

Learning from Contexts: A Multicase Study of Secondary Preservice Teachers in Chile

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Abstract

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This is a qualitative case study of seven secondary preservice teachers in the areas of humanities and social sciences during their teacher preparation at a public university in Chile. The objective was to establish a comprehensive understanding of what preservice teachers learned from students' contexts and how they used that knowledge while learning to teach. Documents, transcripts from a series of personal interviews, as well as in-classroom observations of preservice teachers were used as primary sources. The study is anchored in a sociocultural perspective that analyzes personal, institutional, and community planes of learning to teach as a social activity. It is also grounded in culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) and pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), which complete the theoretical framework. I found that what preservice teachers learned from students' contexts was primarily based on key constituents such as the type of school placement (institutions), students' backgrounds and diversity, situated knowledge of learners, and the complexity of contexts. Importantly, preservice teachers learned that gaining access

to contextual constituents is mainly facilitated by the construction of sound teacher-student relationships through authentic openness to emotional bonding. By sharing their personal stories, and acknowledging students' identities and adolescent nature, preservice teachers established the baseline for achieving quality teaching and learning. In terms of how knowledge of students' contexts informed preservice teachers' thinking, planning, and actions in the classroom, the findings show that the first major step is the adjustment of their personal frameworks. Their encounters with schools' and students' realities during field experiences tested and transformed their teaching preconceptions, enabling them to define their teaching methods by practicing alongside and differentiating themselves from cooperating teachers. Learning from students' backgrounds also helped them to embrace contexts pedagogically through the use of traditional as well as new teaching strategies and resources. Towards the end of the practicum, preservice teachers were confident in their abilities to transform expert content knowledge into teachable content for the high school level. However, the findings suggest that, although it is often highlighted in discourse, one of the least frequently observed skills is using creativity to develop more pedagogically appropriate and situated teaching material that really connects to students' needs and interests. Other findings relate to the programmatic and personal factors affecting preservice teachers' pedagogical use of knowledge of context. Some important implications for teacher education are: evaluating the role of relationships and emotions in teaching and learning; advancing towards a community-oriented preparation that ensures better knowledge of contexts; and fostering a practice-oriented teacher preparation with spaces for trial and error and innovation.

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Table of Contents

List of Tables	xi
List of Figures	xii
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Background of the Problem	1
Research Problem	7
Chapter 2: Literature Review	11
Sociocultural Theory.....	11
Culturally Relevant Pedagogy	17
The multicultural education framework.....	17
What is culturally relevant pedagogy?.....	20
Pedagogical Content Knowledge	23
Theories Transcending Boundaries and Time	26
Research on Preparing Teachers to Learn About Contexts	29
Efforts within the multicultural education framework.....	31
Professional development schools and community-oriented settings	33
Moving teacher education into schools and communities	37
Summary	48
Chapter 3: Methodology	50
Research Context	50
Research Design.....	55
Settings and participants	58
Data collection	60
Data analysis	68
Validity and Reliability.....	74
Summary	76
Chapter 4: What Preservice Teachers Learn from Their Students' Contexts.....	79
Building Relationships.....	81
Emotionality.....	87

Sharing	88
Naming.....	92
Adolescence	93
Context Constituents.....	96
Institutions.....	98
Students’ backgrounds and diversity	102
Situated knowledge of learners.....	108
Complexity and vulnerability of contexts.....	113
Chapter 5: How Knowledge of Students’ Contexts Impacts Preservice Teachers’	
Preparation	119
Adjusting Frameworks.....	120
Testing preconceptions	120
Reality shock.....	124
Learning by practicing	127
Differentiation.....	129
Embracing Contexts.....	132
Strategies and resources	133
Creativity in progress	137
Transposition.....	140
Chapter 6: Enabling or Constraining Elements Affecting Preservice Teachers’	
Pedagogical Use of Students’ Contexts	144
Programmatic Features	144
Program strengths	145
Complaints and demands	150
Tutoring.....	155
The ‘Not yet There’ Status.....	158
Inexperienced youth.....	159
Fears and insecurities	161
Transformationist attitude.....	163
Chapter 7: Discussion	166
Overview of the Study	166

Discussion of the Findings.....	167
Implications for Teacher Education.....	184
Suggestions for Improvement within DEP	190
Limitations	191
Recommendations for Future Research	194
Conclusions.....	197
References.....	200
APPENDIX A: MAP OF SANTIAGO, ITS COMMUNES, AND SCHOOL PLACEMENTS' LOCATIONS	217
APPENDIX B: BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS OF SCHOOL PLACEMENTS	218
APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS	219

List of Tables

	Page
Table 1: Demographics and Educational Background by Participant	59
Table 2: Master Codes	72
Table 3: Categories by Chapter	78

List of Figures

	Page
Figure 1: Three foci of analysis (Rogoff, 1995)	15
Figure 2: Conceptual Framework	25

Chapter 1: Introduction

Background of the Problem

Student populations and their educational needs are becoming increasingly diverse in many nations. What in the U.S. has been described both in terms of “the academic achievement gap” (Barton & Coley, 2009) or “the education debt” (Ladson-Billings, 2006) is also internationally connected to other phenomena such as the persistent socioeconomic gaps, migrations, and conflicts among different ethnic, racial, cultural, and linguistic groups in societies and educational institutions. Since educational disparities mainly affect students living in poverty, they present increasing concerns for policymakers, researchers, and practitioners around the world.

Prominent authors in the U.S. and other western countries have indicated the global emphasis on testing, standards, and accountability as one of the main factors that deepen the inequities between mainstream students and most ethnic minority students (Banks & Banks, 2010; Banks & Park, 2010). The growing magnitude and complexity of the educational inequities associated with diversity factors has motivated a number of researchers to investigate the conditions that create and perpetuate these inequities in various educational systems.

In the United States, educators have made continuous efforts to develop appropriate practices for serving students from different backgrounds, to the extent that *diversity* became “a buzzword of U.S. society” (Ladson-Billings, 1999, p.86). However, it is generally considered that the U.S. school system has been incapable of adequately addressing the problem. In fact, it has been described as “dysfunctional for disproportionately large numbers of children who are not part of the racial and language

mainstream” (Cochran-Smith, 2004, p. 46) and live in poverty. Although recent publications contend that the persistence of U.S. school system’s failures is just one of several effects of the privatization movement (Ravitch, 2013), previous scholarship and prevailing discourse have stated that, current methods aimed at addressing inequity and diversity, curricular reforms, policies and practices have not been successful enough.

Assuming this rather negative diagnosis, scholars agree that teachers play a paramount role in providing quality learning opportunities to minoritized students¹ and fostering the achievement of social justice through education (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Zeichner, 2009). Certainly, the development of these crucial teaching capacities is a lifelong learning process that is influenced by teacher education programs. But, contrary to common assumptions, the preparation of teachers not only involves mastering subject matter and developing pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1986; Grossman, 1990; Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2001); it also requires understanding the social conditions of schooling (Liston & Zeichner, 1991), the development of cultural competence (Banks & Banks, 2010; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2006) and, specifically, knowledge of students’ contexts (e.g., sociocultural backgrounds, race, ethnicity, gender, language).

In the U.S., a number of scholars have investigated the issue of preparing teachers to work with diverse students (e.g., Ball & Tyson, 2011; Cochran-Smith, 2004; Irvine, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1999; Lucas, 2011; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Zeichner, 1993) while others have emphasized the importance for pre- and in-service teachers to develop

¹ *Minoritized* refers to students of color, students from different ethnic groups, indigenous students, new immigrants whose parents have relatively low levels of schooling, students living in poverty, and all students who have been ascribed characteristics of a minority and are treated as if their position and perspective are of less worth (Shields, Bishop & Mazawi, 2005; Sleeter, 2011).

the dispositions and skills to engage in culturally responsive teaching (e.g., Gay, 2010; Howard, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 2006, 2009; Villegas, 1991). At the same time, various initiatives have attempted to reform teacher education programs in order to better prepare teachers to learn from students' cultural backgrounds and communities. Multicultural teacher education programs, for instance, have aimed to prepare teachers to work with culturally and linguistically diverse learners (Ladson-Billings, 1999; Vavrus, 2002).

However, a new approach towards preparing teachers for diversity by learning from contexts has also emerged. Recent studies have reported teacher education programs stepping out of their position of privilege and working along with communities to allow preservice teachers to develop knowledge of contexts. Placements in community-based organizations can provide opportunities to learn about students and communities and from the practices of community-based educators (McDonald, Tyson, Brayko, Bowman, Delpont, & Shimomura, 2011; McDonald, Bowman & Brayko, 2013). However, just placing people in communities does not necessarily create a knowledge shift. More research regarding the effective impact of initiatives whose aim is to develop authentic and democratic collaboration between community, school, and university staff is necessary (Zeichner & Payne, 2013).

Beyond U.S. borders, the topics mentioned above (e.g., student diversity, school segregation, academic achievement gap, teacher education for diverse students) also constitute growing concerns, particularly in Western nations. Countries such as the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, as well as many non-English speaking nations (e.g. France, Spain, and South American countries) face problems similar to those experienced in the United States (Banks & Banks, 2010). Working with

diverse epistemological and semantic aspects, scholars of *Intercultural* and *Multicultural Education* from around the world have increased their dialogue and have inspired researchers, practitioners and policymakers facing this phenomenon across the globe (Grant & Portera, 2011).

Within the Multicultural Education framework, for instance, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy² has recently captured the attention of international educators who see it as a suitable theoretical foundation that could assist in the implementation of transformations and practical implementations in different educational contexts. While some might argue that going beyond the context where theories originated could potentially cause problems, the current international landscape shows high levels of interconnectedness between theoretical approaches. Culturally Relevant Pedagogy encompasses principles, dimensions, and general practices that have shown themselves to be applicable in various contexts. Consequently, it is plausible to seek the construction of a common ground that transcends national, geopolitical, and cultural boundaries.

In an effort to contribute to this common ground, my research addresses the specific case of Chile, a country that faces the challenge of educating an increasingly diverse student population, while dragging and maintaining educational inequalities linked to historical socio-economic segmentation. National and international reports are in agreement that Chilean society is characterized by disturbing disparities, resulting in a

² In the United States and other English-speaking countries, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy is also known as Culturally Responsive Teaching. Other adjectives such as responsible, sensitive, congruent, appropriate, compatible, or equity pedagogy are used interchangeably in the literature. Thus, throughout this dissertation proposal, these adjectives may appear according to the authors' use. I will mostly use Culturally Relevant Pedagogy or the acronym CRP where the "R" states for both *responsive* and *relevant*, and the "P" emphasizes *pedagogy* (*pedagogía*), which is a commonly used term in the Spanish-speaking educational arena.

notoriously segregated school system (García-Huidobro, 2007; OECD, 2011; Senado, 2012).

Certainly, Chile does not exhibit the same levels of racial and ethnic diversity or immigration rates like the U.S. and other nations; however, it is undeniably a multiethnic and multicultural country because of its indigenous, mixed, and rising immigrant populations. In addition, these social groups are mostly living in poor urban areas with segregated schools that serve underprivileged students.

While in Chile the need to prepare teachers for culturally diverse, minoritized students exists, there is little or no preparation for teachers in this regard. Statistics say that most of the underserved students –including those from indigenous and immigrant populations– live in the urban areas like the capital, Santiago (INE, 2012); however, they attend schools where teachers are not well prepared to serve them (Fernández, 2005; MINEDUC, 2011; UNICEF, 2011). The *Intercultural Teacher Education Program* at the Catholic University of Temuco (Quilaqueo & Quintriqueo, 2008) constitutes an isolated effort to prepare teachers for a specific indigenous population (Mapuche) but the scope is limited to a specific region of southern Chile.

Since the early twentieth century, the Chilean school system has historically provided a uniform and ethnocentric education that is now in need of replacement. Twenty-first century Chile is undeniably multiethnic and multicultural, as evidenced by the existence of indigenous, mixed, and immigrant populations. The 2012 Census stated that 11.1% of the people identified themselves as belonging to one of the 11 ethnic groups (INE, 1993, 2002; PULSO, 2012), and the immigrant population has doubled in the last decade (INE, 2012). Poor immigrants from Peru, Colombia, Argentina, Bolivia,

Ecuador, and Haiti are part of Chilean society, and their children represent an important challenge for a school system that usually segregates according to socioeconomic status.

Though they are disconnected from one another and still scarce, some efforts have been made in Chile to deeply analyze and propose solutions to the chronic educational inequities (e.g., Casassus, 2003; Waissbluth, 2010), and promote multicultural education and teaching with a diversity approach (e.g., Campos, Montecinos & González, 2011; Williamson & Montecinos, 2011). However, academic work connecting the achievement gap to cultural diversity and the life conditions of minoritized students is almost absent in the Chilean context. Accordingly, there is little research specifically relating initial teacher preparation to these phenomena. As in the U.S., it is important to explore how Chilean teacher education programs and their preservice teachers are coping with these issues. It is particularly important to investigate how preservice teachers learn from contexts of practice so they can better face their current preparation and future teaching.

In conclusion, both teacher education programs with a focus on unprivileged, diverse student populations and research on the topic are still scarce in Chile. Because of its limited development, scholarship on teacher education has mainly focused on macro views from a national or international perspective (Ávalos, 1997, 2002a, 2008; Ávalos & Matus, 2010), on a historical review of Chilean teacher education (Ávalos, 2002b), or on teacher preparation and professional development policies (Ávalos, 2003a, 2003b, 2010a, 2010b).

Just recently, researchers have started to focus on specific issues such as secondary teacher education and the knowledge society (e.g., Ávalos, 2005), or how elementary preservice teachers perceive their own preparation (Sotomayor, Coloma,

Parodi, Ibañez, Cavada, & Gysling, 2013). Nonetheless, Chilean research designed to study initial teacher education, in general, and the preparation of future teachers to learn from students' contexts, in particular, are still poorly explored fields.

Research Problem

At the beginning of the 1990s, during the post military dictatorship era, a negative diagnosis of Chilean initial teacher education was made. This diagnosis led to the creation of the *Program for the Strengthening of Initial Teacher Education* (1997-2001) also known as FFID (for the Spanish phrase *Fortalecimiento de la Formación Inicial Docente*) (Ávalos, 2005; Cox, 2005). Although this state-funded program was well received and important improvements were made, the government at that time (the 2000-2006 administration) decided to terminate the project. More than a decade after its elimination, it has become obvious that economic, policy, and research efforts are needed to improve the quality of Chilean teacher education.

The lack of research on initial teacher preparation has also been confirmed by recent studies. Cisternas' (2011) meta-analysis, for example, has stated that Chilean research on teacher education has explored some issues more than others and tends to focus on one-dimensional problems. There are important knowledge gaps regarding the subjects, components, processes, and outcomes of teacher education. When considering subjects and processes in particular, there is a dearth of research on preservice teachers and their learning from students' social and cultural backgrounds.

Moreover, policy and research efforts created to improve Chilean teacher education have privileged the elementary level. This is confirmed by the implementation of the INICIA test that, since 2008 and at a national level, has assessed elementary

preservice teachers' content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, written communication, and basic information technology skills. For better or worse –scholars have criticized its use and abuse (García-Huidobro, 2010)– this standardized test is not yet implemented at the secondary level. Thus, secondary teacher education remains unmeasured in many ways, and aspects of teacher education that go beyond disciplinary knowledge and basic pedagogical skills are practically absent in the research agenda.

Taking into consideration the context described in the previous paragraphs, this study identifies two main unknown areas in the Chilean teacher education landscape. On the one hand, there is little research that captures directly how preservice teachers learn from students' backgrounds in order to teach effectively; on the other hand, this shortage is more noticeable at the secondary teacher education level. The first gap has to do with the need to prepare teachers for a diverse and underprivileged student population suffering educational inequities perpetuated at the global and local level (Sleeter & Soriano, 2012; Williamson & Montecinos, 2011). The second points out the secondary school level where –in addition to addressing issues of diversity and poverty, among others– future teachers must become subject matter specialists and develop pedagogical content knowledge in order to teach in the context of the knowledge society (Ávalos, 2005).

In this dissertation, both gaps have been jointly addressed by examining the experiences of preservice teachers participating in a post baccalaureate secondary teacher education program, in Santiago de Chile. This process takes place in a higher education institution that makes strengthening public education and the search for diverse school placements explicit features of its preparation of prospective teachers. In light of the

increasing diversity of the student population and the challenge of meeting minoritized students' needs, the purpose of this study was to understand the knowledge construction process that a group of secondary preservice teachers underwent in order to learn from diverse contexts and how they used that knowledge to become culturally responsive, effective teachers. The following questions guided the study:

- What do secondary preservice teachers learn about school contexts and students' social and cultural backgrounds in different stages of the practicum³ during the teacher education program?
- How does this learning about contexts and sociocultural backgrounds transform, if at all, the way secondary preservice teachers think about teaching, the way they plan their teaching, and the way they actually teach their subject matter?
- What are the programmatic and personal processes that preservice teachers perceive as enabling or restricting their ability to use contextual knowledge as a pedagogical asset?

Considering the knowledge gaps identified earlier in this introduction, the focus on these research questions is of high relevance. Certainly, investigating what secondary preservice teachers learn about students' backgrounds, and how this learning informs their teaching –namely, the development of pedagogical content knowledge with an

³ In the education field, *practicum* refers to the period of clinical experiences in school placements that is supported by university coursework and school partnerships. In general, *practicum* provides preservice teachers with direct experience and opportunities to apply acquired skills and knowledge. It brings them face to face with concrete teaching situations in the classrooms. In this study, *practicum* comprises the last of the three semesters of the program where teacher candidates assume complete responsibility for the classroom. However, it may also refer to clinical experiences during the previous semesters where they are also exposed to classroom observation, lesson planning, and supervised teaching of single units.

explicit focus on diverse and underserved student populations– can contribute to research and practice within teacher education. Moreover, the study’s relevance and contribution does not only apply to the Chilean context. On the contrary, utilizing established theories recognized around the world and ascertaining their appropriateness in new contexts directly supports the aforementioned common ground for the advance of international academic collaboration.

Having established the rationale for this research, next I present the conceptual framework that identifies the major components and constructs of this study. Chapter 2 encompasses a comprehensive review of the literature related to the research problem that allows me to expand the points that were briefly stated in the introduction. Accordingly, I include relevant theories, their current trends, and research data published during the last decades.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

As suggested by the research questions, this study requires a conceptual framework that addresses issues of teacher learning and practice— one that conceives this learning to be co-constructed in relation to others in sociocultural contexts, addresses the development of pedagogical content knowledge beyond the mastery of a subject matter, and significantly considers the backgrounds of students served by preservice teachers during their practicum.

Consequently, this chapter presents sociocultural theory as the larger framework in which culturally relevant pedagogy is rooted. Here, I aim to contextualize the way in which the theoretical and practical contributions of culturally relevant pedagogy naturally overlap with a sociocultural perspective, but also with a multicultural education framework and principles of education for social justice. In addition to illuminating these connections, I incorporate the founding arguments and latest revisions of the concept of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) that shed light on how contextual aspects contribute to the development of quality teaching. Taken as a whole, these theoretical perspectives are gathered to inform my understanding of how sociocultural-contextual elements influence preservice teachers' learning to teach in diverse settings.

Sociocultural Theory

Teacher education has been studied differently in different places and historical moments around the world. Some have paid attention to the role of universities in preparing teachers for the school system; others have focused on related organizational aspects such as the relationship between higher education institutions and schools; and, others have studied the professional aspects of teacher preparation, focusing on what,

where and how individuals learn to teach. Nonetheless, it is necessary to go beyond the professionalization view –which certainly has helped in establishing standards to evaluate teachers’ effectiveness– and address issues of teacher learning as a sociocultural and historical process.

Ellis, Edwards, and Smagorinsky (2010), for instance, called for a shift, proposing “a cultural-historical perspective about teacher education and development that offers a powerful theoretical and methodological lens through which both to analyse the problem of teacher education and to design new curricula and programmes” (p. 2). In that vein, various authors have started to use cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT) to study teacher education issues, though many of them use it only partially, since they study individuals instead of systems.

In recognizing the need for a shift in perspective, one can also note that different authors use the term *sociocultural* in different ways in the literature. For the sake of clarity and comprehensiveness, here I prefer to use a broad definition of a sociocultural perspective on teaching and teacher learning. I have made this decision in order to take into consideration any developments that may contribute to my research purpose, namely, to investigate how preservice teachers individually and collectively engage in their teacher learning activities, and how this learning takes place in diverse settings.

How does sociocultural theory address the process of learning to teach? Various approaches arise from the work of Vygotsky (1978), who pioneered the path toward understanding human learning in terms of engaging in situated social practices, using the resources available in those settings, and being immersed in dialectical relationships with the motivating elements of a culture. In general, all of the various strands of sociocultural

theory share a view of human learning as a dynamic social activity that is situated in physical, social, and social contexts, and is distributed across subjects. Recent literature on teacher education has viewed learning to teach as an interactive process mediated by culture, language, context, and social interactions in light of the cultural practices and community activities (Johnson, 2009).

In other words, this framework informs us that what and how preservice teachers learn depends on the specific social activities in which they engage. In considering both coursework and the practicum period, for instance, the sociocultural perspective helps us to observe how preservice teachers' learning occurs in social practices fostered both inside and outside teacher education programs. On the one hand, university-based courses are settings where they interact with one another, teacher educators, and program components in order to become effective teachers. In CHAT's terminology, university courses' goals, assignments, and tasks are important tools mediating the experiences of individual preservice teachers (Engestrom, 1996). Therefore, it is important to investigate the ways in which these tools mediate preservice teachers' developing conceptions of teaching, learning, and students.

Additionally, school placements and the practicum also involve a number of essential components that the sociocultural theory can help to investigate. Since these settings usually provide preservice teachers with their first experiences of teaching and put them in direct contact with students in schools, the sociocultural perspective constitutes an appropriate theoretical lens to explore how preservice teachers participate in these settings with regard to learning, performance, and interaction with others. Unlike university-based preparation, the practicum experiences have their own goals, present

particular structural features, provide diverse sets of relationships, and have their own resources. Consequently, preservice teachers are expected to negotiate sometimes conflicting goals and experiences. Sociocultural theory can help us to explore these tensions.

But teacher learning outside university settings goes beyond placing oneself inside a school building; other spaces also need to be considered as spheres of teacher education. Real experience-based interactions that take place in communities (experiential knowledge) have been found to be crucial ways of helping student-teachers learn from contexts. Among other benefits, researchers have found that experiential knowledge helps preservice teachers to overcome their negative, stereotyped perceptions of student diversity (Zeichner & Melnick, 1996).

As it is noted in recent CHAT literature (Engestrom, 1999; Ellis, Edwards & Smagorinsky, 2010), a sociocultural approach highlights the role of mediation in teacher learning. Human mediation, particularly, is crucial since learners' cognition does not function in isolation, but is mediated by the social relationships between subjects (Johnson, 2009). In this vein, one can understand preservice teachers' learning to be facilitated by the human mediation provided in relationships with classmates and teacher educators, on one side, and students and cooperating teachers, on the other. A variety of activities inherent to the teacher preparation (at the university) and practicum (at school placements) may help in this mediation, fostering the transformative process of becoming a teacher.

Both in university and school settings, human mediation translates to the relationships that exist between preservice teachers and other individuals. Sociocultural

theory helps to explore how participating and interacting with others mediates teacher learning. This type of learning is considered to be the product of one's engagement and sense-making within activities that are simultaneously individual and collective. Therefore, preservice teachers' construction of pedagogical knowledge is investigated in terms of their participation in diverse activities and the negotiation of meaning within social contexts.

Sociocultural theory also refers to participatory or situated theories of learning and activity theory (e.g., Engestrom, 1999; Lave & Wenger, 1991). A particularly useful sociocultural perspective used in this study is put forth by Rogoff (1995) who proposed three planes of analysis of learning and development, namely, the personal plane, the interpersonal plane, and the community plane (see Figure 1). Without implying different levels or hierarchy, these are inseparable, mutually established planes that can become the focus of analysis at different times, while the others necessarily remain in the background (Rogoff, 1995). This perspective provides the theoretical ability to understand preservice teachers' process of learning to teach as a social activity.

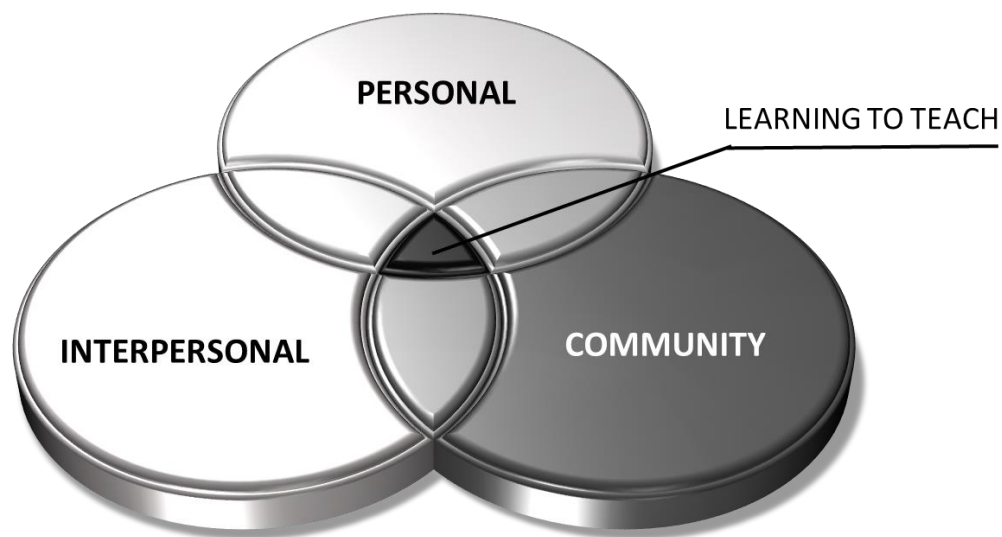


Figure 1: Three foci of analysis (Rogoff, 1995)

Importantly, the sociocultural perspective takes into account learners' prior experiences and stories. Thus, preservice teachers are seen as individuals who bring their previous knowledge and beliefs to their current learning activities. Their prior experiences, beliefs, opinions, and the interaction with others in meaningful activities can strongly shape their developing teacher learning and practices (Lortie, 1975; Pajares, 1992). For example, their preconceptions of diverse students and communities may affect the way they serve them. Consequently, exploring the prior knowledge and life experiences of this study's participants is pertinent in order to understand their emerging discourses and performances.

Finally, it is necessary to note that a sociocultural approach considers the sociopolitical factors in the process of learning to teach. Although these factors are not the focus of this study, they are recognized as the inseparable background of macro-structures influencing teacher education. Individual mental functioning of preservice teachers does not exist apart from the broader contexts where they take place. As Johnson (2009) stated, "it is critical to account for how individual's activities shape and are shaped by the social, cultural and historical macro-structures which constitute that professional world" (p. 77). Therefore, when trying to understand what and how preservice teachers learn from contexts, larger social-cultural-historical structures that surround that process need to be considered.

In short, the term "sociocultural" refers to the social and cultural aspects of human interaction and participation. In this dissertation, the use of sociocultural theory sheds light on the connection between the teacher education process, preservice teachers' prior knowledge and experiences, and their learning from students' social and cultural

backgrounds. Thus, we can understand what and how they learn from them. In addition, a sociocultural framework also illuminates our understanding of preservice teachers' developing teaching and interaction with diverse students. To focus on this aspect, the following section addresses culturally relevant pedagogy, which is naturally rooted in the sociocultural perspective since it acknowledges students' backgrounds and embraces them through responsive curriculum and instruction.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Since one of the objectives of this study is to explore how secondary preservice teachers incorporate students' social and cultural backgrounds into their teaching, it is also necessary to use a theoretical lens that sees the teaching and learning processes in the light of increasing student diversity and the need for equal teaching practices that help to overcome educational inequities. These aspects are encompassed by Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP).

The multicultural education framework. In addition to its connection to sociocultural theory, CRP is rooted in Multicultural Education, which has been defined in diverse ways by different authors. However, despite nuances or emphases regarding components, approaches, and goals, a consensus has been built and strengthened (Gay, 1994). One of the most recognized definitions has been provided by Banks (2010), who asserts that, "Multicultural Education is at least three things: an idea or concept, an educational reform movement, and a process. [It] incorporates the idea that all students – regardless of their gender, social class, and ethnic, racial, or cultural characteristics, should have an equal opportunity to learn in school" (p. 3).

Sleeter and Grant (2003), in turn, state that Multicultural Education includes attention to racial or cultural diversity, gender, social class, and public policy such as immigration and bilingualism. Accordingly, they contend that the focus should be on “several forms of difference that also define unequal positions of power ... [which] include race, language, social class, gender, disability, and sexual orientation” (p. iv). They add that “Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist deals more directly [...] with oppression and social structural inequality based on race, social class, gender and disability” (Sleeter & Grant, 2003, p. 195-196).

Although there are some differences between the above definitions, here I point out and stress the places where they converge. In fact, Sleeter’s and Grant’s (2003) Social Reconstructionist stance is congruent with Banks’ *social action approach* to the integration of multicultural content, which aims “to educate students for social criticism and social change and to teach them decision-making skills.” Thus, educators are encouraged to “empower students and help them acquire *political efficacy*” (Banks, 2010, p. 245, emphasis in the original).

Another conceptualization that has contributed to the broad consensus and illustrated the multidisciplinary nature of Multicultural Education is provided by Bennett (2001), who states that the Multicultural Education framework rests on four broad principles: (a) the theory of cultural pluralism; (b) ideals of social justice and the end of racism, sexism, and other forms of prejudice and discrimination; (c) affirmations of culture in the teaching and learning process; and (d) visions of educational equity and excellence leading to high levels of academic learning for all children and youth (p. 173).

Interestingly, Bennett's (2001) *equity pedagogy* genre and third principle (*affirmation of culture in the teaching learning process*) are, respectively, consistent with one of the Banks' (2004) dimensions of Multicultural Education and the characterization of CRP that I will explain later. As a brief illustration, the aforementioned third principle of Bennett (2001) has been reaffirmed, among others, by Gay (2010), who argues that "culture is at the heart of all we do in the name of education, whether that is curriculum, instruction, administration, or performance assessment" (p. 8).

A fourth and final contribution I want to mention in order to round out a comprehensive definition of Multicultural Education is from Nieto (2004), who states that:

[It] is a process of comprehensive school reform and basic education for all students. It challenges and rejects racism and other forms of discrimination in schools and society and accepts and affirms the pluralism (ethnic, racial, linguistic, religious, economic, and gender, among others) that students, their communities, and teachers reflect. [It] permeates the schools' curriculum and instructional strategies, as well as the interactions among teachers, students, and families, and the very way that schools conceptualize the nature of teaching and learning. Because it uses critical pedagogy as its underlying philosophy and focuses on knowledge, reflection, and action (*praxis*) as the basis for social change, multicultural education promotes democratic principles of social justice (p. 346).

For Nieto, Multicultural Education is: antiracist education, basic education, important for all, pervasive, education for social justice, a process, and a critical

pedagogy. Therefore, it “represents a way of rethinking school reform because it responds to many problematic factors leading to school underachievement and failure [...] Multicultural education can transform and enrich the schooling of all young people [because] it takes into account the cultures, languages, and experiences, of all students” (Nieto, 2004, pp. 361-362). This definition is especially helpful in exploring the possibilities of this theoretical framework in international contexts, which I will attempt to do in the following paragraphs.

In conclusion, the CRP approach is anchored in the Multicultural Education framework, which, in general, integrates the idea that all students should have an equal opportunity to learn in school. The ultimate goal is to deal with oppression and social structural inequality based on race, language, social class, gender, disability, immigration status, or any other student characteristics. As sociocultural theory does, CRP sheds light on exploring what and how secondary preservice teachers learn from diverse schools, students, and their contexts. Its main definitions and features are described as follows.

What is culturally relevant pedagogy? Gay (2010) describes CRP as a “different pedagogical paradigm needed to improve the performance of underachieving students from various ethnic groups— one that teaches *to and through* their personal and cultural strengths, their intellectual capabilities, and their prior accomplishments” (p. 26, italics in the original). It goes beyond traditional teaching approaches in two ways. CRP is a routine that “filters curriculum content and teaching strategies through [students’] cultural frames of reference to make the content more personally meaningful and easier to master.” It is also a radical proposal that “makes explicit the previously implicit role of culture in teaching and learning, and it insists that educational institutions accept the

legitimacy and viability of ethnic-group cultures in improving learning outcomes” (p. 26).

To summarize Gay’s (2010) conception of CRP, one can call attention to six essential characteristics and four dimensions. Regarding characteristics, CRP is *validating, comprehensive, multidimensional, empowering, transformative, and emancipatory* (pp. 31-38). The first three characteristics emphasize the cultural aspect of CRP, while the rest embody a critical pedagogy stance. The four dimensions of CRP are *caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction*. These are the guiding principles for culturally responsive teachers’ practices.

In an overlapping, though not identical conceptualization of CRP, Ladson-Billings (2009) describes it as “a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes” (p. 382). Thus, there are three essential CRP principles that “teachers must attend to in order to achieve success with students who have been underserved by our schools” (Ladson-Billings, 2006, p. 33). These principles are: *academic achievement, cultural competence, and sociopolitical consciousness*.

Academic achievement means holding high academic expectations and offering appropriate support, such as scaffolding. Cultural competence implies reshaping curriculum, building on students’ previous knowledge, and establishing relationships with students and their families. Finally, sociopolitical consciousness means that teachers are aware of their place in teaching, examine their positionality in the broader context while at the same time linking social disparities with issues such as race, class, and gender. Therefore, they understand social issues regarding the school community and the

larger society, and also incorporate those issues into their teaching. Teachers' task is "to help students use the various skills they learn to better understand, and critique their social position and context" (Ladson-Billings, 2006, p. 37).

Gay's and Ladson-Billings' definitions of CRP find a corollary in the works of Irvine and Armento (2001) and Howard (2006). The former have stressed commitment to social justice in the sense that teachers can aim to contribute to the reconstruction of society through their teaching, while the latter proposes a *transformationist pedagogy* that defies the dynamics of social dominance and its implications in the school system. In noting that the great majority of teachers in the U.S. are white and female, Howard specifically challenges white dominance, stating that *we can't teach what we don't know*. However, to stop perpetuating privileges and the academic achievement gap is not just a mission for white female teachers in the U.S., but also for "all educators, whatever our racial or cultural identity may be" (Howard, 2006, p. 132).

Important principles of CRP also have been identified by Villegas and Lucas (2002), whose curriculum proposal for educating culturally responsive teachers is explicitly built on principles of *social justice*. Based on empirical and theoretical research, they have identified several characteristics of CRP including "understand[ing] and embrace[ing] constructivist views of teaching and learning" (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p. 198). Recently, Lucas (2011) has expanded on this work, stressing the need for preparing teachers to work with linguistically diverse students. This constructivist perspective is also stated by McKinley (2005, cited in Howard, 2006) who concluded that a key factor in effectively working with minority students "is the willingness and ability

of teachers to employ *a constructivist approach* that utilizes the students' personal and cultural knowledge as the basis of inquiry in the classroom" (p. 132, italics added).

To sum up, CRP is the manifestation of an ethical position that teachers take in order to ensure the quality and equity education their students deserve (Ladson-Billings, 2006). At the same time, it constitutes a still-evolving theoretical framework that helps us to understand how pre- and in-service teachers can transition from a traditional teaching style to a culturally responsive one, re-conceptualizing their role to serve an increasingly diverse student population in a constantly changing world. CRP's theoretical and ethical perspective guides my inquiry about what preservice teachers learn from students' social and cultural backgrounds in the Chilean context.

Pedagogical Content Knowledge

In addition to sociocultural theory and culturally relevant pedagogy, the third theoretical perspective used in this study is Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK). It is an essential component of teacher knowledge that can help explain how preservice teachers learn to teach and how this learning is affected by contextual elements and processes. In other words, I use PCK as another lens to understand how and what preservice teachers learn from their students' backgrounds and, particularly, how they effectively use that knowledge to make their subject matter teachable and relevant.

In addressing teachers' mastery of subject matter and the ability to make it teachable for students, Shulman (1986; 1987) developed the concept of PCK in response to his dissatisfaction with previous research on teacher knowledge. PCK has become a construct that builds on both subject matter knowledge and knowledge of pedagogy. Since teachers need both theoretical and practical knowledge of the subject matter, any

definition of their work must take both aspects into account. As Shulman (1986, p. 9) stated:

PCK goes beyond knowledge of subject matter per se to the dimension of subject matter for teaching... [It involves] the most regularly taught topics in one's subject area, the most useful forms of representation of those ideas, the most powerful analogies, examples, illustrations, explanations and demonstrations—in a word, the ways of representing and formulating the subject that make it comprehensible to others (p. 9).

At first, the organization of the subject matter (content) and the skills regarding the transmission of content knowledge for teaching (pedagogy) were Shulman's two main components of PCK. Since then, more components have been added, enriching and extending initial work. Wilson, Shulman, and Richert (1987), for instance, stated that PCK is "a new type of subject matter knowledge that is enriched and enhanced by other types of knowledge—knowledge of the learner, knowledge of the curriculum, knowledge of the context, knowledge of the pedagogy" (p. 114). According to Grossman (1990):

PCK includes overarching conceptions of what it means to teach a particular subject, knowledge of curricular materials and curriculum in a particular field, knowledge of students' understanding and potential misunderstandings of a subject area, and knowledge of instructional strategies and representations for teaching particular topics (p. 25).

In Grossman's model, there are three knowledge domains that interact within the PCK: subject matter knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, and knowledge of context. Hence, PCK is not just informed by disciplinary and pedagogical knowledge, but

also by contextual components surrounding the teaching and learning process. In a later study, Grossman (1994) continued to extend the model by considering knowledge of context and knowledge of self as part of PCK.

Turner-Bisset (2001) followed the path of model enrichment and specification considering PCK as an amalgam of various knowledge bases that involve eleven components. These are: substantive knowledge, syntactic knowledge, beliefs about the subject, curriculum knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, models of teaching, knowledge of contexts, cognitive knowledge of learners, empirical knowledge of learners, knowledge of self, and knowledge of educational ends. As a consequence, PCK increased in complexity and continued to consider contextual aspects, which has legitimized its appropriateness as a means to study preservice teachers' learning from students' backgrounds, and increased the possibilities of linkage to other theoretical constructs such as CRP. This latest version of PCK, developed by Turner Bisset (2001), is the one I find most comprehensive and useful for my study.

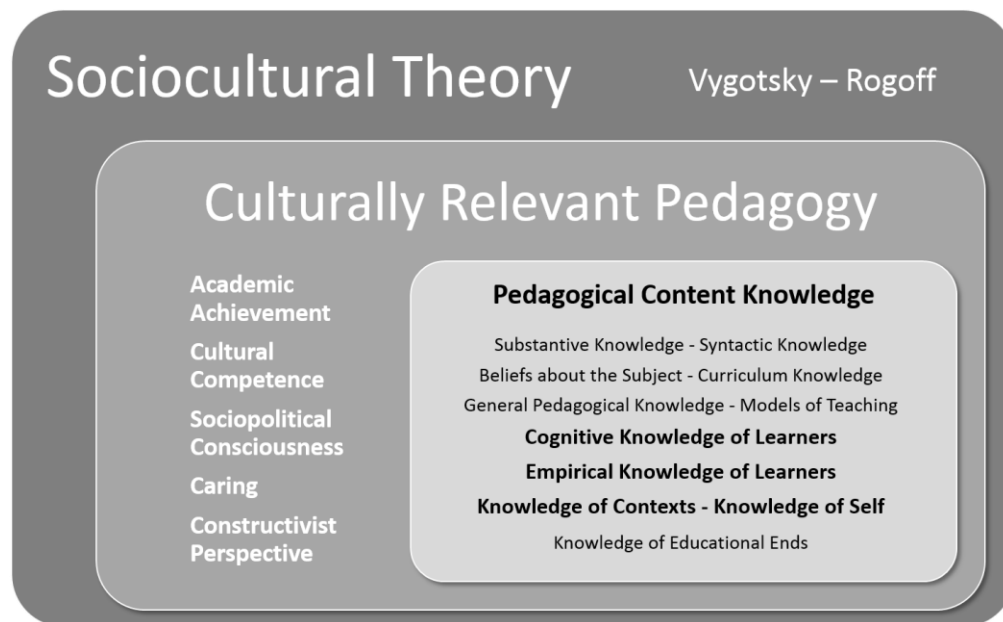


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

In summary, my framework includes three theoretical lenses: (1) sociocultural theory, (2) culturally relevant pedagogy, and (3) pedagogical content knowledge. As shown in Figure 2, these three theories constitute a nested structure of possibilities for analysis and interpretation. Together, they facilitate the exploration of how contextual issues impact secondary preservice teachers' process of learning to teach.

Theories Transcending Boundaries and Time

As stated in the introduction, CRP is increasingly being used and seen as a suitable theoretical source for research and practice internationally. However, some concerns emerge when we begin to think about potential problems that go outside the context where theories were originally developed. The same preoccupation about adopting and adapting foreign theories such as CRP could have arisen in the past when discussing the appropriateness of the sociocultural and the PCK theories. In fact, none of the three frameworks mentioned above originated in Chile or even Latin America. But the truth is that today, more than in the past, international scholarship –particularly on the Western side of the globe– is characterized by its interconnectedness and the rapid spread of solid theoretical approaches.

As is well known, sociocultural theory and PCK have their roots in the former Soviet Union and the U.S., respectively, nonetheless they have been welcomed, used, and revisited worldwide. It was during the 1960's when Vygotsky's legacy is widely recognized and used in the West (originally in North America, and later in other regions of the world) even now.⁴ Shulman's PCK originated during the 1980's, but it continues to

⁴ Various translations of Vygotsky and his collaborators were later known under the title *Mind in Society*. This Western version of Vygotskian theory is frequently associated with scholars such as Michael Cole, and it has recently gained strength under the name of cultural-historical activity theory (a.k.a. CHAT) or simply activity theory.

be used in numerous teaching and teacher education research studies. A recent review and content analysis by Salazar Díaz (2014) found that, between 2002 and 2013, 63 scientific studies on PCK had been published in international peer-reviewed journals. Thus, researchers from English-speaking, Latin American, and other countries continue compounding PCK's diverse lines of research.

It seems clear that there is no need for more justification of the use of PCK or sociocultural theory on research in the Chilean context. They are theories that have been adopted for decades in many different countries. Unlike sociocultural and PCK theories, CRP is relatively new and barely known in Chile, so its use may require more justification. Nonetheless, the definitions, components, and goals provided earlier in this chapter prove its universality in a globalized world. Indeed, CRP encompasses principles, dimensions, and general practices that have demonstrated their ability to be applied in a variety of contexts. Consequently, it is plausible to seek the construction of a common ground that transcends national, geopolitical, and cultural boundaries.

There is no society without cultural diversity and the need for a culturally responsive education. CRP's principles, therefore, are not only applicable in the United States or other English-speaking countries. Contrarily, they emerge as reasonably transferable principles to various international contexts, including South America and Chile, which is a multicultural nation.

In my view, we can anticipate that CRP literature will continue being transferred to other contexts, as has happened with the multicultural education framework. In fact, multiculturalism and educational equity have been enduring concerns in the Spanish-speaking literature for decades (viz., in Spain and South America). Definitions have been

developed and nurtured from different theoretical traditions and, beyond the conceptual debates about the appropriateness of terms such as Multicultural, Intercultural, Bilingual, etc., (García, Pulido & Montes, 2002; Giménez, 2003; Williamson, 2004), discourse on cultural pluralism has been the foundation of educational policies and practices, and the object of continuing academic development.

In recent years, due to the globalization of knowledge and international academic exchanges, the Multicultural Education scholarship produced in the United States has gained popularity and influence around the world. In addition to being cited in numerous Spanish-speaking works, most prominent English-speaking Multicultural Education scholars in the US have had their work translated to or written in Spanish (e.g., Sleeter, 2004, Sleeter & Grant, 2011; Campos, Montecinos & González, 2011). Moreover, Spanish book chapters also have been translated and published in English (e.g., Santos & Nieto, 2000; Sleeter & Soriano, 2012). This international academic collaboration will continue expanding the Multicultural Education scope, and will increasingly introduce CRP literature beyond North American boundaries.

In Chile, specifically, the publication of *Educación Multicultural: Práctica de la equidad y diversidad para un mundo que demanda Esperanza* [Multicultural Education: Equity and Diversity Practice for a World that Demands Hope] (Williamson & Montecinos, 2011) has shown that Chilean researchers, teacher educators, and practitioners are increasingly open to learning from and utilizing this literature. My own essay titled *La pedagogía culturalmente relevante y sus posibilidades en el contexto chileno* [Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and its Possibilities in the Chilean Context] will

be published in 2015 in the Universidad de Chile's online journal *Vínculos*, which confirms the growing interest and receptivity.

More importantly, the transferability of Multicultural Education and CRP to the Chilean context is not only conceptual, but also presents practical possibilities. This openness on the part of scholars not only responds to an intellectual interest, but also to the social and cultural realities they investigate. Certainly, Chilean scholars will do more research on culturally responsive teaching and on learning to teach for diverse students and school contexts during the next years. In the meantime, I dedicate the next section to a review of recent publications on teacher preparation and learning about contexts in the U.S.

Research on Preparing Teachers to Learn About Contexts

Before beginning an exploration of how knowledge of context informs secondary preservice teachers in Chile, it is important to know what has been done in this regard by other researchers. In this section, I review research that has examined efforts within teacher education programs to prepare teachers to learn about the contexts in which they teach and their students live, and the ways in which this knowledge can be utilized to train more effective teachers. On the one hand, this review helps us to learn about the factors that make these teacher preparation efforts successful and how this success can be measured or observed. On the other hand, it helps to identify the knowledge gaps regarding teacher preparation's efforts to help teacher candidates learn about context and, in doing so, to better frame and justify the importance of this study's research problem.

From a broad perspective, one can state that education systems face two main problems: First, serving students from different economic, social and cultural

backgrounds; second, closing the academic opportunity and achievement gaps between mainstream and historically underserved students. Given these problems and teacher educators' and researchers' conviction that teachers play a key role in helping to overcome them (e.g., Darling-Hammond, 2006; Zeichner, 2009), a growing body of research has started to investigate how teacher education programs prepare future teachers to better serve diverse students.

It has been highlighted that, to increase their effectiveness, teachers need to know and respect their students' cultural traditions and family knowledge, commit to the local communities where they serve, work with families and other community members, and utilize what they learn about them (e.g., funds of knowledge) in order to provide a more culturally relevant teaching that supports students' learning (Banks, et.al. 2005, Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Moll & Gonzalez, 2004). But, what have teacher education programs done about it, and what are the results?

In addition to research on multicultural education and culturally responsive pedagogical approaches in the U.S., recent literature has also emphasized the need for community-based learning in teacher education. Some articles report how placements in community-based organizations provide opportunities to learn about students and from the practices of community-based educators (McDonald, Tyson, Brayko, Bowman, Delport, & Shimomura, 2011; McDonald, Bowman & Brayko, 2013) while others focus on the role of community-centered activities in developing teachers' pedagogical skills in particular content areas (Gallego, 2001; Brayko, 2013). I will delve into the aforementioned lines of research in the following paragraphs.

Efforts within the multicultural education framework. Regarding teachers' development of knowledge of contexts, important research projects have been carried out to understand how teachers learn to teach for diversity (e.g. Bennett, 2007; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Zeichner, 1993). The multicultural education and culturally responsive pedagogy frameworks have been extensively used to identify the factors that help to better prepare teachers to teach diverse students (e.g., Banks, 2004; Howard, 2006; Irvine, 2003, Villegas, 1991).

Examples of teacher education programs that have worked to transform teacher education through the multicultural education lens can be found in Ladson-Billings's (1999) review, which identified five programs that were characterized by their teaching-for-diversity approach. Santa Clara University, University of Alaska-Fairbanks, University of Texas-Pan American, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Teachers for Chicago (TFC)⁵ were identified as having programs seeking a quality and culturally responsive preparation of future teachers. Some of them prepared teachers to teach Latino, Asian-American, or African-American communities in urban settings; others have prepared teachers to work with small, rural Native or American Indian populations, and still others to teach bilingual or non-English speaking students living in poverty.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison's Teach for Diversity (TED), for instance, was noted for being "designed purposely to attract people committed to principles of equity and diversity who do not have a background in education" (Ladson-Billings, 1999, p. 108). Among their key features, these programs involved special selection processes

⁵ TFC's participating colleges and universities were Chicago State University, Columbia College, Concordia University, DePaul University, Loyola University-Chicago, Northeastern Illinois University, Roosevelt University, Rosary University, and Saint Xavier University.

and comprehensive assessment tools to guarantee quality teacher preparation. In general, they included features such as purposeful coursework, assignments with community-based organizations, field experiences in community placements, and a high level of connection with the community.

During the 2000's, diverse scholars have made revisions in theory and practice that could lead to a transformative multicultural education for teachers. Firstly, they have recognized historical, institutional, and policy reasons that undermine the status of multicultural teacher education and that generate a negative impact on prospective teachers' attitudes and decisions (Vavrus, 2002). Secondly, preservice teachers were found to resist engaging in open discussions about cultural differences (Irvine, 2003). Based on this "assimilationist ideology" (Banks, as cited in Irvine, 2003), many subjects wrongly believe that good teachers are effective with all types of students regardless their context.

Thirdly, many preservice or novice teachers generally tend to avoid teaching in urban, poor schools where children need good teachers the most, and where the work is more demanding. Even worse, underprepared teachers are more likely to teach children from poor communities (Darling-Hammond, 2004). Finally, multicultural teacher education faces limitations due to the existence of several interpretations of how to better enact a multicultural approach. Indeed, the *infusion* approach (integration of multicultural education throughout various courses and field experiences) and the *segregated* approach (preparation on multicultural issues in one or few courses as a subtopic of their regular education) represent the contrasting and unbalanced implementation of multicultural teacher education (Zeichner, 1993; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

In spite of difficulties and limitations, the literature also reports positive examples of programs that have implemented multicultural teaching preparation. In the last two decades, particularly, scholars have highlighted the characteristics of successful teaching for culturally and linguistically diverse learners. Some have investigated ways to teach minority students in general (e.g. Au, 2009; Banks et al. 2005; Cochran-Smith, 2004; Darling-Hammond, French & Garcia-Lopez, 2002; Gay, 2001/2010; Larkin, & Sleeter, 1995; Lucas, 2011; Vavrus, 2002; Villegas & Lucas, 2002), while others have studied key pedagogical practices for particular student populations such as language-minority students, or for specific ethnic groups such as Latino or African-American students (Irvine, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 2009; González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005).

The literature discusses a number of specific practices and structures that have been developed to address the diversity challenge and help teachers learn from contexts. These are the subject of the following paragraphs.

Professional development schools and community-oriented settings. Boyle-Baise and McIntyre (2008) have summarized a significant amount of research in comparing two different approaches aimed to provide preservice teachers with opportunities to learn from students' contexts and gain experience. These approaches are: professional development schools (PDS's) and community-oriented settings. As they have stated, "Both contexts can be described as efforts for reform, improving student learning and teacher preparation, but they differ considerably in the kinds of experiences teacher candidates receive" (p. 307).

PDS's⁶ were thought to renovate the relationship between universities and P-12 schools such that teachers, administrators, and university faculty would have new opportunities to collaborate and improve their respective work. They ended up becoming places where teachers could learn from actual instead of simulated experiences, having a major part of their preparation inside schools. Although PDS's presented some difficulties and obstacles in terms of collaboration between diverse stakeholders, the experience of effective PDS's helped to articulate significant principles (e.g., teachers' professionalization, students' academic achievement, links between schools and universities to become centers of educational excellence) to guide teacher preparation (Boyle-Baise & McIntyre, 2008).

Community-oriented teacher education programs, in turn, emphasize field experiences such as *service learning*, *cultural immersion*, and *community schools*, and are usually located in communities with culturally diverse and/or lower income populations. However, knowing students and their communities is imperative for all teachers. *Service learning* is described as “the most common effort to address community issues in teacher education [that] allows preservice teachers to work with and learn from local youth and adults in the process of doing something worthwhile” (Boyle-Baise & McIntyre, 2008, p. 309). Nonetheless, this teaching as a public service presents the risk that participants will develop deficient views of others. Thus, alternatives such as critical service learning, justice-oriented service learning and multicultural service learning are recommended to affirm students' diversity, build community, and challenge inequity, thus supporting the

⁶ Professional Development Schools (PDS) were created in the U.S. after the publication of *Tomorrow's Teachers: A Report of The Holmes Group* (1986).

development of an asset-based view of communities. A very illustrative discussion about the distinctions between traditional and critical versions of service learning can be found in Mitchell's (2008) literature review.

Cultural immersion has been described as the set of cultural experiences that helps preservice teachers venture outside their cultural comfort zones and transform their understanding of others. These immersions can supplement conventional student teaching, provide prospective teachers with cultural insights, and develop community teacher knowledge (Boyle-Baise and McIntyre, 2008). Finally, *community schools* aim to prepare teachers "on the job" since they offer definitive community locations for those teachers being prepared to work in particular communities. Although this kind of teacher preparation is still scarce, authors like Murrell (2001) have helped to establish principles for educating community teachers, and thus continued the process of legitimizing community-oriented teacher preparation.

When they juxtaposed the community-oriented and PDS approaches to teacher preparation, Boyle-Baise and McIntyre (2008) noted important differences. While PDS's emphasize teachers' professionalization, students' academic achievement, and links between schools and universities to become centers of educational excellence, community-oriented teacher preparation focuses on building strong connections between schools and communities. This broad educational perspective involves students' academic progress, personal well-being, cultural affirmation, and social engagement. In terms of social and cultural diversity, evidence suggests that the PDS's treat these goals as part of students' academic achievement. Community oriented efforts, instead,

explicitly prioritize the affirmation of diversity as the *conditio sine qua non* for preparing teachers.

In terms of general perspectives, community-oriented initiatives stress teacher learning for multicultural understanding, a service ethic, an asset-based view of students and communities, a broad, relational view of education, and the development of community knowledge. PDS settings, in turn, require teachers to master content knowledge, learn through inquiry, collaborate in school/university partnerships, and be accountable for student learning. Moreover, community-oriented efforts are aimed at preparing teachers to become public servants while PDS's ask them to become professional, subject matter specialists. As Boyle-Baise and McIntyre (2008) have written, "From a community view, future teachers need to make connections outside schools, in communities. From a PDS view, future teachers need to concentrate on what happens inside schools, on student learning" (p. 323).

Based on this comparison, the recommendation in the chapter is to promote community-oriented PDS's that take the best of both worlds, putting more attention on issues of equity and increasing the diversity of the teaching force, among other improvements. In following Boyle-Baise and McIntyre's (2008) arguments, one can conclude that, although the PDS approach prepares teachers to focus on student learning and inquiry, more attention to equity, diversity, family, and community is needed. Their proposal of community-oriented PDS's calls for more comprehensive ways to prepare teachers to learn from contexts and encourages teacher educators, researchers, and practitioners "to think of students as members of certain contexts, with particular needs" (p. 326).

Moving teacher education into schools and communities. Recently, there have been efforts to move teacher education into urban schools that have been put together in order to connect teacher preparation to local communities and better prepare future teachers to learn from contexts (Noel, 2013). While past initiatives have had a university-led focus with unequal roles, some new efforts try to foster authentic collaboration and horizontal relationships with school and community members. From this point of view, schools and communities have their own knowledge, programs, and ideas that are as important as those brought from universities. In this paradigm, teachers are prepared to work more intimately with urban schools, communities, and community-based organizations, valuing and prioritizing local strengths.

Recent literature explains how teacher education programs can begin to leave their position of privilege and effectively struggle along with communities trying to overcome social, economic, cultural, educational, and racial injustice. Programs that have moved either partially or totally into urban K-12 schools and their communities have been researched by several authors that use theories prioritizing an asset-based view of schools and communities. They explain how the university-school-community relationship was developed, how they became integrated partners, and what the impact has been on participants. Research cited below shows a variety of programs that come from diverse geographic locations in the U.S., representing different levels of schooling, and making use of diverse research methodologies.

First, an example of theoretical frameworks that affirm community strengths is provided by Zeichner and Payne (2013), who pose the question of “*whose knowledge*

should count in teacher education” (p. 3). In critiquing the role of the traditional model of teacher education (college-recommending), these authors have noted that:

The way in which college- and university-based teacher education is usually structured is fundamentally undemocratic and largely fails to strategically access knowledge and expertise that exist in schools and local communities that could inform the preparation of teachers (p. 4).

In their view, community knowledge should inform novice teacher learning and inspire teacher educators to better connect their work with the social justice work occurring in local communities and beyond. It becomes crucial to build “hybrid spaces,” that is, spaces where universities, schools, and communities come together and equally share and value one another’s knowledge. In drawing on the cultural-historical activity theory framework (CHAT), they argue that:

The knowledge and expertise needed by teacher candidates is located in schools, colleges and universities, and in communities, and [...] the key problem of teacher education is to figure out how to provide teacher candidates with access to this needed expertise from these different systems (Zeichner & Payne, 2013, p. 8).

Examples of hybrid spaces provided by Zeichner and Payne are the Teachers in Residence Program at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and the Faculty Associate positions at Simon Fraser University in Canada, where teacher educators make permanent efforts “to involve expert teachers in all aspects of university-based teacher education, including program planning, instruction, and ongoing evaluation and renewal” (p. 9). The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching is also a pioneer in “the

utilization of web-based documentation of the work of outstanding K-12 teachers in methods courses taught by university faculty” (p. 10).

While is true that several university-based teacher education programs have started to move methods and foundations courses from university settings into schools, this relocation does not necessarily entail a knowledge shift. What matters is the authentic and democratic collaboration between community, school, and university staff. As Zeichner and Payne (2013) have asserted, “When instructors and teachers collaborate to strategically connect academic and school-based forms of expertise around particular content areas, the possibility for a democratic construction of knowledge emerges” (p. 10). For example, practice-based methods provide a more situated preparation for new teachers while helping them to successfully enact research-based teaching practices that they learn in their programs and that are innovative for school settings.

McDonald, Tyson, Brayko, Bowman, Delport, & Shimomura (2011) have reported an interesting experience of cross-cultural community-based experiences for preservice teachers. This University of Washington’s community-based practicum included a variety of field experiences that represented situated teacher preparation and exemplified the efforts of valuing and accessing the knowledge that acts as mediator between the university and the local community, fostering more democratic relationships. This type of innovation promoted a new ethic of collaboration where community members’ knowledge was welcomed in new teacher preparation. Their knowledge counts because “[they] send their children to public schools and live in the communities that schools are supposed to serve” (Zeichner and Payne, 2013, p. 13).

Although they utilize a different theoretical framework, Glass and Wong (2013) echo the new ethic of collaboration involving a democratic knowledge production in connection with schools and communities. Their research goal was to:

Explore ways that university faculty members, student teachers, teachers, K-12 students, and parents formed communities of learners to produce knowledge in an equity-oriented, urban professional development school (PDS) network with specific commitments to integrate community knowledge in the service of student learning and to serve community needs through that same learning. (p. 20)

Glass and Wong (2013) studied the Equity Network, a system of 12 PDS's mainly serving Latino, South Asian, and African American students coming from low-income families in the California Central Valley. Since 2001, this network has created a number of opportunities for both novice and experienced teachers to collaborate in enhancing the academic and social development of their diverse student population. According to Glass and Wong (2013), examples of these learning opportunities for educators are:

Cooperating teacher workshops, teacher research projects, lesson study, research reading clubs, co-instruction of teacher preparation courses, K-16 curriculum development projects, before- and after-school tutoring programs, and school-community events. (p. 23)

These instances allow preservice teachers to participate in a network guided by equity-oriented principles, curricular approaches, and pedagogical practices. The commitment of novice teachers to learning from contexts and utilizing that knowledge to better serve diverse, low-income students is reinforced through their participation in the

Equity Network. Glass and Wong (2013) have described a powerful, collaborative production of knowledge where participating teachers:

Recognized the importance of understanding the particularities of their students' lives and the larger contextual issues impacting them... [In this collaborative process] students' languages, historical and cultural backgrounds, perspectives, and emergent social formations were integrated with the core curriculum in whatever ways possible. (p. 23)

Based on the principles guiding the Equity Network's work, Glass and Wong (2013) proposed "Teachers for Communities (Not Only for Classrooms)" (p. 24), urging new and experienced teachers to develop collaborative learning communities that involve members of local communities. In doing so, schools, communities, and universities can deliberately collaborate to produce and validate knowledge from diverse sources. While acknowledging the complexity and large workload involved in this type of project, Glass and Wong (2013) assert that these efforts are a step in the right direction because they cannot only improve historically underserved students' tests scores but, more importantly, they contribute to improving their lives.

Another example of the impact that school-community-based teacher education can have on preservice teachers is demonstrated in Stairs and Friedman's (2013) description of the Urban Immersion program at Boston College. As part of a secondary teacher education program, this urban school-university partnership is a collaborative effort whose goal is:

That through course work and experiences in classrooms, participants should develop their knowledge of content and pedagogy, but more importantly, develop

their knowledge of the urban context and how to balance the multiple demands so that all students might learn and improve their life chances. (p. 43)

Key principles and features have been maintained through the years in order to ensure that new teachers acquire specialized knowledge from urban contexts and develop non-deficit conceptions of urban students. The five principles are: promoting social justice, constructing knowledge, inquiring into practice, accommodating diversity, and collaborating with others. Four features configure the Urban Immersion: a cohort model, site-based course work, a collaborating instructor, and a partnered field experience.

There are also important findings based on qualitative and survey research. From the qualitative side, Stairs and Friedman (2013) have found that: (1) preservice teachers advance in better understanding urban teaching; and, (2) novice student teachers gradually enact culturally responsive pedagogy, but they better enacted it and believed in their roles as urban teachers after they gained experience in urban settings. From the quantitative side, they found preservice teachers' perceptions regarding how they valued both the integrated on-site course and the pre-practicum and partnered field experience to be very positive. In addition, preservice teachers expressed high interest in gaining more on-site and field experiences, as well as having a desire to spend more time working with urban students during their training. They also had more interest in working in urban schools upon graduation.

Overall, as a result of more than 10 years of work, Urban Immersion showed positive results in terms of the ongoing development of cultural competence and increasing commitment to urban teaching in their student teachers. Finally, Stairs and Friedman (2013) conclude that the school-university partnership has been successful in

helping future teachers to learn from contexts. This can be attributed to the fact that in this teacher education program:

Preservice teachers experience firsthand the social context of one urban school, replete with limited human and material resources, pupils' struggles with self-esteem, racism, alienation, poverty, and discrimination, tragedy, dreams, aspirations, and successes, poignantly reminding them of their own privilege and the power it brings, but also providing rich opportunities to develop relationships with the interested, interesting, engaged, and engaging cultural 'other.' (p. 53)

Another example of the impact of moving teacher education into urban schools and communities can be found in a chapter by Lee, Showalter, and Eckrich (2013). Using survey research, they evaluated the results of teacher preparation courses that had undergone a redesign in order to become contextually based in a community-embedded urban teacher preparation model. Their work presents findings from the second and third years of one large Midwestern university's work, whose objective was:

To infuse existing teacher education courses with new content, guided discourse, and embedded diverse field experiences that juxtapose the redesigned course content to the context of high-density, urban communities that work in partnership in an urban teacher preparation (UTP) initiative. (p. 57)

The premise in this initiative is that collaboration between university and school-based instructors can engage preservice teachers in diverse, community-based field experiences in combination with guided discourse about their beliefs, assumptions, dispositions, and concerns. This partnership provided preservice teachers with context-based exposure and allowed them to develop the skills they need by observing, reflecting

on, interpreting, and implementing practices appropriate and sensitive to the needs of children from diverse backgrounds.

As Lee, Showalter, and Eckrich (2013) have noted, UTP overcomes the abstract instruction used in traditional teacher education approaches that are not directly applicable to clinical situations. On the contrary, UTP is:

Situated in part within the context of urban classrooms, [and] allows prospective teachers an opportunity to practice their teaching skills and become socialized into the role of teacher, connect theory with practice, and work with students they are likely to serve ... [Thus] preservice teachers benefit greatly from the identity and sense-making work they can do conjointly with children and cooperating teachers when situated in multicultural settings. (p. 59)

Concretely, the UTP initiative provided university faculty an opportunity to design or redesign (if it was taught in the past) a teacher education course aiming to better prepare teacher candidates for serving urban and high-need students. Two studies were conducted. Study 1 sought to identify the impact of redesigned UTP courses and their course-embedded urban field experiences during 2007-2008. Study 2 replicated Study 1 in order to assess the continuing impact of the UTP initiative in the next academic year. Hundreds of participants were surveyed before and after the redesigned courses. Results showed that:

Participation in a course redesigned to focus on urban education increased and enhanced participating preservice teachers' intentions to teach in an urban setting, their perceptions of urban education, their attitudes toward diversity and

multiculturalism, and their developing sense of self-efficacy toward urban teaching. (Lee, Showalter, & Eckrich, 2013, p. 68)

Two other findings are also noteworthy. First, although with reduced statistical significance, redesigned courses and field experiences seemed to reinforce and augment the positive effects on participants. Second, and more importantly, results demonstrated that, for participants, more open and informed urban perceptions on education, positive attitudes toward diversity and multiculturalism, and more personal exposure to urban settings were positively correlated with their intentions to teach in an urban setting.

In conclusion, it has been demonstrated that preservice teachers find crucial contextual knowledge to be embedded in spaces outside the university or schools, within the communities of students that will be served. That knowledge goes on to be the outcome of a collaborative partnership where future teachers learn from the work setting in which they will soon participate. Lee, Showalter, and Eckrich (2013) conclude by stating that:

Through active site-based participation, preservice teachers begin to acquire the skills necessary for proficiency in their profession as they transition from student teacher to teacher professional with a growing panoply of real-world experiences that have been reflected through metacognition and guided discourse. (p. 70)

All the initiatives mentioned so far were commonly devised on campus and then moved into communities. In consequence, significant disconnections can still persist between colleges of education, their teacher candidates, and the communities they strive to serve. However, in the interest of overcoming common disconnections and prioritizing community strengths, new partnerships have been created.

An example of these initiatives is *Nueva Generación* (New Generation), a community-based program that has aimed to transform schools and teacher education from the inside out (Skinner, 2010; 2013). *Nueva Generación* is the model for the Grow Your Own (GYO) teachers initiative in Illinois that “provides funds to consortia consisting of a community-based organization, a college of education, and a school district to recruit and prepare community leaders to become teachers” (Skinner, 2010, p. 156).

Since the beginning of the 2000’s, *Nueva Generación* and GYO have helped dozens of neighborhood residents attend college and work toward a bachelor’s degree and teacher credentials. Their previous participation as teacher assistants, school volunteers, and community leaders gave them the opportunity to become community teachers (Murrell, 2001) serving in the Long Square neighborhood, a multiclass and multiracial community typically recognized as Latino (with mostly Mexicans and Puerto Ricans) and situated on the northwest side of Chicago.

The Logan Square Neighborhood Association (LSNA) –a community based organization– contacted Chicago State University (CSU) personnel and discovered a shared vision of education, a common theoretical framework based on the value they place on “the cultural capital and funds of knowledge the community members bring to the school and their capacity to act as change agents within those schools” (p. 205). Thus, Spanish language, Latino culture, life experiences in home countries and the current neighborhood, and knowledge about raising and caring for their children constitute crucial knowledge in the process of learning to teach.

Unlike other initiatives, the LSNA-CSU partnership put the emphasis on preparing local leaders with experience in serving in community schools as teachers rather than acculturating outside-the-community teacher candidates. While this collaboration differs from other teacher education programs that prepare mostly white, female teacher candidates, it constitutes a pioneering experience that illustrates how universities, schools and communities can find shared principles that frame their joint efforts to better serve the needs of their children.

Issues such as overcoming deficit views of Latinos, or improving recruitment and retention mechanisms, for instance, are significant lessons to be learned. Despite many difficulties, the LSNA-CSU collaborative work demonstrates that nontraditional, Spanish-speaking, Latino community members deserve the opportunity, are academically able to become effective, culturally competent teachers, and want to continue serving in their communities.

The program has been successful in promoting cultural competence since “The graduates’ culture, language, and background knowledge match that of their students. Those funds of knowledge, when combined with the pedagogy learned in the college of education, prepared them up for success as urban teachers” (Skinner, 2013, p. 211). Moreover, the involvement between university and community members brought two important benefits for the college of education: First, faculty members learned from relationship-building and the positive impact on the culture within the entire program; second, community members contributed new and palpable energy when participating in regular campus-based classes.

Finally, there are two main caveats regarding *Nueva Generación*. First, more research is necessary to evaluate the success of this initiative. As stated by Skinner (2013), “Further research will document how long [these new teachers] stay in their current school, and how they impact student achievement and climate in those schools” (p. 211). Second, potential replications of the *Nueva Generación* project must consider the particularities of each context. If similar partnerships are envisioned, several considerations should be held in relation to institutions’ history and experiences, people’s knowledge, expectations and needs, and risks of isolation and the lack of funding that community-based initiatives might face.

Summary

In Chapter 2, I have provided my conceptual framework, expressed in a comprehensive review of the theoretical and empirical literature that, within the broad area of initial teacher education, delves into the specific topic of preservice teachers learning from schools’ and students’ contexts, particularly within the U.S. On the theoretical side, I have enunciated three main sources, namely, sociocultural theory, culturally relevant pedagogy, and pedagogical content knowledge. While demonstrating their spread and universality in the Western world, I have justified their appropriateness for this study in the Chilean context since they are theories that continue defeating geographical boundaries and time.

On the empirical side, I have synthesized the most relevant and current research trends regarding research on preparing teachers to learn about contexts. The review included: efforts within the multicultural education tradition, the contrast between professional development schools and community-oriented settings as sites for learning

to teach, and recent initiatives that move teacher education from universities to schools and communities. Although a number of initiatives have attempted to improve or transform teacher education programs in order to better prepare teachers to learn from students' cultural backgrounds and communities, further research is necessary in the U.S. and around the world to demonstrate how these initiatives are impacting diverse students' academic achievement and lives.

Chapter 3: Methodology

In this chapter, I begin by providing the research context in which my study takes place. Next, I detail the methodological choices of my study, the methods used to gather data, and finally my efforts to verify that the data is presented in a way that ensures reliability and validity.

Research Context

In order to better explain the research design and methods described in the next section, I will describe contextual elements regarding the teacher education program from which I selected participants. This research analyzed the learning experiences of a group of secondary preservice teachers attending the University of Chile's *Department of Pedagogical Studies* (DEP for its words in Spanish). This university is the oldest and most traditional higher education institution in the country and its current teacher education programs were rebuilt to reflect its public mission after having been closed during the military dictatorship.

After losing the *Pedagogical Institute* in 1981, the role and leadership of the University of Chile in preparing teachers were silenced. Later, when the democratic regime returned, efforts to reinstitute teacher education programs were made. The first step was the *Research on Pedagogical Studies Program* (PIEEP for its words in Spanish) that was created under the University Decree of January 21, 1994. This pioneer program showed its own distinctive trademark, as opposed to the more traditional, positivist, and behaviorist paradigm that governed most Chilean programs during those days. As declared in a recent DEP document:

This program was distinguished from others existing ones by its innovative, critical and potentially transformative nature ... In a plan and a curriculum consistent with this understanding of pedagogy, the PIIEP's proposal characterized pedagogical praxis as an extended, humanist, complex, and inter- and multi-disciplinary profession. (DEP-UCh, 2012, p. 20)

In 1999, the PIIEP became the *Center of Pedagogical Studies* (CEP) under the Faculty of Philosophy and Humanities. In 2009, the CEP received Department status. Thus, the Faculty again recognized the Pedagogy's disciplinary hierarchy, and the DEP (the teacher education program) was given the same status as other departments, such as History, Literature, Linguistics, and Philosophy. The recognition of the re-foundation process at the University of Chile was reflected through a successful accreditation process in 2009. The Accreditation National Commission (CNA) declared, "The DEP program shows good progression of students and appropriate monitoring of learning processes, as evidenced by high retention and approval rates, as well as adequate graduation times" (CNA, 2009, p. 3).

Initially, the program was established as a critique of the extant model, that is, of a model that simultaneously integrates subject matter (specialization) and pedagogical preparation and that lasts up to ten academic semesters (five years). This traditional model in Chile was seen by DEP scholars as a forced integration of curricula with diverse epistemological natures and purposes, with strong distorting effects on teacher preparation. In addition, the concurrent model incorporated a practicum phase only in the final semester which, in their view, generated dissociation between theory and practice,

and originated intuitive teaching practices of reduced theoretical basis (PIIEP-UCh, 1996).

These arguments led to the adoption of a post-bachelor or consecutive model, and it was considered innovative by DEP advocates at that time. Unlike the concurrent model, this type of teacher preparation is aimed at university graduates, holders of a bachelor's degree related to one of the specific disciplines in the National Curriculum Framework (PIIEP-UCh, 1996). This model aims to take advantage of students' previous university education, appealing to their disciplinary expertise. It allows them to concentrate on acquiring useful and essential pedagogical knowledge to make professional decisions based on scientific, technical, and philosophical arguments typical of contemporary educational problems (DEP-UCh, 2012).

Currently, the University of Chile's secondary teacher education program includes 11 majors (specializations) in accordance with subjects included in the national secondary school curricula. These disciplines include Lenguaje y Comunicación (Spanish), Philosophy, History, Geography and Social Sciences, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Visual Arts, Music, English, and the Math-Physics bi-discipline (see <http://www.filosofia.uchile.cl>).

In accordance with the University mission, DEP seeks to foster a just, quality public education for all students (DEP-UCh, 2012). While recognizing that future teachers can serve both in municipal (public), state-subsidized private, or totally private institutions, it is preferred that their practicum take place in municipal or low-income, subsidized private schools where preservice teachers can develop a critical and reflective inquiry stance directed both to contexts and pedagogical action (DEP-UCh, 2012).

DEP is oriented to the professionalization of the teacher role in its multiple dimensions. This is reflected in the graduate profile (*Perfil de Egreso*⁷) defined in 2004 and has stayed consistent with DEP's mission, vision, and objectives, in dialogue with government documents such as the Framework for Good Teaching (*Marco para la Buena Enseñanza*) and the Standards for Initial Teacher Education (*Estándares para la Formación Inicial*) (CNA, 2009, p. 3). However, the DEP's approach is defined as an extended professionalization (DEP-UCh, 2012), in which the teacher's profile is understood in terms of its flexibility and potential to provide guidance for a reflective practice.

This profile assumes a lifelong learning perspective, a permanent enrichment of teacher knowledge and a strong commitment to the development of autonomy, emphasizing the preparation of reflective practitioners who examine their teaching practices and conceive of themselves as historical subjects. As the official DEP website states:

The graduate profile of the Graduate in Education and Teaching in Secondary School is characterized by the guidelines of the University of Chile's institutional mission since it is a public and secular university with values of pluralism, freedom of thought, tolerance, civic engagement, and critical and reflexive attitude. Specifically, the DEP's graduate is a subject with ethical and civic sense; with responsibility and social solidarity; promoter of dialogue that creates spaces for interaction in their own discipline as well as other fields of knowledge; with historical consciousness and political vision that allow him/her to take a critical

⁷ *Perfil de Egreso* (graduate profile) refers to a model of what program graduates will ideally be like. It defines the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that the program seeks to develop in teacher candidates.

and transformative role of his/her own experience and that of their students and the community as a whole. (<http://depuchile.cl/perfil-del-egresado/>)

In addition to the reflective practitioner emphasis, explicit reference to the contextual aspects involved in teaching can be found in the competencies of the graduate profile. Thus, the DEP expects future teachers to:

1. Work in collaboration with the teaching community, parents and guardians, and the school environment in the task of educating students committed to the changes of their own time.
2. Organize and implement pedagogical strategies considering both the epistemic and curricular frameworks dictated by their academic disciplines and the students' socio-historical and cultural diversity in order to promote their learning and development.
3. Participate in school management, promoting strategies aimed at strengthening the educational community and its relations with the context.
4. Systematically, critically and reflectively inquire about the school environment and the pedagogical practice in order to enrich their professional performance.
5. Empower students in their development as critical thinkers and whole persons.
6. Critically integrate information and communication technologies into their professional work. (<http://depuchile.cl/perfil-del-egresado/>)

Competencies 1, 2, and 3 explicitly refer to the contexts of the students and communities that are crucial elements of this study. Although the DEP approach overlaps with other teacher education programs' goals in terms of general professional teaching competencies, it differs in terms of embracing students' socio-historical and cultural

diversity. DEP preservice teachers are expected to develop a wide and pluralist vision of teaching, a commitment to public education and the academic achievement of all students, and the ability to empower students to be agents of social change.

Three semesters of comprehensive teacher education are devoted to preparing future secondary school teachers to achieve excellence both academically and professionally. Diverse stages of the practicum play a crucial articulation role, in direct relationship to the practicum-research workshops that allow student teachers to develop an inquiry stance toward the school system, the school, and the classroom.

In each school placement, six to ten preservice teachers from various academic disciplines are organized into multidisciplinary, collaborative teams. As individuals, they are required to develop research projects, write biographical and pedagogical cases, and write performance portfolios reflecting their practicum experience. Collectively and individually, they are required to report on their learning process from diverse sociocultural realities and school settings.

Research Design

This is a qualitative, comparative embedded case study of seven secondary preservice teachers in their final semester at the University of Chile's Department of Pedagogical Studies. Although fieldwork was conducted during the last period (semester) of coursework and the final practicum, it is important to note that data from interviews and documents also refer to the whole period of preparation (three semesters). Due to the nature of the questions guiding the research and the conceptual framework, a case-study approach emerged as the most appropriate methodology.

As Merriam (2009) has stated, “qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world” (p. 13). The embedded design of the proposed study allowed me to explore multiple elements that influence the way preservice teachers think about teaching, the way they plan their teaching, and the way they actually teach their subject matter.

As Yin (2006) has stressed, “The case study method is pertinent when your research addresses either a descriptive question (*what* happened?) or an explanatory question (*how* or *why* did something happen?)” (p. 112). Therefore, a qualitative, comparative case-study methodology (also called collective, cross-case, or multicase case-study) allows the researcher to conduct an intensive investigation of one or more instances of the same phenomenon (or process), and helps to answer questions of “how” and “in what ways” the phenomenon under study occurs while considering the role of context. In Stake’s (2006) words,

In multicase study research, the single case is of interest because it belongs to a particular collection of cases. The individual cases in the collection are somehow categorically bound together. They may be members of a group or examples of a phenomenon. (cited by Merriam, 2009, p. 49)

In general, case-study methodology offers a means for examining complex social units consisting of multiple variables of potential importance in understanding a phenomenon (Merriam, 2009). It also requires prolonged, intensive contact with the field in an effort to understand the day-to-day life experiences of individuals, groups, or organizations in ways that allow for the complexity of any given situation to be addressed

(Miles & Huberman, 1994). Grounded in real life situations and contexts, case-study research supports a holistic account of the phenomenon. Furthermore, the stated conceptual framework, especially the socio-cultural theory with its emphasis on multiple settings and the relationships and interactions between situations and individuals, requires a research design that allows for the complexity of any particular system to be examined.

The embedded cross-case design used in this study supports an analysis of how the process of achieving similar learning goals (teacher learning) occurs in different contexts (school placements). The comparison of preservice teachers enhances the analysis of the process by which each participant incorporated students' social and cultural backgrounds. The comparison across cases reveals factors that influenced preservice teachers' learning and account for differences. Additionally, the use of multiple cases to study the same phenomenon increases the robustness of the research findings (Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2006).

Nevertheless, the cross-case design has limitations that include its requirement that the investigator to study multiple cases in-depth, which requires considerable effort. In other words, its strength could also be its weakness. Due to time and other resource constraints, this research is not as extensive as a single case-study approach would allow. However, it is possible to find a balance between depth of understanding and breadth. Another limitation of this design is the risk of focusing on the subunits of analysis at the expense of the larger unit of analysis. If that were to happen, the initial focus of the study would become the background. In an effort to avoid that situation, I found it necessary to periodically review the initial research design (e.g., observation and interview protocols) in order to keep a steady focus on the primary units of analysis.

Settings and participants. In this qualitative study, I used a *purposeful sampling* (Patton, 2002) strategy that “is based in the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned” (Merriam, 2009, p. 77). In other words, my sampling aimed to find *information-rich* cases to study in depth, so I could answer the research questions properly. In order to privilege similarities but also consider contrasting points among the cases, I used the following questions to select seven teacher participants:

- Are they being prepared to teach subject matter in humanities or social sciences?
- Is their student teaching (practicum) located at a state-subsidized, urban school?
- Have they had the opportunity to be immersed (observe and/or teach) in diverse school placements during their whole teacher preparation?
- Are they identified as reflexive and culturally sensitive teacher candidates by their teacher educators?

To find and access my participants, I used one main pathway: contacting faculty members at the Department of Pedagogical Studies who knew preservice teachers both through general coursework, practice workshops, or specific teaching method courses (*Didácticas Especiales*), and were able to identify and recommend individuals who matched my selection criteria. The seven participants’ demographics and educational backgrounds are summarized in Table 1 (see below).

Sampling participants located in different school settings provided me access to similar and contrasting characteristics in preservice teachers’ experiences of the practicum. Since one of the main purposes of the study was to examine how participants interacted with students and incorporated their backgrounds into their teaching, careful

attention was paid to the diverse population of students that preservice teachers served. For instance, I focused on the contextual aspects informing their lesson plans, the use of tailored curricular content involving students' previous knowledge, and teaching strategies that accounted for different sociocultural characteristics.

Table 1: Demographics and Educational Background by Participant

Participant	Age	Gender	City Region	High School Attended	Bachelor's Degree and University
Alicia	23	F	Linares (South)	Semi-private	Language and Communication U. de Chile
Carmen	23	F	Iquique (North)	Semi-private	Philosophy U. de Chile
Cony	25	F	Santiago (Capital)	Semi-private	History Private Religious University 1
Luna	27	F	Santiago (Capital)	Emblematic Municipal	Visual Arts Private Religious University 2
Paula	24	F	Santiago (Capital)	Semi-private	History U. de Chile
Susana	23	F	Santiago (Capital)	Semi-private	English U. de Chile
Vicente	23	M	Santiago (Capital)	Emblematic Municipal	History U. de Chile

It was important to find variation in the subject matter preservice teachers teach, while at the same time selecting disciplines that demand a culturally relevant pedagogy that connects with students' daily lives. Subject matters such as History and Geography, Language and Communication, Philosophy, Arts, and English challenge preservice

teachers to develop culturally responsive teaching practices in the pursuit of meaningful learning. Furthermore, the experience of being bachelor's graduates at the university level provides a common background on disciplinary mastery that challenges their ability to "think like a teacher."

Data collection. Data collection took place both in the school placements and in teacher education program settings, in accordance with the selection of participants. The methods considered in this design were used to elicit the experiences, attitudes, perceptions, and actual practices of preservice teachers. The total time for fieldwork involved an entire semester between March and June 2014. This timeframe allowed me to interview and observe the participants, take field notes on their lessons, and collect crucial documents and artifacts such as practicum reports, written case studies, lesson plans, teaching material, and student work, among others.

In addition, I interviewed two types of teacher educators: some of them worked as reflective workshop instructors and others as teaching methods instructors of specific academic disciplines and/or as university-based tutors. The goal of interviewing workshop instructors was to explore how, from their viewpoint, these courses helped participants to make sense of their practicum experience and helped them align theory and practice while teaching at their school placements. The purpose of interviewing teaching methods instructors or university-based mentors was to investigate how they created dialogue with their students and provided scaffolding for teacher candidates to reflect on their teaching of specific subject matters and relationships with their students.

Since teaching methods instructors and university-based tutors are subject matter specialists, they also work as practicum supervisors at DEP. Accordingly, I conducted

post-supervision interviews with the supervisors of all seven candidates. Additionally, I interviewed teacher candidates' cooperating teachers to better understand their joint work, experienced teachers' opinions of the candidates' performance, the context in which they were teaching, and how their work differed –or not– from that of the candidates.

The use of multiple qualitative techniques of data collection helped me to avoid the flaws that any of these methods can produce in isolation, and to prevent them from having a negative impact on the findings. Observations and interviews of different participants helped me to triangulate my findings and uncover possible discrepancies among participants' discourses and practices, as well as discrepancies between my own interpretations and those of the participants (Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2006).

Semi-structured interviews. I conducted semi-structured interviews with three main groups of subjects: preservice teachers, teacher education faculty members, and cooperating teachers. Due to its flexible nature, the semi-structured interview format allowed me to ask specific questions but also to explore particular issues in more depth as they emerged (Merriam, 2009).

Interviews of preservice teachers. Over the course of the study, I conducted two 60-minute semi-structured interviews with each preservice teacher, one at the beginning and one at the end of the semester, which corresponded to the start and end points of the class observation period. While the two rounds of interviews were similar in duration, each one had a different focus. The first round of interviews focused on preservice teachers' beliefs and attitudes toward the program, the school, and the students they served, as well as experiences during the past year of teacher education, and their

perception of their preparedness to face the final practicum. The second round had a clinical nature in order to determine the rationale behind observed practices including lesson planning, strategies, teaching practices, discourses, and interactions. Finally, these closing interviews were designed to obtain the participants' perceptions of the entire practicum learning process.

To elicit information in the initial interview, I addressed participants' perspectives on teaching by asking questions such as:

1. Why did you decided to become a teacher?
2. How would you describe the evolution of your teacher preparation so far?
3. In which school contexts have you been able to observe and teach? What is your perception about those contexts?
4. How would you describe your perception, and your feelings when just entering the school setting during the first semester?
5. In general, what have you learned about the students' social and cultural backgrounds, interests, and needs?
6. How do you feel about your preparedness with regard to subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and knowledge of students?

In the second interview, I asked participants about their experiences during the last stage of the practicum, teaching practices they had observed, their perceptions about learning from students' backgrounds, assessment of students' learning outcomes, and perceptions regarding the whole practicum experience and its influence in their preparation as a secondary school teachers. This interview considered questions such as:

1. Could you describe the process of planning the lessons for this class?

2. Why did you decide to use this specific teaching strategy in this class?
3. To what extent do you think contextual aspects such as students' cultural background, class, family, etc., have influenced your teaching?
4. What aspects of students' contextual elements have you incorporated in your lesson planning and instruction?
5. In considering what you have experienced during this final stage of the practicum, how would you describe the whole experience of learning to teach in this context?
6. How important have your university courses, instructors, mentors and supervisors been in this process? Why?

In addition to the above questions, I considered it important to use the final interview to ask questions regarding how interviewees saw themselves as future in-service teachers and where they expected to serve. These questions provided me with a good sense of the impact that the school placements and practicum experiences had on their projections as educators, and for how long they expected to work as teachers in the future.

Interviews with teacher educators. I conducted seven semi-structured interviews with DEP faculty members who play one or more roles in the program, namely, instructor of the reflective workshop (*Tallere de Práctica e Investigación*), the instructor of the teaching methods course (*Didáctica de Especialidad*), the student teaching supervisor, and the university-based tutor. Out of the seven faculty members interviewed, four divided their time between leading a university course and another role as either student teaching supervisor or tutor; two played three roles as instructors of a university course, tutor, and supervisor; and just one worked as an instructor of a single university course.

Importantly, all teacher educators corresponding to the participants' subject matters were included.

Obviously, the interviews of faculty members playing diverse roles covered more topics and took more time. Questions addressed to the reflective workshop instructors focused primarily on broader issues regarding their perceptions of how preservice teachers used this course to align theory and practice in their field placements, and to reflect on their developing teacher knowledge. Instructors of these courses were asked to describe issues related to the activities they led in order to help preservice teachers "think like a teacher," incorporate school students' backgrounds, and cope with the practicum experience. Most of these interviews were conducted towards the end of the semester, so they also included questions about teacher educators' perspectives on how the workshop went, what preservice teachers learned, and what the main difficulties had been.

The questions posed to teacher educators who are subject matter specialists mainly focused on their perceptions of preservice teachers' learning in their particular courses and, when appropriate, issues related to their role as supervisors. Consequently, these interviews also included questions about the assessment of preservice teachers' performance and relationships with the school placements. Moreover, other questions revolved around the evidence showing ways in which preservice teachers' practices reflected their learning from students' backgrounds, how they integrated new knowledge into their lesson planning and everyday work during the practicum, and how they evolved from content knowledge specialists into pedagogues.

Interviews with cooperating teachers. Since preservice teachers were placed in other teachers' classrooms, it was necessary to ask about issues such as the practices,

routines, or any other contextual elements that cooperating teachers had established prior to the arrival of teacher candidates. Initially, interviews were scheduled with the seven cooperating teachers; however, one of these interviews (with the Philosophy teacher) could not take place due to health issues. Nevertheless, the interview with the university's Philosophy tutor helped me to cover issues related to this specific case's performance and experience.

Eventually, six interviews with cooperating teachers were conducted, allowing me to learn about the particularities of each student teacher's teaching experience, the existence or absence of collaboration, the extent to which their practices differed from those of the cooperating teachers, as well as the contrasts between their perspectives. It was crucial to understand the practices that cooperating teachers had developed in the past and the conditions they had created before teacher candidates entered their classrooms. In this vein, I was able to differentiate between what had been previously created by the cooperating teachers and what was developed later by the preservice teachers. Examples of questions I asked the cooperating teachers are:

1. What are the pedagogical practices and routines that you have established for this class? How have they worked so far?
2. What do you think the teacher candidate has been doing differently from your own teaching?
3. How do you think your own practice and the conditions you have established for this class have impacted the teacher candidate's practice?
4. How would you describe the nature of your experienced-novice relationship?
5. How would you evaluate the candidate's performance as a whole?

In short, the combination of diverse individual interviews helped me to ensure the credibility of the information provided by the participants (triangulation). Moreover, since data provided by these research techniques have a textual nature, I recorded them using a digital device. Later, I transcribed the interviews using the free version of Express Scribe Transcription Software along with Microsoft Word.

Non-participant observation of preservice teachers' instruction. As part of its contribution to the triangulation process, the purpose of the observations was to complement the interviews and work as another source of data (Merriam, 2009). Observations added an ethnographic nature and searched for the insider's perspective (Anderson-Levitt, 2006). Since the purpose of this study was to examine what and how preservice teachers learn from students' backgrounds and incorporate that knowledge into their teaching, a crucial part of my data collection was the observation of subjects' in-practicum instruction.

Observations were a privileged way to examine the alignment between the lesson plans described during pre-observation interviews and the actual practices that took place in the classroom. Since there was a high probability that what teachers intended to teach would differ from what they actually taught, observations provided insight into what actually happened during instruction.

I planned to observe each candidate three times during the fieldwork's timeframe (March - June 2014), a plan that I was able to fulfill by observing each case in different stages of his/her practicum. A crucial goal of these classroom observations was to understand how content, assignments, and activities developed by the candidates incorporated students' contexts, if at all. I paid special attention to how the preservice

teachers framed their teaching (instruction, assignments, and learning activities), and how students reacted to that instruction.

This work was supported by detailed note taking of the teaching and learning process and other teacher-student interactions taking place inside classrooms. To clarify: during classroom observations, preservice teachers are the focus, not the students. However, recording teacher-student interactions was relevant for answering some of my research questions. The use of profuse field notes helped to register specific textual (verbal and nonverbal interactions) and spatial activity (distribution, artifacts, movements, etc.) relevant in the iterative search for contrast during analysis. After each observation, I reviewed my notes and added my own reflections and reconstructions of missing episodes.

Document review. As Merriam (2009) has asserted, “documents are not subject to the same limitations as interviews and observation” (p. 139). Unlike other sources of data, documents provide information not affected by the presence of the researcher. Therefore, in addition to interviewing participants and observing their practice, I have examined important documents such as the official curriculum, lesson plans, teaching material, written learning activities for students, biographical and pedagogical written cases, university course reports, and portfolios.

Documents of a diverse nature were collected over the course of the fieldwork period and even after it was over, since some reports and portfolios were available and sent to me via email after the end of the semester. All documents were properly obtained with the participants’ consent. Once they had been received, the set of documents allowed me to check for alignment between lesson plans and actual practices, understand

how participants considered students' backgrounds in planning and delivering their instruction, and what their reflections on the entire teacher education process were, among other relevant aspects. All in all, the totality of textual information has complemented the other sources of data, ultimately lending robustness to my analysis and conclusions.

It is well known that qualitative research necessarily stresses the textual nature of the data (evidence). Given this feature, criticisms about validity or generalizability can emerge. In fact, either in a single or in multiple-case study, the researcher must be concerned about generalization and representativeness whenever he/she is looking for a case of something. Therefore, regarding generalizability, I have not aspired to generalize the findings to a wider population, but rather to generalize them to the theory-building process and its contribution to filling in some knowledge gaps in the field.

In order to assure the rigor of this study, my goal was to achieve a "saturated" collection of data by staying in the context "for a full cycle" (Wolcott, 1997). In addition, obtaining information from multiple sources and using diverse techniques has allowed me to triangulate.

Data analysis. While both data collection and analysis iterative processes in which I remained engaged throughout the entire study, a great deal of my analytic efforts were concentrated in the periods during and after I gathered data. In the search for evidence of preservice teachers' learning about students' social and cultural backgrounds and the incorporation of this learning into their teaching practice, I aimed to answer my research questions through a thoughtful analysis of data from diverse sources.

Interviews, observations, field notes, and documents were the primary data sources for this naturalistic inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 2009). Interviews were semi-structured based on protocols, and were adjusted according to observations. Field notes were used to register my observations in formal and informal settings as well as the reflections that fed my ongoing analysis. Naturally, most of my field notes were written in Spanish, while those notes directly connected to code development were written in English to facilitate subsequent analyses. I conducted all interviews in Spanish and later transcribed them using Express Scribe Transcription Software. As shown in the findings chapter, all relevant data supporting my claims were translated into English by the author.

Since the nature of qualitative research expects researchers to be flexible throughout the process, I collected data with an awareness of how some preliminary analysis would inevitably suggest some variation of the original questions. During and after the initial interviews and some observations, I was able to evaluate or challenge the initial approach and my own preconceptions about the fieldwork.

As the human research instrument of this project, I had to be constantly aware of my own theoretical and personal preconceptions. Sometimes, the emerging elements in the interviews and observations suggested alterations to the original focus, research questions, conceptual framework, and/or post-observation interview protocols. In the end, I was able to preserve the main focus of my study and my conceptual framework. However, those emerging elements led me to fine tune my post-observation protocols and reduce my research questions from four to three.

In order to capture Rogoff's (1995) three interrelated planes where learning and development occur (the personal plane, the social plane, and the community-institutional plane), I clustered codes that helped me identify instances of the three planes and the activity settings in which they occurred. By activity setting, I mean all instances of the practicum that involve learning from contexts. Accordingly, specific courses (*Special Didactics* and *Workshops of Practice and Inquiry*), tutoring, and field experiences are strongly connected and constitute a complete activity setting. Within the activity setting, each of the three planes comes into contact with the others.

Since this study has been an inductive process, the development of codes was an important step for organizing the data. The initial *open coding*, that is, the "process of making notations next to bits of data that strike you as potentially relevant for answering your research questions" (Merriam, 2009, p. 178), was accomplished by making notes on the actual text. This was the first step in constructing themes or categories. Consequently, a very useful exercise was the iterative reading of and reflection on my interview transcripts, field notes, and documents.

This continuous reading and coding of the same verbatim text naturally led to the open coding which constitutes an important tool at the outset of analysis. In other words, I spent time "listening to the data" in different ways in order to achieve a more comprehensive understanding and investigation of it. As suggested by Grounded Theory (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995; Strauss & Corbin, 1998), I used open coding as a powerful tool to continue the analysis and train my eyes to recognize important pieces of data.

Consequently, I read the transcribed documents multiple times to familiarize myself with their content and breadth. I carefully continued reading field notes, interview transcripts, and documents, making comments on how particular topics within these data related to my research questions. At this point, I started to use MAXQDA software as a valuable support to organize my coding and write analytic memos to document my thoughts and initial data analysis. These memos helped me by suggesting emerging themes or patterns (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Next, I followed an analytic chain of writing memos, reading, and re-reading data, so I could have a clearer and more detailed notion of what were the salient themes were appearing from my detailed examination. That process led me to develop analytical codes (Merriam, 2009) whose definitions facilitated the identification of open codes that fit them. During the “memoing,” I created and defined more analytical codes, adding the use of the aforementioned software so I could better organize the selected data in groups of open codes that, together, represented analytical codes.

Salient data was considered anything related to preservice teachers’ learning from contexts and the way they used that knowledge in their lesson planning and teaching. After highlighting the salient codes, I organized them into a detailed list of 71 recurring topics. In using these codes, I began to catalogue the data and to develop a coherent coding system that reflected my emergent understanding of the data across cases. In considering the activity setting and with my research questions in the fore, I went again to my codes to re-cluster them and focus on the more recurrent and relevant themes.

Once I dismissed the irrelevant topics, I ended up working with 42 codes that began to merge into one another such that some original codes became part of other more

inclusive ones. During this process, repeated incidents confirmed the coding. I found final validation through the constant comparative method (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 2009). This iterative and selective process helped me to build the main categories aiming to capture learning and development within the three planes as described by Rogoff.

Illuminated by this sociocultural perspective, I found that individual codes contained multiple meanings across Rogoff's three planes. Consequently, some codes could be used in more than one category, reflecting the interconnectedness of the three planes within the activity setting. For instance, the code *knowledge of students* provided relevant data for two categories: *building relationships* and *context constituents*. The code *complaints* and the code *demands*, in turn, merged to form a category labeled *programmatically features*, but they also had merit as part of the category *the 'not yet there' status*. For explanatory purposes, they were combined into a single category. The codes that were ultimately used for this analysis (master codes) are defined in Table 2.

Table 2: Master Codes

Code	Definition
Relationships	Involves all references to creating a bond or establishing good relationships between teachers and students as an essential part of the act of teaching. Teaching and learning are considered relational acts.
Beyond Classrooms	Refers to any participant's mention of educational or social activities occurring outside regular classes that facilitate interaction and mutual knowledge and trust.
Caring Teaching	Any comment or observation regarding sensitive treatment of students. Involves examples of preservice experiences' past and current experiences, as well as the caring practices of their cooperating teachers or tutors.
Adolescents	Comments and observations about students as adolescents, characteristics associated to that stage in their life, and consequences on the teaching and learning process.
Emotions	Comments and observations on the importance of emotions in the teaching and learning process, or the presence of emotional aspects in past or current practices both in school placements or teacher education program.

Code	Definition
Knowledge of Context	Every reference to preservice teachers' knowledge of students' contexts –including physical, social, cultural, or historical backgrounds– considered relevant to their processes of learning to teach.
School Context	Includes comments or observation regarding general or specific characteristics of the school placements involved in the study: teacher force, infrastructure, resources, norms, administration, bureaucracy, etc.
Impact of Contexts	Refers to comments or observations of actual incorporation of students' contexts into preservice teachers' planning or instruction of their subject matter.
Diversity	Comments or observations that contain references to student diversity, such as learning style, special needs, race, ethnicity, gender, class, socioeconomic status, etc.
Difficult Contexts	Includes all references to vulnerable schools and/or minoritized students, that is, contexts where teaching and learning are hard to enact due to factors like poverty, deficient educational outcomes, violence, learning difficulties, lack of resources, etc.
Preconceptions	Comments and observations alluding a preservice teacher's prior knowledge, experiences, beliefs, opinions about teaching.
Reality Shock	Refers to any comment or observation of activities where preservice teachers face the complexities of the school placements that challenge their preconceptions.
Learning in Practice	Comments or observations that reveal preservice teachers' learning during practicum's teaching activities.
Pedagogical Strategies	Refers to every instance where preservice teachers mention or utilize a teaching strategy being learned or developed during practicum.
Didactic Resources	Comments or observations referring to different didactic resources used by preservice teachers (e.g., study guides, videos, Power Point, games, etc.)
Creativity	Includes comments and observations on preservice teachers' creative use of teaching strategies or resources, or their struggles with creativity.
Transposition	Comments and observations alluding to preservice teachers' ability to make curricular content (expert knowledge) teachable to high school students.
DEP Preparation	It is a code that refers to the main characteristics of the DEP teacher education program that preservice teachers consider to have enabled their preparation. Includes educational philosophy, teaching approach, coursework, and workshops.
Complaints	Includes all the preservice teachers' references to DEP program's features that they consider to have restricted or placed constraints on their teacher preparation.
Demands	Preservice teachers' negative comments about the program. Includes a variety of demands in terms of the need for a more practice-oriented teacher preparation.
On-the-way	Comments and observations referring to the conflicting state of being an apprentice or trainee and its consequences during the practicum.
Fears and Insecurities	Includes all the comments that preservice teachers made about their feelings of not being prepared enough to face actual instruction in classrooms. Refers to their lack of emotional and pedagogical preparedness.

Validity and Reliability

By nature, data collected in a qualitative study is "subjective" and thus subject to the researcher's interpretation. My role as a researcher is one of interpreter of the experiences within a teacher education program and the impact that those experiences have on preservice teachers' learning to teach. Despite the interpretative nature of my role, "validity and reliability are concerns that can be approached through careful attention to [the] study's conceptualization and the way in which the data are collected, analyzed, and interpreted, and the way in which the findings are presented" (Merriam, 2009, p. 210). Accordingly, I paid careful attention to the biases I brought into the research, both in choosing what data was important to examine and the particular set of lenses I used in analyzing and interpreting that data. Likewise, I made every effort to act as a non-participant observer and interpret only what emerged from the data.

In terms of *internal validity*, there are several different ways to ensure that research findings are congruent with reality, namely, by using triangulation, checking interpretations with interviewed or observed individuals, staying on-site over a period of time, asking peers to comment on emerging findings, involving participants in all phases of the research, and clarifying researcher biases and assumptions (Merriam, 2009). In this study, triangulation was achieved through the collection of data from multiple perspectives and means: face-to-face interviews with preservice teachers, teacher educators, and cooperating teachers; observations of preservice teachers' pedagogical interventions; follow-up interviews; and examinations of documents both from the individual preservice teachers and the teacher education program. Gathering multiple

forms of data from multiple participants enhanced my ability to maximize reliable interpretation of said data.

As each preservice teacher's experience is unique, variations within their experiences during preparation and practicum were expected. Thus, member checks were utilized in order to ensure that the researcher's interpretations of collected data were reliable. After transcribing interviews and generating themes, this information was taken back to each participant in order to provide them with the opportunity to clarify their statements and to challenge or corroborate my initial interpretations.

In terms of staying on-site over a period of time, this study was conducted over an entire semester during the 2014 academic year, generating a large amount of data whose interpretation was enhanced through construction of a meticulous chain of evidence. In other words, I created an "audit trail" (Merriam, 2009) that involved paying careful attention to the study design, data collection, coding, development of categories, and interpretation of data via memos and notes over the course of the entire study.

Regarding *external validity*, that is, “the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations [and] how generalizable are the results of a research study” (Merriam, 2009, 223), I cannot expect others who read the data necessarily to obtain the same results. Instead, I expect outsiders to concur that, given my research design and collected data, these results are consistent with their interpretations and constitute useful information in the teacher education field. Consequently, the appropriate level of generalization for this study’s results should be determined by readers, who will need to examine whether this research reflects their own context and whether the results are applicable to their own particular situation (Merriam, 2009).

Summary

In Chapter 3, I have detailed the diverse parts and stages of this study's research methodology. Before justifying my research design, it was necessary to explain the research context since it takes place in a university setting in Santiago de Chile and in diverse school placements. The recent history, institutional context, and formative goals of this particular teacher education program have provided significant elements to understand the importance of studying what secondary preservice teachers learn through their experiences in diverse Chilean school contexts, and how they incorporate that learning in their whole journey as teachers.

In order to explore these phenomena, I have used a qualitative, comparative embedded case study of seven secondary preservice teachers in their final semester of teacher preparation. Data sources include: semi-structured interviews of all seven secondary preservice humanities and social sciences teachers, in addition to seven teacher educators and six cooperating teachers; non-participant observation of preservice teachers' instruction; and the analysis of documents such as official curricula, lesson plans, learning activities, written biographical and pedagogical cases, reports, and portfolios.

My data analysis was rooted in the Grounded Theory tradition, adopting an inductive methodology to systematically generate theory from methodical exploration of my data. An iterative and thoughtful process of reading, re-reading, and "memoing" guided me in the development of the open and, later, analytical codes that emerged from the verbatim reading. This led me to a more abstract and selective process of building key

categories that, taken as a whole, constitute a storyline around which the studied phenomenon can be explained.

Finally, due to the nature of the qualitative research, this study has attempted to ensure validity and reliability by paying careful attention to the researcher's biases and making every effort to be as objective as possible when reading and interpreting the data. Diverse research techniques such as triangulation, member checking, staying on-site, and clarifying biases and assumptions were used to ensure *internal validity*. Although this particular study is not generalizable to other settings, stakeholders in the teacher education field could use its results to inform their reflection and practice.

Next, I present the findings of my study divided into three chapters, each of which is intended to address one of my research questions. Chapter 4 identifies what preservice teachers learned from students' contexts in diverse settings and stages of their practicum. Chapter 5 accounts for how this learning impacted the way participants thought about teaching, the way they planned their teaching, and the way they eventually taught their subject matter. Chapter 6 identifies the programmatic and personal elements enabling or constraining preservice teachers' ability to use contextual knowledge as a pedagogical asset. Within each chapter, I present categories built around salient codes. A summary of the categories is presented in Table 3 (see below). Listed within each category, I provide sub-categories or dimensions which are built upon analytical codes selected according to their frequency in the data corpus. However, their frequency (percentage or weight) in the data was not the only criterion used to discern the relevance of the codes. Although some codes appeared less frequently, they were nonetheless rich sources for analysis and useful for answering my research questions.

Table 3: Categories by Chapter

Chapter	Category	Definition and Sub-categories
4	Building Relationships	<p>The construction of strong, authentic, vigorous teacher-student relationships as a necessary condition for teaching and learning to occur.</p> <p>Sub-categories: <i>Emotionality; Sharing; Naming; Adolescence.</i></p>
	Context Constituents	<p>Aspects that constitute students' contexts from the preservice teachers' perspective. This refers to students' sociocultural backgrounds, abilities, learning styles, interests, and needs.</p> <p>Sub-categories: <i>Institutions; Student Backgrounds and Diversity; Situated Knowledge of Learners; Complexity and Vulnerability of Contexts.</i></p>
5	Adjusting Frameworks	<p>The process through which preservice teachers confront what they bring to and what they encounter in the process of learning to teach. In this process, their preconceptions are challenged by what they find in school placements.</p> <p>Sub-categories: <i>Testing Preconceptions; Reality Shock; Learning by Practicing; Differentiation.</i></p>
	Embracing Contexts	<p>Addresses not only the acquisition of knowledge of students' contexts, but also the processes through which preservice teachers transform contextual characteristics into pedagogical assets for their incipient teaching.</p> <p>Sub-categories: <i>Strategies and Resources; Creativity in Progress; Transposition.</i></p>
6	Programmatic Features	<p>Encompasses preservice teachers' perceptions about the main characteristics of the DEP teacher education program that enabled or inhibited their preparation as effective teachers.</p> <p>Sub-categories: <i>Program's Strengths; Complaints and Demands; Tutoring.</i></p>
	The 'Not Yet There' status	<p>Contains the personal characteristics that preservice teachers indicate as catapults or barriers in becoming effective, responsive teachers.</p> <p>Sub-categories: <i>Inexperienced Youth; Fears and Insecurities; Transformationist Attitude.</i></p>

Chapter 4: What Preservice Teachers Learn from Their Students' Contexts

Before identifying the specific types learning that preservice teachers acquire, it is necessary to remind readers what I mean by “students’ contexts” and through what lenses I view this learning. In general, the context of teaching includes every aspect in the surrounding environment —namely, physical, social, institutional and personal— that influences the teaching and learning process. While acknowledging that the physical and institutional aspects of schools play an important role in preservice teachers’ experience during their practicum, here I will focus on the social, cultural, and personal elements that students bring to the classroom and that mediate their interactions with others.

The social and cultural aspects include the relationships between students and preservice teachers, and the norms that determine what can and does occur in the classroom during practicum. For example, a preservice teacher’s level of openness to students’ backgrounds and needs can determine the type of communication that characterizes their interaction with the classroom and the school as a whole. Importantly, preservice teachers face students’ diversity, dealing with issues of gender, class, or ethnicity, which can potentially (re)shape their beliefs and attitudes towards teaching and learning.

In the classroom, preservice teachers confront students’ attitudes about learning, teaching, academic abilities, subject matter, among other topics. What they know (or think they know) about students’ personal contexts can positively or negatively affect their beliefs about students’ abilities to learn, which can create a self-fulfilling prophecy. That is, students’ contexts encompass the social, cultural, and personal backgrounds they bring to the classroom. These contexts become explicit for preservice teachers as they

work in the classroom space. Dealing with these aspects can certainly affect preservice teachers' relational and pedagogical interactions with students during a crucial learning stage that can lead them to embrace or leave the profession.

To round out my understanding and use of the “context” in the phrase “students’ contexts,” I subscribe to van Dijk’s (2008) view on contexts as not objective conditions or direct causes of what happens in social situations. On the contrary, contexts are intersubjective constructs, designed by participants during interactions. In the pedagogical settings addressed by this study, this means that student contexts presented in the social-teaching situation do not necessarily determine preservice teachers’ learning outcomes.

As in the relationship between context and discourse (van Dijk, 2008), the relationship between context and the act of teaching is not a direct and causal one. It would be a mistake to think about students’ contexts as objective, decisive variables. By doing so, one might assume that in similar teaching situations, teachers and students who share characteristics such as gender, class, age, and social position, among others, would consistently have the same outcomes. As a consequence, in this study, I see every teaching and learning situation as informed but not totally determined by students’ contexts since preservice teachers bring their own filters to the teaching act.

From a sociocultural perspective, we recognize the importance of what preservice teachers bring with them when they enter teacher education programs. What they learn during their preparation is influenced by their beliefs and attitudes towards teaching. Through formal and informal education, preconceptions begin to form very early and are well established by the time student teachers begin taking pedagogy courses. Decades

ago, Lortie (1975) made reference to this issue introducing the term “Apprenticeship of Observation,” which implies that student teachers bring with them past experiences that make them see teaching from a limited viewpoint. Consequently, “training in pedagogy does not seem to fundamentally alter earlier ideas about teaching” (Lortie, 1975, p. 79).

Another caveat regarding teaching preconceptions is that they tend to resist change and influence the process of teacher learning. In his review, Pajares (1992) concluded that preconceptions tend to resist change and “strongly influence the processing of new information” (p. 317). Therefore, learning to teach and teaching practice are greatly influenced by beliefs, attitudes, and values. If teacher preparation is influenced so heavily by these factors, it is crucial for teacher education to address them with appropriate mediations.

Similarly, researchers studying teacher education must ponder the above aspects when analyzing and presenting their findings. I therefore present the following categories to assist in recognizing that what participants learn from students’ contexts is filtered by their previous experiences. However, such consideration does not imply that preconceptions determine everything and are unalterable. On the contrary, they can evolve. This evolution allows preservice teachers to learn, particularly from previously unfamiliar field experiences and from a teaching viewpoint.

Building Relationships

The learning that preservice teachers more strongly emphasized was the construction of strong teacher-student relationships. In order to truly know students and their sociocultural backgrounds, and responsively use that knowledge to teach during their practicum, all participants recognized the need for building strong, authentic relationships with students. Although preservice teachers acknowledged that other

aspects are undoubtedly relevant for their teaching performance (namely, content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and classroom management), relationship building is seen as the foundation for teaching and learning.

Once they received their school placements, preservice teachers' first move in classrooms was to interact with students on a human level. They immediately discovered that connecting assertively with students was paramount and could be particularly difficult at the high school level. Before starting to teach, they were inevitably noticed by students. The success –or failure– of this encounter shaped how their practicum developed.

Yo creo que eso el vínculo [con los estudiantes] es toda la clave, toda la clave. Porque ahora yo siento que hay mucha indiferencia de todas las partes, es como un desinterés [...] entonces si es que uno no rompe la indiferencia a través de los vínculos, entonces es imposible llegar a los estudiantes, va a ser como una clase vacía, se vacía el sentido si es que no hay vínculo. [...] yo tengo que reconocer su palabra, respetar sus deseos, su primera desconfianza, debo preocuparme por los gestos que son súper importantes, yo siento que los gestos de un profesor envían mensajes súper poderosos.

I think that the bond [with students] is really the key. Because now I feel there is much indifference from everyone, it is like a disinterest [...] so if you do not break the indifference by creating a bond, then it is impossible to reach the students, it will be like an empty classroom, if there is no bond it is just a void [...] I have to acknowledge their words, respect their desires, their initial distrust, I have to worry about my gestures which are super important, I feel a teacher's gestures send powerful messages.

–Carmen, Philosophy

The need for recognition was mutual, but preservice teachers were foreigners in an unknown territory. Although they spent some time (usually two weeks) observing the class where they would teach and trying to gather as much information as possible to get to know their students, they began to face challenges when they stepped into the teacher's role and faced the students' judgment for the first time.

Me tuve que ganar al curso, se burlaban mucho de mí en un comienzo, pero al fin y al cabo tenía que pasar la prueba, aprendí eso. Aprendí que cuando uno entra a la sala está siendo constantemente evaluado por parte de los estudiantes, que uno lo que haga todo

lo miran todo lo observan todo... y por otro lado también aprendí algo muy importante que fue como el cariño de un profesor que antes no lo veía porque no lo había visto en mis profesores [...] aprendí mucho eso, que si no hay cariño uno no puede ir a la sala de clases porque si no sería horrible. También aprendí a que uno tiene que confiar en los alumnos, es básico.

I had to earn the class' appreciation, many mocked me at first, but in the end I had to pass the test, I learned that. I learned that when one enters the classroom, one is constantly being evaluated by students, whatever one does, they are watching, they are observing... and on the other hand, I also learned something very important that was like the teacher's affection for students, because before I did not see it in my teachers [...] I learned that a lot, if there is no affection one cannot go into the classroom because it would be awful. I also learned that you have to trust the students. This is essential.

–Cony, History

Importantly, Cony's reflection on teaching actions, affection, and trust echoes Gay's (2010) principle of caring, which suggests that teachers pay attention not only to the students' academic performance but also to them as people. As is also inferred in other preservice teachers' discourses, caring not only expresses sentiments of concern or love but “has dimensions of emotion, intellect, faith, ethics, action, and accountability” (p. 54). This dimension of culturally relevant pedagogy also resonates with preservice teachers' acknowledgement of student diversity and the need to welcome many backgrounds in order to achieve responsive teaching:

Creo que se debe trabajar estableciendo vínculos con los alumnos más allá de la enseñanza y el aprendizaje, así se logra integrar la diversidad. Porque si yo no conozco a la persona que le estoy haciendo clases, nunca voy a saber cómo poder integrar su mundo. Entonces para eso tiene que haber otra relación con los alumnos tiene que haber una conversación.

I think we must work to establish bonds with students beyond teaching and learning, so we integrate diversity. Because if I don't know the person that I am teaching, I'll never know how to integrate his/her world. So, to achieve that, I need to have another type of relationship with students, there has to be a dialogue.

–Alicia, Language & Communication

In relation to enacting conversation and establishing rapport with students, one key feature preservice teachers stressed was the ability to communicate, utilizing every

available space and time. Luna, for example, highlighted her natural capacity to initiate genuine teacher-student conversation as an asset to create connections in the classroom. This capacity and its achievements deserve special attention when enacted in schools serving marginalized (minoritized) students. Recalling previous stages of her practicum, Luna declared having done her best to establish strong relationships with students in two different schools characterized by poverty, violence, and drug consumption, among other vulnerability factors:

En las dos escuelas que he estado les he agarrado mucho cariño a los chiquillos [...] y yo sentí que entre ellos y yo se logró un vínculo relativo al cariño y el respeto, el respeto. Una relación cariñosa, ellos sentían que yo de verdad me preocupaba por ellos [...] Yo soy muy conversadora [...] yo les pregunto cómo se llaman y terminan contándome cosas como que alguien se hizo un aborto [...] que fuman marihuana y de cómo roban, así el nivel de confianza. [...] Cuando tú muestras prejuicios no te van a contar nada. [...] Es el diálogo. Yo creo que salí beneficiada con ese don.

In the two schools I've worked in, I've felt deep love for the children [...] and I felt a bond between them and I related to affection and respect. It was a loving relationship— they felt that I really cared about them [...] I am very talkative [...] I ask them their names and they end up telling me things like someone had an abortion [...] who smokes marijuana and how they stole something, that level of trust. [...] When you show prejudice, they are not going to say anything. [...] It's about dialogue. I think I benefit from that gift.

—Luna, Visual Arts

Luna's case suggests that there are certain contexts where students do not respect their teachers (old or new) just because they are adults in charge. There are schools where there is no authority figure *per se*. Marginalized students do not necessarily respect teachers wearing suits and ties. As Luna implies, preservice teachers working in 'difficult schools' learn that students' respect is difficult to earn. Nonetheless, once respect is achieved, not all preservice teachers are clear about what allows them to build good relationships with students. In some cases, they were not able to identify their own strengths and weaknesses regarding communication. What is clear, though, is the

outcome when students demonstrate that their trust has been gained. After this, academic work becomes possible.

No sé cómo llegué a ellos el primer semestre, no sé qué hice pero como que les caí bien a los que eran los líderes de la clase, estos líderes que uno sabe que pueden llevar a aportarse muy bien o muy mal, y con los chicos más desordenados no tuve una mala relación [...] Me gustaría tener la fórmula para que me funcionará todos los años. [...] el profesor guía me dijo "es que les caíste es bien" [...] Una vez ellos me dijeron que era que no era polla como los otros profes, me dijeron que era 'de pana', que es como buena onda, debe ser.

I do not know how I reached them the first semester, I do not know how the leaders of the class liked me, these leaders that you know can make the class behave good or bad, and with conflictive kids I did not have a bad relationship [...] I wish I had the formula so I could use it every year. [...] My cooperating teacher told me, "It's because they liked you" [...] Once they told me that it was because I was not silly/naïve like the other teachers, they said I was 'made of pana' which is being cool, I think.

–Paula, History

Paula had a hard time identifying the personal characteristics or actions that allowed her to connect with students. However, during the two interviews she mentioned her low-income background and experience working in informal education programs in marginalized neighborhoods. Moreover, during my observations and informal conversations, I witnessed her use of specific Chilean slang that helped her to match the informal language used by students. Literature addressing the promotion of a diverse teacher force has suggested that cultural links between teachers and students are essential in facilitating academic achievement. In addition, teachers who mirror their students' cultures serve as role models (Villegas & Irvine, 2010). In other words, this cultural matching results in environmental conditions that foster quality teaching, which was identified as crucial learning by preservice teachers during their practicum.

While some preservice teachers exhibited a cultural match or inherent personal communicational abilities, others learned about themselves and their enjoyment in working with students. Therefore, this learning process built around relationships was not

only focused on responsiveness or pragmatism to succeed or survive inside classrooms; on the contrary, practicum experiences revealed a passion for connecting with students and educating them. As Vicente said in one of our interviews:

[El semestre pasado] hice tres semanas o un mes de clases a tres cursos de cuarto medio y fue una muy buena experiencia porque aprendí a soltarme un poco más, ya no estaba tan tenso, porque nunca antes había hecho clases así como formales y aprendí a tomarle el gusto también a la relación con los estudiantes. Eso fue súper bueno.

[Last semester] I taught three weeks or a month in three 12th grade classes and it was a good experience because I learned to relax, not to be tense, because I had never taught formally, and I learned to love my relationships with students. That was great.

–Vicente, History

To better understand the importance that preservice teachers gave to building strong relationships with students and establishing a bond with them, I consulted their teacher educators regarding this aspect. Scholars who work with specific teaching methods or workshops of practice and inquiry confirmed that the relational-emotional aspect of teaching was often present in group discussions or individual tutoring sessions. Furthermore, this aspect is reinforced by teacher educators as essential to develop quality pedagogical practices. One representative answer from teacher educators was the following:

Yo les decía que hay un principio casi irrefutable. Es una verdad tiene que ver con que si la escuela es un lugar de transmisión, circulación, comunicación de la cultura, del conocimiento -sea como se lo entienda, la única forma de que los sujetos accedan a la cultura, el conocimiento, al saber, es a través de alguien, a través de la calidad del vínculo que se desarrolle con alguien, y ese alguien en la escuela es el profesor.

I told them that there is an almost irrefutable principle. This truth has to do with... if the school is a place of transmission, movement, communication of culture and knowledge – however people understand it; the only way subjects have access to that culture, that knowledge, that learning, is through a quality bond with someone, and that someone in the school is the teacher.

-Teacher Educator, Workshop of Practice and Inquiry II

Emotionality. The act of teaching involves empathy or antipathy between teachers and students that is part of the school dynamic and includes different factors such as communication style and values. Preservice teachers acknowledged the emotional component of teaching at a very early stage in

Category: **Building Relationships.**

The construction of strong, authentic, vigorous teacher-student relationships as a necessary condition for teaching and learning to occur.

Sub-categories:

- **Emotionality**
- Sharing
- Naming
- Adolescence

their practicum; they were faced with their own temperamental traits and their own emotional competence. These elements are exercised and have influence on students during daily interactions in the educational context, originating certain behaviors in students. In this scenario, an important part of the relationship between teacher and student is the ability to "step into the other's shoes."

Primero, siento que es demasiado de emocionalidad lo que uno tiene que poner en la relación con los chiquillos. No lo veía tanto desde esa perspectiva antes de que empezara a hacer la práctica y me involucrara tanto con ellos. Eso me toca mucho, me preocupa demasiado, a veces prefiero no comer por tener que prepararles una guía, y lo hago. Siento que eso me sirve mucho, y me ha mostrado el compromiso que uno puede tener como profesional cuando se siente encantado por lo que hace.

First, I think you have to put a lot of emotionality into your relationship with the students. I didn't see that way before I started my practicum, and became so involved with them. That touches me a lot, I worry a lot about them. Sometimes I choose to skip a meal so I can prepare a study guide. I feel that is very rewarding and has showed me the commitment that you can have as a professional when you are happy about what you do.

–Vicente, History

Teaching is a social and affective activity. Preservice teachers cannot ignore that their selves and their emotions are involved in the process of learning to teach. Thus, in recognizing or discovering their passion for teaching high school students, preservice teachers' discourses illuminated the importance of knowledge of self. On one hand, a preservice teacher's own personality is involved as a means of communication and it is

projected in the act of teaching; on the other hand, this act has an impact on the self since learning to teach is affective as well as cognitive (Turner-Bisset, 2001). These two aspects are represented well by the following statement:

Creo que ser profe es un aprendizaje contextual, es una relación emocional, aunque muchas veces se deje de lado. [En este colegio] dicen que uno no tiene que relacionarse con los alumnos. Mentira, la emoción tiene que estar, fuera de la sala uno tiene que ser el profe amigo, el profe compañero, el profe que te puede dar un consejo [...] Yo no creo que [enseñanza y el vínculo] sean cosas que tengan que estar separadas.

I think being a teacher is a type of contextual learning, it is an emotional relationship, but often that gets left behind. [At this school] they say you do not have to interact with students. That's a lie, emotion must be present. Outside the classroom, one has to be the friend, the buddy teacher, the one who gives them advice [...] I do not think these two things [teaching and relationships] have to be separate.

–Alicia, Language & Communication

Sharing. Cognitive and affective dimensions are interwoven in preservice teachers' pedagogical experiences. Their accomplishments at the academic level need to be facilitated by a genuine teacher-student bond. Sharing one's own life and learning experiences, and demonstrating true openness is an essential part of the job. During my observation of one of Carmen's classes, she was trying to engage science-oriented students in writing micro-stories to reflect philosophical ideas. Most of the time, her students were reluctant to write until she decided to share her own story, exposing herself in front of this unmotivated group. The result was a positive reaction from them and the beginning of an attitude shift in favor of her teaching activities.

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Another example of this openness of self was Vicente's experience of sharing personal stories in his History class. Unlike Carmen's case, Vicente's students seemed open to the activities he proposed; however, his relationship with students had begun during the previous semester when he opened up to his students to gain their trust. In recalling their experiences and key moments, both Carmen and Vicente had similar stories:

Si, esa idea [de leer mi propia historia] surgió en la planificación, buscando recursos y en la pregunta de qué es lo que puede llegar a ellos, pero yo ya no quería que fuera algo que le llegara a ellos sino algo que yo les quisiera transmitir a ellos [...] Habíamos hablado en la didáctica que cuando hay una desconexión tan profunda entre un profesor y la clase, el hecho de que el profesor se exponga a sí mismo de manera explícita genera una interpelación inevitablemente. [...] Entonces yo me acordé de eso cuando estaba planificando y dije “por qué no me expongo yo” y lo hice basándome en una experiencia de vida, en inquietudes propias.

Yes, the idea [of reading my own story] came up during planning, when I was looking for resources and wondering about what I could do to reach them. I didn't want something from them to me, but from me to them [...] We had said in our teaching methods class that when there is such a deep disconnect between the teacher and the class, the fact that the teacher exposes her feelings explicitly generates an unavoidable interpellation. [...] I remembered that when I was planning, and I said “why don't I put myself out there?” And I did that, about a life experience, about my own concerns.

–Carmen, Philosophy

Yo también participo de eso [contar mi propia experiencia] y cuento cosas que son muy personales con el sentido de que se sientan más en confianza, se sientan más parte de un grupo y de que se conozcan entre ellos mismos [...] y siento que eso después es mucho más fácil poder enfrentar un curso más cohesionado.

I also did it [I told my own story], and told them things that are very personal, to make them feel more confident, more part of a group and like they know one another [...] and I felt that after that it was much easier to work with them as a cohesive class.

–Vicente, History

During my interview with the philosophy teacher educator, we talked about Carmen's learning experience and the importance of sharing one's life in relation to the content being taught. In this regard, she highlighted the relevance of future teachers'

openness toward their students, showing commitment to the subject matter they teach as a way to attract their attention in an authentic way:

Yo trabajo en la didáctica y estamos trabajando en diseñar acciones prácticas en la clase de tal manera que se cuide y se propicie ese vínculo personal del profesor con el conocimiento, ese gusto por lo que se enseña. Pero que se explicita que en la clase, que el profesor se muestre, que cuente una pequeña historia en relación al contenido, algo personal, que no sea neutral.

I work in Didactics [teaching methods] and we are working on designing practical actions in the classroom so that we care about and foster the personal bond of teacher knowledge with the content, the passion for the subject. But that has to be explicit in the class, the teacher reveals who she is, she tells a little story related to content, something personal, non-neutral.

–Teacher Educator, Philosophy Didactics

In addition to opening up and sharing their lives to reach students, preservice teachers learned they needed to be role models, modeling what they asked students to do. They needed to give of themselves so students would feel motivated to make a strong effort in return.

Another aspect of sharing has to do with the activities and time preservice teachers choose to dedicate to their students beyond classroom walls. Student-teacher relationships are not built only during class. Most of the preservice teachers I interviewed demonstrated a commitment to activities that helped them engage in more horizontal ways with students. Susana, for example, discovered that attending an art event that took place at the school on a Friday night helped her to better connect with her class and changed students' attitudes during the following weeks of practicum.

Lo que marcó el punto de inflexión un día que tenían una actividad como curso después de la hora de clases [...] tenían que hacer un café concert (muestra artística), y no sólo fui sino que además los ayude y además llevé gente por el tema de las entradas que tenían que vender [...] No digo que ahora me aman y que me encuentran bacán, no, pero sí siento que hay una acogida distinta y siento que ellos se dieron cuenta de que yo estaba interesada en ellos y que no son solamente una pega [...] Me di cuenta también de que había un cambio, sutil pero un cambio.

What marked the turning point was one day they had an after class activity [...] they had to perform a coffee concert (art exhibition), and I not only attended but also helped them and brought people because they were required to sell tickets[...] I'm not saying they love me and think I'm cool now, but I feel they have a different disposition since they realized I was interested in them and this is not just a job for me [...] I also noticed that there was a change, though it was subtle.

–Susana, English

In Vicente's view, building strong relationships with students is not just the result of establishing clear rules, communication, and authentic caring, but also extra-curricular work that enables him to show his self. For example, during his practicum period at a low middle-class, subsidized school, he played and assisted with school sports:

Al final de año hicimos el tema del fútbol [...] eso me ayudó mucho con los muchachos especialmente, mucho más cercanos me saludaban de la mano y me preguntaban "cómo está profe?", y las niñas igual pues porque habíamos organizado un torneo de fútbol con los niños y de voleibol con las niñas, pero con las niñas no resultó. El torneo de fútbol si resultó, [ellas] tenían barras y todo el espectáculo, y eso claro nos acercó mucho más, había una cercanía con las niñas, funcionó muy bien eso.

At the end of the year we did a soccer unit [...] that helped a lot especially with the boys, they were much closer greeting me, shaking hands and asking me "how are you doing, teacher?" and girls did the same because we had organized a soccer tournament with the boys and volleyball with the girls, but with girls it never got off the ground. The soccer tournament did happen, though, and [the girls] were cheerleaders and they put on a whole show, and that of course made everyone much closer, there was a closeness with the girls that worked very well.

–Vicente, History

In addition, Vicente used orientation time (officially designated for discussing academic and behavior issues by the cooperating teacher) to address students' concerns, needs and even help resolve conflicts between classmates. This space, called *consejo de curso* (class council) was used by Vicente as a 'type of group therapy' and illustrated that establishing good relationships outside the classroom is important because it helps students begin to see preservice teachers not just as a instructors but also as a confidants. At that point, preservice teachers evolve into teachers that listen and guide, adults students can trust.

Naming. We cannot ignore the importance of calling someone by her/his name. The name is the representation of a person, the first sign of one's identity, the first impression we get, and the first piece of information that we provide to others. In a way, things without names do not exist. The same seems to be true

for students inside schools. In fact, preservice teachers participating in this study reported many situations in which experienced teachers made students invisible by not naming; a practice that treated them as a number on the class list. Contrarily, they discovered the richness of naming students as a thoughtful teaching activity and acted accordingly:

Category: **Building Relationships.**

The construction of strong, authentic, vigorous teacher-student relationships as a necessary condition for teaching and learning to occur.

Sub-categories:

- Emotionality
- Sharing
- **Naming**
- Adolescence

Primero, para mí es súper importante aprenderse los nombres, esforzarme en aprenderme sus nombres y ojalá nombre y apellido. [...] No sé, por ejemplo Fabián llega siempre tarde... "Fabián, hola como estás" "hola profe" (hace-imita el gesto) Pero que se salude, que seamos humanos en el acto de venir a compartir una clase también.

First, for me it's super important to learn their names, make an effort to learn their first names and hopefully their last names [...] I don't know, for example if Fabián is late... "Fabián, how are you?" "Hi, teacher" (imitating gesture). But I need him to wave to me, so that we are both humans participating in the act of sharing a classroom.

–Paula, History

Yo intento también ser un profesor que quiere conocerlos, que trate de hacer la clase tanto a nivel general como nivel particular. [...] donde yo hago clases ahora yo me sé todos los nombres de los estudiantes y los trato por su nombre en cada una de las clases en cada una de las preguntas que hago específicas y eso creo yo que demuestra hacia los estudiantes que el profesor tiene mucho interés en ellos y también creo que hace que ellos se comprometan mucho más.

I also try to be a teacher who is interested in knowing them, try to really make the class both at the group and the individual level. [...] Where I teach now, I know all the students' names and call them by name in each class, with each specific question I ask, and I think that shows students that the teacher is interested in them and I also think that helps them to be more committed.

–Vicente, History

Naming involves much more than simply assigning a label to something or someone we want to identify. The act of naming is central in human cognition; a deeper identity is hidden behind the name. Naming people triggers much more beneath the surface of what we see. In the act of teaching, naming a student serves to highlight her/his presence, putting her/him in the spotlight, recognizing her/his individual being, abilities, and contribution to the collective. Therefore, when a (preservice) teacher named a student, this not only captured her/his attention, but also seemed to activate her/his mind and willingness to connect and learn together.

Al principio me costaba más [la clase] porque no me sabía los nombres, entonces como que no podía apelar a alguien en específico, entonces terminaba diciendo así "tú..." (ríe)... como para poder apelar a ellos. Pero ahora que ya sé los nombres y ellos me conocen, si yo hago una pregunta y pasan 30 segundos sin que nadie me responda yo empiezo a decir nombres.

At first [the class] was harder for me because I didn't know everyone's name, then because I couldn't call out a particular student, I ended up saying "you ..." (laughs) ... like... to appeal to them. But now that I know their names and they know me, if I ask a question and 30 seconds pass without anyone answering me, I start calling out names.

–Alicia, Language & Communication

The students' names served as the metaphor representing every aspect of their individuality and identity formation. Perhaps the most important mission of youth is the search for (or construction of) identity. For this reason, another essential aspect of preservice teachers' learning from students was the recognition of adolescence as a crucial stage of life to which they must be sensitive during daily teaching work.

Adolescence. Etymologically speaking, *adolescence* means 'coming to maturity' or 'toward growing up' (from the Latin *adolescere*). In Spanish, the same word is a synonym of 'lacking,' so being an adolescent means living in a period of incompleteness until one reaches adulthood. Despite of this conception, high school students usually manifest their needs and interests in school contexts. Consequently, part of the preservice

teachers' acknowledgment of the essential role of relationships is noticing the universality of young people's needs. Dealing with adolescent students and their behaviors became a constant factor for preservice teachers when comparing various contexts to each other. In other words, high school placements can differ in terms of

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- **Adolescence**

their educational goals, type of administration, neighborhoods, families' socioeconomic status and cultural capital, etc., but they all have adolescents inside their classrooms.

A representative example of this acknowledgement was given by Susana when she was asked about her main learning experiences regarding teaching contexts:

No es lo mismo trabajar en un colegio municipal, particular subvencionado que en un particular pagado, no es lo mismo trabajar en un colegio técnico profesional que en uno artístico, eso es evidente. Pero yo creo que lo transversal es la necesidad -independiente del contexto- que tienen los chiquillos de que sean vistos. [...] yo creo que lo transversal más allá de todo es eso que los chiquillos quieren que los vean y los escuchen.

It is not the same working in a municipal, a subsidized semi-private, or a private school; is not the same working in a vocational school as in an artistic one, that's obvious. But I think the universal issue —regardless the context— is that kids need to be seen. [...] I think the universal issue, beyond all matters, is that kids want to be seen and heard.

–Susana, English

To round out this category, it is interesting to notice that the superb relevance of a strong (or at least good) relationship with students was also made notable by its absence. When there was no relationship at all, there were negative consequences for preservice teachers and the students they served. After having a positive experience with students in previous stages of her practicum, Susana found herself in another school placement, faced with the apathy of a new class. The big question for her was how to build that

relationship when everything seemed to be hostile and she could not perform as expected in front of her cooperating teacher.

En el centro [de práctica] en que estuve el año pasado por último uno les despierta la curiosidad [...] y entonces te preguntan “¿usted qué está haciendo acá, por qué va a ser la práctica acá, y va a estar todo el año con nosotros?” Y acá [el colegio nuevo] nada, nada, absolutamente nada, entonces fue indiferencia y eso fue algo que me acompañó yo creo durante las primeras dos semanas de mi intervención [...] Es que yo creo que los odié como hasta la tercera semana o tal vez un mes de odio.

In the school where I was last year at least I had their curiosity [...] and they asked me "What are you doing here, why will your practicum be here, will you be here all year with us?" And here [the new school placement] nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing, just total indifference and that was something that stayed with me, I think, during the first two weeks of my intervention [...] I think I hated them until the third week or maybe a month.

–Susana, English

To conclude this category, I want to stress the way in which these preservice teachers related to students and their contexts. Certainly, among their main goals were developing pedagogical content knowledge and, through that pedagogical growth, providing better learning opportunities for students. Nonetheless, they acknowledged the crucial impact that teacher-student relationships have on teaching and learning. Preservice teachers acquired knowledge of students’ backgrounds, interests, and needs, and made an effort to explicitly incorporate that knowledge during their practicum.

Building relationships –as a category– has been supported by a number of sub-categories or dimensions such as emotionality, sharing, naming, and adolescence, which express preservice teachers’ intellectual and personal backgrounds, discoveries, intentions, commitments, teaching philosophies, and desire for autonomy, among other categories, in order to enact a suitable relational and learning environment. *Building relationships* constitutes one of the main abilities secondary preservice teachers acquired, and I consider it to be directly connected to the principles of social justice-oriented and culturally relevant pedagogy.

On the one hand, the social justice-oriented side of the aforementioned dimensions of this category is shown through teaching approaches that combine *functional* and *relational literacies* as stressed by North (2009). Preservice teachers' pedagogical philosophies combine sociocultural, relational and even political elements that differ from a mere list of teaching practices learned in a teacher education program. Their approaches show a personal and political commitment that compromises their selves since learning to teach goes far beyond a pedagogical endeavor that encompasses teaching methods and techniques.

On the other hand, preservice teachers' remarkable comprehension of the relevance of vigorous relationships –especially with students– connects with the CRP's principle of *caring*. In fact, various factors influencing teacher-student relationships are described, rather than simply a number of surrounding elements. On the contrary, these are key elements to consider in every activity involved in learning to teach. Preservice teachers' understandings highlighted that strong relationships facilitate teaching and learning, and that they are called on to re-conceptualize their roles. Thus, once they graduate, they will not only serve as pedagogical-content specialists and reflective practitioners and researchers, but also as culturally responsive pedagogues and members of caring communities (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Irvine, 2003).

Context Constituents

This category aims to respond to inquiries about what preservice teachers found in the field and what constituted students' contexts from their perspective. When addressing knowledge of contexts, researchers (e.g., Turner-Bisset, 2001) and practitioners usually refer to the educational context whose immediate space is the classroom. Precisely, it is

in the classroom where students express their culture, abilities, learning styles, interests, and needs. Nonetheless, contexts also involve the environment and the circumstances where a teacher is assigned to work. In reality, a teacher becomes involved with the school, the neighborhood, the city, the region, the state, and the country. Moreover, context comprises students' family backgrounds, the community, the organization and management of the school and the education system, including the history and philosophy of education they embrace.

However, all these aspects are not necessarily transparent for a preservice teacher in the early stages of the lifelong task that is learning to teach. For instance, in coursework and inquiry workshops, DEP secondary preservice teachers were called upon to evaluate the contexts in which they intervened and acted accordingly, as their actions were defined by surrounding circumstances. There are certain views on reality, certain principles that a preservice teacher can use to 'read' and interpret the context, as well as a set of teaching strategies to be used.

Due to their limited prior teaching experience in formal contexts and the bounded time frame attached to the practicum period, secondary preservice teachers highlighted the contextual aspects most accessible to them, in contrast to the greater variety of elements evident for experienced teachers. Indeed, there are contextual aspects directly related to the teaching conditions at schools that preservice teachers do not necessarily find relevant. As the Language & Communication teacher educator stated in the interview, "There is strong and shocking aspect about the school context which is the pressure from the administration, and the dimension of teachers as professionals under surveillance."

The category *context constituents* encompasses all salient contextual elements stressed by preservice teachers in relation to what they learned during their practicum in different school placements. Although they acknowledged the significance of institutional aspects surrounding their student teaching experience (e.g., type of school, norms, surveillance, etc.), the more salient aspects referred directly to who students were and what they brought to the classroom. Thus, the first dimension –institutions– remains in place as a background for the others.

Institutions. Sociologists have stated that schools –like other traditional institutions- have entered a stage of disintegration or demodernization as a result of changes in the globalized world. Thus, these institutions look the same from the outside, bear the same names, but inwardly have changed. Giddens (2000) has called them *shell institutions* since their facades remain, but the insides have become inadequate for the tasks they are called to fulfill in present days. Is this what preservice teachers face when attending school placements during their practicum?

In general, participant preservice teachers' perceptions of school placements varied within a range of more or less friendly scenarios, which could determine the development of their performance as student teachers. Institutional conditions can influence their initial approaches and change as time goes on in their new role in the

Category: **Context Constituents.**
Aspects that constitute students' contexts from the preservice teachers' perspective. Refers to students' sociocultural backgrounds, abilities, learning styles, interests, and needs.

Sub-categories:

- **Institutions**
- Students' Backgrounds and Diversity
- Situated Knowledge of Learners
- Complexity and vulnerability of Contexts

school environment. Reactions can move between mere conditioning, adaptation, or criticism.

Cuando uno en verdad entra al sistema escolar como que tambalea un poco dice “voy a realmente poder entregar lo que yo quiero entregar me va a ser posible entregarlo como yo lo quiero entregar o voy a tener que ajustarse a las normas del colegio, a la actitud que me impongan los alumnos, a los que me deje hacer el profe guía, o a lo que me deje hacer el director?” entonces ahí uno ya empieza a decir [...] uno entra acá y dice “mmm el sistema escolar” [gesto de desagrado].

When one really enters the school system, it's like you wobble a bit and say, “Will I really be able to deliver the results I want, will it be possible to do what I want or will have to comply with school rules, students' attitudes, my cooperating teacher, or the principal?” [...] one comes here and says “Hmmm, the school system” [gesture of displeasure].

–Alicia, Language & Communication

[En los dos semestres anteriores] estuve en el [colegio] X y en el [colegio] Y. Los dos eran colegios municipales y vulnerables, pero eran nada que ver entre ellos. Yo lo pasé pésimo en el X, no por los chiquillos, sino por la institución, muy cuadrada, muy burocrático todo. El director el primer día que llegamos nos dijo que el interés de él y del colegio era normalizar a los chiquillos y me empezó a chocar. [En el Y] me gustó por la libertad porque nadie nunca me paqueó en ese colegio [...] En éste no los formaban [en filas], era como todo más de cariño [...] yo sentí más libertad, y como sentí más libertad, me di muchas más licencias.

[In the previous two practicum stages] I was at the [school] X and [school] Y. Both were municipal and vulnerable schools, but they had nothing to do with each other. I had a bad time in the school X, not because of the children, but because of the institution, which was very square, very bureaucratic. The principal, from the first day we arrived, told us that their mission was to normalize the children, and that was a shock for me. I liked Y because of the freedom I had, no one was ever policing me in that school [...] In this one, there were no straight rows of students. It was like, all about caring [...] I felt more freedom, and as I felt more freedom, I gave myself permission to do more.

–Luna, Visual Arts

The encounter with a school triggered different emotions. For some it was a time of crisis, for others it was an inspiring and motivating event. The institutional context was then seen as a condition of the act of teaching. Preservice recognized the importance of learning about the institutional setting but at the same, when facing reality, context and its established rituals can become obstacles against the implementation of innovative proposals which are typical of future teachers' idealistic conceptions of teaching.

School placements were perceived as routine spaces. Those spaces that are built on relationships and activities promoted within rigid boundaries. Preservice teachers' common perception was that schools are strongly attached to routines, where little or no innovation takes place. The routines are part of the school bureaucracy where there is little room for new pedagogical proposals. In alluding to their fresh university teacher education, they understood that those routines affect the teachers' professionalism.

Esto es un colegio con inspectores, inspectores de patios, donde no se puede comer en la sala. La disciplina que hay es que el profesor más encima de tiene que hacerse cargo de retarlos en la mañana, retarlos para que todos queden bien -porque como yo estaba en un colegio religioso- pero este colegio [nuevo] es mucho más relajado, aparte es municipal, también creo que tiene que ver con eso. [Pero] tienen como 1500 estudiantes y tienen 20 psicopedagogas, es mucho.

This is a school with inspectors, schoolyard inspectors, where you cannot eat in the classroom. There is an expectation that the teacher, in addition, has to sermonize the kids every morning so everyone will be good -because that was in a religious school- but this [new] school is much more relaxed because it is municipal, I think it has to do with that. [But] they have like 1,500 students and 20 special education specialists, which is too much.

–Paula, History

Este sigue siendo un colegio igual -muy artístico, muy hippie si uno quiere, pero sigue siendo un colegio [...] igual tienen que usar un informe, uno entra a la sala de profesores y los profesores se quejan exactamente de lo mismo que se quejan en otros colegios. [...] yo me he visto un poco, no coartada, pero sí maquetada un poco por como a mi profe guía le parece que tienen que ser las cosas, y que es modalidad colegio. [...] Sigue siendo un colegio porque una de las cosas que la profesora a mí me recalca es la disciplina, o sea cuando tuve que tomar la prueba casi que me hizo requisarle los teléfonos, ¿cachai? Y que se separen... porque "a nosotros lo que nos interesa en una prueba es que estén ordenados."

This is a school –even though it's very artistic, a hippie school, if you will- but it is still a school [...] they also have to wear uniforms, one enters the teachers' lounge and they complain about exactly the same issues as in other schools. [...] I've felt a little, not confined, but directed a little since my co-teacher wanted to have things her way, that's the way things are, the school way. This is still a school because one of the things my teacher stresses with me is discipline, I mean, when I had to give the test she almost made me take their cellphones away, you know? And they have to separate ... because "what matters during a test is that they are quiet."

–Susana, English

As they advanced in their process of preparation and performance in practicum, preservice teachers found tension between adaptation and resistance to the school features, which reflected the inner workings of the whole system. In the confrontation between expectations and real contexts, thinking like a teacher seemed to push towards contradictory ends. On the one hand, they had to be flexible in order to survive the process. On the other hand, it was necessary to resist and assume a transformative teaching stance. Moreover, reified teaching practices in school placements not only affected in-service teachers' attitudes towards the candidates, but they also influenced students' attitudes towards preservice teachers' initiatives. The following quotes exemplify these phenomena:

Cuando yo estaba en el primer semestre en el colegio Z, para la mayoría de los practicantes era un cacho hacer clases ahí porque tenían un estilo súper marcado, eran muy autoritarios, eran dueños de sus clases, no daban ningún espacio para el trabajo de nosotros que en ese caso era como de ayudantes (ríe)... de profesor en práctica... no podíamos hacer absolutamente nada. Yo me cambié particularmente de colegio por eso, y los compañeros más lo hicieron. ¡Y así ocurre en muchos de los casos poh!

When I was in my first semester at school Z, teaching there was a pain for most preservice teachers because they [the teacher at the school] had a really marked style, they were very authoritarian, they owned their classes, had no room for us, we were like assistants (laughs) ... of teaching ... we could not do anything. I switched schools because of that, and my classmates did the same. And it happened so in many cases!

–Vicente, History

Cuando me tocó intervenir fue difícil al principio porque los chiquillos no estaban acostumbrados a una didáctica más constructiva estaban acostumbrados a recibir información que uno les pasa el PowerPoint y que ellos anoten y reciben... y listo se acabó. Yo los hice hacer comparaciones, y tenían que hablar un poco de sus experiencias, tenían que juntarse con el compañero, tenían que compartir ideas, tenían que crear algo en conjunto, entonces igual fue difícil porque plantearles todo eso... [ellos] “noooo, no queremos eso queremos que usted nos pase la diapositiva y listo.

When it was my turn to teach, it was difficult at first because the kids were not used to more constructivist teaching. They were accustomed to receiving information from a PowerPoint and they took notes and received the information ... and that's it. I required them to make comparisons, and they had to talk a little about their experiences. They had to work with a partner, share ideas, and create something together, but it was so difficult

to propose all that ... [they would say] "noooo, we don't want that, we want you to put up the slides, and that's it."

–Alicia, Language & Communication

These incidents challenged preservice teachers in terms of the difficulties that emerged in implementing planned lessons and in terms of what would happen in the future in their teaching careers, depending on the type of school in which they may work. Thus, the *institution* dimension translated into at least two types of impact on teachers: First, a personal impact due to physical and mental demands on the future teachers. Second, the professional project impacted their projected future careers, that is, in how they interpreted the relevance and validity of their vocation and their skills as teachers which could lead to their decision to remain in or abandon the field of teaching.

Students' backgrounds and diversity.

Being aware of the sociocultural backgrounds and diversity of students implies a profound change in the current Chilean school culture. In general, Chilean schools have been characterized by an attempt to homogenize students of different ethnicities, abilities, interests, motivations, and learning styles. Due to this, teacher education programs have not fully incorporated diversity issues in their curricula. Consequently, the lack of importance placed on diversity in education is one of the main factors that generates learning difficulties and participation problems, especially among disadvantaged students.

Category: Context Constituents.

Aspects that constitute students' contexts from the preservice teachers' perspective. Refers to students' sociocultural backgrounds, abilities, learning styles, interests, and needs.

Sub-categories:

- Institutions
- **Students' Backgrounds and Diversity**
- Situated Knowledge of Learners
- Complexity and vulnerability of Contexts

Currently, the principal cities in northern and central Chile have experienced a migration process that is transforming the ethnic and racial landscape of K-12 classrooms. This process of change entails difficulties, resistances, and uncertainties related to the fear of the unknown, but also offers opportunities for the personal and professional growth and development of educators. In the case of DEP preservice teachers, their perception of field experiences fully reflected the increasing classroom diversity, which added to the previously existing segregation phenomenon.

All statements presented below reveal their encounters with socioeconomic segregation (depending on the type of school) and diversity in the classrooms, which presents complex challenges for planning and performance during student teaching. Although issues of school contexts and the diversity of students are mentioned in some university courses, the DEP preservice teachers criticized the superficial treatment of those issues and they felt unprepared for dealing with diversity inside their school placements. Therefore, their challenge was to ‘read’ the contexts as quickly as possible and design contextualized strategies. Although these attempts were not always successful, the contact with students enriched preservice teachers’ instructional knowledge and gave them hints for future performance.

The following three statements allude to preservice teachers’ encounters with various aspects of student diversity:

Bueno, el contexto del colegio H era bien multicultural, por así decirlo, multi-cognitivo también. Habían chicos con problemas psicológicos, chicos con problemas de aprendizaje, chicos sordos, chicos chinos. En una sala de clases uno podía tener en tres chicos sordos y el resto de los chiquillos que ya son un mundo aparte.

Well, the context of H high school was rather multicultural, so to speak, and multi-cognitive too. There were children with psychological problems, children with learning disabilities, deaf children, and Chinese children. In a classroom, one could have three deaf children and the rest of the kids that were from an entirely different world.

–Alicia, Language & Communication

Tienen compañeros que son peruanos, bolivianos, no sé, extranjeros, de color de piel distinto, interacciones distintas. Hay una diversidad, no extrema, pero sí hay diversidad. [...] En mi curso hay un estudiante que es peruano, el año pasado tenía una estudiante que era afroamericana. En el colegio Z igual tuve un estudiante que era afroamericano y era como si nada.

They have classmates who are Peruvian, Bolivian, I don't know, foreigners, with different skin colors, different types of interaction. There is diversity, not extreme, but there is diversity. [...] In my class there is a Peruvian student. Last year I had a student who was African American. At school Z, I also had a student who was African American but it wasn't a big deal.

–Vicente, History

Fui a este colegio en donde yo no era de esa religión [...] Los chicos que me hablaban del génesis, la formación de la tierra, decían que Dios lo había creado y ahí se acababa la discusión. Entonces, [tenía que] como combinar por ejemplo la religión con la historia y con conceptos religiosos que yo no podía trastocar [...] Aparte de estos chicos que eran peruanos pero que se sentían más chilenos que peruanos, ya llevaban tanto tiempo en Chile que podían pasar por alto su propia nacionalidad [...] Cuando pasábamos mestizaje y la diversidad... a los negritos como que los molestaban, tiraban unas tallas medias xenófobas. Entonces, yo creo que es fundamental educar en diversidad.

I went to this school where I was not from that religion. [...] The kids talked to me about Genesis, the formation of the earth, saying that God had created it, end of discussion. So, [I had] to combine religion with History, for example, religious concepts that I could not disrupt [...] Moreover, from these kids who were Peruvian but they felt more Chilean than Peruvian, and had been in Chile so long that they could overlook their own nationality [...] When we talked about miscegenation and diversity ... some made fun of the brown skinned kids, kind of xenophobic jokes. So, I think it is essential to educate them in diversity.

–Paula, History

Preservice teachers noted that ethnic origin, cognitive ability, special needs, and religious diversity were increasingly present in the classroom. However, there is little or no mention of how they addressed this phenomenon from a pedagogical perspective. In addition to their complaints about the teacher education program –which does not directly address issues of diversity– preservice teachers did not seem to pay much attention to diversity since their focus was primarily on moving forward with their practicum. They recognized the importance of education for diversity, but felt unable to adequately

address it during this stage of their preparation. In the meantime, attention to diversity seems more like an emerging and intuitive topic than a planned and systematic task.

En cada curso, dentro de esa diversidad, hay un mundo [...] los nerd, los gay, los reggaetoneros, los flaites [...] Me encanta que haya diversidad de los cursos, me gustan los cursos mixtos por lo mismo, pero encuentro que es una pega difícil para nosotros el que los cursos sean diversos porque hay que atender a muchas necesidades.

In each class, within that diversity, there is a world [...] the nerds, the gays, the reggaetoneros, the flaites⁸ [...] I love that diversity in those classrooms, I like classes with girls and boys, but I find it a difficult job for us that classes are diverse because you have to serve so many needs.

–Luna, Visual Arts

As stated by Luna, the diversity of student backgrounds brings with it a variety of needs. Over the course of three semesters at DEP program, teachers have gone through different schools and have met face to face with many individual worlds but who, nonetheless, live in relatively homogeneous spaces. In most of the interviews, participants referred to three main types of schools where they learned about student contexts: the public school that serves students living in poverty and does not have high academic expectations for high school graduates; the private school serving children of upper-middle class families who take university studies or professions for granted; and, the selective municipal schools serving students from middle-lower class who have academic potential and see this type of institution as the path to performing well on their university entrance exam.

The following excerpts exemplify these contrasting contexts:

Hice una pregunta sobre la crisis económica: “¿qué harías en lugar de la familia que estaba en medio de la crisis económica?” Christopher respondió: “bueno, yo trabajaría pero en verdad yo nunca voy a salir de la pobreza.” [...] Es como si las cosas ya están dadas. Un día la Julisa entró a la sala con los ojos rojos y después de la clase le pregunté qué pasó y me dice “no, profe, si no va a cambiar nada.”

⁸ *Reggaetoneros* are youngsters who follow a Latin dance music style called Reggaeton; *flaites* are the equivalent of U.S. urban young people who like hip-hop music and life style. Usually, these adolescents come from low socioeconomic backgrounds, being discriminated by others.

I asked a question about the economic crisis: "What would you do if your family were in the midst of the economic crisis?" Christopher said. "Well, I would work but, the truth is, I'll never get out of poverty" [...] It's as if things are already taken for granted. One day, Julisa came into class with bloodshot eyes and after class I asked her what happened. She said: "no, teacher, nothing is going to change."

–Paula, History

Yo estuve en el liceo M, un colegio particular [donde] muchos de los papás son académicos o son connotados profesionales, entonces su capital cultural es increíble, un bagaje cultural enorme y los niños los han aprovechado. [...] Cualquier profe diría que es un paraíso para ellos hacer clases porque los chiquillos saben y están bajo esa presión, toman sus apuntes, saben estudiar solos.

I was at M high school, a private school [where] many of the parents are well-known academics or professionals, so their cultural capital is impressive, a huge cultural background, and the children have taken advantage of that [...] Any teacher would say it is a paradise for them to teach there because the children are knowledgeable and are under so much pressure, they take notes, know how to study on their own.

–Carmen, Philosophy

Durante el semestre se dieron algunas jornadas de reflexión relacionadas con los temas de la reforma educacional y específicamente con el problema de la selección de los estudiantes en los establecimientos caracterizados como emblemáticos. [...] En esta institución, lo bueno y lo malo, lo exitoso o no, es determinado por las notas y por los resultados de este tipo de pruebas estandarizadas; por ello, los estudiantes se preocupan de sus promedios y andan con calculadora en mano.

During the semester they had a few days of reflection on the themes of education reform and specifically with the problem of admissions in an emblematic school like this one. [...] In this institution, good or bad, successful or unsuccessful, is determined by grades and the standardized test scores; therefore, students care about their grades and always have a calculator in their hand.

–Cony, History, Portfolio

A final note on learning about students' backgrounds has to do with the deepest reflection that some preservice teachers made on their experiences with diverse students. Supported by practicum workshops and tutoring in which they have the opportunity to share their experiences, preservice teachers could reach a comprehensive understanding of their students that goes beyond labels and stereotypes. An example of these post-practicum reflections is provided by Camila, who did the first stage of her practicum in a private school and then moved to a public high school:

El aprendizaje más valioso que he tenido de la práctica tiene que ver con que ese trasfondo de los estudiantes. [...] Muchas veces uno piensa de antemano y de forma errónea que tiene que ver con conocer sus gustos, con conocer solamente sus expresiones artísticas, como todo ese ámbito que uno asocia a lo juvenil. Entonces, lo que me ha mostrado este centro de práctica tiene que ver con ampliar mi visión sobre las inquietudes juveniles. La juventud no solamente se reduce a sexo y drogas, ellos también tienen su propia forma de captar el contexto en el que están.

The most valuable lessons I've learned from practicum have to do with students' backgrounds. [...] Many times one thinks beforehand and mistakenly that it's about knowing their preferences, knowing only their artistic outputs, as with everything else associated with the youth. So, what teaching in this school placement has shown me is about expanding my vision when it comes to youth concerns. The youth is not only reduced to sex and drugs, they also have their own way of capturing their context.

–Carmen, Philosophy

Although it is evident that the DEP teacher education program and its candidates struggle to systematically address the pedagogical aspects of dealing with a diverse student population, it is also evident that there are benefits to preservice teachers changing school placements partway through their practicum. This enriches their viewpoints by familiarizing them with a variety of contexts. Teacher educators emphasize this feature of the program and make efforts to help candidates understand the advantages of spending one or two semesters in one school and the final semester in a different school. According to them, this feature has helped preservice teachers develop a deeper knowledge of school and student types:

Me gusta que vayan a distintas escuelas, definitivamente, porque después cuando al final ellos van a ver que hay distintas realidades. [...] La situación, el contexto va a ser totalmente distinto y un profesor tiene que entender al alumno en ese contexto. No puedo acostumbrarme a un solo tipo. Creo que aporta el hecho de que el profesor en formación se enfrente a distintos escenarios. Y aunque se desestructure totalmente con el siguiente escenario, él (ella) tiene que saber construir algo.

I like that they go to different schools, definitely, because in the end they will see that there are different realities. [...] The situation, the context will be totally different and a teacher has to understand each student in that context. You cannot get too accustomed to just one type. I think that changing schools provide candidates with different scenarios. And although the second scenario can be disruptive, he (she) needs to know how to work with it.

–English Teacher Educator

Situated knowledge of learners.

Student learning in diverse school placements is at the heart of preservice teachers' practicum. While they are being prepared to develop skills and dispositions that characterize DEP teachers, they develop an understanding of teaching and situated knowledge of how students learn in specific contexts. During field experiences, participant preservice teachers began to see relationships between teacher learning in the program, the ways students learn, and the pedagogies that support their learning.

Importantly, the knowledge gained by participant secondary preservice teachers depends on their practicum's context. Every high school provides a different environment that reflects students' specific learning skills, weaknesses, interests, and needs. Indeed, diverse school backgrounds or cultural capital affected how students learned or participated in classrooms. While in some school placements, preservice teachers dealt with stories of relative academic success, in others they faced stories of failure that limited students' academic progress.

One of the phenomena described by participants is the recurrent passive or negative student attitudes towards the teaching strategies preservice teachers attempt to implement. While many high school students seem bored with traditional teaching practices, classroom interaction shows that many unmotivated students resist alternative

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pedagogical practices as well. Regardless of the subject, experiences such as the following appear frequently during the interviews:

Me costó mucho, [los estudiantes] querían el dato solo y pasar la materia para la prueba y eso es lo que les interesaba y no les interesaba aprender historia sino porque tenían que sacarse una buena nota en la prueba. Con el tiempo, les dije “no, chiquillos tenemos que ver esto porque no sirve para entender otras cosas de ahora” y estuvimos haciendo mucho ese ejercicio... y ahora igual hacen reflexiones. No es que sea un cambio radical pero si ha habido un avance en eso.

It was hard for me because [students] just wanted the data [information] alone and they wanted to see just what they would need for the test and that's what interested them, they were not interested in learning history—they just wanted a good grade on the test. After a while I said "no, guys, we have to do this because it help us to understand other issues now" and we did that a lot this year ... and now they reflect. It is not a radical change, but it has been a step in the right direction.

—Cony, History

Yo quería mmm... lograr una cierta empatía con mis clases, como... motivacional, por así decirlo. Porque los chiquillos están acostumbrados a las clases tradicionales, de hecho eso me lo dijeron... “que el PowerPoint, que la guía...” Entonces están así ya [aburridos], la monotonía los tiene en la desmotivación, así como “¡qué paja lenguaje, nooo... otra vez una guía!”

I wanted to achieve a certain empathy with my lessons, like ... motivational, so to speak. Because the kids are used to traditional classes, in fact they told me that ... "the PowerPoint, the study guide ..." So, they are like this [bored], monotony has them unmotivated, like "Language is so boring, nooo ... a study guide!"

—Alicia, Language & Communication

Yo siento mucho que [lo que sucede en la clase] tiene que ver con la disposición de los chicos, como que hay días en que [ellos disponen que] no se va a hacer clase y no se va a hacer clase, y ellos no quieren tener clases. Y hay días en que ellos quieren y yo no lo entiendo.

I feel that [what happens in the classroom] has to do with the disposition of the kids, it's like some days [they decide] the lesson is not going to happen, and it doesn't happen, and they do not want to have classes. And there are days when they want to, so I don't understand.

—Paula, History

On the one hand, what happens in classrooms depends on the teaching styles to which students have become accustomed. On the other hand, these habits have created a certain inertia that causes certain students to reject preservice teachers' desired transformative practices, thus affecting their performance. In addition to these attitudes

and habits, preservice teachers have to address students' learning difficulties or weaknesses inherited from their past school life. Examples of these limitations are deficiencies in writing, oral communication, or teamwork/collaborative learning, among others.

Yo podría cerrar esto [la unidad pedagógica] pidiendo que me escriban un texto expositivo, un ensayo o un artículo de opinión, y yo sé que lo van a hacer bien. Por tanto, el desafío creo yo sería proponerles que hiciéramos un debate [...] llevarlos a un debate [...] llevarlos un poco a esa tensión y que finalmente lo puedan oralizar.

I could close this [teaching unit] by asking them to write an expository text, an essay or an opinion, and I know they will do well. Therefore, the challenge, I think, would be to propose a debate [...] carry out a debate [...] put them under that pressure so they can express themselves orally.

–Alicia, Language & Communication

Les enseño que tienen que escribir y hay muchas palabras difíciles en historia y que yo no sabía. [...] Más aún cuando empieza uno a ver la revolución rusa y ya 'revolución' es una palabra complicada porque la escriben mal. Por ejemplo, la palabra 'proletariado', yo no sabía que era tan difícil, pero para los chicos es muy difícil. [...] Entonces hay que usar diapositivas, y se demoran tanto en escribir tres palabras, pero que escriban.

I teach them that they have to write, and there are many difficult words in history that I didn't know. [...] Especially when one begins to learn the Russian Revolution and 'revolution' is complicated because they misspelled that word. For example, the word 'proletariat', I didn't know it was so hard, but for kids it's very difficult. [...] We must then use slides, and it takes so long for them to write three words, but I want them to write.

–Paula, History

The first of these quotations represents practices in private schools serving students with greater cultural capital and reading habits; in these school environments students have more resources to develop academically. However, with the classwork, they prefer to express their intellectual abilities through writing activities. Many students lack the skills for oral communication that are essential for future academic and professional life.

The second quote comes from a preservice teacher working with disadvantaged students who live in poverty and demonstrate low academic skills. Similar to this

municipal school, there are others where DEP preservice teachers do their practicum and face the challenge of teaching complex subjects to students with minimal writing and reading skills. Therefore, after planning, teaching and assessing students, and comparing dissimilar teaching contexts inside university courses and inquiry workshops, preservice teachers verify the contextual nature of their learning to teach.

As learners, high school students exhibit different characteristics depending on their stage of development. These students expect a more playful instruction from in-service and preservice teachers because they are closely related to their adolescent stage and to the context invaded by pop entertainment culture (e.g., television, video games, Internet) or street culture. Indeed, this study's participants had field experiences that showed that using playful strategies helped them to better reach and engage students.

Hay dos razones [para usar un juego al comienzo de la clase]: una porque chiquillos antes de la clase [de inglés] del día lunes tienen Física, y yo me acuerdo lo que era para mí esa clase era un invento (ríe)... Entonces si es física el día lunes, y [segundo] la profesora insistía en que yo tenía que hacerles preguntas de comprensión lectora entonces dije, "¿cómo hago esto? ¿Cómo les hago preguntas de comprensión lectora después de una clase de física sin que sea fome?" Entonces ahí estaba [el juego].

There are two reasons [to use a game at the beginning of the class]: one, because kids have physics class before English on Monday, and I remember that that class was kind of non sense to me (laughs) ... So if they have physics on Monday, and [second] the cooperating teacher insisted that I had to ask reading comprehension questions, then I said, "How do I do this? How do I make reading comprehension questions after a physics class without being boring?" Then there was [the game].

–Susana, English

Esta cuestión de lo audiovisual y la música es algo que siempre les va a interesar, entonces poner un video en la clase, de lo que sea, los chiquillos le van a tomar atención.

This audiovisual and music aspect is something that always will interest them, so if you show a video in class, no matter what it is, the kids will pay attention.

–Alicia, Language & Communication

These days, games and audiovisual resources have a great influence on the development of children and youth. Preservice teachers doing their practicum in

classrooms with 12 to 17 year old students found in these resources a pedagogical ally to motivate their students and promote participation and learning in their respective disciplines. According to my observations and material provided by participants, the most common resources were PowerPoint presentations, clips from movies or full movies, Youtube videos, and music. After getting to know their students and understanding what works best for teaching in a certain context, preservice teachers started to use enticing audiovisual material that was friendly for teen students, encouraging them to interact, participate, and share their values, feelings, and preferences.

Los chicos pasan con los audífonos puestos entonces yo me pregunté cómo hago para que se saquen los audífonos y bueno a la solución más básica es ponerles un video, creo que no siempre resulta tener preparado algún material audiovisual y música para que los chicos estén obligados a sacarse los audífonos y tomar atención. [...] Pongo un video y entonces pah [exclama]... estos chicos se enganchan tres minutos, los tres minutos que dura el video y entonces vuelvo a tener su atención por tres minutos, cuestión que puedo aprovechar al menos por cinco minutos más y tengo un espacio en donde puedo volverlos a enganchar en la clase, y después vuelve el desorden y todo pero tengo como ese salvavidas del video.

The kids are always wearing headphones, so I asked myself how I do make them take them off and the most basic solution was to play a video, I think it always works to have any kind of audiovisual material and music so kids are forced to take off their headphones and pay attention. [...] I put on a video, and there you go! [exclamation]... these guys are hooked for three minutes, three minutes that the video lasts and then they turn their attention back to me for three minutes, which I can take advantage of to get five more minutes of their attention and I have a space where I can re-engage them in the class, and then the clutter and chaos comes back, but the video is a lifesaver.

–Paula, History

Hice un trabajo con imágenes, partir con la emoción, [...] yo estaba muy insegura porque es un trabajo que yo nunca había hecho y lo lleve a la clase. Salieron las inquietudes y me dio mucha confianza para al otro día llegar a la clase. Hice el trabajo con imágenes y fue mejor de todo lo que yo me pude haber imaginado que sería ese trabajo [...] Para iniciar una clase creo que lo más fructífero es imágenes, video y diálogo o sea lo que moviliza afectos y concepciones previas.

I put together a project with images, based off my emotions [...] I was very insecure because it's something I had never done, and I brought it to class. Their concerns came out and that gave me confidence for the next class. I did this work with pictures and everything went better than I could have imagined [...] To start a class I think the most fruitful thing is images, video, and dialogue, that is, what mobilizes emotions and preconceptions.

Besides the function of these resources as a socialization strategy, preservice teachers understood that doing playful activities with teenage students could create conditions for better development of their academic abilities. From the sociocultural perspective—for example, the notion of Vygotsky’s (1978) zone of proximal development—playful and striking audiovisual resources (e.g., photos, short videos, role playing) allow increased assimilation of curriculum content through interaction with others. However, these resources were still used in an intuitive and reactive rather than a systematic manner by preservice teachers. This issue will be further developed in the conclusion chapter of the study.

Complexity and vulnerability of contexts. In Chile and elsewhere in the world, there are young student populations living in vulnerable situations. When they begin their teacher education, DEP preservice teachers have already internalized the tension between criticism of the exclusionary socioeconomic system and the struggle for integration and better opportunities. Either through their own school experience, through having taught in informal/popular education, or through the appropriation of the discourse on quality and equity in their teacher education program, these preservice teachers go into their school placements with a perspective of educational inequality and the challenges posed by certain contexts.

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- **Complexity and vulnerability of Contexts**

This *complexity and vulnerability* dimension, however, is not relevant only for field experiences in poor, vulnerable school contexts, but also in terms of the complexities faced by students from more privileged backgrounds. Since DEP preservice teachers have diverse field experiences in different types of schools, what they learn is the product of a comparison between sometimes contrasting realities. While some move from a private (or semi-private) school to a municipal (public) one, others do the opposite. Thus, findings concerning perceived contexts' complexities and vulnerabilities result from the sum of these experiences.

Paula (a preservice teacher of history) wrote in her final portfolio: “mi profesor guía me dijo ‘En este curso no se puede hacer clases’ ” (my cooperating teacher told me ‘it’s impossible to teach this class”). Probably, that sentence pervaded her final practicum. This is the type of context where some DEP preservice teachers try to enact their lesson plans and develop their teaching skills. Most of these schools’ students live in poverty and have low expectations regarding their academic future. Preservice teachers see the lack of resources and listen to experienced teachers describing classes in terms of whether they are “able to teach” or not. Class contexts seem to limit teachers’ pedagogical competency. The following quotes from Paula and other DEP preservice teachers working in vulnerable contexts represent their perceptions of schools and how they reacted to those teaching conditions:

Yo siento que en un colegio vulnerable vale más la energía que la experiencia, como la energía que tú gastas en hacer callar a los estudiantes para pasar la materia. [...] Yo siento que es muy desgastante ser un profesor, como que los chicos que absorben energía. Yo me acuerdo que yo salía feliz, feliz de las clases pero con un hambre, con un cansancio. [...] Es como que 45 personas me hubieran absorbido la energía.

I feel that, in a high risk school, energy is worth more than experience, like the energy you spend on silencing students so you can teach the material. [...] I feel it is very tiring to be a teacher, the kids absorb your energy. I remember that I left happy, happy from

class but then I felt so much hunger, so much exhaustion. [...] It's like 45 people had soaked up all my energy.

–Paula, History

Ahí [en contexto vulnerable] sí yo creo que es un trabajo difícil. Ahora yo insisto, con 40 niños en una sala no sé quién puede. Ahí sí yo creo que es un trabajo duro.

Over there [in a high-risk context] I do think it is a difficult job. Now, I insist, with 40 kids in a classroom I don't know who could make it. I do think it's hard job.

–Susana, English

Eran colegios muy vulnerables en los que francamente no quería ir nadie. Y el segundo colegio, las chiquillas de [literatura] inglesa querían sólo huir de ese colegio.

These were very vulnerable schools where frankly no one wanted to go. And the second school ... my female classmates in the English department only wanted to get out of that school.

–Luna, Visual Arts

In addition to the conditions presented by the general atmosphere in these schools, preservice teachers got to know students as individuals within their particular backgrounds. Through a series of activities of inquiry such as observation, interviewing, and written cases, preservice teachers got to know students' family and personal stories, which impacted their ongoing teacher learning and shaped their perceptions of their present and future pedagogical practices. While Paula's and Luna's statements relate to specific student life conditions having an impact on what happened in classrooms, Vicente alludes to the teaching and learning process and type of communication struggles that occur in vulnerable classrooms:

Una niña me dijo “una vez mi tío tenía 200 plantas de marihuana en una pieza” y llegaron los pacos y se lo llevaron en cana. [...] Bianca me dijo “si pues, si a mi papá también se lo llevaron preso. Y mi hermano ahí le disparó a un loco de la pobla y lo mató”. [...] Christopher me escribió “mi crisis fue cuando fui a robar y me llevaron en cana y estuve en el calabozo” [...] Dante va a ser papá en un mes más y él es chico, está en primero medio, le van muy mal, tiene puros rojos, entonces la mamá le dijo que si seguía teniendo puras malas notas se fuera del colegio porque tiene que ponerse a trabajar por su hijo.

One girl told me "once my uncle had 200 marijuana plants in one room" and the cops came and took him to jail. [...] Bianca said "yeah, my dad was taken away to jail. And then my brother shot a dude in the neighborhood and killed him" [...] Christopher wrote to me about "my crisis was when I went to steal and was taken to jail and I was in the dungeon" [...] Dante is going to be a dad in a month and he is just a kid, is in 9th grade, his grades are very bad, so his mother told him that if he keeps getting all bad grades, he will have to drop out of school so he can get a job to support his son.

–Paula, History

Elías era del estereotipo de niño problema del curso, un niño increíble... pero delincuente. Le ha pasado de todo en la vida, llegaba drogado. Fue heavy, porque dije "me voy a encontrar con muchos Elías en mi vida" y no sé si tengo el carácter o la fortaleza para lidiar con casos en los que yo me involucro tanto.

Elias was the stereotypical problem child in the class, an amazing child ... but a criminal. [...] So much has happened to him in his life. It was heavy, because I said to myself "I will find many Eliases in my life" and I don't know if I have the character or the strength to deal with cases where I get so involved.

–Luna, Visual Arts

El colegio [municipal] era un colegio que me pareció casi en riesgo porque había muchos estudiantes que provenían de comunas un tanto conflictivas, de escasos recursos, con poca tradición eh... académica, escolar. Es un colegio técnico, los estudiantes no estaba muy interesados en ir al colegio. Claro, se nota mucho la diferencia en las mismas palabras que yo tengo que utilizar para explicar ciertas cosas. No me entendían lo que yo estaba diciendo, porque lógicamente no tenían el mismo equipaje mental que otros muchachos.

That [public] school was one that seemed almost at-risk because there were many students who came from somewhat conflicting, poor areas with few academic, school traditions. It was a technical school where students were not very interested in going to school. Of course, the difference is very noticeable even in the words I had to use to explain certain things. They didn't understand what I was saying, because obviously they weren't functioning on the same level mentally as other kids.

–Vicente, History

As mentioned above, an important element of the contextual learning that preservice teachers reach in their field experiences is comparing the different schools where they worked during their teacher preparation. On the one hand, they witnessed personal interactions, teaching styles, and expectations towards specific student populations. On the other hand, they were able to see beyond the social preconceptions regarding certain types of schools and their academic performance. For example, the learning experiences that came from comparing schools serving students with contrasting

socioeconomic status and levels of academic achievement (Alicia), or from comparing schools that assumed equivalent students' academic performance (Carmen):

Bueno, los dos tipos de colegios [en que he estado] son súper distintos. La visión de H [particular subvencionado] sobre sus alumnos es que los chicos son mano de obra barata, de que hay educarlos para que salgan a trabajar luego nomás. No se cree mucho en ellos, y no se cree que les va a ir bien de la PSU. En cambio en el M [particular pagado] no importa si van o no a la Universidad pero que se formen como personas, eso es lo que nos importa. [Ahí] los chicos nunca son mirados en menos. Entonces puede ser un chico muy desordenado y todo pero ellos dicen "no importa, tendrá otras habilidades".

Well, the two types of schools [I have been in] are very different. The vision of H [private subsidized] school about their students is that kids are cheap labor, that they need to be educated so they can just get a job. No one believes in them, that they will get good scores on the university selection test. However, in the M [subsidized school] no matter if they go to college or not, they are educated people, that's what matters to them. [In that school] the kids are never seen as being of less value. So, he/she can be a very sloppy guy and all, but they say "that's alright, he/she has other abilities."

Alicia, Language & Communication

Yo vengo del M [privado, semestre anterior] y ahora estoy en el C, y yo tenía presente ciertas similitudes a pesar de que uno es privado y el otro es público. Se dice que ambos son de excelencia, cabros súper movidos políticamente, pero no sabía qué tan abismal que iba a ser la diferencia dentro de las salas de clases. Por ejemplo, los cabros del M muy prestos a validarte desde lo académico, desde el conocimiento académico. Y cuando yo llegué al C [no era así].

I came from M [private, first semester] and now I'm at C, and I was aware of certain similarities even though one is private and the other is public. Both are considered very good, with politically motivated students, but I did not know how abysmal the difference in classrooms would be. For example, the kids at M were already prepared to validate me in academic terms, based on my academic knowledge. And when I arrived to the C [it was not like that].

–Carmen, Philosophy

Finally, it is necessary to mention that preservice teachers who are assigned to schools serving privileged students notice the intricacies of contexts and the type of struggles affecting those who attend private or renowned, “emblematic” high schools. In Chile, there are two main types of privileged schools: private-paid schools serving student populations of upper-middle class or wealthy families, and municipal/public

schools called *emblematic* since they have a tradition of high academic outcomes and conduct a rigorous selection process where only a small percentage of students are accepted.

In the final quotes of this category, we see two representative examples: the first involves a private school context where preservice teachers learn from cases of affluent students affected by psychological or family issues; then second it is an excerpt from a preservice teacher's reflection the emblematic schools. The latter is particularly interesting since Cony studied at an emblematic all-female high school which –like others– posed difficulties inherent to all competitive schools that push their students to 'be the best' and not falter on the path to university.

Manuel [un chico del colegio privado M] tenía problemas con que quería ser dibujante, ser artista y el papá lo quiere obligar a estudiar otra cosa. Salvador [otro estudiante] tiene problemas en la casa porque nadie lo infla, él es un niño brillante pero nadie lo infla en la casa entonces él se siente solo. Y había otro chiquillo que la profe [guía] me contaba que escribió un ensayo de psicología y es como pa' matarse. Es terrible, depresivo.

Manuel [a boy at the private M school] had trouble because he wanted to be a cartoonist, an artist, and his dad forced him to study other subjects. Salvador [another student] has problems at home because nobody cares about him, he is a bright child but nobody cares, so he is lonely. And there was another boy that the cooperating teacher told me he wrote an essay in psychology and it's about how he wanted to kill himself. It's terrible, depressing.

–Carmen, Philosophy

Yo estudié en un colegio emblemático, y ahora voy a uno. [...] Yo que estuve en ese sistema, y creo que es terrible porque les mandan tareas enormes para la casa, todos las hacen. Están todos muy metidos en que tienen que saber todo lo que dice el profesor en todas las áreas, porque si no se humillan entre ellos mismos. Para mí eso es terrible, pero ellos están acostumbrados a eso, están siempre estresados.

I studied at an emblematic school, and now I'm at an emblematic school, and for me it was very shocking. [...] I was in that system, and I think it is terrible because they give them a huge amount of homework, everyone does it. They are all very into learning everything the teacher says in every subject, because otherwise they humiliate each other. It seems terrible to me, but they are used to it, they are always stressed out.

–Cony, History

Chapter 5: How Knowledge of Students' Contexts Impacts Preservice Teachers' Preparation

As established above, the way in which preservice teachers think about teaching can be traced to their own learning experiences and their schooling. Nonetheless, their formal teacher preparation and the school contexts in which they are placed also impact their teaching conceptions and the ways they plan and execute their early teaching experiences. While the findings of this study support previous findings on the power of teaching preconceptions, they also suggest the beginning of a changing process that could lead to a deeper transformation regarding pre service teachers' perspectives.

In the following pages, I will describe how the seven preservice teachers have adjusted their frameworks and embraced contextual aspects while learning to teach during their practicum. The first category (*Adjusting Frameworks*) is based on dimensions (codes) such as testing prior knowledge and beliefs, coping with challenges posed by real school environments, learning from initial pedagogical interventions in classrooms, and differentiating their teaching practices and styles from other preexisting ones. The second category (*Embracing Contexts*) is centered on a description of teaching strategies and resources, creativity development, and pedagogical (didactic) transpositions.

This is followed by a comprehensive analysis of these processes as they relate to a larger question of the impact of contextual aspects on preservice teachers' thinking, planning, and actual teaching. Each of the categories, *Adjusting Frameworks* and *Embracing Contexts*, is discussed separately and in detail using the previously mentioned individual codes from each category for specific points and examples.

Adjusting Frameworks

Each preservice teacher came with his/her own framework with regard to what it means to teach and learn. Certainly, such frameworks influenced the ways they faced the process of teacher education and provided answers to the challenges that arose. With this category, I aim to describe the changes in preservice teachers' frameworks during practicum. Findings show that, despite what the literature has established about the stability of teachers' prior experiences, beliefs, or opinions about teacher learning and practices (Lortie, 1975; Pajares, 1992), in this study they evolved and shifted when the preservice teachers encountered specific contexts.

Testing preconceptions. This first dimension refers to preservice teachers' experience of confronting their prior knowledge and beliefs with their teacher preparation coursework, on the one hand, and field experiences at school placements, on the other. Initially, most of the participants confirmed assertions from the literature and acknowledged the influence of their past school experiences on their initial views on teaching.

Category: **Adjusting Frameworks.**

The process through which preservice teachers confront what they bring to and what they encounter in the process of learning to teach. In this process, their preconceptions are challenged by what they find in school placements.

Sub-categories:

- **Testing Preconceptions**
- Reality Shock
- Learning by Practicing
- Differentiation

Bueno, cuando yo era alumna y hasta hace muy poco tiempo pensaba que la forma más fácil de aprender era como yo había aprendido en el colegio, que era la forma súper deductiva y yo encontraba que eso estaba bien, para mí no estaba mal.

Well, when I was a student and until very recently, I thought that the easiest way to learn was how I had learned at school, it was a super deductive method and I found that it was fine for me, there was nothing wrong with it.

–Alicia, Language & Communication

Yo pensé “chuta, al final lo que pesa más en nosotros es cómo a nosotros nos han enseñado que todos los libros que podamos leer sobre cómo se enseña, de verdad.” Yo creo que no voy a encontrar un cambio en mi manera de ser profesora si yo estoy exigiendo que me enseñen a evaluar cómo me han enseñado siempre, [...] y lo hacemos todo el tiempo y los seguimos reproduciendo.

I thought, "Damn, in the end the thing that affects us the most is how we were taught, more than all the books we can read about how to teach, really." I doubt I will make any changes in my way of being a teacher if I am demanding that they evaluate me the same old way [...] and we do that all the time and continue reproducing it.

–Luna, Visual Arts

Teacher educators also confirmed the impact of preconceptions and prior knowledge, particularly when preservice teachers enter the teacher education program after four years of a bachelor program with a high academic level. An example of this view on the part of teacher educators can be found in the following quote:

A ellos les marca mucho el cómo aprendieron en su licenciatura. Les marca mucho, mucho, mucho, y en tres semestres [en el DEP] no se alcanza a contrarrestar totalmente eso.

They are very influenced by how they learned in their bachelor's degree. They are very, very, very influenced by that, and in three semesters [at DEP] you cannot undo all of that.

–English Teacher Educator

Nonetheless, once prospective teachers began the teacher preparation process in the DEP program, readings of specialized pedagogical literature, coursework activities, and dialogue with instructors and peers, among other elements, impacted their perspectives to the point that their perspectives began to change and they recognized that their teaching conceptions needed to evolve.

Pensé que [enseñar] era algo mucho más técnico, que era algo con fórmulas, así como recetas y como que esperaba recibir el recetario pedagógico, en verdad. No me daba cuenta de su complejidad.

I thought teaching was something much more technical, something with formulas and recipes, like I was really expecting to receive the pedagogy recipe book. I did not realize how complex it really is.

–Carmen, Philosophy

Sí, de hecho yo tuve un vuelco dentro del tema de lo que yo pensaba que era enseñar. Porque yo tenía una forma de enseñar que era la que a mí me habían enseñado en el colegio, que era transmitir conocimientos y yo aprendía, y el que se lo aprende mejor es el mejor alumno.

Yes, in fact I had change of mind on the subject, on what I thought teaching was all about. Because I had a way of teaching that was the way they taught me in school which was like they transmit knowledge and you learn, and the one who learns best is the best student.

–Cony, History

What they knew and believed before entering the DEP teacher education program was not only influenced by their schooling and informal learning experiences, but also by their recently completed 4-year academic degree. In order to be admitted at DEP, candidates must have a bachelor's degree in one of the disciplines consistent with the Chilean school curriculum. Although it is assumed that preservice teachers are specialists in their fields and are ready to start pedagogical studies, it is not guaranteed that their academic specialization matches what the schools have a need for. Moreover, their encounters with school reality through non-participant observation taught them the relative importance of their specialized knowledge and the increasing relevance of schools' and students' contexts.

Hay que adecuarse al contexto. Da lo mismo cuanto yo sepa, tengo que saber entender el contexto en el que estoy.

We must adapt to the context. It doesn't matter how much I know, I have to understand the context that's around me.

–Susana, English

Preservice teachers also tested preconceptions based around different people's beliefs about specific schools. Despite their own superficial knowledge about school placements, candidates did research on their institutions and received numerous references from previous cohorts, practicum supervisors, the general public, and teachers working in these schools. In cases like emblematic schools, the media has created

institutional profiles based on standardized test results and recent news related to student protests in favor of public education. All these elements painted an expected picture of schools that preservice teachers confronted when entering those hallways and classrooms. Many times, these preconceptions were dismantled after the preservice teachers became familiar with particular classes and students.

Le conté a otras personas que iba a estar en un colegio emblemático y todos me dijeron “ah, pero qué maravilloso porque vas a poder hacer otro nivel de trabajo ahí, vas a poder sacar reflexiones más profundas” [...] y yo dije “voy a encontrarme con puros niños mateos, estudiosos, y van a saber o más que yo en algunas cosas”, pero al fin y al cabo cuando entre a la sala y los vi que son niños y que están interesados en otras cosas también.

I told others that I would be in a emblematic school and they all said "oh, that's wonderful because you'll be able to do another level of work there, you'll be able to have deeper reflections" [...] and I said to myself, "I'm going to be working with all bookish, studious children, and they probably know more than me about some issues," but in the end, when I entered the classroom, I saw that they were children interested in other things too.

–Cony, History

Sobre el “colegio uno”, las profesoras encargadas de las prácticas [en la universidad] y los mismos compañeros que venían de antes me decían que era un colegio flaite, que se parecía mucho al estaba, donde habían cabros que no querían estudiar. Y cuando yo llegué al curso era una realidad completamente distinta. La mayoría de los chiquillos estaban como bastante comprometidos con mi clases [...] Supuestamente no hay grandes diferencias socioeconómicas y culturales entre los dos colegios, pero en la práctica yo veo algo distinto.

About “school one,” university professors in charge of the practicum and also classmates who were there before told me it was a bad school, similar to the previous one where students didn't want to study. And when I got to the class, it was a completely different reality. Most of the kids were pretty committed in my classes. [...] Supposedly, there are no major socio-economic and cultural differences between the two schools, but in practice I saw something else.

–Vicente, History

En el colegio H yo entraba a la sala de profesores y era “ya, que estos que son tontos, que no saben nada...” y yo igual me contaminaba un poco con eso. [...] Esa visión la perdí cuando me cambié al colegio M. Ahí no hay ningún cabro tonto, es un cabro que aprenden diferente nomás.

At the H school, I entered the staff room and people would say, "These kids are dumb, they don't know anything..." and I got contaminated with that. [...] I lost that vision when I went to M school. There are no dumb kids, they just learn differently.

Regarding actual teaching during the first stage of the practicum, preconceptions began to be transformed regarding lesson planning and teaching styles that preservice teachers had in mind when they started the program. At the beginning, inexperience and the need for recipes to help maintain a structure worked against what the contexts demanded. In addition, the strategies proposed by the teacher education program were out of sync with the personal characteristics of each preservice teacher. As the following comment reflects, this is a stage of adjustment that was difficult to overcome:

Al principio, cuando partí con esta onda súper estructurada, mis planificaciones eran mi ley. O sea, cuando estaba planificando era todo muy apegado al currículum con muchos libros sobre la mesa, buscando cómo esquematizar los conceptos. [...] Hacía un punteo muy rígido de lo que tenía que ser la planificación, y después yo iba mirando ese cuaderno donde tenía escrito todo lo que tenía que decir.

Las didácticas que son más innovadoras siempre van a chocar con nosotros en el sentido de que para llevarlas a cabo se necesita tener una confianza, se necesita ser creativo.

Hay como elementos ahí personales que influyen en la recepción que nosotros tenemos de la didáctica y en cómo nos planteamos

At first, when I started with this super structured mood, my plans were law. So, when I was planning, it was all very connected to the curriculum with a lot of books on the table, seeing how I could outline the concepts. [...] I made a very rigid outline of where my plan was leading, and then I was looking at that notebook where I had written everything I had to say.

The teaching methods that are more innovative are always going to be hardest for us in the sense that you need to have confidence, you need to be creative. There are personal elements that influence our reception of any teaching and the way we plan.

–Carmen, Philosophy

Reality shock. This second dimension has to do with the conflicting encounters preservice teachers had with the school world and the various contextual aspects that each school encompassed. Although every type of school challenges candidates' expectations of what the practicum will be, most of the disturbing experiences registered in my data collection took place in municipal or semi-private schools serving students from low-income families.

At first, the reality shock occurred when observing the culture and needs of a school and its students. The observation period is part of the initial stage of teacher preparation and is designed to enable the “reading of the school placement” that would be used in the near future to design a pedagogical intervention for the following semester. However, in several cases, that kind of diagnosis did not ensure the anticipated success, and the reality shock became evident when preservice teachers taught their first lessons. Below, I have selected some participants’ comments on the challenges of the teaching and learning process that emerged as discouraging and frustrating.

Category: Adjusting Frameworks.

The process through which preservice teachers confront what they bring to and what they encounter in the process of learning to teach. In this process, their preconceptions are challenged by what they find in school placements.

Sub-categories:

- Testing Preconceptions
- **Reality Shock**
- Learning by Practicing
- Differentiation

Cuando yo llegué al colegio S, nos estaban incitando a hacer cosas distintas, [pero] es muy difícil transformar las prácticas pedagógicas. [...] Se adopta la misma actitud pasiva que se adopta en otras asignaturas, [los estudiantes] adoptan modos de trabajo más tradicional, una pasividad absoluta.

When I arrived at S school, they were encouraging us to do things differently, [but] it is very difficult to transform teaching practices. [...] The students adopt the same passive attitude as in other subjects, students adopt traditional modes of work— an absolutely passive attitude.

–Carmen, Philosophy

A mí me cuesta que [los estudiantes] hablen, y yo necesito que hablen y me cuenten lo que vimos en la clase anterior (gesto de frustración) pero no dicen nada. [Además] mis cabros de cuarto medio no saben leer. Yo creo que esa fue mi principal dificultad, no poder trabajar con documentos, demorarnos mucho leyendo una diapositiva, y también dándoles el tiempo para que lean. [...] ¿Cómo, como profesor de historia, te puedes hacer cargo de niños que no saben leer? ¿Cómo?!

It’s hard to get [students] to talk, and I need them to talk and tell me what we did in the previous class [frustration gesture] but they don’t say anything. [Also] my kids in 12th grade don’t know how to read. I think that was my main difficulty, being unable to work with documents, spending so much time reading a slide, giving them the time to read. [...] How, as a history teacher, can you do anything with students who cannot read? How?!

–Paula, History

Preservice teachers became frustrated not only when their expectations as experts in a field were challenged, but also when they were confronted with students' abilities and needs. In these vulnerable contexts, even trying to lower expectations and follow the Education Ministry guidelines for a basic curriculum resulted in disappointment. Even the suggested activities offered in official textbooks can seem excessive for minoritized students.

En la clase ocupé la unidad del currículum oficial pero como pretexto para hacer otra cosa. Dije "nica voy a enseñarles esto, nica les voy a contar sobre quién es Rodin si con suerte saben lo que es volumen" ¿cachai?

In that class, I used the unit in the official curriculum as an excuse to do something else. I said, "I won't teach this, no way can I tell them about who Rodin is when they barely even know what volume is," you know?

–Luna, Visual Arts

Los libros que entrega el Ministerio [de Educación] hacen referencias a la vida de la gente de Inglaterra o de Estados Unidos -y no está mal porque una lengua va de la mano con la cultura, pero me parece que es una falta de respeto que ese sea el único énfasis que tenga el inglés para chiquillos que con suerte salen de vacaciones en el verano a la playa y uno les va a hablar de cuando hagan el Check-in en el aeropuerto? [...] me parece que es una falta de respeto y además no tiene que ver con ellos tampoco.

The books distributed by the Ministry [of Education] make references to the lives of people of England or the United States –which is not a bad thing, because language goes hand in hand with culture, but I find it disrespectful that this is the only application English has for kids that rarely go to the beach on vacations, and you are going to talk about when how to check in at the airport? [...] I think it's disrespectful, and it has nothing to do with them.

–Susana, English

The workshop for practice and inquiry is a privileged space where preservice teachers share their feelings of frustration about reality shock. Professors in charge of these workshops confirmed that preservice teachers are continuously adjusting their expectations and personal teaching frameworks due to the challenges that real students and classroom environments present:

Tengo recuerdos recientes del shock que muchos tienen al comenzar a hacer clases. Es el shock que consiste en percibir que algo anda mal pero no saber bien qué anduvo mal. Quizás tiene que ver con la percepción de que su clase no fue efectiva en el sentido de

que los alumnos no estaban enamorados de su clase ni completamente atentos. Ellos [los estudiantes de pedagogía] llegan a la clase con muchas expectativas y sin experiencia previa y con un esquema de clase no sometido a la crítica.

I have recent memories of the shock that many of us had when we started teaching. It is the shock that comes from perceiving that something is wrong but not knowing it was. Maybe it has to do with the perception that their lesson was not effective in the sense that the students were not in love with the lesson and not completely attentive. They [teacher candidates] go to classrooms with high expectations but without previous experience and a lesson plan that has not been subject to criticism.

–Teacher Educator, Workshop of Practice and Inquiry II

In most cases, disappointment also occurred when observing cooperating teachers’ practices and teaching styles. In general, these preservice teachers had a fairly critical view of experienced teachers, an issue that I will delve into later in the sub-category *Differentiation*. However, future teachers eventually understood that frustration must give way to adaptation. The result was that they they did not lower expectations, but instead searched for pedagogical alternatives according to the characteristics of the students they served.

Learning by practicing. This third dimension refers to the learning process that preservice teachers experienced from being in direct contact with students. As a counterpoint of learning by watching experienced teachers give lessons, participants stressed the importance of practicing teaching to actually learn how to instruct different kinds of students across ethnic, class, and gender categories. Learning to teach in today’s challenging contexts requires not only skills,

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Sub-categories:

- Testing Preconceptions
- Reality Shock
- **Learning by Practicing**
- Differentiation

knowledge, and dispositions from candidates, but also the capacity to judge when, where, and how to use those features in direct interaction with learners.

Since little knowledge exists about how teacher education might serve to teach this ability, preservice teachers' perceptions of their learning experiences gave them a hint of how to transform their practicum in order to better prepare for this endeavor in the future. This study's participants explicitly highlighted the importance of beginning to actually teach as soon as possible. Despite the usefulness of the observation period, authentic teaching episodes increased candidates' chances to develop a teaching approach and gain confidence.

Los he conocido [a los estudiantes] mucho más haciendo clases que cuando estaba en observación, porque yo siento que cuando uno observa en verdad no tiene un situación activa. Cuando uno hace clase con ellos y llega al conocimiento que uno tiene cuando hace clases, entonces ahí uno conoce lo que le gusta, lo que les interesa, y uno ve los ojitos de cuando se asombran o de cuando se aburren y que no quieren hacer nada. Eso, uno lo ve más como profesor que como observante.

I've gotten to know them [students] a lot more by teaching than when I was in the observation period, because I feel that when you observe, you don't have an active role. When you teach them and get to know them that way, then you find out what they like, what interests them, and you see their sparkling eyes when they are surprised, or their bored faces when they don't want to do anything. That's it, you see it more as a teacher than as an observer.

–Paula, History

La práctica la veo como la instancia en que uno realmente vive lo que uno ha leído acá [en el DEP] porque acá todo es muy teórico. Entonces, acá [en el DEP] hay una captación intelectual que solamente en el colegio se transforma en aprendizaje.

Practicum is, for me, the instance where you really live what you've read here [at DEP] because here everything is so theoretical. So, here [at DEP] it's an intellectual uptake that is transformed into learning only when you enter the school.

–Carmen, Philosophy

These data confirm a certain perception of preservice teachers: that the education they received was put in play more in practicum than in their theoretical preparation. The same point will be explored further when I describe the dimension of *Complaints and Demands* (Chapter 6). In addition, a logical consequence of having a real chance to

practice teaching, to succeed and make mistakes, is to develop a feeling of accomplishment or self-efficacy. Once teachers have understood what works or does not work in specific teaching situations, they are also aware of developing an empowering capacity that makes them better teachers.

Lo que aprendí en el colegio M es la desentwicklung que logré y que luego logré finalmente llevar a cabo mi clase. Yo creo que eso de sentirme ahora tan empoderada nuevamente de mi rol... siento que si volviera a hacerlo, sería una profesora muy distinta de la que fui [el semestre pasado].

What I learned in school M is the level of confidence I reached and finally I managed to utilize in class. I think that feeling empowered again in my role... I feel that if I could go back and have the chance to do it again, I would be a very different teacher in comparison to what I was [last semester].

–Alicia, Language & Communication

Differentiation. This fourth dimension refers to preservice teachers' frequent activity of comparing cooperating teachers' pedagogical and content knowledge to their own. Because they are specialists in their disciplines and they have current contact with a variety of pedagogical literature, preservice teachers are constantly making contrasts between what they presume to be a progressive, constructivist approach to teaching and old traditional, deductive lectures. These comparisons mainly involved three topics: use of strategies and resources, updating curricular content, and classroom management.

Category: **Adjusting Frameworks.**

The process through which preservice teachers confront what they bring to and what they encounter in the process of learning to teach. In this process, their preconceptions are challenged by what they find in school placements.

Sub-categories:

- Testing Preconceptions
- Reality Shock
- Learning by Practicing
- **Differentiation**

First, the following comment represents preservice teachers' distinction in using IT technologies and conducting discussions in the classroom:

Bueno ella [la profesora guía] usaba el PowerPoint, diapositivas con mucho texto y las leía. Yo uso diapositivas, sí, pero yo hago esquemas y los explico. Esa es una diferencia muy importante, porque ella no explicaba la materia sino que la hablaba y no se entendía mucho la verdad, hasta a mí me costaba entenderle algunos conceptos [...] y la otra diferencia es el tema del diálogo; yo hablo mucho en clase con ellos y de repente los chiquillos se ponen a debatir y yo dejo que fluya.

Well she [the co-teacher] used the PowerPoint slides with lots of text and she would read it. I use slides, yes, but I make diagrams and explain them. That is a very important difference, because she did not explain the content; she just talked, and it was hard to understand her, truly. Even I found it hard to understand some concepts. [...] And the other difference is dialogue; I talk to the students a lot in class and suddenly they start a discussion, and I let it flow.

–Cony, History

The second comment addresses preservice teachers' perception of possessing deeper or more updated disciplinary knowledge due to their recent degree completion:

La profesora del colegio técnico llevaba mucho tiempo haciendo clases, era demasiado estructurada y si la desviaban un poco de la clase se volvía loca. Y el otro profesor [...] era como súper disperso, súper desordenado, y también sólo utilizaba el libro de clase. Como que su formación como historiador si se puede decir así, no existía, y yo siento que eso también influye mucho después en las percepciones que tienen los estudiantes de lo que es un profesor. No es porque yo intente ser un profesor seco, pero si yo me doy cuenta que les puedo enseñar muchas cosas.

The teacher in the technical school had been teaching for a long time, she was too structured and if the students diverted a little, she went crazy. And the other teacher [...] was like super scattered, super messy, and she only used the textbook. It was like his education as a historian, if I may say so, did not exist, and I feel that influenced a lot of students' perception of what a teacher is. It's not that I think I'm a great teacher, but I realize that I am able to teach them many things.

–Vicente, History

The third comment illustrates preservice teachers' critical views of old-fashioned, traditional strategies for classroom management and attitudes towards students:

Un día, al término de la clase, la profesora [guía] me retó porque una niña no estaba sentada [...] Yo pienso que en verdad da lo mismo porque no estaba haciendo desorden y estaba respondiendo bien a la clase. [...] Y [la profesora] me dio pseudo-consejos como "nunca te hagas amiga de ellos" y "nunca reconozcas un error". Entonces ante eso yo no tenía tanta libertad para enseñar como yo quería. [...] Hay un tema generacional, no menor. No digo que los profesores jóvenes seamos mejores por eso, pero me parece que uno no puede morir haciendo clases.

One day, at the end of the class, the [cooperating] teacher lectured me because a girl was not sitting down [...] I think it really does not matter because she was not being disorderly and was responding well to my instruction. [...] And the teacher gave me

pseudo-tips like "Never be friends with the students" and "never acknowledge that you made a mistake." So, I felt I did not have much freedom to teach as I wanted. [...] There is a generational issue, and it's not a minor issue. I'm not saying that we young teachers are better, but I think that you cannot teach yourself into the grave.

–Susana, English

Besides differentiation factors related to the need for freedom to develop their own teaching and class management strategies, preservice teachers highlighted other distinctions regarding generational gaps and pedagogical styles. For example, some preservice teachers perceived what seemed to be tactics of emotional detachment that veteran teachers had adopted in order to avoid wear and stress.

[Estaba] la profesora que se desvinculaba de las problemáticas extra que no tenían que ver con el ámbito académico. Esa profe hacía sus clases maravillosas, seguía sus pautas, no había ningún problema en ese sentido, ella era como súper conectada con el mundo juvenil (tono irónico), súper, pero los problemas del contexto permanecían invisibles tanto para ella como para ellos [los estudiantes].

[There was] the teacher who detached herself from extra issues that had nothing to do with academics. That teacher had wonderful lessons, on track with her guidelines, there was no problem in that sense, she was like super connected with the youth world (ironically), super, but contextual problems remained invisible for her and for them [the students].

–Carmen, Philosophy

Other comments attempted to tell preservice teachers that one must assume a distant attitude in the name of authority. For instance, the following quote emphasizes a comparison with other institutions that prepare teachers in traditional ways, assuming a vertical relationship between prospective teachers and their students. DEP candidates are sent to school placements where candidates from other universities also attend. They were able to view their own identity in contrast to that of other programs they perceived as more conservative.

[Un practicante] de la Universidad P me decía, "tú no debieras tener tanta confianza con los chiquillos, tú no deberías hacer esto, tú no deberías hacer esto otro. No sé por qué te quieren tanto". Me decía, "¿y tú puedes hacer clases"? [Y yo contestaba] "Sí, puedo hacer clase, si los chiquillos se portan bien. El problema no es ése" le dije. "Si tú entrai y crees que porque vai con corbata y porque eres profe de historia los cabros te

van a respetar por tu presencia, déjame decirte que ¡todos esos cabros tienen más presencia que tú! ¡Esos cabros sí que imponen respeto!"

[A candidate] from P University told me, "you should not be so close to the kids, you should not do this, you should not do that. I don't know why they like you." He said, "Can you teach there? [And I answered] "Yes, I can, the kids are well behaved. That is not the problem." I said, "If you go there and think that because you wear a tie and are a history teacher, kids will respect you, just for your presence, let me tell you— they have a lot more presence than you! These kids really demand respect! "

—Luna, Visual Arts

To summarize, this category encompasses what the seven participants experienced in terms of the evolution of their prior knowledge, beliefs, and opinions about the meaning of teaching. Four dimensions (built on analytical codes) capture the data related to *Adjusting Frameworks: testing preconceptions, reality shock, learning by practicing, and differentiation*. These four dimensions helped me to understand how preservice teachers' views on teaching evolved during diverse stages of the practicum.

In short, preservice teachers learned by confronting their preconceptions with the DEP teacher preparation and field experiences; contrasting their expectations with challenging and disturbing experiences at schools, their direct contact with students in actual teaching activities, and identifying differences between themselves and in-service teachers as well as the approaches used by other teacher education programs.

Embracing Contexts

This category of analysis addresses not only the acquisition of knowledge of students' contexts but also the processes through which the seven preservice teachers transformed contextual aspects into pedagogical assets for their incipient teaching. It helps to understand to what extent these participants were able to incorporate what they learned during diverse stages of practicum into their lesson planning and teaching practice. To various degrees, the findings show that all participants were impacted by students' backgrounds and their manifestations inside classrooms in such a way that they

were able to make use of that knowledge in order to develop culturally responsive lessons. The following three dimensions represent specific ways in which preservice teachers addressed this endeavor.

Strategies and resources. This first dimension involves preservice teachers' planning of the teaching and learning process, whereby they choose activities and resources that will be used to achieve their pedagogical objectives in a certain context. Interestingly, this dimension shows how preservice teachers started to think as teachers in various ways such as: diagnosing students' needs, organizing the teaching and learning process according to identified needs, stimulating prior knowledge and connecting with new learning, and using real situations from students' environments to stimulate learning. For instance, the excerpts below demonstrate how preservice teachers took students' current lives and concerns into account when planning their initial stage of teaching in conjunctino with their subject matter:

Category: **Embracing Contexts.**

Addresses not only the acquisition of knowledge of students' contexts, but also the processes through which preservice teachers transform contextual aspects into pedagogical assets for their incipient teaching.

Sub-categories:

- **Strategies and Resources**
- Creativity in Progress
- Transposition

La semana pasada [los estudiantes] hablaron sobre cómo se sienten en el colegio, de que se sienten muy poco libres respecto a cómo tienen que vestir, las cosas que tienen que aprender y por qué las tienen que aprender. Entonces quiero agarrar ese tema y llevarlo al tema del indígena, porque al indígena también se le dice cómo tiene que vestir, cómo tiene que pensar, en las cosas que tiene que aprender durante la colonia. Les conté la idea y me dijeron que sí, que querían hablar de eso.

Last week [students] talked about how they feel at school, about what they have to wear, the things they have to learn and why they need to learn them. So, I want to grab this question and bring it to the indigenous issue, because indigenous people were also told how to dress, how to think, things they had to learn during colonization. I presented the idea to them and they said yes, they wanted to talk about it.

—Cony, History

Estuvieron paralizados tanto tiempo con el tema de las movilizaciones. Entonces tomé eso también, tome también sus problemas, de cómo la sociedad presiona al individuo, tomé también todas las tensiones que yo veía en ellos que estaban entre ellos y la sociedad [...] Entonces, a partir de sus propios discursos fuimos encontrando las tensiones entre el individuo y la sociedad que eran parte del curriculum.

They were unable to move forward a lot of time because there were protests and demonstrations. So I took that into account, also their problems, how society pushes the individual. I also thought about all the tensions that I saw between them and society. [...] So, from their own discourses, we found tensions between the individual and society that were in the curriculum.

–Carmen, Philosophy

As part of their efforts to connect with students from diverse backgrounds and incorporate their needs and interests into their teaching, preservice teachers took the risk of experimenting with different types of instruction using various strategies such as guest speakers, multimedia, and games. Although preservice teachers also used traditional, well-known learning activities (e.g., study guides, expository lessons), they made considerable use of alternative strategies in most cases to capture students' attention.

Certainly, alternative strategies and resources cannot constitute the norm during the entire practicum. They become salient examples that, according to participants, gave them powerful lessons on how to incorporate students' backgrounds and improve their teaching. A very illustrative case is Alicia who, after having difficulty connecting with a specific group of students in her Language class, experienced a significant step forward:

Cuando le comenté al profesor la visita de mi amigo [rapero], me dijo que era muy buena idea. Porque yo había notado que algunos chiquillos les gustaba el Rap... y yo dije "ya, aquí los puedo enganchar". [...] Entonces también lo hice como un recurso didáctico para engancharlos con algo, y lo logré porque ahora tengo la atención de ellos.

When I told the cooperating teacher about inviting my [rapper] friend, he told me it was a very good idea. Because I had noticed that some kids liked rap ... and I said "OK, here I can engage them". [...] Then, I did it as an educational resource to engage them with something, and I succeeded because then I had their attention.

–Alicia, Language & Communication

As in the case of rap that is able to capture the attention of a specific group of students, in many other teaching situations, the use of popular culture and the Internet by the preservice teachers was almost guaranteed to succeed. Regardless of the subject matter that the curriculum indicated should be taught, they found that the use of more elaborate resources (e.g., conceptual maps) or activities (e.g., debates) is facilitated when they first used warm-up activities involving IT or videos. Findings show that multimedia constituted the preferred resource of the seven participants.

Conocerlos [a los estudiantes] pasa por saber cuáles son sus intereses. [...] Siempre va a haber un porcentaje importante dentro de un curso en que sus intereses van hacia algún representante de la cultura angloparlante, cantantes, actores y libros, siempre. Internet es parte de sus vidas ahora. Les pedí que me anotaran un cantante, un libro y una película que le gustará, esperando que fuera en inglés obviamente, y fue una cuestión que funcionó al tiro.

Knowing the students involves learning about their interests. [...] There will always be a significant percentage in a class whose interests are related to a representative of the Anglo culture like singers, actors, and books, always. The Internet is part of their lives now. I asked them to write down a singer, a book, and a movie they like, hoping it was something English, and it worked right away.

–Susana, English

Los chicos pasan con los audífonos puestos. Entonces, yo me pregunté cómo hago para que se saquen los audífonos sin que yo los esté retando a cada rato. Bueno, la solución más básica es ponerles un video, tener siempre preparado algún material audiovisual y música para que los chicos estén obligados a sacarse los audífonos y tomar atención. Siento que más que el objetivo propiamente didáctico del video, se convirtió en una herramienta mía para salvar la clase a veces.

The kids spend so much time with headphones on. So, I wondered: What can I do so they take their headphones off without yelling at them all the time? Well, the most basic solution was to play a video, to always have some audiovisual material and music prepared for the kids so they are obliged to remove their headphones and pay attention. I feel that more than playing a didactic role, videos became a tool for saving my lesson, sometimes.

–Paula, History

[Yo hacía] muchos mapas conceptuales, hacía mapas conceptuales para mí y para la clases y trabajaba mucho en torno a eso. [Pero] para iniciar una clase creo que lo más fructífero es imágenes, video, diálogo, o sea lo que moviliza afectos y concepciones previas. Lo peor que se puede hacer para iniciar una clase fue lo que hice antes con los mapas conceptuales porque viene un montón de aparataje que nadie entiende.

[I used to do] a lot of concept maps, I made concept maps for myself and for the lessons and did a lot of work with them. [But] to start a lesson, I think it is more fruitful to use images, video, dialogue, that is, what mobilizes emotions and preconceptions. The worst thing you can do to start a lesson is what I did before with concept maps, because that introduces some topics that nobody understands.

–Carmen, Philosophy

While it is true that serving diverse groups of students (individuals) would require a variety of resources and activities, it is noteworthy that multimedia (short videos, films, etc.) are seen as the predominant successful resource. However, preservice teachers were aware of the risks of using only one type of platform. The following excerpt exemplifies preservice teachers' conclusion that although audiovisuals captured many students' attention, its use and its reference to pop culture or arts should vary.

Cuando estoy usando un recurso [didáctico], yo sé que no voy a llegar directamente a todos con eso, porque mi grupo es tan diverso. Yo sé que en ese momento estoy tomando la atención de un grupo, pero en la otra clase voy a tomar la tensión del otro, y la otra clase voy a tomar la atención del otro, y va a llegar el día en que finalmente voy a poder tomar la atención de todos.

When I'm using a [teaching] resource, I know that I will not reach all of them directly, because my group is so diverse. I know that at that moment I'm getting one group's attention, but in the next lesson I will get other students' attention, and then others, so eventually, there will finally come a day when I get everyone's attention.

–Alicia, Language & Communication

A noteworthy phenomenon is that, although the teaching methods (*Didáctica General, Didáctica de Especialidad*) or psychology-oriented courses (*Aprendizaje y Cognición*) taught in DEP always referred to the theory of multiple intelligences, it is only from practical experience and contact with students that preservice teachers saw the embodied theory and highlighted its importance. This finding is directly related to the dimension of *complaints and demands of practical preparation* that will be addressed later.

Creativity in progress. As a result of the search for strategies and instructional resources that facilitate the use of students' contexts for better teaching, preservice teachers not only sought options within the material that already existed, but also faced the challenge of adapting or creating new learning activities and/or resources. In accordance with their transformationist attitudes, many concluded that it was necessary to invent their own teaching methods since each context and classroom were unique. However, both preservice teachers and teacher educators recognized that "one of the more diminished characteristics among us is creativity" (Teacher Educator, English).

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Sub-categories:

- Strategies and Resources
- **Creativity in Progress**
- Transposition

Most DEP teacher educators declared that they see teachers as reflective practitioners, going beyond mere technical or even professionalization approaches. From their perspective, DEP teachers should be creative educators that take advantage of the opportunities provided by different contexts. Unfortunately, from the teacher educators' stance, preservice teachers struggled to face innovation and realize their dreams of change. In addition, they stressed how difficult this was in schools that focused on learning outcomes (standardized testing) and did not welcome creative teaching. Both sides of this struggle for creativity are exemplified in the following teacher educators' comments:

Estamos sujetos a un modelo estructurado donde no hay mucha cabida para el aporte creativo del docente, para replantear las propuestas pedagógicas, para reconstruirlas. Es una mirada muy subordinada al currículum tal cual está, muy ligada al aparato de gestión del colegio, llámese UTP y dirección. Ellos son, más bien, vigilantes de que el

currículum será transmitido estrictamente tal cual está planteado. Hay pocos espacios para pensar, reconstruir, inventar e imaginar.

We are subject to a structured model where there is not much room for teachers to have creative input or rethink the extant educational proposals, to reconstruct them. Their view is very subordinate to the curriculum as it stands, very tied to the school management apparatus, the administrative staff. They prefer to ensure that the curriculum is transmitted strictly as it is written. There are few areas where you can think, rebuild, invent, and imagine.

–Teacher Educator, Philosophy

El año pasado les propusimos a los estudiantes [de pedagogía]: “hagan proyectos, imagínense un proyecto de un día, de una mañana con sus alumnos, lo que ustedes crean que le hace falta a su grupo.” Y ellos decían “No, es que no, es que la lógica de la escuela”. ¡Miles de excusas! Mucha crítica de lo que hay pero no hay propuestas, no hay imaginación, no hay creatividad, y ese es un tema que me tiene súper preocupada.

Last year we proposed to the students [preservice teachers]: “create projects, imagine a project for a day, a morning with their students, whatever you think your group needs.” And they said, “No, it’s better not to, because of the logic of the school.” Thousands of excuses! So much criticism of what schools are doing but no proposals, no imagination, no creativity, and this is an issue that worries me a lot.

–Teacher Educator, Workshop of Practice and Inquiry

The workshop mentioned in the previous comment took place in the second semester of DEP’s teacher education program. At that time, candidates had moved beyond the stage of mere non-participant observation and were beginning their first teaching intervention in high school classrooms. Therefore, difficulties with creativity seemed natural and, when a creative strategy succeeded, it brought up even more challenges because teachers did not have a wide repertoire of teaching strategies yet. Consequently, they assumed the problem was their weakness in the creative process and expected themselves to evolve as they moved towards the end of the program.

Crear mis propios recursos didácticos? Mmmm Yo creo que es fundamental pero también es lo más difícil. Porque uno está haciendo la práctica no más, y uno tiende a repetir ciertas cosas, y para innovar uno necesita tiempo, más tiempo de permanencia con los cursos que uno tiene por que a lo mejor los recursos que yo ocupo para este tercero medio ni siquiera en el mismo colegio me serviría para el segundo medio.

Create my own teaching resources? Mmmm, I think it's important but it's also the most difficult part. Because one is just doing his/her practicum, and one tends to repeat certain

things, and you need time to innovate, more time spent with the classes you teach and maybe the resources that I use with this 11th grade won't even work in the same school for another grade level.

–Susana, English

[Con el invitado rapero] generé muchas expectativas en los chiquillos y ahora me preguntan “profe, ¿y qué vamos a hacer hoy día?” Así como “¿qué novedad nos trae hoy?” (ríe). Igual eso me ha jugado un poquito en contra porque después de eso igual vuelvo a la clase más tradicional y expositiva, entonces es fome, ¿cachai?

[With the guest rapper] I generated high expectations from the kids and now they ask me “teacher, what are we doing today?” Like, “What’s new for today’s lesson?” (Laughs). It’s like it has played against me a little because after that I’m back to the more traditional and expository lesson style, so it is boring, you know?

–Alicia, Language & Communication

As has been pointed out in the dimensions *learning by practicing* and *strategies and resources* above, the turning point for preservice teachers occurred in direct contact with students, when they were in full charge of the class. Creativity was put into action on the fly, when teachers grasped students’ needs and interests by listening to their voices. Then, a synergy between the need to plan lessons and activities that meet the program requirements and the need to create attractive material for learners emerged. As shown in the following excerpts, creativity is in the process of being developed as it is triggered by the needs of everyday practice:

La idea de crear mi propio cuento, material original surgió en la planificación, buscando recursos, buscando qué es lo que puede llegar a ellos. Yo quería que fuera algo para transmitir a ellos. [...] Lo hice basándome en una experiencia de vida, en inquietudes propias en los procesos que yo ahora estoy pasando y buscar allí una conexión con los chiquillos.

The idea of creating my own story, original material emerged during the lesson planning, seeking resources, seeking what can reach them. I wanted it to be something I could convey to them. [...] I did it based on my life experience, on my own concerns in the processes which I am going through now, so I can find a connection with the kids.

–Carmen, Philosophy

Estaba en la clase de didáctica y se me ocurrió la idea de pedirles un trabajo grupal en donde ellos tenían que imaginar que viajaban por América Latina. Al final me hicieron un video contándome cómo fue su viaje. [...] La primera parte era entregar un escrito de

cómo había sido su viaje, combinando datos reales con la imaginación. Algunos se pusieron fotos con maletas, otros hicieron Photoshop. Ellos me hicieron el video, después lo vimos todos en grupo y luego lo evaluamos en conjunto.

It was the Teaching Methods class and I got the idea to ask them to do a group activity where they had to imagine traveling around Latin America. Finally, they made a video about what their trip was like. [...] The first step was to submit a paper about the trip, combining real data with imagination. Some took photos with suitcases, others used Photoshop. They gave me the video, then we watched them as a group and we jointly evaluated them.

–Paula, History

Transposition. This third dimension takes its name from the concept of didactic transposition exposed by Yves Chevallard (1997). As a parallel concept to Shulman’s (1986) PCK, didactic transposition refers to the mechanism by which teachers "take" knowledge and transform it to be presented to students.

Certainly, human knowledge is grown in the scientific community, and teachers must process that knowledge perfectly in order to teach it to their students. Since *transposition* is a familiar concept to DEP’s preservice teachers, I use it to capture the process through which these content specialists (BA graduates) made their disciplines teachable for a high school level.

Due to their previous disciplinary education, DEP’s preservice teachers carried a "wise content knowledge," but they experienced a transition where they learned how to present that knowledge to their students. During interviews, they often used the colloquial term “lower content to their level” (*bajar los contenidos a su nivel*) to represent their crucial work of embracing students’ prior knowledge, needs, and abilities to plan and enact their teaching. Their *transposition* not only involved using strategies and resources,

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- **Transposition**

but also an attitude change toward learners. As the following comments show, diverse preservice teachers learned to make difficult topics or concepts accessible to students.

Cuando hablé de la política de la ciudadanía, que es bastante compleja, utilicé un video en CNN Chile. [...] Habían palabras y conceptos bastante complejos que los chiquillos no entendían. Entonces yo tuve que tratar de explicárselos a partir de palabras más sencillas, cosas que tenían que ver directamente con la teoría que estábamos planteando sobre los movimientos sociales. Creo que les hizo mucho sentido porque tenían que explicar con sus propias palabras y funcionó bien.

When I spoke of the politics of citizenship, which is quite complex, I used a video on CNN Chile. [...] There were quite complex words and concepts that the kids did not understand. Then, I tried to explain them using simpler words, things that had to do directly with the theory that we were talking about with social movements. I think it made a lot of sense to them because they had to explain it in their own words, and it worked well.

–Vicente, History

Yo tenía que trabajar mi ansiedad y entender que los chiquillos no son los que tienen que ir a mi ritmo, sino que yo debo ir al ritmo de ellos. Yo creo que ese fue el gran, el gran aprendizaje. [Yo me preguntaba] “¿cómo no entienden esto, si es tan fácil?” Pero claro yo soy licenciada en esta cuestión y le dediqué cuatro o cinco años de mi vida y obviamente yo lo entiendo, pero tengo que ser capaz de ver por qué ellos no lo entienden.

I had to work on my anxiety and also understand the kids do not have to follow my rhythm, but I must keep pace with them. I think that was the great, great learning. [I used to ask to myself] "Why can't they understand this, when it's so easy?" Of course, I have a degree in this subject and spent four or five years of my life studying it, so I obviously I understand it, but I have to be able to see what they do not understand.

–Susana, English

The *transposition* process involves making complex content easily understood and learned by students. This is particularly challenging for graduates of humanistic disciplines such as philosophy, history, and Hispanic and English literature at the University of Chile as they are well known for their high academic standard in the country. As graduates from the best humanities department in Chile, these preservice teachers had a difficult time realizing they should stop thinking as experts, and instead develop simple, direct explanations. The success of the high school students' learning lies

in that ability. Paula's and Carmen's narrations exemplify the ways in which rather difficult content was manipulated to be teachable for students in disadvantaged contexts:

Cuando tuve que trabajar con Aristóteles, lo que hice fue volver a leer, leí leí leí leí leí... y después dije "Bueno, acá voy a tener que tomar una decisión y voy a tener que cortar, cortar cosas que estén demás, hacer que la teoría baje para los chiquillos." [...] En términos de poder vislumbrarla al lado de la teoría de Platón y con eso podemos hacer un trabajo paralelo y comparativo entre la teoría de Aristóteles y la teoría de Platón.

When I had to teach Aristotle, what I did was read it again—I read, read, read, read, and read ... and then I said "Well, here I'll have to make a decision and I'll have to cut, cut things that are unnecessary, bringing the theory down to the kids' level" [...] In terms of visualizing it alongside Plato's theory, so we can make a parallel and do comparative work between the theories of Aristotle and Plato.

—Carmen, Philosophy

Yo las primeras clases las hacía muy abstractas y ellos son primero medio y todo tiene que ser un aprendizaje concreto. Por ejemplo, [usé] la desigualdad en Rusia y puse una imagen de un banquete de la nobleza, y ellos dijeron así como "ah, lo están pasando la raja" ... y luego puse una escena campesina, y ellos dijeron algo como "no, ellos son pobres" (imitando el tono). La idea es llegar a eso, a lo concreto.

I first taught very abstract lessons in the 9th grade. Everything has to be concrete learning. For example, [I used] inequality in Russia and put a picture of a banquet of the nobility, and they said like "ah, they're having a great time" ... and then I put up a peasant scene, and they said something like "no, they are poor" (imitating the tone). That's the idea, to be concrete.

—Paula, History

It is important to note that the simplification of abstract concepts through a specific set of didactic methods and resources does not necessarily imply lowering learning expectations. In this case, preservice teachers seemed to emphasize a scaffolding strategy rather than reducing the content to a minimum level. In high school classrooms, university level expertise meets young secondary students' needs and abilities.

In summation, the category *embracing contexts* encompasses three main ways in which DEP secondary preservice teachers in the humanities acquired knowledge of contexts and used it to inform their thinking, planning, and teaching during the practicum. *Strategies and resources*, *creativity in progress*, and *transposition* are the dimensions (based on analytical codes) that respectively describe how these participants: developed

in order to be didactically (pedagogically) appropriate, and situated activities and materials for specific contexts and students; struggled for and achieved alternative teaching methods that adapted or transformed what was available for them; and, transformed “wise knowledge” into teachable content for students to learn according to their grade level.

In this chapter, I have addressed one of my research questions describing how learning about students’ contexts and sociocultural backgrounds informed the ways DEP secondary pre-service teachers thought about teaching, the way they planned their teaching, and the way they actually taught their subject-matter. Each explanatory category –*adjusting frameworks* and *embracing contexts*– has been divided into several dimensions that, based on analytical codes, explain ways in which participants adapted their preconceptions, faced the complexities of real contexts, learned by teaching, built their identity in contrast with their cooperating teachers, developed strategies and resources, worked on developing creative teaching methods, and transposed expert knowledge into teachable content.

Chapter 6: Enabling or Constraining Elements Affecting Preservice Teachers' Pedagogical Use of Students' Contexts

In this chapter, I address the third research question, which seeks out programmatic and personal processes enabling and constraining secondary preservice teachers' pedagogical use of contextual knowledge. The findings are divided in two categories: *Programmatic features* refers to elements of the DEP teacher education program that participants considered relevant in terms of fostering or constraining their growth as effective teachers. *The 'not yet there' status* has to do with personal or even generational characteristics that, in combination with their transitional stage (to be on-the-way), preservice teachers identified as affecting their development as teachers.

Programmatic Features

Before elaborating on participants' perceptions of the DEP program's characteristics, it will be necessary to recall some general aspects about how this program is portrayed for the public. In formal terms, it constitutes a post-baccalaureate or consecutive model aiming to take advantage of university students' previous degree (BA congruent with a specific discipline of the National Curriculum Framework) and allowing them to acquire essential pedagogical knowledge so that they can become professional, reflective educators.

In accordance with the University mission, the DEP program supports the struggle for a just, quality public education for all students. Nonetheless, it acknowledges that its approach does not focus on any one student population, instead preparing teachers for municipal (public), state-subsidized private, or totally private institutions. However, as

data has shown, the preservice teachers' practicum mostly took place in municipal or low-income, subsidized private schools.

One of the main characteristics of the DEP graduate profile is the promotion of a lifelong learning perspective, a permanent enrichment of teacher knowledge, and a strong commitment to the development of autonomy, emphasizing the preparation of reflective practitioners who permanently examine their teaching practices. While this development is preferably based on analysis of preservice teachers' interviews, the following paragraphs describe their viewpoints on this DEP profile and how it displays in reality. Analytical codes that were built on supporting software (MAXQDA) help to conclude that the *programmatic features* category is divided into three dimensions, namely, (1) *program strengths*, (2) *complaints and demands*, and (3) *tutoring*.

Program strengths. This first dimension refers to the programmatic aspects enabling preservice teachers' pedagogical preparation, thus encompasses their positive evaluation of DEP's program. Participants stressed its education/teaching approach, its theoretical vigor in some courses, and its constant provision of spaces for reflection, discussion, sharing, and interpersonal/social learning. In terms of the general approach or DEP philosophy of teacher education, they highlighted its permanent encouragement of an inquiry stance and reflective practice. Since most of the participants came from the same institution (University of Chile), they took this reflective approach for granted, as an essential part

Category: **Programmatic Features.**

Encompasses preservice teachers' perceptions about the main characteristics of the DEP teacher education program that enabled or constrained their preparation as effective teachers.

Sub-categories:

- **Program Strengths**
- Complaints and Demands
- Tutoring

of the University of Chile's identity. However, when contrasting their view with the views of graduates from other universities, they were able to place the DEP's approach in relief and to better explain it.

Although graduates from University of Chile provided rich commentary on their agreement with DEP's perspective, the following statement from a graduate of another institution of higher education stresses this aspect even more:

Entré al DEP y yo creo haber sido de las personas de las pocas personas que desde el primer semestre destacó mucho el enfoque. Como yo venía con la comparación de la [Universidad] Católica, encontré que este sistema era mucho más concordante con lo que yo consideraba que era la pedagogía. [Porque] yo creo que el profesor es investigador, que el profesor es una máquina imparable de retrospectión, con un enfoque de investigación constante.

I entered the DEP and I think I am one of few people that emphasized its approach from the first semester. Since I came from the Catholic [University], I found this system was much more consistent with what I thought pedagogy was about. [Because] I think the teacher is a researcher, the teacher is an unstoppable machine of retrospection, with a focus on ongoing inquiry.

–Luna, Visual Arts

When asked to discuss the extent to which they were satisfied with the DEP teacher education approach, most participants indicated that they were pleased with the robustness of theoretical courses such as *Bases Teóricas de la Educación* (Theoretical Foundations of Education) and *Educación y Reformas* (Education and Reforms) and the series of Workshops on Practice and Inquiry (*Taller I, II, y III*). The readings, debates, and activities such as analysis of observations, among others, were perceived as congruent with the program's stated inquiry stance. Workshops on Practice and Inquiry were especially highlighted as privileged spaces for making sense of what happened at schools. In addition, their initial satisfaction with the program's approach was linked to the eclectic school placements the DEP provided.

Un curso que me enseñó a entender muchas cosas -pero esto fue como otro tipo de entendimiento, fue el trabajo que hicimos en Educación y Reformas [curso de

perspectiva histórica]. Uno piensa que es un ramo súper lineal [pero] nos hicieron hacer el trabajo indagatorio a partir de una escena actual de la escuela. Entonces uno empieza a indagar.

A course that taught me to understand many things –but another kind of understanding– was the work we did in Education and Reforms [historical perspective]. You think it is a super linear course, [but] they made us work on an inquiry task using a current school scene. So one begins to inquire.

–Carmen, Philosophy

Creo que el tema del análisis de las observaciones que uno puede tener de las clases en función de hacer investigación pedagógica me ha servido mucho porque a veces he tenido algunos problemas que son así como choques de personalidades, cosas que son como muy emocionales, y lo he podido superar al intentar mirar un poco más allá y entender como la lógica que funciona en la escuela, la lógica que funciona en los adolescentes, y una serie de elementos que me ayudan como a expandir un poco más la visión. Lo he aprendido en el DEP.

I think that with regard to the issue of analyzing observations, one can have courses that work in terms of doing pedagogical research. This has been useful for me because sometimes I had some problems that are like personality clashes, things that are highly emotional, and I could overcome them while trying to look a little further and understand how the school logic works, the logic that works on adolescents, and a series of elements that help me to expand my vision a little more. I have learned this at DEP.

–Vicente, History

Yo creo que las cosas que uno puede valorar del DEP son su potente contenido teórico y su espacio para la teorización, la propuesta teórica, y la calidad de centros de práctica que tiene. Porque yo siento que vamos a contextos reales, a contextos difíciles, colegios donde hay gente real. Entonces, nuestra preparación del contexto y todo eso, es mucho más potente.

I think things that one can value at DEP are its powerful theoretical content and space for theorizing, the theoretical proposal, and the quality of school placements. Because I feel that we are going into real contexts, difficult contexts, schools with real people. Then, our preparation of the context and all is much more powerful.

–Paula, History

In addition to the robustness of the focus on reflective practice, theoretical soundness, and proper choice of school placements, preservice teachers also emphasized that the DEP perspective is marked by an attempt to develop a relevant and responsive pedagogy toward students. This constitutes a direct reference to Freire's philosophy of education and becomes an important influence within the program. This influence also connects with culturally relevant pedagogy, which was stated in this study's conceptual

framework and provides useful insights into analyzing and discussing these findings.

Two comments representing this caring approach to teaching are provided below:

Creo que el principal aporte del DEP para mí fue el tema de abordar, dentro de la pedagogía, la importancia del vínculo, de que mucho pasa por ahí.

I think the main contribution of DEP for me was addressing the importance of the bond in teaching, the importance of those ties, and realizing that much of what happens is because of that.

–Susana, English

En la [Universidad de] Chile igual te dicen harto que educar es un acto de amor. [...] Yo creo que a mí el tema del cariño, y el lenguaje, son temas que me apasionan. [...] A mí el DEP me cambió la vida de verdad, me dio una visión de cosas que para mí antes pertenecían al ámbito de la intuición quizás.

At the [University of] Chile they tell you often that to educate is an act of love. [...] I think to myself that caring, affection, and language, are topics that fascinate me. [...] To me DEP really changed my life, it gave me a vision of things that before had perhaps belonged to the realm of intuition.

–Luna, Visual Arts

While there was some consensus regarding the courses that were most useful in fostering theoretical training and facilitating reflective practice, participants' comments revealed that there was some disagreement regarding the courses that would not contribute decisively to their preparation, as in the case of “Educational Management” (*Gestión Educativa*) and “IT for Teaching” (*Informática Educativa*). Preservice teachers gave diverse opinions about what courses seemed “disposable” or implied a waste of their valuable time.

But beyond lessening the contribution of some coursework, there was a majority agreement around the possibility that, directly or indirectly, the program provided rich spaces for interpersonal learning, or socialization of pedagogical issues. These spaces were formal and informal, that is, both inside and outside the DEP classrooms, especially through dialogue that came up in workshops (*Taller de Práctica e Investigación*) and specific didactics (*Didáctica de Especialidad*).

Creo que conversar es bueno, que es sano, que ayuda cuando uno llega a las clases de Taller [de investigación y práctica] y comparte lo que ha sido su experiencia en práctica, no sólo la propia, sino que la de los otros compañeros en otros contextos. Creo que esto debe generar diálogo y la reflexión en común, que es lo que se hace en el taller y a uno lo va ayudando de alguna manera.

I think talking is good, it's healthy, it helps when you get to the Workshop [of inquiry and practicum] and you share experiences from practicum, not only your own, but also from peers in other contexts. I think this should generate dialogue and joint reflection, which is what is done in the workshop and it helps you, somehow.

–Susana, English

Creo que [la clase de didáctica] igual han servido bastante, hemos socializado en la clase general de la didáctica con todos los compañeros de Historia, creo que ese es el fuerte. Se ve el tema de la narración de experiencias, del análisis de casos particulares [...] Es la enunciación, porque al final la enseñanza la hacemos entre todos, como compartiendo nuestras actividades y nuestro trabajo sobre las diversas herramientas.

I think [the Didactics class] has been very useful, we have socialized in the class and talked about didactics with all of our classmates in History, I think that's the powerful part. We studied the topic of narrative of experiences, analysis of particular cases. [...] It is the enunciation, because, at the end, we do teaching all together, sharing our activities and our work on various tools.

–Vicente, History

Escribir casos [en el Taller 2] fue fácil porque me gusta escribir y me gusta conversar. A algunos no les gusta y se les hace difícil escribir, pero son instancias en las que podemos compartir experiencias en grupo, y nos hace hacernos pregunta. [...] Siento que en el DEP se me han abierto muchos espacios, pero también estoy convencida de que he aprendido mucho en el momento en que estoy con un compañero y me da su opinión y eso pasa ahí en los patios, con una cerveza y un cigarro, conversando horas sobre cómo fue la experiencia en la clase o cómo te fue en la práctica con los chiquillos.

Writing cases [in Workshop 2] was easy because I like to write and I like to talk. Some people do not like it and find it difficult to write, but these are times where we can share experiences in a group. It makes us question ourselves. [...] I feel that the DEP opened many spaces for me, but I am also convinced that I learned a lot by sharing time with a classmate who would give his/her opinion, and that happens in the courtyard, with a beer and a cigarette, talking for hours about what the classroom experience was like and what it was like to teach the kids.

–Luna, Visual Arts

Finally, although it has been a much-debated decision within the program, the requirement of moving from one school placement to another for the final stage of the practicum has been acknowledged as a positive feature of the DEP's program. The possibility of accessing diverse school contexts (types of institutions, students'

sociocultural backgrounds, etc.) has become a valued program characteristic both by teacher educators and candidates. As the following excerpt shows, when faced with this school placement change, preservice teachers are usually reluctant since they prefer to stay in the ‘safe zone’ of a familiar school environment. However, most of them end up acknowledging the formative nature of this change. This finding would suggest that there is no appropriate or perfect school placement. Contrarily, every school placement has pitfalls and educative aspects that preservice teachers need to embrace in an adaptive way.

Con respecto a conocer distintos lugares de práctica y de trabajo, tener la posibilidad de ir conociendo y viendo distintas prácticas y formas de organización y de trabajo... eso me parece potente. Por ejemplo, yo trabajé con Miguel (practicante) en la didáctica de artes y él hizo su práctica primero en un colegio de Peñalolén, que era ideal para él, y él siempre dijo que se quería quedar porque había encontrado su lugar, estaba super cómodo. Y ahora lo cambiaron a otra comuna, en un contexto super complejo, y Miguel no quería eso y dijo “no puedo, no puedo, no puedo”... hasta que finalmente fue y empezó a observar y observar, conoció a los chiquillos, y se empezó a encantar con los jóvenes con los que estaba trabajando, empezó a conocerlos, se dio cuenta de que les gustaba mucho el fútbol y empezó a organizar un campeonato. Hasta le pidieron en el colegio que se quedará [una vez graduado] y él lo está pensando.

With regard to getting familiar with different school placements and places to work, having the opportunity to know and see different practices and ways of organizing the job... I think that is powerful. For example, I remember working with Miguel (a candidate) in the Didactics of Visual Arts and he had his first practicum stage in a school in Peñalolén (a commune) which was ideal for him, and he always said he wanted to stay there because he felt super comfortable. And now they moved him to a different commune, with a super complex context, and Miguel did not like it and he said "I can't, I can't, I can't" ... Finally he went there and began to observe and observe, he met the students and began to love the young people there, he got to know them, he realized they loved soccer and began to organize a championship. They [at the school] even asked him to keep working there [after graduation] and he is thinking about it.

–Teacher Educator, Visual Arts

Complaints and demands. Complaints are mainly focused on the perception of an overemphasis on theoretical preparation. Demands, in turn, involve an explicit call for a more practice-oriented teacher education. Overall, complaints and demands reflect a

perceived imbalance between theory and practice that delays the perception of effectiveness both for the final stage of the practicum (third semester) and subsequent initiation into professional life.

Category: **Programmatic Features.**

Encompasses preservice teachers' perceptions about the main characteristics of the DEP teacher education program that enabled or constrained their preparation as effective teachers.

Sub-categories:

- Program Strengths
- **Complaints and Demands**
- Tutoring

El DEP tiene eso de la teorización, de darte espacios para la reflexión y dejar de lado o desvalorizar de alguna forma las recetas, porque dicen "todos los contextos son diferentes." Nosotros sabemos que los contextos son diferentes, pero a nosotros y a la mayoría de la generación le gustaría tener herramientas, y ahí empieza el descontento. [...] Se habla de la vinculación teórico-práctica pero les cuesta mucho bajar a la realidad.

The DEP has that issue of theorizing, of giving you space for reflection and devaluing the recipes. They say, "All contexts are different." We know that the contexts are different, but we –and most of our generation– would like to have tools, so there begins some level of dissatisfaction. [...] They talk about the theory-practice relationship, but they have a hard time getting down to reality.

–Paula, History

Yo entiendo mucho esa filosofía [de educación] que tiene el DEP, de hecho, la comparto. Creo que las herramientas no son lo más importante. [...] Uno sabe que las herramientas no son lo más importante, pero si no las conoces, al menos es un problema, y creo que existen muchos otros ramos que tomamos dentro de nuestra formación y que apuntan a ir más allá de las herramientas pero ¡no es posible que en la totalidad de los ramos sea así!

I understand the DEP's philosophy [of education], and in fact, I support it. For me the tools are not important. [...] You know that tools are not the most important part, but if you don't know them, at the very least that's a problem, and I think there are many other classes we take in our preparation that aim to go beyond the tools, but not every course can be like that!

–Vicente, History

La gran falencia que tienen en el DEP es que están muy, muy teóricos y muy poco conectados con los contextos. [...] Creo que uno puede tener mucho manejo teórico de cómo hacer una clase, pero necesito algo como concreto. Hay como una tendencia a decir que aquí no existen fórmulas ni recetas para enseñar ni para ser profesor, y eso está bien, pero... "ayúdame un poquito pues, muéstrame lo que a ti te ha funcionado [...] No estoy pidiendo que me des un libro de cocina de cómo tengo que hacer clases, pero

uno aprende mirando, uno aprende comparando también. Entonces, ayúdame, enséñame, dame herramientas”.

The big flaw of people at DEP is that they are very, very theoretical and very little connected to the contexts. [...] I think one can theoretically master how to prepare a lesson, but I need something concrete. There is a tendency to say that there are no formulas or recipes to teach or to be a teacher, and that's fine, but ... "help me a little, show me what has worked for you [...] I'm not asking you to give me a cookbook on how to teach, but we learn by watching, we also learn by comparing. So, help me, teach me, give me tools".

–Susana, English

Besides the perception of the imbalance between theory and practice in most coursework, preservice teachers noticed the absence of trial and error spaces and practical experimentation before entering actual classroom. This claim becomes even more relevant in reference to *Didactics* or teaching methods courses (*Didácticas de Especialidad*), where practical exercises are supposed to be an essential part of the course. During the interviews, participants indicated that much of the time in *Didactics* courses was spent reading and discussing texts about teaching methods, but not putting into practice what the texts recommended. In general, preservice teachers felt surprised and disappointed when teacher educators seemed to prefer talking about teaching strategies to actually modeling them as a way to provide examples.

No, no, no, no, esos espacios [de simulación de clase] no existen. Pero yo sí sé que existe en [otra universidad]. Un amigo de allá me decía “nosotros teníamos que entrar a la sala y estaban todos desordenados como si fuera una sala de clases y uno trataba de controlarlos.” Pero eso no existe en el DEP.

No, no, no, no, those spaces [of simulation of lessons] don't exist. But I do know that they exist at [another university]. A friend that goes there told me "we had to enter the room and they were all chaotic like a real classroom and you tried to control them." But that doesn't exist at DEP.

–Paula, History

Siento que he adquirido mucha teoría y poca práctica. Creo que el DEP tiene una buena visión respecto de lo que debe hacer la pedagogía y lo que es ser profesor, aun cuando yo creo que está muy descontextualizada respecto a la realidad.

I feel I have acquired a lot of theory and little practice. I think DEP has a good vision about what pedagogy is about and what it means to be a teacher, even though I think it is very decontextualized from reality.

–Susana, English

At the time of conducting the interviews, I got the impression that these responses were laden with a sense of uncertainty, of being overwhelmed by the practicum, as preservice teachers were at a stage of assuming full responsibility of the lessons but did not feel ready. Therefore, claims seemed to emerge in a state of crisis where participants were not comfortable with their teacher education. Moreover, the interviews served as space for catharsis and relief. However, this criticism was maintained over time. As expected, preservice teachers shared their practicum experiences in university classrooms in order to receive feedback from the experts. Unfortunately, most of them concluded that their teacher educators were unable to give them a good orientation because it had been a long time since they had worked in real classrooms.

La crítica es que la mayoría de los profes que están aquí parece que jamás en su vida han pisado una sala de clases, no tienen idea cómo se comportan los chiquillos de 16 años. Bueno, hay algunos que han hecho clases en colegio pero eso hace muchos años. [...] Hemos tenido muchos cursos en que se estudia lo que pasaba en los años 90 ¡pero ya no estamos los noventas y las salas de clases ya no son como los 90s!

Our criticism is that most of teacher educators working here seem to have never in their life set foot in a classroom, they have no idea how 16-year-old kids behave. Well, there are some who have taught in schools, but it was many years ago. [...] We have studied what happened in the 90s but we are not the nineties, and classrooms are no longer the way they were in the 90s!

–Alicia, Language & Communication

En un curso -se llamaba Bases Teóricas de la Educación- claro que era más bien teórico, pero la profesora, yo me daba cuenta, que hace mucho tiempo que no está en una sala de clases. Como que se sorprende mucho de cosas que pasan en la cotidianidad de nosotros en nuestras prácticas.

In a course called Theoretical Foundations of Education, of course it was rather theoretical, but the professor –I realized– it has been a long time since she taught and she was not familiar with a school classroom. It's like she is very surprised by things that happen every day in our practicum.

–Paula, History

The perception of failure was compounded when some of the preservice teachers had knowledge of other programs which were more practice-oriented. Here we can see a paradox where participants value the excellent DEP theoretical preparation, but lament the lack of opportunities to practice even the most basic aspects of a teacher's routine. When asked for trial and error spaces in her teaching methods (*Didactics*) class, the following teacher educator stressed its importance and recognized the dearth of teaching rehearsals and other practical aspects. At the same time, in accordance with other teacher educators' views, demands for more practice-oriented courses seemed excessive to her. Preservice teachers' and teacher educators' perspectives collided when it came to this key aspect.

Yo he tratado de hacer mi clase lo más práctica posible. A veces siento que no es lo suficientemente práctico pero tampoco pienso que se deba a perder el sustento teórico. Entonces, siento que esta demanda de lo práctico de parte de los alumnos es exagerada hasta el punto de querer recibir recetas, algo pre- hecho), y no entienden de que es el profesor el que tiene que resolver cómo enfrentar una situación en el aula, es la persona la que tiene que ir tomando las decisiones y resolviendo en cada instante.

I've tried to make my class as practical as possible. Sometimes I feel it is not practical enough, but I also think it should not have to sacrifice theoretical support. So I feel that this demand for practice from the students is exaggerated to the point of wanting to receive recipes, something pre-made, and they do not understand that it is the teacher who has to figure out how to deal with a situation in the classroom. It is the individual person who has to make decisions and solve problems in the moment.

–Teacher Educator, English Didactics

Although most teacher educators expressed disagreement about the demand for a more practice-oriented preparation and did not want to change the orientation of their courses –which would contradict their teacher education philosophy, their comments confirmed that preservice teachers' demands were an ongoing phenomenon in every cohort.

In the preservice teachers' view, the validation of teacher educators' expertise was possible when they demonstrated ability and orientation to practice as well as updated knowledge of school contexts.

El profesor [formador docente] debiera ser un profesor de aula también. Si no conoces la realidad en la que están ahora los chicos -no 20 años atrás - te pierdes, te pierdes un poco de la realidad. [...] Yo creo que ese es el principal motivo de que las clases aquí no se presenten de forma desafiante, es porque los profesores están atrasados. Y pueden haberse leído todo lo que hayan podido leer, pero la enseñanza en aula es otra cosa.

The teacher educator should be a classroom teacher as well. If you don't know the reality of today's kids -not 20 years ago- you get lost, you get lost with regard to reality. [...] I think that's the main reason that classes here are not so challenging, because professors are old-fashioned. They may have read everything that it was possible to read, but teaching in the classroom is something else.

–Paula, History

This observation invites us to consider the recent literature and experiences in democratizing the teacher preparation process, where knowledge of school teachers counts and is really valued (Zeichner & Payne, 2013). Later, in the discussion and conclusion chapter, I will return to this topic to review the possibilities of democratizing the reform of teacher education programs in Chile.

Tutoring. This third dimension refers to the essential role played by instructors of specific didactics who give personalized advice to preservice teachers during key stages of their practicum. Preservice teachers clearly differentiated between group sessions of didactics (specific teaching methods courses) and tutoring sessions where the teacher

Category: Programmatic Features.

It encompasses preservice teachers' perceptions about the main characteristics of the DEP teacher education program that enabled or constrained their preparation as effective teachers.

Sub-categories:

- Program's Strengths
- Complaints and Demands
- **Tutoring**

educators assumed a different role. Interestingly, from participants' point of view, the

same instructor showed a different facet, when providing individual one-on-one tutoring. Despite reinforcing what was taught during group session, teacher educators tailored sessions paying attention to individual preservice teachers' needs. One of the main aspects of this responsive tutoring was the ability to examine lesson plans and readings about classroom contexts in detail in order to find appropriate pedagogical solutions.

El trabajo más profundo, creo yo, está en las tutorías, porque ahí estoy solo con el profesor. Todas las semanas, antes de que nos reunamos, le envío mis planificaciones generales y mis planificaciones específicas, las actividades que pueden hacer y los materiales que voy a utilizar, siempre. Después en la tutoría nos encargamos de discutirlo. Él me hace algunas precisiones, cosas que considera que debe cambiar, algunas sugerencias para que la clase resulte mejor, y creo que el trabajo con él se da muy, muy bien.

The most profound aspect, I think, is in the tutoring, because I am alone with the professor in that moment. Every week, before we meet, I send him my general plans and my specific plans, activities that can be made and the materials that will be used, always. Then, during tutoring, we make sure to discuss those issues. He gives me some clarifications, things he thinks I should change, some suggestions to improve the lesson, and I think that kind of collaboration with him works very, very well.

–Vicente, History

Yo hice esa lectura de contexto y acá por el DEP fue muy importante la planificación con la didacta de filosofía. Ella es una increíble didacta porque yo le mandaba las planificaciones y yo recibía constantemente comentarios, sugerencias, explicitaciones. Ahora realmente he visto la potencialidad que uno tiene de crear su propia clase, pero eso yo lo asocio mucho al apoyo y al trabajo que he tenido con mi didacta [tutora].

I learned about the school context and then, at DEP, it was very important to plan my lessons with my philosophy didactics professor. She is an amazing tutor because I sent my plans to her and then constantly received her comments, suggestions, and clarifications. Now I've actually seen the potential that I have to create my own lessons, but I attribute that with the support and work that I had from my teacher educator/tutor.

–Carmen, Philosophy

Cuando yo empecé a hacer clase, no sabía eso del inicio, desarrollo y final, de remarcar el objetivo de la clase, y eso lo conversamos en la tutoría. Eso pasa en la tutoría, no en la didáctica. Entonces yo por eso lo valoró el espacio de la tutoría en donde uno dice "esto en verdad sirve".

When I started teaching, I did not know about the beginning, middle, and end of the lesson, about stressing the goal of the lesson, and we talked about that during the tutoring. That happens in tutoring, not the didactic part [the course]. So that's why I appreciated the space of tutoring that makes you say, "this is really helpful."

–Paula, History

In addition to the personalized, technical-pedagogical support received from the tutors, the second crucial factor for preservice teachers was the personal closeness and friendly treatment they received in tutoring sessions. As noted in chapter 4, in reference to the relationship or bond between preservice teachers and adolescents, participants gave high importance to teacher educators' emotional responsiveness in addressing not only teaching issues but also personal aspects in times of crisis. Although this comment was made about almost every teacher educator, the History tutor (a member of the History Didactics team) was frequently mentioned because of his academic and personal attributes:

Creo que la principal diferencia y la cuestión que más me gusta de él, de su tutoría, es que a él lo siento como una persona mucho más cercana, como una persona que más allá de corregir una cosa. Él se encarga de aconsejar, tiene un tono muy distinto y él no está lateado haciendo la tutoría.

I think the main difference and the thing that I like about him and about his tutoring sessions is that I feel much closer to him, like he has a role beyond just making corrections. He really gives advice; he has a very different tone, and he is not bored by tutoring.

–Vicente, History

Con mi tutor, en lo personal, es una relación súper cercana que a mí me ha dado mucha fortaleza en la práctica porque además estoy en un contexto difícil. Yo hice una clase es pésima porque mi mente estaba en otra parte –mi abuela estaba muy enferma, y yo me acuerdo que salí de esa clase y el profesor me dijo: “Paula, como que no la vi con el ánimo de siempre”. [...] Entonces, tener la posibilidad de hablar esos problemas con el profesor tutor, yo siento que fue un apoyo muy grande, ese apoyo que yo nunca había sentido antes de ningún profesor en mi vida.

With my tutor, personally, I have a super close relationship that has given me a lot of strength in practice because I'm also in a difficult context. I had a bad lesson because my mind was in another place –my grandmother was very sick– and I remember I finished that lesson and the professor told me: "Paula, you were not in your usual mood". [...] So having the opportunity to speak of these problems with the tutor, I feel it was a big support, the support I had never felt before from any teacher in my life.

–Paula, History

In summary, the category *programmatic features* encompasses what the seven participants perceived as the main DEP program features facilitating or constraining their preparation as effective teachers. Based on their respective analytical codes, three dimensions have captured the salient data, namely: (1) *program strengths*, (2) *complaints and demands*, and (3) *tutoring*. Preservice teachers' complaints and demands called for a more balanced teacher education program in terms of the theory-practice relationship, and for instructors that had updated knowledge of school and students' contexts. As a consequence, this is a dimension identifying the main constraining aspect of the program. Nonetheless, the program's teaching approach and theoretical soundness (program strengths) were noted as enabling factors in shaping preservice teachers' reflective practice and inquiry stance. Finally, the role of teacher educators as tutors during one-to-one sessions was identified as an essential, enabling aspect that helped preservice teachers to perfect their planning and teaching, and to overcome personal difficulties during times of uncertainty.

The 'Not yet There' Status

To recap, this chapter deals with the elements that facilitated or restricted the pedagogical use that preservice teachers gave to their knowledge of context. Category 1 – *program features*, as just described– examined perceived characteristics of DEP teacher education program. Now, *the not yet there* category is the other side of the coin, examining the personal characteristics that preservice teachers pointed out as catapults or barriers keeping them from becoming effective, responsive teachers.

This category was formed from the accumulation of codes that made reference to the tension between the desire to transform Chilean education and the status of

inexperience and uncertainty. In metaphorical terms, it represents being in no-man's-land or limbo since student teachers are no longer bachelor's students, but are on the way to being considered schoolteachers. Unfortunately, this status implies neither having the responsibility nor the attributes preservice teachers expected they would have. Based on the analytical codes, three dimensions help to deploy this category: the first two dimensions (*inexperienced youth, fears and insecurities*) are described as obstacles for achieving pedagogical effectiveness; the third (*transformationist attitude*) was perceived as a facilitating characteristic that preservice teachers felt boosted their vocation and future development.

Inexperienced youth. This dimension refers to all the frustrating feelings and ordeals that preservice teachers experienced due to their being 'apprentices' or 'trainees.' At this stage of the practicum, preservice teachers were influenced by, among other factors, their personal biography, the school context they were assigned, and the role they were expected to play in those schools. Although we cannot specify with exactitude the degree of influence of each of these factors, they affected student teachers' perceptions of their preparation and their decision-making in the planning, implementing, and reflecting on teaching. In other words, these factors influenced the thinking and actions of preservice teachers in a context that varied according to the type of school they were placed.

Category: **The 'Not yet There' Status.** It contains the personal characteristics that preservice teachers point out as catapults or barriers in becoming effective, responsive teachers.

Sub-categories:

- **Inexperienced Youth**
- Fears and Insecurities
- Transformationist Attitude

The following excerpts represent preservice teachers' views on being inexperienced and confronting frustration and uncertainty:

Todos [los estudiantes de pedagogía] estamos saliendo de la zona segura, y yo creo que eso es algo que uno tiene que considerar porque allá [en la licenciatura previa] uno está seguro. El trabajo teórico siempre es un trabajo seguro, si uno lo hace bien. [...] No es lo mismo ponerse en juego en un ensayo que ponerse en juego frente a otra persona o frente a un grupo en un contexto escolar. Entonces eso lleva a inseguridades y es primera vez también que estamos haciendo el trabajo didáctico de transformar nuestras disciplinas en contenidos pedagógicos y eso también nos demanda mucho tiempo, mucho trabajo.

We [teaching students] are coming out of the safe zone, and I think that's something you have to consider, that there [in the previous BA] one was safe. The theoretical work is always safe if you do it right. [...] It is not the same to expose yourself in an essay as in front of another person or a group in a school context. That leads to insecurity and is also the first time we are doing the didactic work of transforming our disciplines into pedagogical content. And that also takes a lot of time and work.

–Carmen, Philosophy

Mira, yo no cerré la clase porque me puse muy nerviosa y después que terminó la clase yo dije “¿qué fue lo que hice?” Quería hablar del poder de la palabra, hablar de que el lenguaje es lo más importante que tenemos y que con él podemos transformar el mundo, pero ¿por qué no dije eso? ¿cachai? Pensé: “perdí, perdí una clase.” Quedé como tristoná.

Look, I did not close the lesson because I got very nervous, and after the class ended I said "what did I do?" I wanted to talk about the power of words, to say that language is the most important thing we have and we can change the world with it, but why did I not say that? You know? I thought. "I lost myself, I lost a lesson" and I felt sad.

–Alicia, Language & Communication

Fears and insecurities. As its name explicitly states, this second dimension deals with various phases preservice teachers went through during their status as “foreigners” in school placements. In addition to their lack of experience, participants’ narrations characterized this period full of doubts, tensions, insecurities, survival instinct, and isolation, among others. One issue that caught my attention during interviews with teacher educators is the difference they made for students they have served in recent years and other generations. According to most instructors interviewed, teaching students from recent cohorts seem more insecure than others in the past. Consequently, in addition to participants’ personal characteristics, we could consider a generational factor and the way experiences are socialized inside the program.

Category: **The ‘Not yet There’**

Status. It contains the personal characteristics that preservice teachers point out as catapults or barriers in becoming effective, responsive teachers.

Sub-categories:

- Inexperienced Youth
- **Fears and Insecurities**
- Transformationist Attitude

As expected, one of the first manifestations of fears and insecurities emerged when facing the teacher role for the first time:

Al entrar en el aula aprendí muchas cosas. Aprendí de mis fortalezas y parte de mis debilidades también. Aprendí sobre mí misma, de que no me muestro una persona con desplante dentro del aula todo el tiempo. Y como que soy muy vulnerable. Tuve ataque de pánico casi antes de entrar a la sala! Antes de empezar mi intervención, estuve como una semana sin dormir, me bajaron las defensas, fue un ataque de histeria, casi clínico, como que no dormía, no comía, estaba muy mal.

Upon entering the classroom I learned many things. I learned from my strengths and my weaknesses too. I learned about myself, that I appear to be a person with personality in the classroom all the time. And it’s like I am very vulnerable. I had panic attack right before entering the classroom! Before starting my teaching, I went a week without sleeping, my defenses were down, I was hysterical, almost clinical, I could not sleep or eat, I was in very bad shape.

–Carmen, Philosophy

Luna, a clearly more mature (older) preservice teacher coming from a completely different background (a mother, and from another university) confirmed the conflicting times of her cohort and the generational factor noted by teacher educators:

Estos estudiantes de pedagogía siguen exigiendo un modelo de colegio, siguen pidiendo eso, es como el capítulo de los Simpson donde Lisa dice "por favor evalúame!, califícame!". Yo siento que mis compañeros acá todavía no están preparados para tener un buen estándar de la formación de profesores, necesitan ser evaluados o calificados y necesitan que les traspasen un conocimiento [...] Lo que yo más he escuchado en conversaciones de pasillo son quejas, sobre todo en el primer semestre.

This students of pedagogy continue to demand a school model, they keep asking for that. It is like in one episode of The Simpsons when Lisa says "Please, grade me! Evaluate and rank me!" I feel that my classmates here are not ready yet to have a good standard of teacher education, they need to be evaluated or graded, and they need a transmission of knowledge [...] The thing I've heard most in hallway conversations are complaints, especially in the first semester.

–Luna, Visual Arts

Although it is unlikely that a personal or generational characteristic can actually be changed by a three-semester (or longer) teacher education program, DEP's approach of permanent reflective practice seemed to achieve its purpose towards the end of the road. As demonstrated by the participants' comments, feelings of anxiety and insecurity evolved and gave way to a less anxious state that allowed them to acknowledge learning and changes in their perspective and performance. After my own observation of classes at three different periods during the final semester, I was able to notice the improvement in their confidence and effectiveness in teaching and class management. Some of their comments are reproduced and translated below to support this claim:

Cuando yo me relajé, ellos se relajaron también y pudimos establecer otro tipo de relación. En la primera clase yo estaba, no sé, tuve cinco alumnos que me estaban pescando, después ya tenía a 20, y después ya tenía prácticamente a todo el curso.

When I felt relaxed, they [students] also relaxed and we were able to establish another type of relationship. In the first session I was, you know, I had five students who were paying attention, later I had 20, and then I had almost the entire class.

–Susana, English

Al principio yo pensaba que todo [en el DEP] apuntaba a que iba a ser insuficiente, a que no iba a salir preparada para hacer clases. Pero ahora lo he pensado más y creo que esta ha sido una instancia no solamente para descargar mis frustraciones, mis miedos, mis aprehensiones, y para descargar toda esa vulnerabilidad, sino para recibir una retroalimentación importante. Creo que aquí he encontrado un espacio no solamente de apoyo, sino también como que me han incitado a canalizar todo eso y transformarlo.

At first I thought everything [that the DEP] told me would be insufficient, that I would not be prepared to teach. But now I have thought about it more and I think this has been a place not only to lessen my frustrations, my fears, my apprehensions, and to discharge all that vulnerability, but to receive important feedback. I think I've found a place here where I not only have support, but where they have helped me to channel everything and transform it.

–Carmen, Philosophy

Transformationist attitude. Finally, this third dimension relates to the teaching philosophy that preservice teachers declared to be a crucial part of their decision to be teachers and of their future careers. In explaining their personal teaching principles, participants showed their commitment to social justice in the sense that they wanted to contribute to the reconstruction of society through their teaching, defying the dynamics of social dominance and segregation present in the Chilean school system. Imbued by the struggle for public, free, and quality education in recent years, participants declared their intentions to stop perpetuating privileges and the academic achievement gap between municipal and private schools.

Category: **The ‘Not yet There’ Status.** It contains the personal characteristics that preservice teachers point out as catapults or barriers in becoming effective, responsive teachers.

Sub-categories:

- Inexperienced Youth
- Fears and Insecurities
- **Transformationist Attitude**

One way to manifest this ideal was by critiquing their own public university that, according to their perspective, still needed to explicitly focus on minoritized student populations:

Creo que aquí ahí hay un problema pues si somos tan de prestigio y supuestamente sacamos tan buenos profesores, nosotros (U. de Chile) deberíamos ser los que tomamos la batuta de los colegios vulnerables. Se necesita una visión distinta y un trabajo distinto,

ideas nuevas y no seguir estratificando la educación. Porque si aquí discutimos sobre hablamos de estratificar la educación, ¿por qué voy a salir de aquí y me voy a ir al colegio privado?

I think there's a problem here [DEP – U. of Chile] because if we are so prestigious and supposedly we get such good teachers, we should be the ones to take the load of working in vulnerable schools. A different view and a different type of work are needed; new ideas to not further stratify education. Because, if here we discuss the segregation issue, why would I get out of here and I go to a private school?

–Alicia, Language & Communication

Yo sé cómo es lidiar con un contexto difícil, yo entiendo cuando los alumnos no tienen un soporte detrás que es la familia y por eso mismo entiendo la importancia de una buena formación docente. [...] Por eso no entiendo que un colegio privado o católico tenga como único objetivo enseñar valores y no la justicia social, la igualdad.

I know what it is to deal with a difficult context, I understand when students do not have family support behind them. That is why I understand the importance of good teacher preparation. [...] So, I don't understand why a private or Catholic school would have moral education as its only goal, and not also social justice, equality.

–Susana, English

As will be discussed in the next chapter, this dimension resonates with the principles of culturally responsive teaching that, when referring to teacher education, calls for a curriculum built on principles of social justice (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). DEP's teacher educators acknowledged this transformationist spirit in preservice teachers and some of them reported having made conscious efforts to incorporate social justice-oriented readings and activities. Despite preservice teachers' inexperience, fears, and insecurities, their instructors/tutors saw them as social justice-oriented educators able to help transform Chilean society through teaching.

La mayor parte de ellos quieren ser profesores que pueden transformar significativamente la vida de sus estudiantes y de las comunidades en que ellos viven. Así que a nosotros también nos interesa tener una mirada no academicista de la disciplina, una mirada donde aparece el sujeto, su vida y su historia.

Most of them [preservice teachers] want to be teachers who can significantly transform the lives of their students and the communities in which they live. So we are also interested in having a non-academic approach to our disciplines, an approach where the subject, his/her life, and his/her story is present.

–Teacher Educator, History

In summary, this final category (*the 'not yet there' status*) was intended to encompass what the seven participants perceived as the main personal features facilitating or constraining their preparation as effective and responsive teachers. Based on my analytical codes, three dimensions captured the salient data, namely, *inexperienced youth, fears and insecurities*, and *transformationist attitude*. The first two were described as obstacles preventing participants from achieving effectiveness in teaching, while the third was perceived as an enabling characteristic that preservice teachers and teacher educators perceived as solidifying participants' vocations and boosting their future teaching careers.

Chapter 7: Discussion

Overview of the Study

The purpose of this study was to understand the knowledge construction process that a group of seven secondary preservice teachers went through in order to learn from students' contexts and use that knowledge to become responsive, effective pedagogues. As stated in the research questions, my objective was to establish a better understanding of what secondary preservice teachers learned about students' social and cultural backgrounds in different stages of the practicum; how that learning informed the way they thought about teaching, the way they planned their lessons, and the way they actually taught. Additionally, this study explored programmatic and personal processes that enabled or constrained the ability of these teachers to use contextual knowledge as a pedagogical asset.

Data were analyzed using sociocultural theory guided by Rogoff's (1995) three foci of analysis, namely, the personal plane, the interpersonal plane, and the community plane. This theory provided a lens to look at different levels of learning and development during DEP teacher preparation as a social activity. The practicum was the setting being used as the basic unit of analysis and it encompassed all three planes.

This study used transcripts from personal interviews, documents (lesson plans, portfolios, reports), as well as in-classroom observations of humanities instruction (history, philosophy, Spanish language and communication, English, and visual arts) as primary sources. All data were coded using the constant comparative method (Merriam & Merriam, 2009; Miles & Huberman, 1994). As recommended in the Grounded Theory literature (e.g., Strauss & Corbin, 1998), content analysis was based on the highlighting

of salient information. I used a coherent coding system that reflected a developing understanding of the data across participants. Categories and sub-categories (based on analytical codes) were built as the data were coded, and repeated discourses or incidents validated the coding.

The results of this study were described in detail in chapters 4, 5, and 6 of this dissertation. These findings allowed me to identify which learning experiences were most valuable for secondary preservice teachers' preparation and how these can be projected for future teaching performance. In what follows, I summarize and discuss the findings and address their implications for the teacher education field. Next, I acknowledge the limitations of the study. Lastly, I conclude with recommendations for future research.

Discussion of the Findings

The preservice teachers' foremost salient learning during the diverse practicum stages was the need to build strong relationships with students. While they acknowledged the importance of other types of knowledge –namely, content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, classroom management, among others– they stressed that truly knowing students and their sociocultural backgrounds and using that knowledge to teach during their practicum is preceded by building authentic, vigorous teacher-student bonds. Importantly, participants' reflections on teaching actions, affection, and trust echo Gay's (2010) principle of caring, which constitutes one of the essential principles of a culturally relevant pedagogy.

The finding that refers to *building relationships* with students is supported by four dimensions through which preservice teachers identified their learning: *emotionality*, *sharing*, *naming*, and *adolescence*. Preservice teachers point to the emotionality involved

in the act of teaching and learning, and acknowledge that teaching is a social and affective activity, involving emotional elements when dealing with real students. This confirms that preservice teachers' personalities are involved as a means of communication, which is projected in the act of teaching. Moreover, this act has an impact on the self since learning to teach is affective as well as cognitive (Turner-Bisset, 2001).

However, the way the seven preservice teachers experienced this learning was not homogeneous. While some participants found it easy to know and connect with students from the beginning of their practicum (Vicente, Luna, Cony, Paula) others needed extra effort to open up the "self" and create the desired bond (Carmen, Alicia, Susana). Furthermore, there were clear nuances within these two sub-groups. Different individuals experienced in particular ways aspects such as being a close teacher, becoming a role model, or spending time in activities beyond the classroom walls. Although most preservice teachers demonstrated a commitment to activities that help in engaging with students in more horizontal ways, there was a range of experiences depending on factors such as their personalities and the specific institutional contexts.

The relationship building category in this study adds to what experts have found both in the northern and the southern hemisphere regarding the emotional component of teaching. In investigating teachers' emotions of teaching and educational change, Hargreaves (2000; 2001) stressed the importance of paying attention to diverse emotional geographies of elementary and secondary teaching. However, while he found that elementary teaching was characterized by physical and professional closeness -which creates greater emotional intensity- and secondary teaching was characterized by greater professional and physical distance -leading teachers to treat emotions as intrusions in the

classroom- this study suggests that secondary teaching can also involve emotional intensity. This can be particularly true when considering the experiences of secondary preservice teachers serving in vulnerable, demanding contexts. In general, the findings of my study and Hargreaves' concept of emotional geographies coincide in highlighting the importance of investigating diverse patterns of emotional closeness and distance in teaching contexts. What my study adds in this regard is the need for examining these patterns during initial teacher education, where the emotional geographies already emerge.

In the South American context, Casassus (2003) led an international research project to understand the factors that impacted the learning of students from 14 countries (including Chile). The researchers studied the effects of key variables that influenced student achievement. They discovered that each variable contributed to the explanation of performance variation, but their contribution was less than expected. One unexpected variable rose far above the others. The researchers found that what allowed better learning in students was located on the emotional plane, that is, in the type of relationships and interactions. The conclusion was blunt: "the most important process is the emotional climate *generated* in the classroom (p. 148, italics in original).

More recently, Casassus (2014) has deepened his work in *La Educación del Ser Emocional* [The Education of the Emotional Being], reiterating that "schools are primarily communities of relationships and interactions oriented to learning, where learning mainly depends on the type of relationships established in the classroom" (p. 239). As this study demonstrates, preservice teachers confirm the above claims and demand more attention to emotions and relationships with students. Therefore, rather

than simply being topics to analyze in some courses or workshops, emotions and relationships could be fundamental contents of teacher education.

For teachers, these skills are imperative not only for their personal well-being, but also to improve student learning. Because preservice (and in-service) teachers are not explicitly educated to develop socio-emotional competency, they are left on their own in that respect. This is what teacher education programs could start assuming as their formative responsibility. Moreover, this socio-emotional education for preservice teachers is meant to extend its benefits to diverse students. In that vein, emotional education should merge with a Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, whose principle of *caring* involves intellectual, ethical, and emotional dimensions (Gay, 2010).

In sum, findings suggest that building strong relationships have supreme relevance during student teaching and undeniable positive consequences for preservice teachers and the students they serve. While the main goals of participants were developing pedagogical content knowledge and providing students better learning opportunities, they acknowledged the enormous impact that teacher-student relationships have on teaching and learning. As Edwards and D'arcy (2004) have suggested, learning to teach while interacting with students implies the development of relational agency, that is, the knowledge and capacity to engage with the dispositions of others in order to interpret and act in enhanced ways. Although the concept of relational agency is originally referred to as collaborative engagement with peers, it entails implications for both teacher educators and preservice teachers, and suggests the ongoing development of a relational expertise.

The second most important learning identified by preservice teachers is the set of elements that constitute students' contexts. The primary teaching context for a teacher is the classroom, where students express their culture, abilities, learning styles, interests, and needs. But the context also involves the environment and the circumstances in which teachers are required to work. Consequently, preservice teachers interact with the classroom, the school, and everything comprising students' families, community, etc. However, due to their limited teaching experience, scope of action, and the bounded time frame attached to the practicum period, the participants of this study highlighted the contextual aspects most accessible to them.

The first context constituent was the *institutional* dimension –meaning school placements– which created a background for the other constituents. Preservice teachers' perceptions of school placements varied within a set of more or less friendly scenarios, which determined the development of their teaching performance. Institutional conditions permeated their initial approaches which evolved over time into each participant's new role in the school world. Depending of the type of school, their encounters with institutional conditions triggered different emotions. While for some it was a time of crisis, for others it was an inspiring and motivating event. Moreover, preservice teachers' common conception was that schools are strongly attached to routines, where little or no innovation takes place. Schools' rigidity translated both into personal (physical and mental) and professional (career projection) impacts.

Regarding *students' backgrounds and diversity* (second dimension), the seven participants had a range of experiences of pluralism in concordance with the increasing diversity of student populations in specific of schools of Santiago de Chile. However, for

them, diversity not always meant facing different racial or ethnic groups, but students coming from diverse metropolitan communes, neighborhoods, and family backgrounds. DEP preservice teachers experienced difficulties, resistance, and uncertainties related to the fear of the unknown, but also have found opportunities for personal and professional growth. Due to changes in school placements after the first semester of preparation, all participants reported their encounters with socioeconomic segregation (depending on the type of school) and diversity. When present in specific schools, ethnic, racial, and religious diversity emerged as issues that challenged preservice teachers' planning and teaching.

Findings show that, while recognizing the importance of education for diversity, teacher candidates felt unable to adequately address it during practicum due to what they perceived to be a lack of attention on this issue within the DEP program. Consequently, when facing diversity issues in real classrooms, addressing them seemed more nascent and intuitive than planned and systematic. As has been stated in the U.S. context (e.g., Ball & Tyson, 2011; Cochran-Smith, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1999; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Zeichner, 1993) the increasing diversity of student populations means teachers must be prepared to develop the dispositions and skills to engage in culturally responsive teaching (e.g., Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2006, 2009). Although some efforts have been made in Chile to promote teaching for a diversity approach (e.g., Campos, Montecinos & González, 2011; Williamson & Montecinos, 2011), concrete efforts within teacher education programs are missing.

The third context constituent highlighted by DEP preservice teachers was developing a *situated knowledge of learners*. In direct relation to institutional and student

sociocultural backgrounds, preservice teachers learned that every high school created a different environment that reflected students' specific learning skills, weaknesses, interests, and needs. In other words, findings show that all participants highlight the importance of the school context, but the nature of that contexts differs in every case. For example, cultural capital was identified as a key factor affecting how students learned or participated in classrooms. However, the nature of that cultural capital differed depending on the type of institution, that is, the type of student population being served. Due to disparities in students' prior knowledge and academic engagement between municipal and private schools in the last semester, some preservice teachers communicated their stories of academic success (Alicia, Vicente, Susana, Luna, Cony) while others told stories of failure (Carmen, Paula). These are nuances that teacher education must consider when preparing future teachers to serve in specific communities.

Despite their disposition to treat all students as capable of high academic outcomes, preservice teachers learn that a great deal of student engagement and results can be determined by the type of school they attend which, in the Chilean context, is directly related to academic achievement. Fortunately, cases like Vicente's, whose good experience and outcomes contradicted people's negative expectations, show that positive academic outcomes are possible with disadvantaged students when (preservice) teachers hold high learning expectations, building and maintaining solid relationships with them.

Participants also learned that, as learners, high school students exhibited characteristics that matched their developmental stage. Consequently, the most successful learning activities were those involving pop/street culture, playful strategies, and audiovisual resources. From a sociocultural perspective, these playful and inviting

resources served as means for increasing assimilation of curriculum content through interaction with others, in line with Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the zone of proximal development.

Complexity and vulnerability of contexts was the fourth and final constituent stressed by the DEP's preservice teachers, which also provides a range of perceived experiences. All participants admitted that they went into school placements with a perspective that challenged Chilean educational inequality. After entering schools, candidates declared that the concept of vulnerability –in the socioeconomic sense– mainly applies to students living in poverty. However, there are other types of vulnerability (e.g., psycho-emotional difficulties) that emerge when dealing with students from more privileged backgrounds.

When referring to students' vulnerability, preservice teachers mainly mentioned schools serving students in poverty who had low expectations regarding the academic future. Nevertheless, findings concerning various contexts' complexities and vulnerabilities resulted from the sum of comparative experiences between private (or semi-private) and municipal (public) schools. As a result, preservice teachers that had the opportunity to compare experiences in municipal and private institutions (e.g., Camila, Alicia, and Luna) extended their comprehension of what students' vulnerability means. For teacher education, this extended comprehension implies that the preparation of teachers for specific communities should consider and help to develop diverse types of teaching *literacies* (North, 2009) depending on the school context that preservice teachers are sent during their practicum.

Regarding how knowledge of contexts impacted preservice teachers' preparation, it was found that, while confirming the literature's assertion that the way preservice teachers think about teaching can be traced to their own learning experiences and their schooling (Lortie, 1975; Pajares, 1992), DEP teacher preparation, school contexts, and particularly students' backgrounds also impacted preservice teachers' views of teaching and the way they planned and enacted their early teaching experiences. The findings of this study point to beginning of a changing process strongly influenced by dealing with real-life schools and students and which, with an appropriate supervision and mentoring, could lead to a more deep transformation.

The seven preservice teachers participating in this study went through processes of *adjusting frameworks* and *embracing contexts* while learning to teach during their practicum. Findings related to these categories showed that participants tested prior knowledge and beliefs, coped with challenges posed by real school environments, learned from initial pedagogical interventions in classrooms, and differentiated their own teaching practices and styles from those of others. Moreover, preservice teachers developed teaching strategies and resources, struggled to create new material or activities, and attempted pedagogical (didactic) transpositions to guide themselves from expert knowledge to teachable content according to their students' grade levels.

When they participated in the adjustment of frameworks, preservice teachers first tested preconceptions, confronting their prior knowledge and beliefs with their teacher preparation and field experiences. Readings of specialized pedagogical literature, coursework activities, and dialogue with instructors (university tutors) and peers impacted candidates' perspectives, making them recognize that their preconceptions must

evolve. Encounters with real schools and students helped preservice teachers to shake their superficial knowledge about specific institutions and student populations. Most data regarding this dimension suggested that preconceptions started to be dismantled once they got to know particular classes and students.

These encounters with real schools and students involved a reality shock since every school placement contradicted candidates' expectations of what the practicum was supposed to be like. Interestingly, most of the disturbing experiences registered in the data emerged in municipal or semi-private schools serving students from low income families. At first, the reality shock occurred when observing the culture and needs of schools and students. Later, analyses and descriptions of contexts instructed by teacher educators led to either encouraging or discouraging experiences, depending on the quality of the relationship that was developed with cooperating teachers and students.

Once the reality shock was overcome, preservice teachers noted that the strongest experience was learning by practicing, in direct contact with students while teaching their disciplines. Although they valued the period of non-participant observation aimed to make sense of pedagogical theory and practice, participants stressed that the actual learning came when they started to teach and experience their own successes and failures. Certainly, the preference of preservice teachers for practical instances of learning creates a tension with teacher educators' perspective on the importance of theoretical preparation. As I will deepen later when discussing candidates' complaints and demands, this tension suggests to the need for better ways to bridge theory and practice instead of developing a reductionist or anti-theory view of teaching.

Finally, the adjustment of frameworks is rounded out by preservice teachers' *differentiation* from cooperating teachers' conceptions and practices. Due to their sound theoretical and reflexive preparation (both in their BA and DEP coursework) preservice teachers continually found contrasts between their progressive, constructivist approach to teaching and others' traditional, expository lectures. These comparisons mainly involved the use of strategies and resources, updating curricular content, and class management. Unfortunately, this dimension reflects more a generational rivalry than a mentor-mentee relationship between preservice and cooperating teachers. A more collaborative work between the university program and the schools is needed to find and prepare mentors perceived as inspiring instead of disappointing.

Another important finding was the process of *embracing contexts*, which not only referred to the acquisition of knowledge of students' contexts but also the processes through which the seven DEP candidates transformed contextual aspects into pedagogical assets. Data demonstrated to what extent these participants were able to incorporate what they learned during practicum into their planning and incipient teaching. Although to varying degrees, findings showed that all participants were impacted by students' backgrounds and they made use of that knowledge to develop responsive teaching.

First, preservice teachers developed *strategies and resources* to implement teaching activities for specific contexts. They started to think like teachers in various ways such as: diagnosing students' needs; organizing the teaching and learning process according to identified needs; uncovering prior knowledge and connecting it with new learning; and, using real situations from students' environments to stimulate their learning. They also took risks by experimenting with various types of instruction using

strategies such as guest speakers, multimedia, art, and games. Although preservice teachers also used traditional, well-known learning activities (e.g., study guides, expository lessons), they spent considerable time developing alternative strategies so they could capture students' attention. Findings show that alternative strategies and resources gave them the most powerful opportunities to incorporate students' backgrounds and improve their teaching. Thus, multimedia unanimously constituted the preferred resource of all seven participants. Nevertheless, there was scarce mention of the DEP Information Technologies course (*Informática Educativa*) as a source of pedagogical use of multimedia. This suggests a possible underuse and need for an evaluation of the role of this class within the teacher education program.

As the seven participants searched for strategies and instructional resources to facilitate the utilization of students' contexts, they faced the challenge of adapting or creating new learning activities and/or resources. In accordance with their transformationist attitudes, many concluded that it was necessary to invent their own teaching methods, since each context and classroom are unique. However, both preservice teachers and teacher educators recognized that creativity seemed to be almost absent in current times. Although DEP candidates made efforts to create attractive lessons, from the teacher educators' perspective, creativity barely emerged during coursework since preservice teachers struggled when asked to innovate.

This contrasting views regarding creativity showed another source of tension between them. On the one hand, preservice teachers seemed to expect instructors to provide them with a minimum repertoire of effective teaching practices. On the other hand, teacher educators expected more reflection and autonomy from the part of

candidates. To address the tension, it seems necessary to go beyond a mere reconciliation of positions and develop an additional form of expertise, spending time building common knowledge (Edwards, 2010) around innovative ways of teaching. This construction of common knowledge should also evaluate how schools' focus on standardized testing is discouraging creative teaching. Therefore, while preservice teachers advance in their teacher preparation, they could develop autonomy and gain confidence to creatively deal with standards. A broader teaching repertoire could be the result of an improved creativity triggered by the needs of everyday practice.

A third way preservice teachers embraced contexts was through *transposition*. This is a reference to Chevallard's (1997) notion of didactic transposition— a familiar concept to DEP candidates, it directly connects with Shulman's (1986) concept of PCK. In other words, it refers to the mechanism by which preservice teachers "took" disciplinary knowledge and transformed it so it could be taught to students. Findings exhibit various occasions where DEP's preservice teachers used the colloquial term "to bring down content to their level" to describe their efforts to make complex content accessible to high school students. Their transposition not only involved using alternative strategies and resources, but also a change of attitude towards learners.

This discussion of findings ends with the identification of elements that enabled or constrained preservice teachers' pedagogical growth in using contextual knowledge. Findings show that candidates identified two main factors: 1) *programmatic features* that refer to elements of DEP teacher education program that fostered or limited their growth as effective teachers; 2) *the 'not yet there' status* that has to do with personal characteristics affecting the effectiveness of their preparation.

Regarding *programmatic features* that fostered teacher learning, the first dimension preservice teachers noticed was *program strengths*. Participants stressed DEP's education/teaching approach, theoretical vigor, and constant provision of spaces for reflection, discussion, sharing, and interpersonal/social learning. Some participants explicitly referred to specific theoretical courses (*Bases Teóricas de la Educación, Educación y Reformas*) and practice-oriented courses (*Taller de Investigación y Práctica I, II, y III, Didáctica de Especialidad*) where those spaces were always available. In addition to the focus on reflective practice and theoretical soundness, the choice of diverse school placements was positively stressed due to the possibility to compare diverse contexts and see the reality of schools.

Despite acknowledging the above enabling elements, preservice teachers also expressed complaints and demands regarding specific constraining aspects. Complaints were mainly focused on what some of the called "overemphasis on theory" in courses and instructors they had expected to be more hands-on. As a result, their standpoint regarding program improvement involved an explicit call for a more practice-oriented teacher education throughout the whole teacher preparation. Overall, complaints and suggestions for improvement reflected a perceived imbalance between theory and practice that delayed the perception of effectiveness both until the final stage of the practicum (third semester) and the subsequent initiation into professional life. In particular, preservice teachers stressed the absence of trial-and-error spaces and practical experimentation before entering an actual classroom. Moreover, most preservice teachers concluded that their teacher educators were unable to provide a good practical orientation because of their distance from actual school classrooms.

This is perhaps the most salient tension between preservice teachers and their teacher educators. Due to the demands of student teaching and their eager to feel prepared to take complete responsibility of the classroom, preservice teachers –in varying degrees- perceive that theoretical preparation consumes a disproportionate amount of preparation time and it has been overrated, disfavoring practice. Teacher educators, in turn, do not agree on that assessment, and provide their rationale to defend educational theory as core part for a reflective practice. It is noteworthy that, despite being a very long standing struggle, this dichotomous perception of theory and practice continues hampering university preservice teacher education.

In my view, this unsolved tension is damaging in at least two ways: First, it demonstrate that some university faculty members have not been able to efficiently communicate and incarnate the interweaving nature of theory and practice (*praxis*), Moreover, they have not acknowledged enough their lack real-world knowledge of 21st century students and schools. Second, the dichotomous view on theory and practice seems to cause a distorted view of a theoretical preparation that does not appears anchored to reality.

It seems reasonable that preservice teachers emphasize the need for starting clinical experiences as soon as possible, having access to authentic teaching episodes that can enhance their teaching skills and confidence. The risk is start to devalue theory and develop an impoverished understanding of the teaching practice and experience (Ellis, 2010). The challenge is for teacher education to develop the capacity for critically examining the meaning of practice and experience in order to appropriately link theory and practice and help develop reflective teaching in their candidates.

The last finding related to programmatic features has a positive connotation. Preservice teachers strongly highlighted the enabling nature of tutoring sessions (*tutorías*). As a personalized version of Special Didactics (*Didáctica de la Especialidad*), tutoring played a key role in accompanying preservice teachers during their planning and teaching. One-to-one sessions were perceived as tailored and responsive spaces where teacher educator-tutors paid attention to individual preservice teachers' needs. In addition to the technical-pedagogical support provided by tutors (university instructors), preservice teachers highlighted the personal closeness and friendly treatment achieved during those sessions.

This close relationship or bond between preservice teachers and instructors also provided emotional support, not only to address teaching issues, but also for personal issues in times of crisis. As described by preservice teachers and tutors, this space emerges as a model to follow in other teacher education courses or workshops, and seems to inspire candidates' future teaching, both in terms of professional and personal attributes.

To conclude this discussion, *the 'not yet there' status* alludes to the personal – sometimes generational– characteristics that can foster or limit the process of becoming effective, responsive teachers. While the inexperience of youth, as well as fears and insecurities, were identified as obstacles for achieving teaching effectiveness, a transformationist attitude was perceived as a facilitating characteristic that boosted preservice teachers' vocation and future development.

First, DEP candidates identified their lack of experience and youth as constraining their autonomy in planning, implementing, and reflecting on teaching, in addition to their

decision-making when facing challenging tasks. Most of them confessed having frustrated feelings and episodes due to their role as ‘apprentices’ or ‘foreigners.’ For instance, at an early stage of the practicum, preservice teachers were still influenced by their personal biography (preconceptions); thus, when assigned to school placement, they received conflicting demands from instructors and school staff (cooperating teachers, administrators) about the role they were expected to play.

Second, and strongly connected to the previous dimension, fears and insecurities also constitute constraining aspects in the process of learning to teach. Besides lack of experience, preservice teachers also experienced doubts, tensions, insecurities, survival instincts, and isolation. Moreover, teacher educators stressed differences they perceived in comparing maturity levels between recent cohorts. Consequently, in addition to participants’ personal characteristics, findings suggest a generational factor in the way experiences are socialized inside the program. However, towards the end of the program, DEP’s approach of permanent reflective practice seems to attenuate participants’ fears and insecurities, causing them to evolve and experience more positive feelings.

Finally, there is an element that preservice teachers and teacher educators perceived as enabling teaching abilities and a sense of self-efficacy, which I called the *transformationist attitude*. Despite all their difficulties and frustrating experiences, achievements in the last stage of the practicum reinforce the teaching principles that made DEP candidates choose the teaching career. Though the emphasis had shifted, all participants declared a level of commitment to social justice in the sense that they want to contribute to the reconstruction of the Chilean school system and society through their teaching.

In the spirit of the recent social movement for public education and the end of segregation, these preservice teachers suggest that DEP and other teacher education programs should be more attentive when preparing teachers to work with minoritized student populations. DEP's teacher educators confirmed the persistence of this transformationist attitude in preservice teachers and acknowledged the need for making conscious efforts to incorporate more social justice-oriented readings and activities. Data indicates that preservice teachers' transformationist attitude persists and increases in every cohort, which has pushed DEP teacher educators to re-think the organization of their courses and, eventually, propose a program reform for years to come.

Implications for Teacher Education

In the following paragraphs, I will present the general implications that this study has for the field of teacher education. These implications are derived from the findings on seven preservice teachers in one teacher education program and may not be generalizable to other programs. Indeed, DEP has a post-baccalaureate or consecutive model that prepares secondary school teachers for careers in education and corresponds to a specific type of program in Chile. After discussing the implications and limitations of this study, I will address recommendations for future studies.

Teacher education programs need to evaluate the role of relationships and emotions in teacher preparation. This study's findings have shown that they are important for preservice teachers both during programs' coursework and when teaching in school placements. Besides providing tools of inquiry to "read" the contexts, more time reflecting and working to build strong relationships is needed. There is no doubt that teachers need social and emotional skills if they are to effectively teach and achieve

student learning goals. Thus, why not give instruction on these skills during teacher education? As adults, it is difficult for in-service and preservice teachers to develop social and emotional skills that were not addressed in earlier stages of life. While expert teachers have the advantage of experience, preservice teachers face a complex socio-emotional scenario that can be amplified by so-called ‘reality shock.’

Another implication for teacher education programs has to do with the need for facilitating knowledge of contexts. This can be done through more community-oriented preparation. To really know contexts and understand how they impact students’ predisposition to learn, preservice teachers need access to students’ communities. It is insufficient for teacher education programs to simply provide with various types of school placements for practicum. A deeper involvement with diverse community organizations and their members is required.

As was mentioned in chapter 2, there have been recent efforts of teacher education programs in joint work with communities. For instance, placements in community-based organizations could provide opportunities to learn about students and to learn from the practices of community-based educators. However, future efforts in Chile and other countries should be cautious about placing people in communities without involving a knowledge shift (Zeichner & Payne, 2013). Teacher education programs should develop responsible initiatives of action that attempt authentic and democratic collaboration between community, school, and university staff. In addition, further research is necessary to understand the real impact of those initiatives.

In the U.S. context, efforts within the Multicultural Education (Bennett, 2007; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995), professional development schools, and community-

oriented settings (Boyle-Baise & McIntyre, 2008) have been documented. Given the recent literature and considering the Chilean context, community-oriented initiatives seem advisable. Field experiences such as *service learning*, *cultural immersion*, or *community schools* (Boyle-Baise and McIntyre, 2008) need to be implemented in urban Chilean communities that provide socio-culturally diverse student populations from which preservice teachers can learn the most. Some Chilean universities have started to incorporate *service learning* (aprendizaje servicio) into diverse social science degrees, but a specific focus on teacher education is still missing.

A third implication for teacher education programs in general has to do with fostering creativity in teaching. As was shown in chapter 5, at first preservice teachers use traditional teaching strategies and resources in an effort to stay in their comfort zone. Nonetheless, they rapidly prefer using alternative methods and activities in order to connect with sometimes unmotivated adolescents. Unfortunately, most of them struggle to develop innovative teaching methods, strategies and resources.

When used consciously, creative teaching strategies were shown to encourage students' learning and participation. Multimedia, artistic, and playful activities have proven successful in situated contexts. But more combinations and original uses of these and other resources are scarce. Therefore, creativity should not be left to intuition as if it were a last resort. A re-design or creation of courses and/or workshops combined with the use of appropriate literature would designate specific time for pedagogical innovation as a permanent task for preservice teachers and instructors as a team.

Gorski (2013) has provided data-driven examples of instructional strategies that work when adapted to specific contexts. Among other strategies, Gorski mentions the

incorporation of music, art, and theater across the curriculum, and the integration of movement and exercise into teaching and learning. On the one hand, “In-school access to music, art, and theater education fortifies learning, engagement, and retention for all groups of students, but can be particularly important for poor and working class students” (p. 119). On the other hand, “there are all sorts of easy and applicable ways to incorporate physical movement into classroom instruction, and the list of available resources on how to do so in specific subject areas, or across subject areas, is growing longer every day” (p. 125). These strategies are relevant for every preservice teacher, but especially those assigned to schools serving minoritized students where there is a dearth of facilities. In my view, recent literature is just one source of new teaching strategies. Preservice teachers' own energy and transformationist attitude should be channeled and used to create resources rather than waiting for a Spanish version of an English-language book.

In close relation with the aforementioned challenges for teacher education, another implication refers to the need of a more practice-oriented preparation. In this study, preservice teachers demonstrated familiarity with *didactic transposition* (Chevallard, 1997), which directly connects with the concept of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (Grossman, 1990; Shulman, 1986; Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2001), also studied in Chilean teacher education programs. However, preservice teachers had a hard time providing specific examples of practical application of these concepts.

In this study, I verified various indirect references to components such as curriculum knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, knowledge of contexts, cognitive knowledge of learners, empirical knowledge of learners, beliefs about the subject, knowledge of self, and knowledge of educational ends (Turner-Bisset, 2001). Still, there

was little or no mention of the implementation of alternative representations such as analogies, illustrations, examples, explanations, and demonstrations (Shulman, 1986). This leads us to the issue of fostering a more practical preparation beyond the development of PCK in cycles of intra-program reflection.

If helping preservice teachers develop practical abilities is difficult in traditional models of initial teacher education –due to limited opportunities to engage in authentic teaching situations or limited periods of time in school placements– teacher education programs should be innovative in providing preservice teachers with more safe and practice-oriented spaces for exercising teaching. They need to participate in more real teaching situations over a significant period of time and with structured opportunities to reflect on their content knowledge and teaching practices.

Besides mastering the theory related to *didactic transposition* and/or PCK, preservice teachers must be able to put that knowledge to use in practice. This study's participants, indeed, strongly demanded more practice-oriented experiences that would provide safe spaces for trial and error. They claimed that there were insufficient opportunities to develop practical skills and receive feedback. In providing the rationale for a clinical preparation of teachers, Grossman (2010) stated that “novices need structured opportunities to gain experience in authentic settings of actual teaching practice.” (p. 1). However, while many teacher education programs include field experiences as clinical spaces in their curriculum, they continue reproducing the traditional relationship between universities and schools. Therefore, more time and space for teaching exercises with continued interactions with peers and tutors are required.

While peers (classmates) and tutors (university-based instructors) play a key role in the collaborative work of learning to teach inside programs, a more complex task for teacher education programs is to find and collaborate with cooperating teachers. In the case of DEP program and many other programs in Chile, there is little or no joint work with cooperating teachers outside the administrative area. In addition to the lack of time and resources of university practice coordinators and supervisors, cooperating teachers demonstrated low levels of preparedness for their role. The implications of this study for DEP and other teacher education programs is the need to develop a collaboration model that ensures better preparation and greater rewards for cooperating teachers, such that their contribution is valued and they can devote quality time to the accompaniment of teacher candidates. One concrete step in this regard may be the recruitment of cooperating teachers who can spend part of their normal workday collaborating with preservice teachers and instructors.

But beyond important administrative changes, the main transformation involves changing the role of cooperating teachers from mere supervisors to mentors. In the mentor role, the cooperating teacher pedagogically and personally advises preservice teachers, becoming a supporting element for them. He/she is an expert who assists teaching students and helps them understand the culture of the school (Marcelo, 2008). Although the mentors are mainly considered to be part of induction processes for novice teachers, their role of modeling and guidance illuminates how teacher education programs should select, train, and work with cooperating teachers so they actually support preservice teachers' learning, rather than simply ceding a space and providing an evaluation at the end of the process.

Suggestions for Improvement within DEP

Regarding tutoring provided by instructors of special didactics, the findings of this study showed that these are the most valued formative space for teacher candidates. Tutoring sessions enabled quality advising in terms of depth, reflection, feedback, and emotional support for teaching their subject matters and class management. According to this study's participants, professors in their tutor role were much more supportive, responsive, and sensitive than in group courses, providing the guidance that preservice teachers expected.

Using Rogoff's (1995) sociocultural perspective, we can assert that individual tutoring at DEP is a privileged space within the activity setting that facilitates personal and interpersonal learning in connection with community or institutional aspects. Unfortunately, the time available for tutoring at DEP is very limited. Preservice teachers from the same discipline must compete for an office hour with their tutor. Therefore, an improvement that the program could implement is the redistribution of time devoted to didactics, increasing the hours that tutors dedicate to individual tutoring.

Finally, I find it very important to refer once again to the category of *programmatic features*. The dimension of *complaints and demands* clearly stated which areas, from preservice teachers' perspective, need urgent transformation within this particular program. Aspects such as the redundancy of theoretical preparation (as perceived by candidates) and instructors' reluctance to foster more hands-on activities were strongly labeled as constraining their teacher preparation. In that vein, the demand of preservice teachers for a more practice-oriented teacher preparation in this particular program and the "aggravating factor" that teacher educators distance from actual school

classrooms, calls for better ways to address the unsolved “theory versus practice” tension. While it is understandable that preservice teachers ask for early clinical experiences, DEP teacher educators must develop the capacity for critically examining the aforementioned dichotomous view of the problem in order to build the bridge between theory and practice so preservice teachers can develop a reflective approach of teaching and practical experience.

As a former DEP teacher candidate and teaching assistant, and after reviewing this dissertation's findings, I conclude that, as a whole, these complaints and demands have created an adverse climate that can contaminate the academic relationship between instructors and candidates. Inside this activity setting, positive and negative judgments toward faculty members and courses are shared among preservice teachers from diverse cohorts and sections, constituting a powerful interpersonal learning (Rogoff, 1995). The implications for the DEP teacher education program and its faculty revolve around the way the problem is to be addressed by teacher educators. Appropriate lines of action should be taken to avoid that the same nature of *complaints and demands* emerge year after year, perpetuating tensions that impede quality teacher education. The endeavor is for teacher educators to develop relational expertise and agency (Edwards, 2010) to know the standpoints and motives of “others” (more practice-oriented preparation) while, at the same time, avoid the risk of devaluing theory and communicating an impoverished understanding of teaching and experience (Ellis, 2010).

Limitations

Several limitations affect this study; while some involve flaws of the research design, others refer to flaws of my data, and others are related to my positionality. First of

all, as is the nature of case study research, it is difficult to specify the application of this study's findings to other teacher education programs. A range of circumstantial factors as well as the particular idiosyncrasies of participants inside a specific community make the findings of this study difficult to transfer. This is a study of seven preservice teachers attending a single teacher education program with distinctive characteristics not found in most other programs in the country. Accordingly, the results cannot be generalized to the teacher education field as a whole.

There were limitations related to the study design and timeframe that are strictly associated with the following geographic factor: while I designed the study in the United States, my fieldwork had to take place in Chile. As a consequence, I was not able to gather data from the beginning of the preparation of cohort 2014. This would have made my findings stronger, giving me the opportunity to interview and observe preservice teachers before they started their practicum. At that point, their preconceptions about teaching were not yet influenced by the program. Moreover, being there from the beginning would have given me more time to select a deliberate sample.

Although the analysis included views from preservice teachers, cooperating teachers, and university instructors, field supervisors, and tutors, the timeframe of the study did not cover the entire teacher education process. Interviews and documents referred to three semesters of preparation, but observations only covered the final semester. Conclusions regarding the evolution of preservice teachers' learning from and incorporation of contexts could be affected by an imbalance where discourses predominate over empirical observation of practices. Additionally, I did not follow the preservice teachers into their first years of teaching.

With regard to the limitations of my data, it is necessary to note that despite the original intention to account for the increasing diversity of the student population in Chilean schools, the data collected does not allow drawing robust conclusions about how that diversity impact preservice teachers learning experiences. While data reflect the importance students' social class and socioeconomic status -according to school they attend, the categories of ethnicity or race are rather absent, except for scattered references during interviews. Moreover, when directly referring to class or socioeconomic status, nuances that allow us to differentiate within the same social group are missing. Therefore, the limitation of my data implies the inability to further explore cultural diversity and its impact on teaching practices of the candidates. Certainly, these limitations must be addressed with greater diligence in future investigations.

In terms of my limitations as a researcher, my own experience as an observer influenced –and by definition, limited– data collection, data analysis, and the findings. Prior to conducting this research project, I had been a teaching assistant in the same program. Since my membership in this group ended five years ago, none of the teacher candidates knew me as a former DEP member. However, I was a familiar face to some teacher educators whose courses I had helped to teach in the past. Most likely, the relationship of authority that existed five years ago could have affected the richness of my interviews with those teacher educators for reasons beyond my understanding. Moreover, as a former DEP student and teacher assistant, my interpretations of the program and its components may be influenced by my own memories of that experience.

All in all, I tried to maintain distance and objectivity while interviewing DEP preservice teachers and faculty members analyzing their responses. Nevertheless,

complete objectivity is not achievable by any individual. Naturally, this study is affected by the pitfalls of every human endeavor.

Recommendations for Future Research

There is a world of research to be done in the field of teacher education in Chile. Although many critical areas have been studied in the U.S. and other countries, they are underanalyzed or underdeveloped in the Chilean contexts. As stated in the introductory chapter, Chilean research on teacher education has tended to explore some issues more than others and focused on one-dimensional problems. Its knowledge gaps have to do with subjects, components, processes, and outcomes of teacher education programs (Cisternas, 2011).

This study has made a contribution in terms of subjects (secondary preservice teachers), components (coursework, tutoring) and processes (teaching humanities and social sciences, learning from contexts) but, more importantly, it has pointed to particular research topics that connect teacher education with students' social and cultural backgrounds. Suggestions for improvement include detailed attention to issues of emotionality, community-oriented teacher education, teaching creativity, clinical preparation, and development of a mentoring model. These same issues and others related to teaching increasingly diverse urban student populations could be the focus of future research projects.

Although degrees and courses of emotional education are being provided in some universities and professional development programs in Chile, there is no specialized research or literature addressing the role of emotionality in teaching or teacher education. While Casassus (2014) has addressed in-service teachers' experiences with regard to

emotions, research connecting teacher education and emotions is still lacking. If preservice teachers and teacher educators stress the supreme importance of establishing strong relationships with students as the baseline for academic achievement, specific studies are needed to identify the place that emotional education can occupy in teacher education programs and how, if at all, emotional competency can be fostered in future teachers.

Regarding community-oriented teacher education, only the service learning model has been implemented in Chile in a small number of private universities. Although some research studies have been conducted to understand its impact on university students and instructors, they have not been specifically focused on pedagogy programs (e.g., Jouannet, Ponce, & Contreras, 2012). Despite the fact that more initiatives are needed to connect universities and local communities through service learning, cultural immersion, etc., researchers in the field of teacher education could also focus on that connection and its effectiveness in teaching and learning. Due to a lack of concrete efforts linking teacher education programs and local communities, action-research projects are strongly recommended.

Most Chilean teacher education programs claim to have clinical preparation through field experiences as part of their practicum. However, there is little knowledge of the specific nature of those experiences, and the consistent use of clinical, practice-oriented preparation analyses that shed light on what works in terms of preservice teachers' effectiveness. Moreover, what are the specific activities and resources that those clinical experiences utilize? Based on preservice teachers' demands for more spaces in which to practice teaching, more research is needed to understand how diverse programs

implement clinical experiences and provide, if at all, safe trial and error instances before sending candidates to schools.

Regarding the role of Chilean cooperating teachers, the lack of communication and even mistrust between the actors involved in different stages of the teacher preparation has been clearly noted (Núñez, Arévalo, & Ávalos, 2012). However, this research still stays within the bounds of theoretical discussion about the role of communities, of practicum and the use of writing practices to improve experienced-novice communication and empower teacher development. In Chile, teacher education programs hardly help schoolteachers to appropriately assume a mentoring role. As the DEP program has done, others are trying to prepare mentors that can divide their time between teaching their subject matter and mentoring preservice teachers. Nonetheless, since these initiatives respond to a practical need, they are not followed by a research project that evaluates their impact. More studies on the preparation of and relationships with school mentors are required.

Regarding the increasing diversity of the student population in Chile, teacher education programs are doing incipient work to try to incorporate diversity issues in their curricula. Despite that local educational initiatives for indigenous populations have been studied (e.g., Quilaqueo & Quintriqueo, 2008), they still pertain to the reign of the bilingual-intercultural framework. Recent migratory movements from neighboring countries (Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, Haiti, etc.) are populating urban Chilean public schools, and the impact of this shift is still unknown. In addition to studying the impact of serving ethnically diverse student populations on in-service teachers, specific research

studies are needed to understand how this phenomenon can affect the preparation of teacher candidates who learn to teach in these contexts.

Finally, based on the study's limitations and projecting a future research agenda that complements my findings, it is necessary to conduct longitudinal studies concerning preservice teachers' knowledge of context as they graduate, enter the school system, and continue their teacher learning. As I have acknowledged that a one-semester study is not sufficient to understand the complexity of preservice teachers' incorporation of social and cultural contexts, an extended version of this study is required to better understand what preservice teachers are learning and how they adjust their practice based on that learning.

Conclusions

My experience as a preservice teacher and teacher assistant at the University of Chile influenced my deep interest in contributing to the improvement of teacher education there. I lived and witnessed the fears and frustrations of the practicum, thus I designed and conducted this study expecting to contribute to the better preparation and support for those young people who nobly choose careers in teaching. On the other hand, my teaching experiences at three different types of schools (private, semi-private, and municipal, chronologically) taught me to adapt my teaching according to what I learned from students with very different life stories and cultural capital. Later, I arrived at the conclusion that, regardless of their background, all students deserve to be taught by teachers who understand their abilities, interests, and needs. Therefore, I tried to include my concerns about preservice teachers and students from diverse backgrounds in this research project.

I wanted this study to shed light on the ways future educators make sense of their theoretical preparation and field experiences with real students in order to develop their understanding of how to teach their disciplines. In my literature review, I identified a sociocultural perspective to study different planes of teacher learning and development. The personal, the interpersonal, and the community levels explained by Rogoff (1995) helped me to understand individual and collective learning processes in an activity setting. Thus, I understood how individual prior knowledge and experiences merged with one another in different formal and informal spaces of socialization.

This study confirms that previous knowledge and experiences are influential (Lortie, 1975; Pajares, 1992), but later learning experiences can be equally formative when it comes to preservice teachers' understandings of how to teach. One salient finding is the supreme importance of building strong relationships with students and university-based tutors. For teacher candidates, the construction of a human bond is crucial in both spheres. Being taught Freire's (1969) maxim "to educate is an act of love" is not enough; they need role models that embody that philosophy.

Since teaching is a very complex practice, reflective thinking plays a crucial role in teacher education. However, preservice teachers need and demand preparation that balances theory and practice, supported by teacher educators who do not underestimate and underuse practical tools, and are familiar with real schools and students. Accordingly, preservice teachers should be better prepared to embrace contexts and develop creative strategies and resources that adjust to specific teaching situations. Additionally, more spaces for safe teaching rehearsal could enable them to transform expert knowledge into teachable content and achieve higher levels of student learning.

Practical knowledge needs to be elevated if it is to achieve its rightful place in the always complex and contextualized activity of teaching. This study's findings indicate that university courses make sense for preservice teachers when they are guided by practice. Teacher learning begins with examining theories and critiquing one's own experience, preconceptions, assumptions, and beliefs. Teacher educators have to continue on that path with practical implementations, assuring preservice teachers that they will rise above the 'not yet there' status, and acquire a significant repertoire of pedagogical strategies in order to become autonomous, confident teachers who will continue to learn from teaching.

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APPENDIX A: MAP OF SANTIAGO, ITS COMMUNES, AND SCHOOL PLACEMENTS' LOCATIONS



- ★ University of Chile's Department of Pedagogical Studies
- Experimental High School
- Downtown High School
- Traditional High School
- East Side High School
- Arts High School
- Number One High School

APPENDIX B: BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS OF SCHOOL PLACEMENTS

1. Experimental High School

Administration	:	Paid private
Orientation	:	Scientific-Humanist
Students' gender	:	Co-ed
Location	:	East Commune Santiago de Chile
User families	:	Upper middle class, mostly professional parents

2. Downtown High School

Administration	:	Municipal (Public)
Orientation	:	Scientific-Humanist
Students' gender	:	Co-ed
Location	:	East side Santiago de Chile
User families	:	Middle and low class, some minority students

3. Traditional High School

Administration	:	Municipal (Public)
Orientation	:	Scientific-Humanist
Students' gender	:	Male only
Location	:	Downtown Santiago de Chile
User families	:	Mostly middle class, professional parents

4. East Side High School

Administration	:	Municipal (Public)
Orientation	:	Scientific-Humanist
Students' gender	:	Co-ed
Location	:	East Side of Santiago de Chile
User families	:	Mostly low class

5. Arts High School

Administration	:	Paid private
Orientation	:	Scientific-Humanist
Students' gender	:	Co-ed
Location	:	Downtown Santiago de Chile
User families	:	Upper and middle class

6. Number One High School

Administration	:	State-subsidized (Semi-private)
Orientation	:	Scientific-Humanist
Students' gender	:	Co-ed
Location	:	East Side of Santiago de Chile
User families	:	Mostly low class, some minority students

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

C-1: Interview Protocol for Preservice Teachers (Pre-observation)

Preamble: First of all, I really appreciate that you've accepted being part of this study. In this first interview we'll talk about your motivation for being a teacher and your preparation in this teacher education program, so I will ask you some questions about your coursework, your specific subject matter, and general aspects of your practicum.

1. I'd like you to tell me the reason why you decided to become a teacher?
2. Could you try to define your approach or stance towards teaching?
3. What are the major ideas that define your philosophy of education? In other words, what is the purpose of education according to your view?
4. Tell me about your experience in this teacher education program. How would you describe your teaching training?
5. What courses do you consider to have been most important in your preparation as a teacher? Why?

Now, I'd like to ask you a few questions about your background and the subject matter you teach.

6. What is your background in your subject matter?
 - i. What is your specialization?
 - ii. What do you think are your strengths in your discipline?
 - iii. In what areas do you feel less prepared, if at all?
7. Speaking about the subject that you teach, what are the major areas or themes you consider crucial in your field?
8. What specific contents do you think a teacher should master in your discipline?

9. Why do you think this subject has to be taught in high school?
 - i. What do you think is the importance for your students?
 - ii. What are the topics you prefer to teach them? Why?
10. What are you currently teaching to your students?
 - i. What is/are the unit(s)?
 - ii. How are they organized?
 - iii. What texts and/or material are you using?
11. According to your brief experience, what topics pose more difficulties to your students in learning your subject matter?
12. What are the most common questions or concerns that your students express in learning your subject?
 - i. How do you usually respond to them?
13. What were the main teaching methods or strategies that you use in order to overcome learning difficulties?
 - i. Could you mention a specific case you remember?
14. What aspects of students' backgrounds do you consider relevant in your lesson planning?
15. Which of those aspects do foster or constrain your learning how to teach?

**C-2: Interview Protocol for Preservice Teachers (Pre-observation)
Extended Spanish Version**

Foco: Experiencias previas, creencias y actitudes en torno a la enseñanza, la diversidad (el contexto), el programa de formación inicial, los estudiantes de enseñanza media que ha servido, y su percepción de preparación para enfrentar la práctica.

Preámbulo: Primero, gracias por concederme tiempo para esta conversación. Estoy muy interesado en saber cómo ha sido tu experiencia de formación docente durante el año anterior, cuál es tu percepción de lo que has aprendido hasta el momento, incluyendo los logros y las dificultades, y cómo te sientes para enfrentar tu práctica final. También me interesa saber qué has aprendido en los centros de práctica, especialmente de los estudiantes y sus contextos, con el fin de entender cómo estos aspectos influyen en tu formación. Quiero que sepas que esta es la primera de tres entrevistas, las que irán profundizando en temas pedagógicos y del contexto de enseñanza. Todo lo que conversemos es absolutamente confidencial y no está asociado a las actividades académicas internas del DEP, por lo que no tiene consecuencias para evaluación.

1. ¿Quién eres?
 - a. ¿Qué te gustaría contarme sobre tu biografía personal?
 - b. ¿Qué te gustaría contarme sobre tu biografía como estudiante?
2. ¿Por qué decidiste estudiar esta disciplina (o licenciatura) en particular?
 - a. ¿estudiaste otra licenciatura o carrera previamente?
3. ¿Por qué decidiste ser profesor?
 - a. ¿Cuándo tomaste esa decisión?
4. ¿Qué crees que es fundamental aprender para ser un buen profesor?
5. ¿Cómo describirías tu enfoque personal al enfrentar la enseñanza escolar?
6. ¿Cuál crees tú que es el rol de los profesores en nuestra sociedad?
7. Focalizándonos en tu propia formación docente: ¿Podrías describir cómo fue tu experiencia durante el primer año de formación docente en el DEP?
 - a. ¿Qué aprendizajes rescatarías y por qué?

8. ¿Crees que ha cambiado tu visión de la educación y de la enseñanza luego de un año de formación en el DEP? Y si ha cambiado, ¿cómo crees que se manifiesta ese cambio?
9. Con respecto a tu experiencia práctica: ¿en qué liceo(s) o colegio(s) realizaste tus prácticas iniciales?
 - a. En general, ¿cómo describirías el o los liceos que conociste el año 2013?
10. ¿Cómo describirías tu reacción, tus sentimientos cuando entraste por primera vez a ese centro de práctica y comenzaste tu inmersión en la institución?
11. Más en detalle, ¿cómo describirías lo que aprendiste del contexto, de los profesores y de los estudiantes que conociste?
12. Si cambiaste de centro de práctica: ¿cómo describirías la otra institución? ¿Cómo la comparas con la anterior, con los otros profesores y estudiantes?
13. Considerando tanto el primer como segundo semestre, ¿qué aprendiste acerca de los trasfondos socioculturales de los estudiantes, sus familias, sus intereses y sus necesidades?
14. Considerando lo vivido en la práctica, especialmente en el segundo semestre donde debes planifica y enseñar una unidad,
 - a. ¿cómo describirías ahora tu conocimiento del contexto?
 - b. ¿cómo describirías tu conocimiento disciplinario?
 - c. ¿cómo describirías tu conocimiento pedagógico?
 - d. ¿cómo describirías lo que sabes sobre los estudiantes?

15. ¿En qué medida la formación en el DEP ha colaborado a desarrollar y fortalecer los saberes de contexto, disciplinario, pedagógico, y de los estudiantes en cuestión?
16. Al poner en la balanza lo aprendido en el DEP y en los centros de práctica, ¿en qué aspectos te ha ayudado más uno que el otro y por qué?
17. Considerando lo vivido, lo aprendido y tu contacto con los estudiantes, ¿cuál es tu concepción general de lo que es la *diversidad* en el aula?
 - a. ¿Cómo se ha manifestado la *diversidad* en tu práctica inicial?
18. ¿Cómo crees que se debe abordar la *diversidad* desde la enseñanza de tu disciplina?
19. Si en tu práctica final o en el futuro te corresponde enseñar a niños de minorías étnicas/raciales o inmigrantes, ¿cuál consideras que es tu labor frente a ellos?
 - a. ¿Qué esperas que suceda con ellos en cuanto al rendimiento académico?
20. Si te corresponde enseñar a niños viviendo en pobreza y/o en una condición social vulnerable, ¿cuál consideras que es tu labor frente a ellos?
 - a. ¿Qué esperas que suceda con ellos en cuanto al rendimiento académico?
21. Antes de terminar, ¿quieres agregar algo más con respecto a los temas que hemos conversado?

C-3: Interview Protocol for Preservice Teachers (After Observation)

Preamble: Thanks again for your time. In this final interview we'll talk about your perceptions regarding the whole practicum experience, about your own learning process

and your evaluation of students' learning outcomes, and about your assessment of the influence that this practicum have had in your preparation as a secondary school teacher.

1. In considering what you have experienced during this final stage of the practicum:
How would you describe the whole experience of learning to teach in this context?
2. How important have this particular school's characteristics been in your teacher learning process?
3. In what ways, if at all, do you think your teaching has incorporated contextual elements to provide learning opportunities to your students?
4. What specific episodes would you recall to exemplify your experiences as a student teacher?
 - i. Examples of positive teaching experiences?
 - ii. Examples of negative teaching experiences?
5. How significant has the co-teacher been during the whole practicum? In what ways?
6. How important has been your university supervisor in this process? Why?
7. What courses or specific classes do you find especially useful for your practicum experience?
8. In general: To what extent do you think you are incorporating students' backgrounds in your teaching?
9. What would you do differently in order to improve this teaching experience?
10. Finally, is there anything that you would like to add?

C-4: Interview Protocol for Preservice Teachers (After Observation)

Extended Spanish Version

Foco: aprendizajes a partir del nuevo contexto de práctica (institución, estudiantes y sus trasfondos socioculturales, intereses y necesidades); aprendizajes concretos en torno a la planificación, desarrollo y evolución de la intervención; fundamentación de sus decisiones pedagógicas (planificación, estrategias didácticas, materiales, evaluaciones, etc.); experiencia de la enseñanza de su disciplina en un contexto particular; reflexiones en torno a la enseñanza y el aprendizaje logrado por sus estudiantes; evaluación de la experiencia global de práctica pedagógica tanto en el programa de formación (universidad) como en los centros de práctica.

Informante: un(a) profesor(a) en formación del programa de enseñanza media de la Universidad de Chile en su tercer y último semestre de preparación.

Preámbulo: Gracias nuevamente por concederme tiempo para una segunda entrevista. Esta vez hablaremos en torno a tres temas. Primero, del conocimiento que has desarrollado respecto de tu centro de práctica, los estudiantes, sus características, intereses y necesidades, y de la interacción en términos de enseñanza y aprendizaje. En segundo lugar -haciendo referencia tanto al material que me has enviado como a mis observaciones de clase-, te haré preguntas sobre aspectos específicos de tu intervención, es decir, los contenidos abordados, tus planificaciones, decisiones pedagógicas, estrategias didácticas, actividades, materiales, evaluaciones, y cómo has podido incorporar lo aprendido del contexto. Finalmente, te voy pedir una reflexión acerca de cómo evalúas el proceso global de la formación docente y de la práctica, es decir, tu

propio resumen sobre cómo este proceso formativo ha impactado en ti, los aspectos que crees que han favorecido o dificultado tu aprendizaje, tu proyección como docente, etc.

Para empezar:

1. Después de nuestra primera entrevista, ¿cómo ha crecido o profundizado el conocimiento del contexto de tu centro de práctica y de tus estudiantes?
 - a. Por favor, dame ejemplos de ese mayor conocimiento
2. ¿Cómo describirías el proceso de planificación de las unidades y clases que has implementado?
 - a. ¿Diferencias entre lo planificado y lo ejecutado? Reflexiones al respecto.
3. ¿Cómo crees que ha impactado el curso de didáctica especial y la retroalimentación de tu didáctica en la planificación de tus clases?
4. ¿Cuáles son las oportunidades y/o limitaciones que has encontrado en el proceso de planificación de tus clases?
5. ¿Cómo se ha desarrollado la relación y/o colaboración con tu profesor(a) guía?
 - a. ¿Ejemplos de su labor de mentor?
 - b. ¿Ejemplos de colaboración?
6. ¿En qué medida tu intervención ha sido una continuidad de lo que venía haciendo tu profesor(a) guía o ha sido algo nuevo planificado por ti? Ejemplos.
7. ¿En qué medida crees que has incorporado lo que has aprendido del contexto de tus estudiantes en la planificación de tus clases y en su ejecución?
8. Si consideramos aspectos como estatus socioeconómico, el trasfondo sociocultural, los conocimientos previos, las familias y comunidades, género o

- algún otro que te parezca relevante, ¿cuál o cuáles crees que son los que más influyen en el proceso de aprendizaje de tus estudiantes?
- a. ¿Cómo crees que se produce dicha influencia? Ejemplos.
9. ¿Cuáles son los contenidos curriculares que has tenido que implementar en tu intervención?
10. Con respecto al contenido de.....
- a. ¿cómo decidiste abordarlo (estrategia didáctica) y por qué de esa manera?
 - b. ¿cómo crees que funcionó? Éxitos y dificultades.
 - c. ¿de qué otra manera piensas que pudo ser abordada?
 - d. ¿cuáles crees que han sido los conceptos más difíciles de abordar con los estudiantes?
 - e. ¿qué has hecho para acercar dichos conceptos a los estudiantes?
 - f. ¿cuáles crees que han sido los temas más atractivos para los estudiantes?
 - g. ¿cómo crees que consideraste el contexto (características, necesidades, intereses) de los estudiantes al abordar este tema?
 - h. ¿qué recursos didácticos o materiales usaste principalmente? (Power Point, video, audio, texto, guías, otros...)
11. Para resumir... ¿Cuáles son las actividades y estrategias didácticas que más has utilizado en tus clases?
12. ¿Cuáles son los materiales o recursos que has utilizado y cómo han funcionado?
13. Sobre la capacidad de crear ambientes de aprendizaje e innovar en la enseñanza de los contenidos:

- a. ¿qué dirías tú que en tu intervención ha sido producto de tu creatividad y has podido innovar en la enseñanza de algún contenido?
 - b. Por el contrario, ¿hasta qué punto crees que has seguido un modelo de enseñanza y te ha costado distanciarte de él?
 - c. ¿qué importancia le atribuyes a la creación de material didáctico original, de innovación en las estrategias didácticas?
14. ¿Qué importancia le das a la creación de un clima de aprendizaje o de trabajo académico antes de comenzar a tratar el contenido planificado para la clase?
- a. ¿En qué medida crees que has logrado ese clima de aprendizaje? ¿cómo?
- Parte finalizar la entrevista:
15. ¿Qué aprendizajes concretos rescatas de tu práctica, de tus aciertos y errores, de lo observado, de lo reflexionado posteriormente, de lo conversado con otros, etc.?
16. ¿Cuál es tu reflexión final en torno a tu desempeño y el aprendizaje logrado por tus estudiantes?
17. ¿Cómo evalúas la experiencia global de práctica pedagógica tanto en el programa de formación (universidad) como en los centros de práctica?
18. ¿Quieres agregar algo más?

C-5: Interview Protocol for Teacher Educators

Topic: Preparation for Future Secondary School Teachers in Chile

Preamble: First of all, I really appreciate that you're giving me part of your time for this conversation. I'd like to explore how your course collaborates in the effort of mastering a discipline and also make it teachable and what is your perception of preservice teachers learning. I have several open-ended questions for you and I'll start with the following:

1. In your role of teacher educator, could you briefly describe the nature and purpose of the course that you teach in this program? (**Listen for:** what type of course he/she is teaching currently? Is it a general course or a specific teaching course?)
2. Could you tell me what issues are covered in this course? (**Listen for:** theoretical and practical issues)
3. What are the key elements that you think students should take away once they pass the course? (**Probe:** learning for their personal development and their future professional practice)
4. After finishing your course, what students have learned about teaching?
5. What are the most important readings (or materials in general) for the course and why they are important? (**Probe:** Details about readings, authors, etc.)
6. What are the mandatory assignments for students in this course? That is, what tasks they are required to complete? (**Listen for:** individual and team work)
7. Could you describe a typical session of this course? That is, what do you regularly do in your class? (**Listen for:** activities, readings, assignments, discussion, debate)
8. What are the most common questions or concerns that students expressed during the course? (**Probe:** how does the professor respond to those concerns?)
9. What are (if any) the curricular and instructional elements in your course that specifically address students' social and cultural backgrounds? (**Probe:** Do they consider issues such as socio-economic/class/racial/ethnic diversity, special needs, among others?)

10. What are (if any) the specific teaching strategies that candidates learn in your course in order to reduce the “achievement gap,” and so doing, reduce inequities in the school system? (**Probe:** How do you teach them to apply those strategies?)
11. According to your opinion, what is the specific approach of this program? (**Listen for:** theoretical, instructional principles)
12. How could you describe the students’ profile or features when entering to this program? (**Listen for:** demographics, attitudes, beliefs)
13. How could you describe the student-professor relationships inside the program during their preparation? (**Probe:** are they vertical or horizontal/democratic relationships?)
14. What is the seal or identity students have once graduated from this program? How this program transforms candidates? (**Listen for:** elements that shows transformation)
15. What kind of school (if any) are your students being prepared to teach in? (**Listen for:** an especial emphasis in some type of institution)
16. Drawing from your experience in this program, how do you think graduates from this program are prepared to struggle educational inequities in the school system? What are graduates’ strengths and weakness? (**Probe:** evidence/information about previous graduates and their experience)

C-6: Interview Protocol for Teacher Educators

Spanish Version

Foco: percepción de la preparación de los profesores en práctica del DEP, percepción del aprendizaje de los futuros profesores en su curso y en su rol como supervisores de práctica; evaluación del desempeño de la profesora en formación y temas asociados.

Informante: formador(a) docente, profesor(a) del Departamento de Estudios Pedagógicos.

Preámbulo: Primero, gracias por concederme tiempo para esta conversación. En el transcurso de la entrevista le haré preguntas generales sobre la práctica pedagógica así como preguntas específicas en torno a lo que usted y yo hemos observado. Mi objetivo principal, es conocer los aprendizajes que el/la practicante evidencia en torno al contexto en el que se está desempeñando, es decir, la institución, los estudiantes y su trasfondo social y cultural, y cómo usted percibe que utiliza ese conocimiento en la enseñanza de la asignatura.

1. ¿Qué cree que es fundamental aprender para ser un buen profesor?
 - a. ¿qué considera fundamental para desempeñarse bien en este colegio?
2. ¿Cómo describiría usted un adecuado ambiente de aprendizaje y cómo se construye?
3. ¿Cuáles son las prácticas pedagógicas/didácticas y rutinas que usted ha establecido en su clase?
 - a. ¿Cómo ha funcionado hasta el momento?
4. ¿Qué importancia le atribuyes a la consideración y uso del contexto sociocultural de los estudiantes en la enseñanza de su asignatura?

- a. ¿cómo lo has incorporado en tu didáctica?
5. ¿Cómo se ha llevado a cabo su trabajo con la coordinación de práctica y la supervisión de práctica?
6. ¿Cómo describiría el trabajo de con la practicante en términos de: los contenidos a tratar, la planificación, el acompañamiento, la retroalimentación, el acercamiento a los elementos que es indispensable saber al trabajar en este colegio (elementos de contexto)?
7. ¿Qué elementos del contexto de los estudiantes cree usted que la practicante ha incorporado en sus clases?
8. ¿Qué consideras que ella ha aprendido acerca de los trasfondos socioculturales de los estudiantes, sus familias, sus intereses y sus necesidades?
9. ¿Cómo describiría la evolución de la practicante durante el semestre?
 - a. Ejemplos concretos de cómo se manifiesta el cambio
10. Considerando los elementos estrictamente pedagógicos, de planificación y ejecución de unidades o de enseñanza de contenidos específicos:
 - a. ¿qué destacarías de lo observado del desempeño de la practicante?
 - b. ¿cómo describirías su conocimiento disciplinario?
 - c. ¿cómo describirías su conocimiento pedagógico?
11. ¿Cuáles elementos que son propios del DEP destacas tanto positiva o como negativamente y que han impactado en el desempeño de la practicante?
12. ¿Cuál es su opinión acerca del rol del profesor guía?
13. ¿Cómo describirías tu comunicación y trabajo con el profesor guía actual?
14. ¿Cómo crees que tú has trabajado con él o ella?

15. ¿Cómo crees que se puede mejorar ese aspecto clave de la práctica?
16. Antes de terminar, ¿quiere agregar algo más con respecto a los temas que hemos conversado?

C-7: Interview Protocol for Cooperating Teachers

Topic: to learn about the cooperating teacher's perception of the preservice teacher's practices; to understand how these practices differ from those of cooperating teachers; contrast their perspectives; and, differentiate what has been previously created by the cooperating teacher and what was later developed by the preservice teacher.

Preamble: First, thank you for giving me this time for the interview. I will ask you questions about your view on teaching, your experience as a cooperating teacher, and your perception and evaluation of the preservice teacher's performance. I will ask you general questions about his/her practice and specific questions about what you have observed. My main objective is to understand the learning evidenced by the preservice teacher regarding the knowledge of context and how he/she uses that knowledge in his/her teaching.

1. What do you think are the crucial characteristics of a good teacher?
 - a. What do you think is key to teaching in this specific school?
2. What is your view on this school and its students' sociocultural contexts?
3. How would you describe an appropriate learning environment?
4. What are the pedagogical practices and routines that you have established in your class?
 - a. How that has worked so far?

- b. How those practices differ from class to class?
5. How important do you think it is to consider and use the sociocultural context of your students when teaching your subject matter?
 - a. How do you incorporate contextual aspects in your teaching?
6. How have you worked in coordination with the university teacher education program and the supervisor?
7. How would you describe your work with the preservice teacher in terms of curricular contents, planning, collaboration, feedback, and guidance to work in this context?
8. What contextual elements of students do you think the preservice teacher has incorporated in her/his teaching?
9. What do you think he/she has learned about students' backgrounds, families, interests, and needs?
10. How would you describe the evolution of the preservice teacher's performance during this semester?
 - a. Can you give concrete examples of this evolution?
11. In considering aspects of pedagogical design, lesson planning, and actual teaching:
 - a. What would you stress about the preservice teacher's performance?
 - b. How would you describe his/her subject matter and pedagogical knowledge?
12. Drawing from what you have observed, what do you consider that the preservice teacher has done different to your own teaching practice or style?

13. In which way do you think your previous practices and routines have impacted in what the preservice teacher has been able to do in the classroom?
14. What elements of the DEP teacher education program would you highlight in term of its positive or negative impact on the preservice teacher?
15. How would you describe your own experience as a cooperating teacher?
 - a. What is your opinion about the cooperating teacher role?
16. Before we finish this interview, do you want to add anything?

C-8: Interview Protocol for Cooperating Teachers Spanish Version

Foco: conocer la percepción de los profesores guías con respecto a prácticas desarrolladas por los estudiantes de pedagogía, entender cómo difieren de las de los profesores guías, así como contrastar sus perspectivas. Diferenciar lo que ha sido creado previamente y lo que ha sido desarrollado después por el o la profesora practicante.

Informante: profesor(a) guía de uno de los liceos o colegio asociados al programa de formación quien tiene a su cargo el acompañamiento del practicante.

Preámbulo: Primero, gracias por concederme tiempo para esta conversación. En esta entrevista quiero conocer su visión sobre la enseñanza, su experiencia como profesor guía, su percepción y evaluación general de su profesor en práctica. Le haré preguntas generales sobre la práctica pedagógica así como preguntas específicas en torno a lo que usted ha observado. Mi objetivo principal es conocer los aprendizajes que el/la practicante evidencia en torno al conocimiento del contexto y cómo utiliza dicho conocimiento en su práctica.

1. ¿Qué cree que es fundamental aprender para ser un buen profesor?

- a. ¿qué considera fundamental para desempeñarse bien en este colegio?
2. ¿Cuál es su visión de la institución y del contexto sociocultural de sus estudiantes (contexto, diversidad) en este colegio?
3. ¿Cómo describiría usted un adecuado ambiente de aprendizaje y cómo se construye?
4. ¿Cuáles son las prácticas pedagógicas/didácticas y rutinas que usted ha establecido en su clase?
 - a. ¿Cómo ha funcionado hasta el momento?
 - b. ¿Cómo difiere dependiendo del grupo-curso con el que trabaja?
5. ¿Qué importancia le atribuye usted a la consideración y uso del contexto sociocultural de los estudiantes en la enseñanza de su asignatura?
 - a. ¿cómo lo ha hecho o cómo lo haría?
6. ¿Cómo se ha llevado a cabo su trabajo con la coordinación de práctica y la supervisión de práctica?
7. ¿Cómo describiría el trabajo de con la practicante en términos de: los contenidos a tratar, la planificación, el acompañamiento, la retroalimentación, el acercamiento a los elementos que es indispensable saber al trabajar en este colegio (elementos de contexto)?
8. ¿Qué elementos del contexto de los estudiantes cree usted que la practicante ha incorporado en sus clases?
9. ¿Qué considera usted que ella ha aprendido acerca de los trasfondos socioculturales de los estudiantes, sus familias, sus intereses y sus necesidades?
10. ¿Cómo describiría la evolución de la practicante durante el semestre?

- a. Ejemplos concretos de cómo se manifiesta el cambio
11. Considerando los elementos estrictamente pedagógicos, de planificación y ejecución de unidades o de enseñanza de contenidos específicos:
- a. ¿qué destacaría de lo observado del desempeño de la practicante?
 - b. ¿cómo describiría su conocimiento disciplinario?
 - c. ¿cómo describiría su conocimiento pedagógico?
12. De acuerdo a lo observado por usted: ¿qué considera que la practicante ha realizado diferente de lo que usted venía realizando y realiza frecuentemente en su clase?
13. ¿Cómo cree usted que las prácticas, normas, rutinas, estilo, etc., que usted ha establecido previamente han impactado –positiva o negativamente- en el desempeño de la practicante?
14. ¿Cuáles elementos que son propios del programa de formación del DEP destaca usted, tanto positiva o negativamente, que son notorios en el desempeño de la practicante?
- a. ¿cómo cree usted que ayuda o dificulta el aprendizaje del contexto y el uso de ello como un recurso pedagógico?
15. ¿Cómo describiría su experiencia como profesor guía?
- a. ¿Cuál es su opinión acerca del rol del profesor guía?
 - b. ¿cómo cree que usted ha desempeñado ese rol?
16. Antes de terminar, ¿quiere agregar algo más con respecto a los temas que hemos conversado?