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Parallel Process in Language Teacher Education

by

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ABSTRACT

FACULTY OF LAW, ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
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PARALLEL PROCESS IN LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION

Ingrid Wisniewska

This study investigates how parallels between the different contexts of language teaching and language teacher education influence student teachers and teacher educators. It argues that the concept of parallel process, though widely referred to in the literature of language teacher education, has not yet been fully investigated or described. It sets out to investigate the effects on student teachers and teacher educators of articulating these parallels explicitly. The study presents a holistic view of the operation of parallels on a language teaching methodology course using data from journals, interviews and class observations. The data were collected from student teachers and teacher educators at a university in North America. The study concludes by suggesting that reflection on parallels offers a valuable link between theoretical and experiential course components, helping to refine skills of critical reflection and observation, and provides valuable insights into how teachers and teacher educators learn and develop. It argues for explicit attention to parallel process as a path of development for both student teachers and teacher educators.

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With loving thanks to my mother and to my husband Greg. Without their help, this project could not have been completed.

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Parallel Process in Language Teacher Education

Introduction

"As I look at you with my lens, I consider you a mirror; I hope to see myself in you and through your teaching… Seeing you allows me to see myself differently and to explore the variables we both use." (Fanselow 1990 p.184)

As a student teacher, I was often aware of the fascinating reflections created by this 'mirror'. Observing the professors and lecturers who taught us about teaching, it was inevitable that we also observed *how* they taught us. Was their teaching style consistent with what they were telling us? Why did they choose those methods? Were we supposed to learn from how they taught, or only from what they told us? Did I appear to my students as they appeared to us? Were these questions part of my learning process?

As a teacher educator, very much concerned with the issue of 'communication', it also seemed particularly relevant to me to be aware of how I was 'communicating' and what kind of messages my students were reading from my choices of teaching methods. I became interested in learning more about how to use these 'reflections'. What kind of learning do they facilitate? How could they be integrated into a methodology course? Could they have a deeper resonance that would alter, not the substance, but the atmosphere of learning?

These questions were the starting point for my research. These 'reflections', which I later called 'parallels,' seemed to me to be unique to the field of teacher education in that it is only in the teaching of methodology that the process can mirror (or parallel) the content. Teacher educators 'teach' at the same time that they 'teach about teaching'.

This project is an investigation of 'parallel process' in language teacher education. I argue that this concept, defined in Chapter 1, plays a significant role in our thinking about the preparation of language teachers and enables us to clarify many aspects of the process of learning to be a teacher. The concept can provide a framework for interpreting interactions that take place in the language teacher education context, providing insights into the nature of learning that will help improve language teaching, teacher education, trainer development and course design.

In this study I attempt to show that the concept of parallel process is useful on a number of different levels. First, it can provide a framework for student teachers to interpret and analyze experiential learning in the context of a language teacher education program, helping to bridge theory and practice. Second, it can provide teacher educators with a framework for presenting course material that will enhance their existing course design. I will argue that the framework of parallel process creates a common language for making certain aspects of implicit learning visible and discussable to both teacher educators and students and thus creating opportunities for critical reflection. Third, this framework can be used as a tool for development of the teacher educator, either within the context of student-teacher educator interactions, or within the context of observer and teacher educator interactions.

I begin with a description of the key concept of 'parallel process' and its use in psychotherapy and therapist supervision. I describe how I have adapted this definition of this term to describe certain features unique to the teaching of methodology in teacher education.

In chapter1, I present an overview of models of teacher education followed by a discussion of the role of experiential learning, reflection, observation and self-study. In chapter 2, I discuss the connection between implicit and explicit learning in language learning and in language teacher education and its implications for course design. These chapters provide a background to the concepts investigated in this research and include examples from the literature on language teacher education.

In chapters 3 and 4 I describe the evolution of my research questions and research design, including a discussion of the observer-researcher's role in the investigation. These chapters present a view of the process of carrying out the research which will enable the reader to critically evaluate the relationship between the observer-researcher and the data.

In chapters 5 and 6, I present selected data and findings based on interpretation of those data. In chapter 7, I summarize the findings and their implications and present a tentative model of the concept of parallel process, locating it within the larger framework of language teacher education.

Key concept: Parallel Process

In this section, I introduce the meaning and use of the term parallel process in the field of psychotherapy and outline its relevance to language teacher education and to my study.

Meaning and use of the term 'Parallel Process' in psychotherapy
The term 'parallel process' originates in psychoanalytic literature and describes 'a process which happens in one situation or relationship and is repeated in another' (Hawkins and Shohet 2000 p.207). These repetitions often occur subconsciously and are generally seen as blocking the path to development. For example, when a client engages in a course of therapy, they may reenact some of the problematic behaviour in their relationships with others in the relationship with their therapist. This can have the effect of preventing the client from finding a solution, but can also enable the therapist to obtain insight into how to help. Awareness of these parallels can open up the possibility of change.

When psychotherapists undergo their training, they are required to engage in a course of therapy. This experience allows them to parallel the experience of their clients, to empathize more effectively with the client's point of view and it also allows them to develop an increased awareness of the self as a practitioner.

Another type of parallel process can be found in the field of therapist supervision. Therapists in training are assigned an experienced therapist as a supervisor who helps them to improve their work with their clients. In the process of describing a case to the supervisor, trainee therapists may transfer behavior from their client sessions to the interaction with their supervisor or mentor.

> 'In the paralleling phenomenon the processes at work currently in the relationship between client and therapist are uncovered through how they are reflected in the relationship between therapist and supervisor. ....In effect, I become my client and attempt to turn my supervisor into me as therapist. This function, which is rarely done consciously, serves two purposes for the therapist. One is that it is a form of discharge – 'I will do to you what has been done to me and you see how you like it.' The second is that it is an attempt to solve the problem through re-enacting it within the here-and-now relationship. The job of the supervisor is tentatively to

name the process and thereby make it available to conscious exploration and learning.' (Hawkins and Shohet 2000 p.81)

Studies carried out by Sachs and Shapiro in the 1970s experimented with an approach to supervision which they described as 'parallelism' between therapy and education (Sachs and Shapiro 1976). They asked student therapists to present their case to a group of peers and asked the peers to react as if they were in the therapist's role. They discovered that student therapists reenacted in the conference what had gone wrong in the treatment. They took their patients' roles and placed the group in a position analogous to their own. The authors attempt to undo this process by pointing out examples of parallelism and inviting students to reflect on them. In doing so, they model the method that they wish their trainees to employ when treating their patients.

Schön identifies two levels of parallelism in Sachs and Shapiro's description of the therapist-supervisor relationship. The 'parallelism of diagnosis' in which the therapist reenacts his interaction with his patient, which enables the supervisor to gain insight into the therapist's experience, and the 'parallelism of intervention' in which the supervisor enacts with the student therapist the kind of intervention he would like the student to use with his patient (Schön 1987 p.252).

'Because an analyst's practice consists of interactions with other persons, a psychoanalytic practicum parallels its practice. It is unavoidably a hall of mirrors in which students read messages about psychoanalytic practice in a supervisor's behaviour – whether or not he intends to convey them – and supervisors read in their students' behaviour messages about the students' way of doing therapy. The effectiveness of psychoanalytic supervision depends significantly on the degree to which coach and students recognize and exploit such mirrorings so as to make their practicum a reflective one in this additional sense.' (Schön 1987 p.220)

In addition to transferring elements of client's behaviour to interactions with the supervisor, trainee therapists may also transfer aspects of their supervisor's behaviour to their later interactions with clients. 'The supervisor is an immensely influential person. You (the supervisor) may have been more aware of that when you were a supervisee than when you sit in the opposite chair. Counsellors (that is, supervisees) are very likely indeed to copy some of supervision when

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they are counseling. As supervisor you need both to be worth copying, and to keep an extremely lively eye on what is appropriate to supervision sessions, and less useful for the supervisee to take back as a method into her work.' (Houston 1995, p.12) This point is also emphasized by Carroll, 'Parallel Process is not just uni-directional: it works back through the system to the client. What happens in supervision will also be represented in the counseling relationship.' (Carroll 1996 p. 107)

The supervisor-trainee interaction can both re-enact and model patterns for trainee-client interactions. Houston describes this as an 'echo.' The task of the supervisor is not simply to notice this echo, but by naming it to make it visible and therefore open to exploration and discussion (Houston 1995 p.86). Carroll supports the view that awareness of parallel process can help supervisors and supervisees to understand the dynamics of what is happening in their interactions with each other and with clients (Carroll 1996 p. 107).

Parallel process and teacher education
In the context of language teacher education, there are many opportunities for parallel process to occur. Student teachers are engaged in a course of study which generates many parallels with their future interactions. All types of classroom behaviour, from groupwork to class management, have the potential to generate reenactments of past experiences, or rehearsals for future teaching situations.

A literal application of the concept of parallel process from the context of therapist supervision would imply that teachers might act out problem relationships from their teaching and learning experiences in the teacher education classroom. Although this may sometimes occur, I am interpreting the term 'parallel process' as having a more limited scope, describing only those aspects of experiential learning that are accessible to our conscious attention. Similar to the conscious alertness to parallels in therapy supervision, I suggest that conscious and deliberate reflection on these parallels can be a path towards professional development.

Why is parallel process relevant to language teacher education?
Although this concept may also be relevant to teacher education in fields other than language education, I believe that it has a special relevance to language teacher education.

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Firstly, language learning, whether of first or other languages, is an experience that all of us already share. Student teachers enter the teacher education process with existing experiences and theories about language learning and teaching that will resonate and create parallels for them throughout their training. This may not be as prevalent in other subjects such as science or geography.

Secondly, the parallel between teaching and teacher education is especially relevant to language teachers. As language teachers, we need to be aware of the messages we convey and how we convey them. We need to be aware not only of *what* we say, but *how* we say it.

Thirdly, trends toward learner autonomy and lifelong learning in language education have made teachers more aware of the importance of reflection to successful language learning. Learning a language is an ongoing process and learning how to learn has become an important goal of many language programs. It is important for student teachers to become aware of their own learning processes in order to understand their students' learning better.

Note: Please note that I am using the term 'parallel process' to describe parallels or similarities between two types of process. This is different from the term 'parallel processing' which is used in computer programming and in applied neurolinguistics to describe simultaneous processing of input and output.

Chapter 1: Process in teacher education

1.1 Models of teacher education

1.2 Experiential learning

1.3 Reflection

1.4 Observation and self-study

1.5 Chapter 1: Process in teacher education

In this chapter I give a brief overview of different models of teacher education. I then go on to discuss the role of experiential learning, reflection and observation in language teacher education. In each section, I outline the background to the issues and follow this with specific questions related to the topic of parallel process (presented as boxed text).

1.1 Models of teacher education

A central issue in language teacher education has been the question of what constitutes the knowledge base of language teaching.

There have been many attempts to define and categorize the different domains of knowledge that are needed to attain professional competence. One framework, suggested by Shulman (1987), defines several domains of knowledge which includes distinctions between content knowledge, theoretical knowledge and practical pedagogical knowledge. Shulman proposes the additional concept of 'pedagogical content knowledge' to articulate the interface between content knowledge and ability to represent this knowledge in a way that is conducive to learning.

Elbaz (1983) conceptualized the content of teachers' practical knowledge by distinguishing three interrelated levels of structure – rule of practice, practical principles, and images. Elbaz asserts that teachers' feelings, values, needs and beliefs combine with experience, theoretical knowledge and folklore wisdom to guide their knowledge. Eraut disputes the artificial distinction between theory and practice, saying that theory can develop out of practice, as well as practice developing from theory (Eraut 1994).

Whilst earlier research into teachers' practical knowledge concentrated on teaching methods and evaluating their effectiveness, more recent research in language teacher education has focused on the activity of teaching and on the teacher who does it. Research into how teachers learn the practice of teaching has developed along two major strands: teacher thinking and socialization (Clark and Peterson 1986, Calderhead 1988, Zeichner 1987, Day 1999) and the teacher competency movement (DfE 1992). A third perspective of 'teacher as researcher' takes a more developmental view of teacher knowledge as an ongoing process (Stenhouse 1975, Elliott 1991). The centrality of teachers' voices is recognized by the current interest in biographical and

narrative approaches to uncovering teachers' knowledge (Erben 1998, Clandinin and Connelly 1999).

A further issue of central importance to teacher education, and intimately bound up with the issue of teacher knowledge, is that of how teachers can best acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to attain professional competence. The processes used on teacher preparation courses provide a reflection not only of *what* should be learned, but also of *how* that knowledge is acquired.

Several frameworks have been developed to describe existing models of teacher education (see, for example, Zeichner 1983, Wallace 1991). Zeichner's framework includes behaviourist, personalistic, traditional craft and inquiry-based models. Wallace describes craft, applied science and reflective models. There is some overlap between these various frameworks, but three models emerge as having had most influence on current debate:

(a) The *rationalist* model assumes that teaching is a science and as such can be examined rationally and objectively. Learning to teach is seen as a process of acquiring a body of knowledge and skills from experts. The results of the latest scientific research are conveyed to teachers who are to implement them in practice. In this model, the teacher is not seen as a contributor to the skills of the profession. There is a 'gap' between academic theorists and practitioners.

(b) The *apprenticeship* model is imitative and static in nature. It assumes that student teachers will learn by first observing and then attempting to copy experienced teachers. The goal is to emulate the practice of the 'master' practitioner. These skills are implicit in their practice. Skills are seemingly handed down unchanged. *A competency-based* approach also focuses on practical teaching skills which are more precisely defined as sets of knowledge, skills and attitudes. Advantages of the competency-based model are a common criterial framework for evaluating performance and more explicitness of instructional goals. A drawback is that the competencies are often established by external bodies and are therefore prescriptive in nature. They do not allow for individual variation and flexibility. Another drawback is that lists of separate competencies tend to create a fragmented view of teaching skills. They reduce teaching to observable aspects of performance and do not place as much value on teacher thinking as a process.

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(c) A *reflective* model of teacher education, influenced by the work of Schön (1983), acknowledges the importance of 'received knowledge', that is, theories, skills and practices generally accepted as useful and effective and combines it with 'experiential knowledge', that is, knowledge acquired through direct experience and reflection (Wallace 1991 p.15). This approach values the individual contributions of teachers and acknowledges the complex process of planning and decision-making which teachers engage in at every stage of their career. It supports an inquiry-based approach which sees the teacher in the role of researcher of his or her own development. This view of teacher education has gained influence along with the recognition that a desired goal of (short-term) teacher education programmes should include that of establishing patterns of thought and action that will promote (long-term) teacher development.

Although these three models diverge in their basic conceptual foundations, in practice, many teacher education courses use a combination of these different approaches. It has also been suggested that different models may be more appropriate to different stages of a teacher's professional development. There is a divergence between what is seen as a 'training' model (teachers acquire a certain body of knowledge or set of skills, usually in pre-service contexts) and a 'development' model (teachers learn to refine their own professional competence through a variety of strategies, usually in in-service contexts). In this work, I use the more general term 'teacher education' to indicate my belief that all programs include elements of both training and development

Relevance to this research: The aim of this study is to investigate the influence of processes in language teacher education on the learning process. It does not aim to establish the effectiveness of teacher education processes, but rather seeks to establish a relationship between student teachers' personal experiential knowledge and their developing theoretical model of teaching and learning viewed through their perceptions of parallels.

In the following sections, I identify three strands in teacher education which are relevant to the topic of parallel process: experiential learning, reflection and observation.

1.2 Experiential learning

Experiential learning involves learning by doing and basing theories or principles on concrete firsthand experience. It takes a holistic view of the learning process, acknowledging learning from prior experience, as well as humanistic and affective features of the learning process. The learner is seen as an active participant in the learning process. The learning process itself forms an important part of what is learned.

The roots of experiential learning can be traced back to John Dewey's work 'Experience and Education' (1938) in which he emphasizes the importance of learning by doing. In his view, knowledge must be linked to experience and experience needs to be reflected upon and applied to further experiences in order for educative results to be achieved. This view of learning from experience contrasts with a more traditional 'transmission' mode of teaching, where students move from abstract concepts to practical application. In the direct experience model, students first obtain data from direct experience and then construct theories which they later try out in practice.

The importance of experiential learning was further developed by Lewin whose work with encounter groups in the 50s, as described in 'Field Theory in Social Sciences' (Lewin 1951), led him to try to integrate theory and practice using a model based on personal experience. In his model, immediate concrete experience is the basis for observation and reflection. It is accompanied by reflective observation that leads to the formation of abstract concepts and the ability to test the implications in new situations. Both reflection and action are necessary for learning to take place. Reflection provides input and action provides the opportunity to test out hypotheses and obtain further input.

This model was expanded in more detail by Kolb (1984). Kolb states that experience alone is not a sufficient condition for learning, experiences also need to be processed consciously by reflecting on them. In Kolb's theoretical model, learning is a cyclic process involving: immediate experience, reflection, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation.

1.2.1 Experiential learning in language teacher education

In teacher education programs, experiential learning involves creating learning situations where student teachers can try out teaching methods and learn by experiencing them firsthand. This is

usually complemented by lectures, discussions, reading or other forms of instructed input about relevant theories and research. Student teachers learn to use their experience to interpret broader theories and approaches. The most significant source of direct experience in teacher education programs is student teaching practice. Observations, videos, and recordings or transcripts of lessons can also help to bring the world of the classroom nearer. But how does experiential learning affect processes in the teacher education classroom?

I suggest five ways in which experiential learning can be brought into the teacher education classroom and will illustrate them with examples from the literature of language teacher education.

i) Prior experience

Student teachers' prior experiences of teaching and learning play a powerful role in shaping their views of teaching. Sometimes these views were found to be quite resistant to change unless acknowledged and articulated (Laboskey 1994, John 1996). Approaches which emphasize student autobiography as part of the awareness-raising process reflect the importance of this issue (Knowles and Holt-Reynolds 1991, Knowles 1993, Day 1993, Bailey et al. 1996). Life history accounts can be used to resolve conflicts and inconsistencies within student teachers' mental frameworks or to explore implicit assumptions about teaching and learning. This exploration can be extended through the use of dialogue journals. This is especially true for language teachers as learning a language (their first language, if not also a successful or unsuccessful learning of a second language) is part of every student teacher's learning experience and is a direct source of firsthand evidence to support or refute theories presented in the teacher education course.

> 'It is this very 'apprenticeship of observation' that makes the preparation of teachers so different from the preparation of professionals in other fields. Lawyers, architects, physicians, and others have not been immersed in their future professions before they enter professional schools. ...The influence of twelve years or more of observing and participating - often successfully - in 'status quo' school and university classrooms introduces a tension unique to teacher education.' (Knowles and Holt-Reynolds 1991 p.88)

In his case study of five pre-service student teachers, Grenfell (1998) refers to the fact that teachers' attitudes to teaching are heavily shaped by how they were taught. 'In the case of modern languages student teachers, they have learnt a foreign language by various direct and indirect means. Their own success and to what they attribute it, must shape their view of how languages are taught and learnt' (Grenfell 1998 p.11). He notes that student teachers fall back on these views when trying to deal with conflict situations, 'the only way of asserting themselves and their own authority is through previous positions with regard to their own language learning and teaching and the experiences from which those ideas arose. For them, apparent certainty about this personal knowing contrasts with the seemingly fragmented, contradictory demands of the training methodology' (Grenfell 1998 p.168).

A student teacher may well remember the experience of the learning process as clearly as the actual content of what was learned. The following anecdote demonstrates how memories of successful (or unsuccessful) learning through these experiences can retain their influence many years later.

> 'In university, while doing my teacher training, I had one professor who would correct our papers and then hand them back covered in red. We were given the option of revising them any number of times (within reason) or submitting them for a final mark. After each revision, he would re-evaluate the paper and return it with new corrections or suggestions for improvements. After successive revisions, there was less and less red on the paper and at any time we could ask him to accept a paper as our final effort. This struck me as an extremely fair system - the more revisions a student was willing to do, the higher the mark and at any time the student was free to decide when he had done enough work on a particular project. I realize that it created extra work for the prof (there were probably 20 student teachers in the class), but I liked the idea so much that I have carried it over to my own classroom and my students like it.' (Mark Richards, Literacy Teacher, Montreal, Quebec, Quotation from Internet discussion list. Date: Sat, 23 Jun 2001 09:48:38)

This teacher vividly remembered his experience as a student and incorporated this method into his teaching style, his enthusiasm probably helping to make it more successful and effective.

Acknowledging prior experience means that student teachers are no longer thought of as tabula rasa. Each individual has his or her own unique starting point. It is recognized that there are parallels between the way we were taught and how we teach.

A potential problem with asking students to write autobiographical accounts of their development is the tendency for the narrative structure to fictionalize and falsify (Usher 1999). The same problem applies to reflective journal writing where events are 'turned into' learning experiences for the benefit of the teacher educator or supervisor.

ii) The foreign language learning experience
One method of challenging existing assumptions and of providing direct experience specifically relevant to future foreign language teachers has been to require student teachers to take a course in a new foreign language. This provides direct data of what it is like to be a learner of a foreign language and encourages them to reflect on the application of theories being taught in other modules of their course (Lowe 1987, Rinvoluccri 1988, Flowerdew 1998, Hyatt and Beigy 1999). These studies all report on the successful use of a foreign language learning component in their teacher education programs and find that it encourages reflection on the process of language learning, facilitated by the use of structured journal writing and discussion.

'In their roles as students, the teachers were able to look again at some of their professional preconceptions. In particular, they were able to reconsider the roles of praise, grammar, repetition, revision and communicative teaching.' (Lowe 1987 p.95)

In the studies described above, student teachers were asked to consider parallels between their learning experience and their teaching theories. Recognizing these parallels helped them to clarify some of their existing assumptions about teaching and learning.

iii) Simulations
Opportunities for experiential learning can also be introduced through the use of activities which simulate language learning activities. The activities may be carried out in the native language or in another language. The emphasis is usually on the process more than on the content. Examples of such activities include role play, information gap or walkaround activities (see for example, Woodward 1998, Spratt 1994, Ur 1996, Tanner & Green 1998).

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Microteaching is another type of simulation that is widely used to provide students with opportunities to learn from experience. Wallace defines microteaching as 'a training context in which a teaching situation has been reduced in scope and/or simplified in some systematic way' (Wallace 1991 p. 92). The teaching may be simplified in terms of the teacher's task, the length of the lesson or the size of the class. Microteaching may involve teaching a foreign language to small groups of peer students, or teaching one's native language to peers who pretend to be learners. Microteaching allows student teachers to try out practical teaching skills in a semi-controlled context that may be less threatening than the language classroom and offers opportunities for reflection and for feedback from peers or instructors.

Variations of microteaching include using teaching non-language topics such as teaching ballet steps, or a recipe (see for example, Graves 1993, Poole 1993, Oliveira 2003). This is similar to language learning as students are still playing the 'role' of learner, but in this case also making the parallel between non-language learning and language learning.

Problems with simulations and microteaching stem from the fact that both involve some degree of role-playing or artificiality. The conditions are similar, but not exactly the same as in a real learning and teaching context and their relevance is questionable.

iv) Transferable processes
In addition to using traditional modes of presentation such as lectures and seminars, many teacher preparation courses include a variety of different modes of presentation, mirroring to some extent the methods student teachers may be expected to adapt for use in their classrooms. Many common techniques used in language teacher education may be adapted for language classrooms. Brainstorming or group work, for example, are commonly used as teaching/learning activities in both contexts and can provide opportunities for reflecting on parallels between them. Using transferable processes is somewhat different from demonstrating or trying out language learning activities in a simulation. The emphasis here is usually on the content as much as if not more than on the process.

Students engaged in a course of study where they are acquiring skills and knowledge are able to observe their own development as learners in groups or and as individuals. Group learning is

especially conducive to this as groups of co-learners characteristically observe themselves and each other to achieve an evolving definition of self (Underhill 1992). Student teachers can be asked to reflect on how they learned or participated in specific activities in the teacher education classroom (Powell 1985, Andersen 1993). Learner diaries and learning logs have also been used to provide opportunities for individual reflection on the process of learning (Jarvis 1992). Gilpin suggests introducing observation tasks into the training classroom that develop gradually from observing concrete phenomena, such as counting examples of questions, to high inference tasks, such as noticing different roles (Gilpin 1999 p.117).

Smith describes her attempts to incorporate constructivist activities into her regular coursework on a language teacher education program. She asserts that 'constructivism is not always well integrated within the training programs themselves, leaving teachers with a strongly embedded, unconscious, and unchallenged transmission model' (Smith 2001 p.221). The modeling of process writing activities, portfolio assessment and other strategies which may be adapted for classroom use allowed her students to observe how she used these methods in her class, to experience those methods directly and to discuss how to adapt them for other settings.

Woodward's description of 'Loop Input' is a type of process aimed to mirror the content of the seminar or workshop in the choice of method used, for example, by using a jigsaw listening on the topic of jigsaw listening (Woodward 1988 p.13). Woodward's argument, though not supported by empirical evidence, is that this type of congruence facilitates learning of content on a deeper level.

There has been a growing awareness that the methods used to teach methodology have an influence on how teachers teach. As Jamieson points out, 'How student teachers are taught in their initial training may also have some implications for models of teaching and learning that they take with them to their classrooms. All other things being equal, if students are exposed to experiential methods in training, they are more likely to employ these methods in their practice' (Jamieson 1994 p.46).

Increased recognition of the role of experiential learning in teacher education involves greater attention to the *process* of teaching and learning. Here, the word 'process' is used to mean the

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method or procedure employed by the teacher educator to convey 'content', as well as the *process* employed by the learner to assimilate and understand the content.

Wallace (1991) makes a convincing case for the provision of a variety of learning modes within a teacher education curriculum. He argues that, as with language learning, a variety of learning modes will help reach student teachers with a variety of learning styles. Different learning modes provide more interest and expose student teachers to different teaching and learning processes. Wallace also recommends that the processes used on teacher education courses ought to reflect, in an appropriate way, the teaching and learning experience of the schools that the student teachers are going to teach in.

> 'Thus, for example, if communicative methodology is the approach to language teaching which the institution has taken on board, then ideally this should be reflected in some, if not all, aspects of the training process. If the student teachers are being encouraged to break up large classes into small groups for group interaction, then periodically they ought to find themselves part of a larger class which is being organized in this way. Only by experiencing this as a (sophisticated) consumer can they begin to evaluate it as a valid procedure for their own clients, their students. ......if (as might seem desirable) the student teachers are to be encouraged to develop their professional expertise in an autonomous and self-directed way, then somehow autonomy and self-direction should be woven into the fabric of their course. Moreover, one might add, these qualities should also be part of the normal professional expertise of their tutors, otherwise how can they meaningfully convey them as desirable outcomes to their student teachers.' (Wallace 1991 p.19)

Wallace here refers to two levels of parallels. One level of parallel is between the methods used by the trainer which may be adaptable to the language classroom. These are the methods being used by the teacher educator to teach methodology, for example group work, or portfolios. The second parallel is where the teacher educator models the desired behaviour in his or her own professional practice. An example of this would be if, in a course that included reflective tasks, the teacher educator also reflected on his or her professional practice. Korthagen describes this as an example of the 'congruence principle' and elaborates further that such processes should not only be used but should also be explicitly discussed (Korthagen 2001 p.83).

v) General framework/course design

It is not only within short planned activities or simulations that students may reflect on the process of experiential learning. The general framework of a teacher education course has the potential to generate reflection on parallels which may have applicability to the language classroom. The trainer's teaching style and view of learning, the course design, the course goals, the evaluation procedures, as well as the teaching methods used, can all convey messages about teaching and learning which contribute to the experiential learning process.

Nunan describes how principles of learner-centered syllabus design through a process of consultation and negotiation with learners may also be applied to teacher education courses (Nunan 1989). This study, however, does not indicate to what extent these parallels on the level of course design were noticed by the participants.

The extent to which student teachers notice parallels in the teacher educator's modeling of teaching behaviour was investigated in an empirical study by Jorge of a teacher educator who used action research on a course about action research. This study reports that 'only in a few cases did the teachers appear to be developing deeper insight into the nature of this kind of experience, and to make the link between the tutor's enquiring stance and their real teaching practice' (Jorge 1997 p.57). This seems to indicate the need for more explicitness on the use of such parallels and confirms Day's hypothesis that explicitness is particularly relevant to 'experiential activities that depend entirely on the trainees' ability to reflect on their parallel relevance to the classroom and to apply them to their own circumstances, when such indirect 'teaching' is quite foreign to the experience of the trainees' (Day 1997 p. 122).

vi) Debriefing

These examples of introducing experiential learning into teacher education courses include debriefing is an essential element, allowing space and time to reflect on the learning that has taken place. Pearson and Smith describe the process of 'deroling' as 'shedding the role taken on for the purpose of the activity and resuming one's usual persona' (Pearson and Smith 1985 p.79). Woodward writes about the dangers of not allowing time to switch roles.

'A little time is necessary to allow trainees to understand that they are popping or leaving one role and taking on another. Time is necessary, too, on their return to their own role after the exercise. Unless the time is taken and the process made overt, trainees are liable to suffer confusion over who they are supposed to be at any one time. To take the metaphor of deep sea diving, going down or coming up too fast can give you 'the bends'.' (Woodward 1998 p.8).

Powell also mentions more profound problems of 'cognitive dislocation' in this phase of reflecting on experiential learning.

'It is extraordinarily difficult to identify what one is learning when engaged in a learning task or at a time quite close to that period of activity [...] It is much easier to report when learning is not taking place or to describe one's feelings about what is happening. At least part of the difficulty lies in the intellectual demand imposed by the sudden switching of attention which is required for immediate reflection on learning. One has to be able to move rapidly and with ease from, say, intense involvement in a discussion of a substantive point to a meta-discussion of ideas and feelings quite unrelated to what was being talked about a short time before.' (Powell 1985 pp.45-46)

Powell's comments relate specifically to reflecting on transferable processes, but it is not clear whether this problem is also true of more artificial simulated activities, or whether this difficulty is something that can become easier over a period of time or when give different types of structured tasks. The way in which debriefing is handled in relationship to explicitness of goals will be discussed further in chapter 2.2.

Summary
Experiential learning presents a model of learning that is conceived in terms of process, not outcomes. It emphasizes the individual nature of learning and takes into account personal and prior learning as well as affective factors. It takes a long-term view of learning that prioritizes the development of lifelong learning skills. A drawback of this approach is that it is difficult to evaluate learning or to provide common criteria for measuring learning progress. In addition, experiential learning alone is not sufficient for development to take place. It must be balanced by access to explanatory theory and feedback from supervisors or peers who can make the individual

aware of gaps in their knowledge. A further issue, of particular relevance to language teaching, is that of cultural appropriateness. Lack of familiarity with this learning style, and with the values that underlie it, can hinder its usefulness.

Relevance to this research: These examples show a range of ways in which teacher educators have attempted to facilitate experiential learning in the teacher education classroom. Awareness of parallels is implicit in the techniques for experiential learning described above, yet little investigation has been done into developing a systematic description of how these parallels can be articulated.

1.3 Reflection

Reflection is very closely linked with the concept of experiential learning. Reflection is one mode of learning within the experiential learning cycle as outlined by Lewin (1951) and Kolb (1984). It is an essential component of extracting meaning from experience and is also seen as an essential tool for teachers' professional self-development.

Although reflection was always included as a component of the experiential learning model, it started to gain ground as an 'approach' to teacher education with the work of Donald Schön in 'The Reflective Practitioner' (1983) and 'Educating the Reflective Practitioner' (1987). Schön based his model on a detailed descriptive study of a number of different professions and introduced the concepts of 'knowing-in-action' and 'reflection-on-action'.

Schön recognized that a great deal of professional knowledge is tacit and is only activated once relevant situational factors come into play. We are able to see similarities and differences which enable us to act appropriately, utilizing our previous experience of similar situations as a framework. This he called 'knowing-in-action'. Later, we may look back at this behaviour and try to explain or describe it. This would be 'reflection-on-action'. Both of these types of knowledge differ from research-based knowledge and provide the basis for an approach to professional education which leads to a greater recognition of the role of experiential learning in creating professional knowledge.

Although Schön did not specifically address the teaching profession in his work, the concept of reflection was one that made intuitive sense to teachers and teacher educators alike. But how was it to be taught? Is it something that can be taught? Or is it something that just 'develops'? How are knowing-in-action and reflection-on-action to be described and defined?

Some different views of reflection

Reflection in teacher education has been defined in a variety of ways. Most writers agree that it can be contrasted with routine, unquestioning and uncritical acceptance of teaching principles and behaviour. Calderhead, for example, writes that the term is used to cover a 'vast number of conceptual variations' but that, 'Some of the common principles of reflective teaching, however defined, are that professional growth both in pre-service and in-service education is viewed as being achieved through the adoption of responsibility for one's own actions, and through the

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analysis and critical evaluation or practice, sometimes including the examination of the relationship of one's own actions to the organizational and societal context in which one works' (Calderhead 1987 p.270).

What evidence is there that reflection actually improves one's teaching? Here a distinction has been made between 'reflection' and 'critical reflection,' the latter being defined as reflection that leads to real change in action or behaviour.

> 'Asking 'what' and 'why' questions gives us a certain power over our teaching. We could claim that the degree of autonomy and responsibility we have in our work as teachers is determined by the level of control that we can exercise over our actions. In reflecting on 'what' and 'why' questions, we begin to exercise control and open up the possibility of transforming our everyday classroom life. The process of control is called *critical reflective teaching.*' (Bartlett 1990 p.205)

It has also been argued that reflection should move beyond the level of action into the level of underlying beliefs. Critical reflection implies an openness to questioning one's own implicit knowledge systems. This aspect of transformative change has been discussed in detail by Argyris and Schön in their description of single and double loop learning. Single-loop learning is described as learning that does not alter fundamental existing beliefs. Such changes are superficial or cosmetic. Double-loop learning involves a deeper questioning which results in ongoing change that can be both disorienting and transformative (Argyris and Schön 1974 pp.18-19).

Far from being a personal and individual act, reflective teaching has also been described as being substantially influenced by social and collegial factors. Schön's model of reflection is said to neglect the importance of dialogue and critical conversation to facilitate reflection (Kemmis 1985, Day 1993). We need to talk about our experience in order to name it and give it form. Dialogue can not only articulate, but also stimulate the process of reflection.

Most writers agree on the empowering and liberating aspect of reflection. It allows teachers to develop their own criteria based on personal experience and apply these criteria to other situations to test out and refine their hypotheses. 'An important aim of the reflective approach to

teacher education is to empower teachers to manage their own professional development'
(Wallace 1991 p.166).

> *Relevance to research:* Some of the questions relating to reflection and parallel process
> that I wish to explore are: Does reflection on parallels engage student teachers in critical
> questioning that may lead to action? Does it help to generate multiple interpretations?
> Can it be used to encourage reflective dialogue with others? Does it establish patterns of
> thinking that will 'empower teachers to manage their own professional development'?

How do patterns of reflection change as teachers develop?

Calderhead comments that the quality of reflection often depends on the extent of the student
teacher's experience. 'It may only be after a basic confidence and competence in teaching is
achieved that student teachers' capacities to reflect on their teaching can be substantially
developed' (Calderhead 1987 p.277). This view is supported by Freeman who writes that, 'For
the beginning teacher, the paramount question is 'What do I teach?' This gradually develops into
'How do I teach?' and finally to 'Why do I teach what I teach and why do teach the way I do?''
(Freeman 1982 p.26).

Laboskey's study of pre-service teachers attempts to identify predispositions to reflective
practice. She identifies two sets of beginning teachers: Alert Novices, who already tend to ask
why they were teaching in a certain way, and Commonsense Thinkers, who tend to ask 'What
works?' (Laboskey1994). Laboskey argues that initial preconceptions about teaching can be a
barrier to growth, and that the teacher educator's role is more like that of a facilitator of learning
in trying to help student teachers overcome these barriers. One conclusion of her study is that
encouraging reflection can be a method of counterbalancing predispositions which student
teachers already have because of their previous educational experiences.

A framework for categorizing different stages of developing a reflective teaching practice was
developed by Stanley in an attempt to describe the process of learning how to reflect. In her
empirical study of six experienced teachers who were attempting to implement reflection and
reflective action into their teaching practice, she suggests the following five phases: a) Engaging
with reflection (total or partial lack of reflective skills) b) Thinking reflectively (random
reflective thinking, mostly descriptive) c) Using reflection (clear reflective thinking, responds

creatively with multiple solutions) d) Sustaining reflection (sustained and more precise reflective thinking, uncovers deeper issues) e) Practicing reflection (has systems on place for consistent reflection, is able to take action based on reflection) (Stanley 1998 p.590). Stanley views this as a linear process of development.

The studies by Laboskey and Stanley reveal the difficulty of categorizing reflection. The content and focus of teachers' reflective comments vary widely and are subject to many different possible methods of categorization, depending on one's definition of reflection. They also show that reflective skills are not a static. They change and develop according to the teacher's stage of development.

Relevance to this research: Questions that I would like to explore further in this study are: Does student teachers' awareness of parallels develop as the course proceeds or does it depend on depend on a predisposition to be reflective? Does attention to parallels make it easier to structure and evaluate the reflective process? Does this give us any insights into how reflection develops?

How do teacher educators encourage reflection in student teachers?
Calderhead examines the nature of reflection in pre-service teacher education and concludes that the concept of reflection should be defined and explicitly discussed so that tutors and student teachers share a common language or set of understandings of classroom processes. He recommends that reflection should also be included in the assessment of student teachers' teaching practice. In his view, it is important to establish 'a dialogue of reflection' which rests on common assumptions about what reflection consists of (Calderhead 1987 p.277).

Zeichner concurs that reflective thinking should be built into every aspect of a training course and supports Schön 's view that it is important to have an organisational context which is supportive of reflective activity. Suggested methods for fostering reflection in teacher education include: action research, journal-keeping (individual or with a peer or mentor), seminar dialogues, micro-teaching and supervisory approaches (including peer or mentor dialoguing) which focus on developing reflective activity (Zeichner 1987, Pugach and Johnson 1990, Valli 1993). Portfolios can also include reflective journals and commentaries on videos or recordings of lessons (Bax and Cullen 2003).

Studies of the use of journals to encourage reflective thinking have shown that they allow student teachers to document their own developing theory of practice and generate questions and hypotheses about teaching and learning processes (Thornbury 1991, Jarvis 1992, Richards and Ho 1998). Journals can be used to create a dialogue between the teacher educator, the student teacher and peer students and can form a link between the content of the course and student teachers' classroom experience. A study carried out by Richards and Ho, however, concluded that 'journal writing can provide an opportunity for teacher to write reflectively about their teaching, though in itself it does not necessarily promote critical reflection. Teachers differ in the extent to which they can write reflectively, and some initial training in reflective writing may well be necessary as a preparation for journal writing' (Richards and Ho 1998 p. 167).

Reflection may also be established as part of the class through the use of reflective questions, dialogues or role-plays. In their three-year empirical study, Pugach and Johnson trained student teachers to rehearse specific reflective, strategic thinking patterns through the use of structured dialogues with their peer partners. This follows the Vygotskian view of learning as a collaborative process of dialogue between learner and helper. Their study suggests that reflective dialogue is a skill that is trainable through rehearsing patterns of behaviour. 'The disposition to engage in reflective practice, then, is acquired through peer collaboration when internal dialogue or conversation is made explicit, and thus, available, to the teacher' (Pugach and Johnson 1990 p.203).

Another strategy for fostering reflection is through modeling of reflective behaviour. Student teachers may be asked to read and compare examples of written reflections collected from other teachers (see, for example, Appel 1995). This idea has also been developed in the work of Loughran. By verbalizing thoughts about his pedagogy and reasoning during teacher education classes and also by distributing his teaching journal comments about his own teaching behaviour, Loughran attempts to demonstrate, by example, the processes he goes through while reflecting on practice (Loughran 1997).

Critics of the role of reflection have included those who support a more teacher-directed instructional view of learning and regard reflection as a vague concept of little practical relevance to the skills and competencies required in the initial stages of teacher education. Asking teachers

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to reflect can also be met with an attitude of skepticism by teachers who do not see its practical relevance and on the other hand by attempts to write what the evaluator or supervisor wants to hear. A further criticism is that time for reflection may be a luxury in contexts where time and resources are limited. As with experiential learning approaches, reflection may also be culturally inappropriate to contexts with different teaching and learning priorities.

Summary

These varying views of what reflection is and what it should be about show how widely the term reflection can be interpreted. One problem is that if the content of reflection is left relatively unstructured, it becomes difficult to evaluate. This indicates a need for teacher educators and students to clarify their precise understanding of what is meant by the term 'reflection' and to specify its purpose more precisely.

Relevance to this research: Although much has been written on the nature and purpose of reflection in teaching, there is still some disagreement as to how to structure reflection and evaluate its relevance to the construction of knowledge. What kinds of reflection are generated by focusing on parallels? Does it generate critical questioning? Does it help to uncover implicit theories of learning? Does it require modeling or training? Or do such reflections occur spontaneously? Does reflection on parallels between processes of language learning and teacher education facilitate teacher learning?

1.4 Observation and self-study

In this section I discuss the importance of observation and self-study in teacher education and consider how they are connected to reflection and experiential learning.

What is observation?

Observation in the context of language teacher education is most often used to refer to observation of a student teacher's teaching by peers and/or mentors, usually followed by peer or mentor feedback. The goal is to help the student teacher improve his or her teaching. Observation is also used as learning tool. Novice teachers are often given the opportunity to observe experienced teachers with the aim of emulating their model. Guided observation may focus on developing observation skills which are useful for teachers later in their practice or when doing research. A further use of observation is to become more self-aware (Fanselow 1990, Gebhard and Oprandy1999). 'The goal is to observe other teachers to construct and reconstruct our own knowledge about teaching and thereby learn more about our teaching attitudes, beliefs, and classroom practices'(Gebhard and Oprandy 1999 p.38).

In Gebhard and Oprandy's exploratory approach, the goal of observation is not to follow a model, or to evaluate, but to gain insights useful for our own professional growth. Observation is not a passive recording of observable events, it involves recording, analyzing, interpreting, questioning and integrating new and existing knowledge to construct new meanings. The effects of developing observation skills in teacher education are twofold. First, the student teacher learns to understand his or her own teaching better. Second, the student teacher develops autonomous skills that will be useful for professional development throughout his or her professional life.

Observation and evaluation

Many teachers feel apprehensive when an observer comes into their classroom. One reason for this may be that any kind of observation has the connotation of being evaluative. In fact, it is quite difficult for untrained observers to avoid making judgements of the teaching they observe. For the observer, being critical or judgmental can interfere with the ability to observe. For the observed teacher, too, receiving feedback in the form of evaluative judgments can take up a lot of emotional energy defending or explaining the reasons behind decisions, and reduce the energy spent on utilizing learning opportunities.

Richards (1998 p.143) recommends minimizing the evaluative connotations of observation by giving the observation a specific focus (which can be negotiated between the observer and the observed) and using specific procedures (for example, a checklist or a chart). 'Participation in a classroom observation is one way of developing a reflective stance toward one's own teaching. An observer can assist an experienced teacher in this process by collecting information about aspects of teaching that a teacher wants to learn more about, information that he or she would normally be unable to collect alone' (Richards p.144). In the post-observation discussion phase, both novice teacher and experienced teacher can gain from discussing not only the observed aspects of the class, but also the unobserved reasoning that underlies much of the classroom decision-making process.

Wajnryb (1992) proposes a variety of focused observation tasks for the development of observation skills, emphasizing that these tasks are for the purpose of professional development, not for assessment, and emphasizing also that observation is a skill that can be learned and can improve with practice, 'the ability to see with acuity, to select, identify and prioritize among a myriad of co-occurring experiences, is something that can be guided, practiced, learned and improved' (Wajnryb 1992 p.1). Wajnryb's tasks are intended for classroom observations. Focused observation tasks are followed by reflective tasks asking the observer to connect the observed data with their own teaching experience in a post-observation reflective phase. Focused tasks, such as those recommended by Richards and by Wajnryb, are one way of clarifying the non-evaluative purpose of an observation.

Mason (2002) uses the term 'noticing' to describe a collection of methods that can be used to refine observation, reflection and learning from experience. Mason suggests separating the stages of observation into: noticing, marking and recording phases, carefully separating the evaluative from the descriptive. He distinguishes, for example, *accounting for,* where a teacher attempts to explain why, with *accounts of,* which are descriptive accounts verifiable by other observers. He suggests that the evaluative part of the process may interfere with the ability to observe, 'when I am caught up in making judgements, whether blaming or explaining, the energy is not available for transformation, for initiating further action. If I can be descriptive rather than judgemental, I can divert the energy of noticing into clearer sight and into alternative action, thereby investing that energy into the future' (Mason 2002, p.14).

Mason's approach, also focusing on the trainability of noticing skills, is broader than the typical definition of observation in that it does not limit observing to classroom observation, but proposes a view of systematic noticing that can be more generally applied to any teaching or learning situation in one's professional life. Many of the techniques he mentions are similar to those used in ethnographic research, for example, noticing themes and building up patterns from primary data and the use of multiple viewpoints to test validity. This approach to observation is consistent with the concept of the teacher as researcher and initiator of autonomous professional development. It enhances lifelong professional development by developing patterns of autonomous learning.

Stages of observation

The observation process can be broken down into several different phases. Wajnryb's observation tasks utilize the following sequence of stages. First, there is a focus for the observation. A brief background to the concept and theories connected to the concept helps to orient the student teacher to the goal of the observation task. Pre-observation tasks appropriate to the task objective could also be used. For example, when observing a grammar lesson, one may ask oneself questions about one's own preferences in the teaching of grammar. Second, the data is recorded. There is a clear observation task or schedule. The emphasis is on the collection of data in a systematic and non-evaluative manner. Third, the data is collated or classified and used to answer some specific questions, for example, what patterns or tendencies can be observed. Some conclusions may tentatively be drawn from the collected data. For example, the student teacher may try to interpret the reasons behind the classroom events and compare these ideas with those of the teacher. Or the student may compare what was observed with what they would have done and suggest possible benefits and drawbacks of each. Finally, there is a reflective phase, where the observer tries to connect what they have observed and draw lessons from it for their own teaching practice. This is the phase that can lead to positive innovation or change.

The reflective phase of each task asks the observer to connect the observed data with their own teaching or learning experience. For example, 'What experience do you have of being corrected when speaking a second or foreign language? Do you think this has influenced your teaching?' This is a clear use of parallel process to stimulate questioning and reflection on one's predispositions towards error correction.

Wajnryb's observation tasks focus on the observation of others and are carefully structured, but observation also has an important role to play in reflection on one's own teaching. Richards (1990) describes this as 'self-monitoring' and suggests that it leads to critical reflection and empowers teachers to take responsibility for their own development. His suggestions for recording one's own lessons and forming action plans to implement change suggest a view of self-monitoring as a kind of action research. Other writers have focused more closely on the process of self-observation itself.

Mason's (2002) proposed model breaks self-observation down into several key phases. He claims that observing one's own teaching is inherently fraught with difficulty as one is caught up in the flow of the events and although we may notice things that are relevant to our development, we are not always able to pay attention to them and they are easily forgotten. In order for this process to be effective, Mason stresses that it must be self-initiated. First, Mason stresses the importance of 'preparing to notice in the moment' (the pre-observation phase), that is, being in a state of mind where one is ready to 'notice.' Second, 'deciding what to record' (providing a focus) is a way of selecting from the mass of events those that we feel are critical to our development. Third, 'writing the account' in a way that can be understood by others is a method of collecting primary data. The observation phase is the 'observation' of events in my own experience. The data is my first hand account of events. Fourth, finding metaphors, themes and tensions in the account is a process of categorizing and interpreting (the inquiry phase). Finally, sharing accounts with others is proposed as a way of seeking common threads or locating disturbances that can benefit both the individual and the group in their professional development.

The use of critical incidents in developing an understanding of professional expertise and finding a focus for classroom action research extends this approach to observation for researching one's own practice. Tripp (1993) describes the development of an 'incident', which can include a description and an explanation within the specific context, into a 'critical incident', an account which finds a more general meaning and classification or significance of the incident within a broader pedagogical context. 'The point is that incidents only become critical because someone sees them as such' (Tripp 1993 p.27). This movement from specific to general is an important step in the process of finding patterns. The questions are designed to initiate a dialogue (internal or external) to create a deeper reflective understanding of one's own practice. It also requires 'stepping out' of one's role as a teacher and observing one's practice from different perspectives.

One point that Tripp does not deal with in his account is whether the effectiveness of these strategies varies according to the teaching experience of the teacher. The ability to see patterns, for example, would seem to require exposure to several different examples of the selected feature. It is difficult to generate a pattern from only one example. A point that Tripp and Mason both agree on is the importance of the teacher identifying events that have significance for them and proceeding with a process of questioning that will facilitate focused observation with the aim of generating positive change.

Observation and parallel process
The relevance of parallel process to observation of teaching and learning can be found in the fact that, as one observes, one learns a great deal about one's own teaching (or one's own assumptions about teaching). The notion of parallel process is referred to implicitly and explicitly in many accounts of the purposes and uses of observation.

Fanselow (1990) views classroom observation as a journey towards self-discovery and knowledge. 'As I look at you with my lens, I consider you a mirror: I hope to see myself in you and through your teaching ... Seeing you allows me to see myself differently and to explore variables we both use' (Fanselow 1990 p.184).

Similarly, Mason (2002) uses the term 'professional noticing' to describe 'what we do when we watch someone else acting professionally (teaching a lesson, working with a client, leading a workshop, delivering a workshop or training session) and become aware of something that they do (a task they set, a pattern of speech they employ, a gesture they use, a question they ask) which we think we could use ourselves' (Mason 2002, pp.29-30).

Both Fanselow and Mason propose a definition of observation that is much wider than the context of a specific classroom observation. It is a set of skills that can empower teachers to constantly challenge and improve their professional practice. Both writers suggest that the act of noticing can be triggered by seeing something that we feel we could use ourselves. The relevance to our own teaching is what makes an event salient to our attention. In contrast to the externally-initiated tasks set out by Wajnryb, the view of observation proposed by Fanselow, Tripp and Mason is one that is internally motivated and has a deeper personal significance for the observer.

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Although this parallel between learning through classroom observation and learning through researching one's own teaching is very broad, for the purposes for parallel process, it brings together three important ideas. The first concept is that developing observation skills (of ourselves and of others) is an effective way of developing teachers' ability to learn about teaching and to continue their later professional development. The second concept is that these observation skills can be usefully broken down into separate phases, each of which can be practised and trained. Thirdly, the use of observation for self-study relies on recognizing that the distinction between observer and observed becomes blurred, as we constantly switch roles from student teacher, to language student, to future teacher.

Some possible problems with emphasizing the role of self-observation in teacher preparation may be that there will be too much emphasis on exploratory experiential components and insufficient emphasis on external input. As discussed above, this type of observational skill may be more easily developed once teachers have acquired a certain amount of experience for which they can then start to generate patterns and principles. A second problem, especially for novice teachers, is that over self-consciousness in performance can have a negative effect and inhibit the development of more intuitive teaching skills.

Relevance to this research: How does perception of parallels relate to development of observation skills? Can it be broken down into separate trainable components? Does it develop around the occurrence of critical incidents? How do students express their awareness of parallels? What kinds of parallels do they notice and perceive to be most relevant?

Summary

In this chapter I have outlined the relationship between different models of teacher education and the role of experiential learning, reflection and (self-) observation. After reviewing the research within this field, I concluded that although reflection on parallels is implicit in much of the literature on experiential learning and reflection, it has not yet been systematically described as a concept, nor has its influence on teacher learning been thoroughly investigated. This chapter has raised questions about how teacher educators and student teachers make their awareness of these parallels explicit. Do they notice them if they are not explicit? If they are made explicit, how is

this awareness achieved? Furthermore, what impact does creating awareness of parallels have on the student teacher and the teacher educator and his or her view of the learning/teaching process? These are some of the questions that I seek to address in my research.

In the next chapter, I discuss the relationship between implicit and explicit learning and its relevance to parallel process.

Chapter 2: Implicit and explicit learning

2.1 Implicit learning

2.2 Implicit learning in teacher education

2.3 Making implicit learning explicit

Chapter 2: Implicit and explicit learning

In this chapter I will discuss implicit and explicit learning and their role in language learning and in teacher education. I will consider the value of making implicit learning explicit and describe various strategies for doing so. The connection between implicit learning and parallel process will be theorized in more detail.

2.1 Implicit learning in language learning

One definition of the distinction between explicit and implicit learning is that when learning is explicit, we are conscious of what we are learning, but when learning is implicit, it proceeds without our conscious awareness of what is being learnt (McLaren et al. 1994 p.313). A result of implicit learning is that it can produce tacit knowledge of the abstract rule underlying a set of instances of that rule, whereas explicit learning produces declarative or propositional knowledge, which is amenable to verbal report (ibid. p.314). Both of these definitions have relevance for language learning and for language teacher education.

Anderson (1985) proposes three types of memory involved in skill learning: short-term memory, declarative memory and procedural memory. He argues that skills move from the declarative memory, which is under conscious control, to the procedural memory, which is carried out unconsciously, through three different stages: cognitive, associative, and autonomous. This model asserts that the more certain routines are practised, the more automatic they become.

When applied to language learning, Anderson's model implies that learners in the initial cognitive stage engage in conscious mental activity in order to apply rules and work out meanings. In the second associative stage of learning, learners are able to use this knowledge procedurally, creating their own interlanguage. Active attention is still being given to language knowledge, but some of the existing structures are used automatically. In the third autonomous stage, learners can produce language without reference to underlying rules.

The role of explicit versus implicit learning has been much discussed in the literature on language learning. Behaviourist language learning theories of the 50s and 60s concentrated on automatizing language knowledge. They believed that conscious attention to rules would inhibit the automatizing process and instead based language learning on repetition. This movement was

in reaction to the cognitive approach of traditional grammar translation methods, where focused attention on rules was thought to result in internalisation of rules that would be sufficient to develop language fluency. More recent studies carried out by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) found that good language learners were able to describe in some detail their mental processes while attempting to learn a second or foreign language. They found that second language learners apply a number of cognitive and metacognitive strategies which can benefit from explicit instruction. In presenting a new strategy to learners, they recommend that teachers 'first explain the purpose and utility of learning strategies in general, name the strategy to be taught, and explain the benefits students will derive from using it' (O'Malley and Chamot 1990 p.200). In their view, this should be followed by many opportunities to apply and practice the skills so that the learning strategies eventually become part of students' procedural knowledge. They emphasize the importance for learners of consciously evaluating their own strategies and their progress in applying these strategies as learners. They argue that the main factors determining whether controlled or automatic processes are used are the degree to which the procedural skills have been learned and the familiarity of the task concerned (O'Malley and Chamot 1990 p. 80).

This cognitive view of language learning is contradicted by those who hold that language performance is inhibited by conscious attention to language rules. Krashen's model of language learning sees these two types of knowledge as totally unrelated and he considers explicit knowledge unimportant for language development. In his view, metalinguistic rules can be learned for the purposes of self-correction, but they do not aid language acquisition (Krashen 1982 p.83). This is supported by evidence that there is a natural order in which grammatical items are acquired irrespective of the order in which they are taught.

Prabhu also argues that language proficiency is naturally acquired rather than formally learned. He claims that language learning takes place when learners are communicating and that learning should be organised around a series of communicative tasks, modeled by the teacher and then performed by learners (Prabhu 1987 p.24). Both Krashen and Prabhu question the need for formal instruction of grammar rules.

McLaughlin counters Krashen's theory in pointing out that there is no way to distinguish comprehensible input given in the form of instructed learning from that given in a communicative setting (McLaughlin 1987 p. 63). Even in classrooms where there is a significant amount of focus

on grammar rules or learning strategies, it may be impossible to say that automatic processing is not being acquired or applied in the normal course of student-teacher and student-student interactions. Furthermore, he argues that many language constructs cannot be formulated from input alone. It is necessary for learners to have negative data or structured teaching so that they can notice the discrepancy between their output and the target language (McLaughlin 1987 p. 46). His theory supports the view that correction and grammar teaching can provide a shortcut for learners in converting input into intake.

Research by Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991 pp.308, 321) claims that failure to balance communicative practice with focus on form can result in premature fossilization. Although formal grammar instruction may not change the sequence of acquisition of grammatical items, it may help to accelerate it.

The tension between 'self-conscious' awareness of rules and strategies, and 'intuitive' application of those rules is one that parallels the distinction between accuracy and fluency in language performance. When consciously attending to the grammar and syntax of the foreign language, the learner tends to lose some of the automaticity of fluency. When fluency predominates, for example when under the influence of extreme emotion, fossilized or random errors may surface resulting in inaccuracy (Brumfit 1984). It is possible that there is transfer in the reverse direction from implicit to explicit knowledge. Unconscious internalisation of certain structures or word units may later be analyzed consciously and contribute to further language knowledge.

2.2 Implicit learning in teacher education

The development of teaching skills requires both declarative knowledge (knowing that) and procedural knowledge (knowing how). Declarative knowledge has been equated with explicit knowledge. Procedural knowledge has been equated with implicit knowledge. There are actions or skills that we carry out without necessarily being able to explain how we do them. Many teaching skills draw upon implicit knowledge. They include, for example, intangible intuitive skills, some of which have been described as sensitivity, patience or 'tact', as in the words of Van Manen, 'Tact is the pedagogical ingenuity that makes it possible for the educator to transform an unproductive, unpromising, or even harmful situation into a positive event'(Van Manen 1991 p.130). Claxton defines expertise as 'the unreflective execution of intricate skilled performance' and implicit learning as 'the acquisition of such expertise by non-conscious or non-conceptual

means' (Claxton 2000 p. 40). He suggests that practitioners draw creatively upon a database of first-hand experience without analyzing how they do so, a process which conscious attention may inhibit. It is possible that some teachers rely solely on intuitive skills, but this is not to say that intuition cannot also be enhanced by formal conscious attention. 'Professional education and training thus have the opportunity, both through explicit instruction and modelling, and through the epistemological culture which they embody, either to enable people to harness and develop their intuition, or to neglect it, and so allow it to waste away' (Claxton 2000 p.50).

Is it the case that teaching skills start off as explicit knowledge and then gradually become internalized until they are implicit? If we apply Anderson's model to language teaching, this would mean that teachers in the cognitive stage of development would be thinking carefully about the minute-by-minute actions required in their lesson. They would probably need to refer to their lesson plan quite frequently and, when faced with a situation that differed from their expectations, might find it difficult to respond immediately. Teachers in this stage of development would first have to build up a body of experiences which they can then draw upon to make generalizations and develop routines. Teachers in the associative stage of development would have developed some of these actions into routinised chunks of behaviour which can be carried out without too much conscious thought, freeing up some of the conscious minute-by-minute thinking time for dealing with unpredicted situations. Nevertheless, when faced with unpredicted situations, they would return to a more conscious awareness of their decision-making strategies. Teachers in the autonomous stage of development would be able to carry out skilled behaviour without having to think about it consciously and would have a number of different routines available for dealing with a wide variety of classroom situations.

This model of learning seems very appropriate if we consider teaching skills to be learned according to an applied science or apprenticeship model of teacher education. These models presuppose that student teachers first learn certain precepts that will guide their teaching or imitate certain behaviours that are considered good and gradually come to internalise them until they are automatic. This view is supported by Calderhead who claims that 'Experienced teachers are able to plan and implement a wide variety of lessons quickly and easily calling upon a memorized repertoire of regularly employed activities and using well-mastered routines to establish and maintain them.' What is routine to the experienced teacher, requires conscious decision from the novice. 'Beginning teachers on the other hand have to devote an enormous

amount of time and thought to the development, organisation and sequencing of activities'
(Calderhead 1984 p.14). Many teacher training courses of the 70s and 80s concentrated on
developing target routinised behaviour patterns through techniques such as (classical)
microteaching. The aim was to get teachers to automatise certain teaching skills until they were
performed without conscious thought (described in Wallace 1991 p.141).

There are three main problems with using Anderson's model to describe procedural knowledge of
teaching skills.

First, it would need to account for the cyclical nature of professional development. One of the
skills needed by teachers is the ability to recognize when routines have become over-fossilized
and to avoid routines that are unprincipled. In other words there is a constant cyclical movement
from explicit (consciously attended to) to implicit (automatic) and back again. Maingay (1988)
distinguishes between ritual behaviours that are unprincipled (carried out through force of habit,
without real sensitivity to the context) and those that are principled (applied as and when
professional judgement calls for their application).

> 'By ritual teaching behaviour I mean teaching that is unthinking, that is, or has become
> divorced from the principles that lie behind it. It is teaching behaviour that is either purely
> imitative; or it is teaching behaviour that has set into patterns that no longer reveal
> awareness on the teacher's part of why he or she should be teaching in that particular way.
> This kind of teaching is ritual in the sense that, although there may be principles behind it,
> the teacher has never known, or has lost sight of, those principles, and is consequently
> going through the motions in the same way as a child will recite the multiplication tables.
> This kind of teaching behaviour...has its value, but it is not generative in the way that
> principled teaching behaviour is.' (Maingay 1988 p.118)

Tsui suggests that there has been confusion between the concepts of expert performance and the
development of expertise. Automaticity and effortlessness may characterize expert performance,
but it is the ability to problematize established routines so that a higher level of performance can
be achieved that distinguishes experts from non-experts (Tsui 2003 p.271). Schön's description
of knowledge-in-action and reflection-in-action is an attempt to reconcile this apparent conflict
between automatized implicit knowledge and explicit conscious attention. These views support a

model of teacher development that is cyclic, recursive and non-linear.

Secondly, it may be that teachers require both implicit and explicit knowledge in varying degrees at different stages in their development. Contrary to the notion that experienced teachers develop more routines, it may be that novice teachers need to rely heavily on routinised behaviour because they are busy developing strategies for coping with new and unexpected situations that arise in any class. Experienced teachers may have many strategies that enable them to avoid routines, or enable them to question routines so that they do not become unprincipled.

Thirdly, it may also be the case that, as with language learning, some types of behaviour are unconsciously adopted as routine behaviour initially, much as certain language routines such as greetings may be learned without conscious knowledge of their structure or syntax, and teachers may only later become aware of the principles underlying these routines. This would be an example of the reverse process from implicit to explicit knowledge and contradicts the proposition that teaching skills start off as explicit knowledge and become implicit.

2.3 Making implicit learning explicit

i) Uncovering implicit assumptions

As discussed earlier (see Chapter 1 pp.26-7 and Knowles and Holt-Reynolds 1991, Knowles 1993, Day 1993, Bailey et al.1996), the use of learner autobiography or personal history can help student teachers to recognize their own implicit learning theories and source the origins of some of the routines they have or may have a predisposition to develop. Several studies have focused on uncovering teachers' assumptions about teaching and learning through an analysis of their use of metaphors (Oxford et al 1998, Vadeboncoeur and Torres 2003 p.101). The use of journals is another method by which implicit or tacit assumptions can be uncovered (Thornbury 1991, Jarvis 1992, Richards and Ho1998). In one case study of a practising teacher, for example, journal-keeping was found to be a useful method of making tacit knowledge explicit and re-reading the journal entries and reconsidering the events described in them proved to be a further source for discovering patterns that were implicit (Loughran and Northfield 1996 p.128). Other types of awareness-raising activities, designed to bring implicit assumptions and beliefs of teachers and student teachers to conscious awareness, can be found in most teacher training handbooks (see for example, Wright 1987 p.16, Ur 1996 p.138, Woodward 2001 pp.8-14).

Although student teachers enter their training with many past experiences of learning and perhaps also of teaching, this does not mean that they are able to articulate their existing assumptions about what makes good learning or teaching. In general, they will mostly have been on the receiving end of the education process and may not have developed the skill or ability to look at this experience from the teacher's perspective. They may say that they enjoyed using songs or poetry in the language classroom, for example, but they may not have thought about their teacher's aim in using poetry or song at that time and how it was integrated into their course syllabus. Developing a language for describing these experiences from the teacher's perspective goes hand in hand with becoming more aware of their implicit assumptions about teacher and student roles.

The role of language in the professional discourse of language teacher education has been investigated by Freeman (1996) whose research showed that 'as teachers learned to express their tacitly held ideas about teaching through the shared professional discourse of the in-service program, they gained greater control in shaping their classroom practice.' He further claims that in the process of renaming what they know through experience, the teachers critically reflect on - and thus begin to renegotiate - their ideas about teaching and learning (Freeman 1996 p. 226).

Discussion of the role of reflection in teacher education (Schön 1983, Zeichner 1987, Wallace 1991) has also emphasized the role of making implicit learning explicit through the development of a shared language of naming and reframing. This is because it is difficult to measure reflection without some kind of verbalized report of the reflection process and this in turn is dependent on the teacher possessing both the language and an appropriate framework for articulating pedagogical principles underlying their behaviour. The ability to verbalize one's pedagogical principles is a skill that requires training and practice and shared understandings of the meaning and purpose of reflection. This process of verbalizing reflection is one of the ways in which implicit learning is made explicit.

It follows, therefore, that one of the roles of the teacher educator is to help student teachers to develop their critical pedagogical awareness of teaching and learning processes and find the language to articulate this. Not only does the process of articulating implicit learning help student teachers to integrate new theoretical constructs into their existing mental frameworks, it is also a skill that they will need in their ongoing process of articulating, reflecting on and improving their

future practice. It is a two-way process: using new language to make implicit learning visible and open to discussion and also drawing on experience to make the new concepts and new language meaningful.

ii) Explicitness in course goals

How does the course design acknowledge the value of implicit learning? If experiential learning components are included, how is the value of implicit learning made explicit? The course design may assume that implicit learning, for example, through teaching practice or classroom observations, automatically finds its way into the student teachers' cognitive awareness. Or it may be assumed that this implicit knowledge remains implicit and automatically transfers itself into practice. Alternatively, the course design may structure the experiential learning components so that student teachers are guided through specific tasks designed to make implicit knowledge explicit. The teacher educator makes choices as to what material to include on the course and how to organize and present the material. But how apparent are the reasons behind these choices to the student teachers, and how can these choices be made explicit in a way that supports autonomous teacher development? Despite the good intentions of the teacher educator in choosing activities to support experiential learning, the aim and purpose of them may not be evident to student teachers or may be interpreted by them in a variety of different ways.

One of the key ways in which student teachers interpret the value placed upon different types of learning is through the course syllabus. The syllabus defines and restricts the parameters within which learning takes place. It sets the framework within which student teachers are to understand the purposes of the course requirements and the teacher educator's method of presenting material. The syllabus can define the content to be covered and can also define the processes to be used in presenting and exploring that content. A detailed course syllabus may define the goals for each class and for each component.

In practice, as the course progresses, adjustments are made depending on the needs of each group or because of external constraints. It is also the case that a course syllabus, scanned briefly at the beginning of the semester, may soon be forgotten by student teachers when it comes to the actuality of the classroom session. Therefore, the teacher educator has the option of redefining the goals of a class either verbally or in written form (or both) by establishing the goals and expected outcomes at the beginning of a class or an activity. This 'opening frame' can help to

orient the student teachers as to their successful completion of the intended aims, can make the teacher educator's goals transparent and, in the case of activities intended to facilitate experiential learning, can help to make implicit learning goals explicit.

The question of whether goals should be made explicit is one that can be disputed. This approach is supported by advocates of a competency-based approach who claim that giving student teachers clear targets of achievement will enable them to evaluate their achievement more effectively. Though framing would seem to make the student teachers' task easier and clearer, especially for student teachers who need to see 'the big picture' first, it can also be argued that such task framing limits the potential outcomes and, from a constructivist perspective, may diminish student teachers' ability to create their own engagement with the material. As with language teaching, it may be the case that teacher educators may not want to set up all goals in an explicit frame at the beginning as it may sound complicated or confusing. Or they may decide to set up only a few priority goals, whilst leaving others optional or implicit. The teacher educator may have personal aims which they do not feel it is pedagogically necessary to make explicit. A goal for an ice-breaker activity, for example, may be to encourage a good class atmosphere, but this goal may very well be left implicit, and only the explicit goal of student teachers getting to know each other be made explicit. Some types of content may be more easily expressed in terms of goals than others. And goals can be expressed in a variety of ways which can leave more or less room for individual variation. 'You will learn from each other by collaborating on a task' is much vaguer than, for example, 'You will compare your answers to the assigned homework task and reach agreement on the ten most important points.' Similarly, competencies may also be expressed in the form of ability to perform a skill, or may include cognitive or attitudinal dimensions.

Differing opinions about the importance of explicit goals can lead to misunderstanding and confusion. The teacher educator may feel it essential *not* to make explicit goals, as they should not be predetermined. In such cases, student teachers may feel that the goals have somehow been 'hidden' from them. The following chart summarizes the advantages and disadvantages of making goals explicit at the beginning of a class or an activity.

Option type	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages
Explicit agenda	Trainer makes agenda explicit	Makes learning goals clear to students	May confuse students by giving too much information at once, may limit outcomes
No explicit agenda	Trainer has no agenda or negotiates agenda with students	Agenda can be determined by students and can have a number of different outcomes	Students may not be aware of and cannot measure their achievement (also a danger of apparent insincerity, see below)
Implicit agenda	Trainer has agenda but chooses not make it explicit	Outcomes are more flexible	Students may feel 'manipulated' by trainer, or that trainer is insincere
Hidden agenda	Trainer gives one agenda, but secretly has another agenda (or trainer is unaware of or has not articulated own agenda to self)	Agenda may be simplified to meet learning level of students	Trainer may send mixed messages that are confusing and insincere

Table 1: Making goals explicit: Benefits and drawbacks

Goals may also be made explicit at the end of a course, class or activity in a closing frame. Closing frames can be handled in a variety of ways.

1. A summary or paraphrase by the teacher educator of the goals outlined at the beginning, measuring what has been achieved by the group against what was planned.

2. The group may try to reach a consensus on the learning outcomes.

3. Individual reflection on individual learning outcomes in the form of a journal entry, a questionnaire, or a brief discussion in pairs.

As is the case with opening frames, there are advantages and disadvantages to each option. The

first option may give the impression that the only learning outcomes to be valued are those which were set out in the goals at the beginning. Other unintended or implicit learning outcomes are not mentioned or made explicit. It assumes that what the teacher educator teaches and what the student teachers learn are the same. Some teacher educators may feel uncomfortable with this as it does not fit well with a collaborative teaching learning style. The second and third options call for a recognition of the value of individualized learning. The goals are seen merely as a starting point for each individual's learning path. In other words, the process of making implicit learning explicit can be elicited from the students, not specified by the teacher educator.

The options outlined above for making learning goals explicit can reveal the teacher educator's approach to implicit learning and the value placed upon teacher-guided and student-directed learning. Whether this is acknowledged explicitly or not, each option conveys a message about the teacher educator's pedagogical philosophy concerning teacher and learner control over the process of learning.

In addition to the intended goals of the teacher educator, there are also elements of experiential learning, not planned by the teacher, which are experienced by the student teacher. How are these aspects of learning - which must necessarily be different for each student teacher - to be made explicit?

As mentioned earlier, goals can be expressed in a variety of ways which can be more or less explicit as to desired outcomes. Goals may be stated in such a way that they provide a framework for articulating implicit learning. For example, a goal such as, 'Observe a language class in order to develop an awareness of individual learning styles' includes a specific measurable objective, but also allows for individual engagement with the material with a broad range of possible outcomes. Reflective tasks that allow student teachers to come up with personal reactions or a variety of responses to the content also create opportunities for implicit learning to be made explicit. Both strategies emphasize the importance of process in the learning cycle as opposed to predetermined learning outcomes. This pedagogical approach is also something that the teacher educator has the option of making explicit.

iii) Explicitness in teaching and learning processes

Not all teaching skills are easily observed, in fact, it may only be the more superficial skills that can easily be observed. When student teachers carry out classroom observations, it is often helpful for them to discuss with the observed teacher the factors that affected their decisions, in order to obtain a 'behind the scenes' view of teachers' decision-making processes. A study carried out by Zanting, Verloop and Vermunt (2003) experimented with different methods of helping mentors to 'explicate' their practical knowledge. Interviews and concept maps were used to make explicit the underlying concepts governing the mentors' behaviour and commentary on the student teachers' actions. 'Articulated practical knowledge can make the mentor's teaching more understandable. When observing lessons, student teachers see only visible actions and not the underlying considerations and motivations. In some cases, they interpret classroom situations totally differently from their mentors' (Zanting, Verloop and Vermunt 2003 p.197). They see this articulation of practical knowledge as one step in the process of helping student teachers to develop their own beliefs about teaching and their own personal teaching style, based on critical reflection.

In the teacher education classroom too, many aspects of a teacher educator's decision-making can remain hidden from the student teacher. Woodward describes the option of 'open process' where:

> 'the teacher educators open up their course to the extent that they make visible to the trainees all the constraints and decision-making procedures they engage in. [...] Trainees are not invited to join in the decision making but are 'viewing' it and can ask questions about it. They can relate this to decisions they have to make a teachers. [...] This way of working amounts to a demystification of the training and teaching process. It involves the teacher educator in removing some protective clothing and it also means the teacher educator has to know why she does things, to be able to express this, and explain it clearly and concisely to others. This is a skill in itself.' (Woodward 1988 p.9)

The skill of making one's own methodology explicit goes hand in hand with creating congruence between the methodology being used to teach methodology. An empirical study of novice teachers found that a majority of teachers in the group thought that teacher educators should 'practice what they preach' and found this to be the most important teacher educator skill.

'Novice teachers who have recently been exposed to a variety of teacher educators are

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very clear about the statement that teacher educators need to practice what they preach. It is not enough to talk about good teaching and alternatives in teaching, but teacher educators are expected to practice this in their own teaching at the teacher education institution. A similar claim is found in the ATE standards for Master teacher educators where the teacher educator is expected 'to model professional teaching practices' (Association of Teacher Educators (ATE), 2002, standard 1).' (Smith 2005 p.178)

But how is attention drawn to the use of these methods? How is the experiential learning component made explicit? Traditional more prescriptive approaches to language teacher education emphasize the explicit modeling of target teaching behaviour in the teaching of methodology. Examples are to be found in Cross (1987) and Doff (1988). 'We felt that methods of training should themselves exemplify good teaching not only for direct effectiveness but also to make the most of the modeling effect'(Cross 1987 p.73). Example training goals are: 'To make teachers aware of basic question types and to show how they can be used for different purposes'; 'To show teachers how to elicit short and long answers from students in a natural way' (Doff 1988 p.22). These course designers use experiential learning techniques to direct student teachers towards specific targeted outcomes.

Other process-oriented approaches recommend finding a balance between telling participants and helping them discover for themselves, but still tend towards the 'discovery' of goals set out by the trainer (Woodward 1988, McGrath 1997). The emphasis is on how the trainer can best select processes in order to 'convey' content. These approaches follow a training model, situated within a craft model of teacher education.

Exploratory approaches to teacher education emphasize the importance of outcomes being determined by the student in accordance with their own learning paths (Fanselow 1987, Ramani 1987, Gebhard and Oprandy1990). These approaches follow a development model where teacher education is seen as developing the skills of self-directed autonomous learning that will sustain professional development in teachers' subsequent teaching careers.

Jamieson (1994) identifies three types of experiential learning within teacher education programs: 1) real experience, such as that provided by teaching practice 2) contrived experience within the student teaching context such as simulations and microteaching 3) learning seen as a mode of

operating within experiences. He suggests that teacher education usually involves an initial phase where experiences are 'set up' or selected for the student teachers. He identifies two models of implementing experiential learning. In the first model, students are put through experiences so they manage to discover 'the right answers', '...in teacher education students are sometimes put in microteaching situations to demonstrate certain points the tutor believes are important.' This type of experiential learning is 'dominated by the tutor or teacher; control rests with him or her just as it does in didactic teaching' (Jamieson 1994 p.47). In the second model, the student is in control of learning, trying with the help of the tutor or teacher to make sense of the experience and integrate it into a personal stock of knowledge. The role for the tutor/teacher here is that of facilitator of learning. The priority for the trainer is not to follow a prescribed agenda, but to develop in her students the power to create their own professional knowledge. Jamieson argues that there may be a progression from trainer-guided to student-led learning, but that the true aim of experiential learning should be to enable students to develop the autonomous skills inherent in the second, student-directed mode of learning.

Schön argues that the new construction of knowledge will be guided by the professional coach who will emphasize 'indeterminate zones of practice' (1987 p. 40), that is, zones of practice that are not immediately solvable by reference to facts but need creative context-specific responses. The role of the coach or advisor is to structure the learning of the student by deciding which areas they should work on and to guide the student into a critical dialogue concerning their current practice. Schön describes two models by which the trainer or coach can do this. These are: 'Follow Me!' where the trainer shows or tells the student while the student attempts to imitate, and 'Joint Experimentation' where the trainer advises and supports the student in pursuing his or her own lines of enquiry in developing solutions to the problem. In the 'Follow Me!' model, there are various ways of 'telling' students how to develop appropriate skills, including what is named 'the Hall of Mirrors', where the trainer's own practice involves demonstrating principles that are relevant to the teacher's own future practice. Each of these methods would be called upon at different times depending upon the circumstances.

(It should be mentioned here that Schön's study is based on analysis of different types of professional practica. It is concerned with coaching skills 'in action', not with the teaching of professional knowledge 'for action'. I suggest, however, that Schön's theories are relevant to the teaching of teaching methodology because of the parallelisms between the world of practice and

the world of the teacher education classroom.)

Loughran, following Schön, proposes that in order to encourage reflective thinking, the teacher educator should model reflective thinking in his or her own practice and make this evident and visible to the student teachers by demonstrating this and using this as a starting point for discussion. He describes thinking aloud in his teacher education classroom and sharing his journal entries and discussing them with his student teachers. He aims to make tacit knowledge explicit through modeling, but he does not explicitly name this process. Starting from the assumption that each student teacher will learn and develop differently within his class, he allows this process of development to unfold naturally and reach student teachers' awareness through their experience and observation.

> 'I believe that by the end of the course all of my student-teachers had a good understanding of why I was talking aloud about my teaching and of my approach to journal writing. However, how this modelling influenced their thinking about learning to teach varied. This could be attributed to the fact that 'telling' does not itself lead to learning and this dictum influenced my approach to modelling such that I rarely (if ever) admonished the class to 'reflect'. Instead I chose to model its use through my practice. By adopting this approach my student-teachers were given the opportunity to accept or reject the use of reflection in their own practice, and to incorporate its use in ways which they saw as appropriate. Inevitably then, individuals drew their own conclusion abut the process in their own time.' (Loughran 1996 p.46)

Loughran's avoidance of explicitly 'telling' his student teachers to 'reflect' indicates the danger that explicit 'telling' can arouse resistance or alternatively cause student teachers to pay lip-service to the recommended behaviour in order to gain the teacher educator's approval. Loughran models reflective thinking (in a 'Follow Me' style monologue) but allows student teachers to interpret his modeling each in his or her own individual way. A possible drawback of his method is that student teachers may again not understand the principle behind this method if it is not made explicit. Another possible drawback (Berry 2001, quoted in Loughran and Berry 2005) is that over-use of making decision-making transparent can result in lack of focus for the student teachers and distract them from issues more relevant to their immediate perceived needs.

Another strategy used by Loughran is to model reflective critical dialogue with a peer teacher educator in a way that confronts student teachers with multiple viewpoints. Again, he seeks to counter the tendency to 'tell' student teachers by modeling the self- and peer-questioning that can lead to professional development.

> '...for if we were to offer epistemic explanations to our student teachers about the situations we create in class, then we would most likely not help student teacher teachers to develop insights into the problematic nature of practice; although it might help us to feel 'right' in explaining our actions, i.e., theory underpins our practice. In contrast, we believe that insights are more likely developed by being involved together, hearing others' (student teachers and teachers) explanations of their different perspectives on episodes. This then offers opportunities for perceptual knowledge to be developed, framed and reframed by all participants. If we did not explicitly model this process of explaining and exploring perspectives through our practice, we would be in danger of simply offering our conceptual knowledge, albeit in perhaps more confronting and demanding ways, but it would really only be another form of delivery; telling as opposed to teaching, or in Myers's (2002) terms, the ever-present telling, showing and guided practice.' (Loughran and Berry 2005 p.12)

A possible drawback of this approach is that student teachers who have been acculturated to believing in the teacher educator's expertise may feel disoriented and lose confidence. An advantage may be that teacher educators are able to make their own assumptions and decision-making processes more transparent and by doing so empower student teachers to notice these aspects of their own and other teachers' teaching.

As can be seen from the discussion above, the issue of how directive teacher educators should be in relation to guiding the implicit learning of their students is a thorny one. It depends greatly on whether the educator takes a training or a development view of the teacher education process (see Chapter 1 p.12). Directive versus non-directive approaches to teacher education represent two ends of a continuum and it is likely that most educators will select a balance of these two approaches.

This contradiction between telling or teacher-led and exploratory or student-led approaches is one

that is currently being debated within the field of language teacher education. Recent trends in the U.K. and in the U.S. have been towards the implementation of specific outcome-based goals and competencies in a more instruction-led approach, although this has also been balanced by more attention to individual reflection in the form of journals and portfolios.

Relevance to this research: Many questions raised in this discussion of implicit and explicit learning relate to the topic of parallel process. What role do parallels play in enabling teachers to make implicit learning explicit? Does noticing of parallels enhance students' ability to bridge theory and practice? Or to reflect critically? Can reflection on parallels enhance students' ability to navigate between implicit and explicit knowledge?

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the importance of implicit learning in language teaching and teacher education. It has suggested that the process of making implicit learning explicit is one that can be very valuable in enhancing the learning process, but has also identified some problems relating to overly teacher-led approaches to guiding experiential learning.

Chapter 3 The pilot study

3.1 The pilot study

3.1.1 Design of pilot study

3.1.2 Description of pilot study

3.1.3 Findings of pilot study

3.2 Evolution of research design

3.2.1 Evolution of research questions

3.2.2 Evolution of research methods

Chapter 3 The pilot study

3.1 The pilot study

3.1.1 Design of pilot study

In order to develop a research design for the main study, I carried out a small-scale pilot study. The purpose of the pilot study was twofold: to refine my research questions and develop a tentative model of how parallel process operates; and to try out data collection methods that might be appropriate to this topic.

For the pilot study, I adopted a non-interventionist ethnographic stance, observing classrooms and recording examples of parallels. I also planned to interview the teacher educators and at least one of their students, to find out about their different interpretations of parallels and compare them with my own, in this way attempting to achieve a triangulation of the data. An ethnographic approach to field research typically involves long-term immersion in the selected community. Through detailed field observation and in-depth interviewing of informants it aims to reveal common cultural understandings related to the phenomena under study. Although the pilot study would only involve a small number of observations and interviews and could not be regarded as a systematic collection of data, I decided to experiment with this approach in order to see what kinds of data could be obtained, outline some tentative data categories and find out how well the data corresponded to my research questions. At this stage it was more important to maintain breadth of approach and be open to a number of different aspects, rather than focusing too narrowly on pre-determined questions.

Pilot study research questions

One aim of the pilot study was to refine my research questions and develop a tentative model of how parallel process operates. The research questions for my pilot study were:

1. What are some of the techniques used by teacher educators to raise awareness of parallel process in teacher education courses?

2. How aware are teacher educators of parallel process in their training sessions and course design?

3. How aware are student teachers of parallel process in their training sessions and course design?

4. What are the different categories of parallel process evident in the written documentation, observations and interviews and when do they typically occur?

5. How do student teachers express awareness of parallel process?

6. How does the teacher educator respond to student teachers' comments on parallel process? How does s/he incorporate this into his or her professional development?

7. How are student teachers influenced by the teacher educator's awareness of parallel process and how do they think it will affect their teaching?

8. How have the views expressed by teacher educators and student teachers above affected my view of the topic?

Pilot study research design

The second aim of the pilot study was to try out data collection methods that might be appropriate to my topic and to determine whether the methods used corresponded to my research aims. These were some of the questions I hoped to answer through my pilot study:

1. What are the best ways of gathering information about the context of this site?

2. Can I observe examples of parallel process by observing sessions passively or will it be necessary to play an interventionist role?

3. What is the best way of recording these data?

4. What is the best way of categorizing these data?

5. What kind of interview questions will best enable me to find out about teacher educators' and student teachers' awareness of parallel process?

Selection of site

The first decision to be made related to the selection of the fieldwork site. The reasons for my selection were based on finding a site where I could gain access, which was within reasonable traveling distance so that I could visit the site regularly, and where there was a high probability of a rich mix of many different types of teaching processes and people. I selected a university that fit these criteria and contacted several professors at the university. I was fortunate that three of the professors agreed to allow me to visit their class for the purposes of my pilot study. I would like to acknowledge their generosity in giving me their time and allowing me to observe their classes.

Disclosure of topic

The second decision that I faced was whether or not I would inform the participants of my research topic. This issue came up immediately when asking for teacher educators' permission to observe their classes. In one case, a written copy of my research proposal was requested. Therefore, I had to decide whether to disclose my topic openly or explain that details of the topic were confidential (and risk losing access to the site). I decided to openly disclose the topic. In this decision to be open about the focus of my research, I felt that participants were afforded greater freedom to decide whether or not they wished to participate by answering my questions. My decision to do this related to my ethical standpoint regarding openness and transparency which is consistent with the topic of parallel process and my hope that more openness regarding teaching methodology will benefit both students and teachers. Therefore, I wanted to apply the same principle to my own research. The risks resulting from this decision were that there would be an increased risk of the 'demand effect,' that is, when subjects know what a researcher is looking for, they may be more (or less) inclined to provide it. In a sense, I had already 'intervened.' When I asked the professors about this later, they confirmed that they had been aware of the topic during their teaching of their class, but did not themselves observe any significant effect on the way they taught the class.

Documentation

A third decision concerned how I would document my classroom observations in order to validate my view of parallels in order to compare it with that of the students and the teacher educators. I decided to audio record the classes, so that I could listen again to segments of the class at a later date, and take notes of what I perceived to be significant incidents in the class. This would be further supplemented by developing my interpretations through my own research journal.

Interview protocol

I first informed the participants that the purpose of my research was to gather data for my doctoral research and that the data they provided would be confidential and not shared with any other participants in the study. I chose a semi-structured style of interview protocol, consisting of one or two lead-off questions, followed by low-inference follow-up questions or paraphrasing. My choice of this format was based on the wish to make these interactions as much as like informal conversations as possible. I felt that this would help me to establish rapport with the

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participants and cause the least anxiety and disruption.

In my interviews with students, I first described the topic of my research by saying that I was looking at similarities between the this class and a language class. I followed this by asking these questions.

1. Do you think there are similarities between the way this class is taught and a foreign language class?
2. What qualities in your instructor's style or method of teaching do you think are most useful to you as a future teacher?
3. Are there any aspects which you would not use or apply to your own teaching?
4. Did you notice a development in the instructor's teaching as the course developed?
5. Do you have any comments on the overall style or method of teaching?

At the beginning of my research, I was not sure how student teachers would react to my topic. I therefore chose a lead-off question that would allow students to say whether or not they thought parallels existed between the different contexts of language teaching and teacher education classrooms. It should be noted again here that given the 'demand effect' and the context of explaining my topic mentioned above, this is clearly a 'leading question' and therefore may be said to have influenced students to answer affirmatively. The subsequent questions aim to uncover student perceptions of general features of teaching style, both positive and negative, which might impact on their own future teaching behaviour.

In my interviews with the teacher educators, I also described the topic of my research and used these lead-off questions: 'What did you find most interesting in this class?' and 'When you plan your class, how do you choose what kind of procedure you will use?' Again, it must be remembered here that all of these questions took place in the context of knowing the topic of my research. Therefore, the answers included the conscious awareness of being relevant to this topic. I followed this with statements about my own observations of what I perceived to be parallels in the class I had observed. By doing this I wanted to find out how the teacher educators thought about parallels and compare my perception of parallels with theirs. For example, in interview 1, I asked: 'An example of a general (parallel) might be the way you encourage your students to be very critical and develop their own opinions. Would you say that is something a language teacher

should also do? Is that something you consciously try to bring out in your teaching that is something they should try to do?'

3.1.2 Description of pilot study

For my pilot study, I contacted three professors in language teacher education at a university in North America. All were teaching graduate courses in foreign or ESL language teaching methods and principles. I obtained their permission to observe and tape one of their classes. I used the following methods of obtaining data: collection of written documentation about the site; audio-recording and field notes of classes; interviews with professors and student teachers; my research journal.

I first present a brief summary of each observation and then summarize the findings in relation to my research goals.

i) 1ˢᵗ pilot observation: Gerry

The first class I observed consisted of a combination of mini-lecture, group and whole class discussion. There were many aspects of the class that I felt could be described as parallels. These included detailed aspects of practice. Ways of stopping and starting group discussion and ways of encouraging participation were some examples of this. In addition, there were also much broader pedagogical themes which could be said to model how teachers and students interact. These included an emphasis on developing an informed critical viewpoint and the importance of responding to learners' viewpoints and making them feel part of the process. The professor's use of an informal conversational style of presentation which aimed to make abstract ideas more meaningful on a personal level could also have been interpreted as modeling teacher-student-content interaction. None of these parallels were pointed out or noticed explicitly in the class I observed.

Teacher educator interview

In my interview with the teacher educator a few days after the class. He showed interest in the concept and was aware of the issues surrounding it, but explained his reasons for not wanting to include specific references to parallels in his class. On the level of pedagogical philosophy, he saw parallels with language teaching in that as teachers we should give the tools, but not tell our students what to do with them. On the level of practical teaching methods, he was against

presenting or modeling a methods or techniques and felt that drawing attention to this would be inconsistent with his philosophy because he believes that everyone has to develop their own teaching approach according to individually constructed beliefs in a way that is appropriate to their context. Modelling teaching methods would be contrary to this view of teacher learning. He also reported that this constant self-consciousness would detract from the intuitive flow of his class.

- I don't want the assumption to be that everything I do in the classroom, every single move I make, is consciously guided and has an agenda and a theoretical foundation to it. That would be crazy!

(Gerry, Interview 30/11/01, p.19)

Student teacher interview

I interviewed one student teacher for about twenty minutes immediately after the class about possible parallels between this class and a language class. It was clear that this was a topic to which she had already given some thought. When asked about positive aspects of the professor's style of presentation, she mentioned that he '*has a sense of humour, has a lot of energy and enthusiasm, is able to laugh at himself and is very laid back.*' These were all considered attributes appropriate to a good language teacher, too. With regard to Gerry's teaching style, she recognized his efforts to include everyone, but was slightly negative about his way of responding to student teachers' answers, saying that he '*tends to take over student teacher presentations and run away with his own ideas. When he is given an answer, he doesn't accept it, but asks the student teacher to paraphrase it in terms of other theories. This is inconsistent with his philosophy of always accepting where the student teacher is coming from*' (Student interview, 16/11/01, p.4). This inconsistency was recognized by Gerry in my interview with him. He was aware of this tendency to turn student teachers' comments to his agenda and explained that he was using his authority 'in a directive way to create the conditions for self-empowerment' (Gerry, Interview 30/11/01, p.18). This response from the student teacher made me aware that my questions could be interpreted as inviting a (possibly negative) evaluation of the teacher educator.

ii) 2nd pilot observation: Isabel

The class I observed consisted of two mini-teaching demonstrations given by students to illustrate two different teaching approaches: comprehensible input and the communicative approach. Each demonstration was followed by discussion and critique guided by the teacher educator. There were many aspects of this class that could have been described as parallels. On a practical level, the use of student presentations demonstrated a student-centred approach to conveying course content. The use of peer observers also modeled ways of encouraging student-to-student learning. The class also demonstrated more general pedagogical principles of involving student participation but balancing this with careful structure, guidance and evaluation in the post-teaching demonstration discussion and critique.

Teacher educator interview

Isabel reported that she was very aware of parallel process and its relevance to her teaching methods, saying that she is very conscious of choosing methods that will model good teaching practice. She reported that at the beginning of the semester she usually asks students to be aware of the methods she uses on the course. The parallels in the class I observed were implicit and were not pointed out or discussed explicitly in the class I observed.

- Yes, I think at the start of the semester, I always say, 'In addition to looking at these issues, I am going to try to model good pedagogical methods' and I always ask myself before each class 'what could I do today that would be good, that in addition to the content would also model the presentation of the content?' (Isabel, Pilot study interview, 26/03/02, p.22-23)

Student teacher interview

I interviewed one student teacher for about twenty minutes after the class. The student interpreted my questions in a more practical manner than in the previous observation and reported that she found many aspects of Isabel's class to be of practical use in her teaching. She mentioned, for example, moving desks into a circle, creating a shift to student-centred activities, using a variety of strategies, not just presenting content in one way on the board but also using tapes and other materials. The interview with the student teacher again confirmed that this topic was one which the student was already very aware of. Her interpretation of the questions was influenced by different preoccupations from those in the previous observation. She was more concerned with

picking up transferable tools for teaching than with analyzing the pedagogical style of the class. This made me aware how the perception of parallels was viewed through the filter of the student's own learning experience.

iii) 3rd pilot observation: Lisa

The class I observed consisted of a combination of student presentations and whole class discussion. As with the previous two observations, I perceived parallels operating on two levels: (1) modelling of teaching philosophy and (2) using processes that correspond to the teaching philosophy and are transferable to language teaching. The main difference in this case was that the teacher educator asked students to reflect on both of these levels explicitly, engaging them in an ongoing process of reflection. Because this referencing was done frequently and explicitly throughout the course, Lisa had developed a metaphor as shorthand for referencing the concept of parallels:

- ... we're also going to be doing an activity which may or may not be useful for you in looking at issues that are your students' issues – so this is one of those Russian doll things, you know, where we're doing it and kind of modeling how you might do it with the students – and this is one of the points where you can tailor this to whatever your own interest is.

(Class transcript, 22/04/02, p.10)

In this phase of the class, Lisa facilitated students' choice of project topics and at the same time modeled how this might be done with language students. It was clear that she often uses this technique (of making a parallel explicit) because she referred to it by a codename, 'the Russian doll thing'. In doing this, Lisa demonstrated a principle that she herself advocates while at the same time making explicit the relationship between that principle and her choice of the method in this class.

There were many parallels on a general pedagogical level. The course was about learner-directed learning and Lisa designed the course to model and illustrate the use of learner-directed learning in every aspect of her course design. This included the use of journals to help her find out about student needs. On a practical level, there were many practical strategies that modeled good teaching practice, for example, the use of personal anecdote, telling stories that had a deep

personal meaning for her. In this she may have intended to model what teachers may do with their classes and how they could encourage their students to share their personal experiences, thus modeling the behaviour of modeling. Other aspects of the class also had the potential to generate reflection on good classroom practice, for example, bringing in outside materials (journals, articles etc) to share with the group, noting who was absent and who would be responsible for taking notes and handouts for them, giving a brief agenda at the beginning of the class. I do not know how conscious student teachers were of all these aspects, but the general framework of parallel process enabled Lisa to select the moments when she decided to use their reflective potential and make them explicit. This meant that she could draw the parallels very quickly, using key words or expressions (e.g. 'the Russian doll thing') to quickly refer to a process of thought and reflection, without having to discuss it in depth each time. Each practical method was a careful demonstration of her general principles of thoughtful learner-centered teaching and learning.

Lisa explained the methodological reasons for her use of journals, a transparency of practice that her comments in the class also reinforced. The use of journals was an important part of Lisa's teaching approach. In our brief discussion before the class, she outlined the importance journal-keeping has for her, both in its function of channeling personal feedback to her about her student teachers and also as a model of how to engage student teachers on a personal level and create a meaningful social context for their personal experiences. Later, it became clear that Lisa uses journals to facilitate the group dynamic and to build a relationship of trust between her and each individual, as well as between her and the group as a whole.

The use of journals demonstrated the use of parallel process on several different levels. First, the use of journals was an established part of the framework of the course, with guidelines set by Lisa, clearly stated as part of the course requirements and connected to the assigned readings. Secondly, one of the assigned readings for the class was about the use of journals. This created an opportunity for student teachers to reflect on the use of journals with their students and their own reactions to the use of journals in this course. Third, the class discussion of journaling - the group consensus on the definition of what constitutes a journal, what makes a journal useful, or not, how journals might be difficult for some and what makes them easier or more difficult - created a parallel with the type of discussion they might involve their students in and this parallel was brought to the foreground by Lisa at the end of the discussion.

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Teacher educator interview

In the follow-up interview, which took place a few days after the class, Lisa's comments about
the class discussion of journals indicate that for her the discussion was a rich and meaningful one.
It was an example of a learner-directed discussion and it revealed some of the difficulties students
had with writing journals. It raised the inherent contradiction of teacher-imposed tasks in a
learner-directed course.

> Lisa: Part of it that was interesting for me that was helpful for me was to create the space
> for people to talk about what made journal writing difficult for them. And although I'm
> very conscious of inviting resistance in my pedagogy all the way through, it often
> surprises me (*laughs*), so it I thought it was interesting to me to hear about the ways in
> which they were uncomfortable with journal writing themselves and …..
> Ingrid: How did that influence you?
> Lisa: It just made me understand more the reasons that people might not be writing. That
> they might not be because they are too busy or they're lazy – I mean, I don't generally
> think about my student teachers as being lazy, but – and really made me realize again the
> power of the notion of teacher expectation. The notion of people feeling they have to do
> something that is not something they would necessarily choose to do, which is a
> contradiction in a course that is trying to create spaces for people to be self-directed.

(Lisa, Interview 28/04/02, pp.29-30)

These comments made by Lisa in connection with her own professional development supported
my hunch that parallel process may be most powerful when it generates resonances on different
levels that can lead to professional development on the part of all participants.

Interview with student teacher

I interviewed one student teacher for about twenty minutes during a short break in the class. The
student teacher reported that she had learned many useful techniques for her classroom and
appreciated the opportunity to try them out herself in this class. One example she mentioned was
an activity where they had to pick out a picture and say why they chose it. On a more general
level, she was doubtful about applying the student-centred methods Lisa was using, '*because, for*

example, my student teachers don't like the circle thing, they like a more traditional approach. They don't like it when I ask them what they want to do. They say: Teacher, tell us.' (Student Interview, 22/04/02, p.16). She was aware of parallel process in the general teaching style of the class and found it to be effective, but was critical of its relevance to her teaching context.

3.1.2 Findings of pilot study

Before carrying out my pilot observations, I had tentatively set out five categories of parallel process. This preliminary and tentative set of categories was influenced by the discussion in the literature review of the different ways of bringing experiential learning into the teacher education classroom (see Chapter 1 pp.14-21) and especially of the need to make roles explicit when using and debriefing experiential learning (see Chapter 1 pp.20-21 and Powell 1985, Woodward 1988).

1. The student teacher examines and reflects on his or her learning processes as a student teacher (and notices similarities or differences with those of language learners).

2. The student teacher plays the role of language learner (in language learning activities they may later use with their student teachers).

3. The student teacher plays the role of teacher (in, for example, microteaching).

4. The teacher educator models behaviour which the student teacher can use in their teaching.

5. Both student teacher and teacher educator reflect on the process of teaching and learning from each other. This interaction results in mutual professional development which can be applied to their future professional development.

I observed examples of one or more of these categories of parallel process in each of the class observations. Gerry's class contained modelling (category 4) and student self-reflection (category 1). Isabel's class contained role-play (categories 2 and 3) as well as modelling (category 4). Lisa's class contained self-reflection (category 1), modelling (category 4) and mutual learning (category 5). These categories provided a superficial description of different roles within parallel process but did not get at the deeper and more varied levels of perception and experience involved. In my interviews with the teacher educators, I attempted to reach an understanding of how and why they used (or did not use) parallels in their teaching.

All three teacher educators were eager to have student teachers be both reflective and critical of the theories being studied on the course. Reflective teaching implied for them a critical stance which would enable student teachers to adapt the ideas they were studying to different contexts. All were against the idea of imposing an ideal model of teaching on the student teachers. In other words, they resisted a description of their teaching as a 'model' for student teachers to follow, but preferred to describe it as one model which student teachers may or may not choose to use.

In the first observation, Gerry rejected the notion of offering a model of teaching behaviour in his class. Parallels with language teaching were implicit in his philosophy and in the methods he used, but he was against drawing explicit attention to them. He gave several explicit reasons for this in his interview.

In the second observation, Isabel used roles to generate reflection on parallels. There was a clear distinction between 'student teachers playing the part of language students', 'student teachers playing the part of teachers' and 'student teachers being students in this class.' She reported that she consciously used her own teaching style as a model.

In the third observation, Lisa set up parallels in the framework of her course and used techniques consistently throughout the course that drew attention to these parallels. The philosophy of learner-directed teaching was both demonstrated and discussed in the class I observed. The use of journals was a tool for Lisa to receive feedback on her teaching and a way to demonstrate ways of receiving feedback from student teachers. This was explicitly discussed in the class I observed. Lisa's philosophy of teaching underpinned all her process choices on the course and were implicit in every aspect of it. There was not an explicit delineation of roles, but a constant switching back and forth between different viewpoints.

These three different viewpoints challenged my implicit assumption that parallels can be 'observed and recorded.' I realized that my categories, though superficially coherent, did not reflect the complexity of the topic which was highly dependent on each individual's set of beliefs and constructs about the relationship between teaching and learning in the different contexts of language teaching and teacher education.

In my interviews with student teachers, I attempted to reach an understanding of how they perceived parallels and whether it influenced them in their ideas about teaching. The first thing I noticed was how readily they responded to the question. Two of the students interpreted the topic in a practical way, by referring to explicit teaching methods, and one student in a more general way, by referring to attitudes or general pedagogical philosophy. None of their perceptions corresponded with my categories. Parallels were perceived by them in a much more complex and holistic way and also involved judgments based on how relevant they were to their specific teaching contexts.

The interviews with the student teachers challenged my expectation that they might find the topic strange, confusing or irrelevant. It appeared to be an issue that they had already though about, though interpreting the question in different ways. I was aware of the 'demand' effect of asking if students noticed any parallels. The question was obviously a leading one and students reacted by trying to find a positive answer. Their readiness to agree with the value of the comparison made me question the value of asking *whether* they noticed parallels, instead of looking at *how* they perceived parallels. Another point that emerged from the student teacher interviews was the fact that my questions had focused on the teacher educator, perhaps because of my personal bias a teacher educator. The focus could be broadened to focus on the teaching/learning process in general. I also realized I would also need more background knowledge about the student teachers in order to put their comments into context.

One finding which emerged from my pilot study was that parallel process was something that permeated every aspect of the classes that I observed. It was implicit in the pedagogical philosophy and in the use of practical teaching strategies. It was sometimes made explicit, for example, in the course outline, or in class discussion, but the parallels noticed by students were not only those which the teacher educator had intended. Based on this, I attempted to redefine my categories.

(i) Explicit versus implicit parallels

My first method of categorization attempted to distinguish implicit or tacit examples of parallel process from examples where parallel process was explicitly discussed. The reason for this relates to the discussion in the literature of implicit and explicit learning (see Chapter 2 pp.42-53).

There were several occasions when student teachers noticed and verbalized their observation of a parallel in class. In Gerry's class, student teachers spontaneously remarked on the group work aspect of their discussion and its similarity to a language class. On the other hand, students noticed many parallels in his class that were not made explicit. In Isabel's class, student teachers described how it felt to be a language learner in the teaching demonstration, but there were also many parallels in the class, designed and intended by Isabel, that students did not notice. In Lisa's class, student teachers made the connection between discussing the use of journals in her class and discussing the use of journals with their students, as well as noticing many general and specific aspects of parallels. Implicit parallels were consistently made explicit.

Explicit discussion of parallel process was most often generated by activities of a reflexive nature, that is, when the opportunity was created for student teachers to reflect on the process they were currently or had previously been engaged in, enabling them to describe the process and their reactions to it and then to draw the parallels with their teaching. This facilitated the process of articulating experiential learning. This differed from the many examples of parallels that students noticed but did not discuss in class and those that they did not notice.

(ii) Congruence between principles and practice

My second method of categorization was based on the idea of congruence between general methodological principles and specific teaching methods. This was influenced by the issue discussed in the teacher education literature of the need for teacher education in practice to reflect principles being advocated (see Chapter 1 pp.17-19) and the model proposed by Argyris and Schön of 'espoused theory' versus 'theory-in-use' (Argyris and Schön 1974). 'Espoused theory is a rationale we claim to believe in and are able to describe, whereas theory-in-use comprises the actual beliefs which we hold and which betray themselves in our behavior in practice' (Argyris and Schön 1974 p.7). This made me examine all three observations and notice how each teacher educator conveyed their stated philosophy of practice through the methods they used in their classes.

All three teacher educators demonstrated congruence of principles and practice, but varied in the way they viewed this congruence and used it in their teaching. Their views may be seen as being situated at three different points along a continuum from implicit congruence to explicit

congruence. In Gerry's class, many techniques that would be useful for teaching and learning were modeled, but attention was not drawn to them in a way that would make this modeling accessible to private or public reflection. Although there was congruence between principle and practice, this was not made explicit. There was no wider framework supporting the noticing of such parallels. In Isabel's class, there was more explicit use of modeling general principles through practice and a reported intention by Isabel to model teaching methods, but no explicit discussion of congruence in the class. In my observation of Lisa's class, her use of learner-directed methods on her course parallels her belief in the importance of learner-directed education for adult ESL learners. Student teachers were able to experience and understand her general philosophy of teaching and learning through her teaching methods on the course. The use of congruence was very explicit and an important part of the framework and methodology of the course.

This second method of categorization follows Schön's description of the 'hall of mirrors' in 'Learning the Artistry of Psychoanalytic Practice' where he describes the parallels that are generated in a supervisor's training of a psychoanalyst.

> 'By doing to the student as the trainee might do with her patient or client, the coach can enable her not only to observe the kind of action she might carry out (as in Follow me!) but also to experience what it feels like to be on the receiving end of that sort of action. These forms of frame reflection make use of inner and outer views of action – action as felt and action as observed. They exploit perceived similarities between interactions of a practicum and those of a practice world. They do these things retrospectively, in relation to events that have already happened, and prospectively, in relation to those might happen...I observe in your present action how I might act with my client, and I experience now what he might later experience with me. My efforts at frame reflection are enhanced as I ring the changes on parallelisms available in a hall of mirrors – integrating inner and outer views of my earlier practice an the new practice I seek to learn.' (Schön 1987 p.253)

Congruence between principles and practice created more opportunities for reflection in two senses of the word: 'reflection' meaning critical reflection, a deeper processing of reactions to a specific set of experiences; and 'reflection' meaning an image reflected in mirror, something

which causes one to see similarities or differences between the original image and its reflected version.

According to Argyris and Schön (1974 pp.174-6), it is at the point where there is some dissonance or incongruence that teacher development is most likely to occur. This point emerged in my follow-up interview with Lisa, where she notes that although one purpose of the journal writing was to make the course more learner-directed, there was an inherent contradiction in her imposition of a journal-writing requirement into a supposedly learner-directed course. She remarked that this was an aspect she would like to consider more.

Conclusion

These attempts to refine my categories for analyzing parallels led me to consider the following key factors in the use of parallel process in the context of language teacher education. These categories will be seen to later feed into the discussion of findings from my main study (see Chapters 5 and 6).

- Explicit versus implicit use of parallels by the teacher educator
- How parallels are perceived and expressed by students
- Differences between parallels planned by teacher educators and those noticed by students
- Congruence between principles and practice as perceived by teacher educators and students
- Possible use of parallels for mutual professional development

3.2 Evolution of research design

3.2.1 Evolution of research questions

One aim of the pilot study was to refine my research questions and develop a tentative model of how parallel process operates. The research questions evolved in response to the pilot study data. This is part of the process of 'reciprocal shaping' (see Chapter 4 p.78). As a result of carrying out the pilot study, my research questions evolved in the following ways.

1. What are some of the techniques used by teacher educators to raise awareness of parallel process in teacher education courses?

This question overemphasizes the teacher educator's role in making students aware of parallels and focuses attention on teaching methods instead of students' perceptions. I eliminated this question.

2. How aware are teacher educators of parallel process in their training sessions and course design?

Teacher educators are very aware of parallels. It seemed redundant to ask if they were aware of them, but more interesting and useful to find out how and why they made use of them, or did not make use of them. I changed this question to: What awareness does the teacher educator have of parallel process and how relevant does he or she think it is to his or her and to student teachers' learning cycle?

3. How aware are student teachers of parallel process in their training sessions and course design?

Student teachers are very aware of parallels. It seemed redundant to ask if they were aware of them, but more interesting and useful to find out how they perceived them and how useful they thought they were. I changed this question to: What awareness do student teachers have of parallel process and how relevant do they think it is to their learning cycle?

4. What are the different categories of parallel process evident in the written documentation, observations and interviews and when do they typically occur?

My preliminary set of categories (see p.65) had provided only a very superficial analysis of the data. I tentatively revised these categories and hoped that a larger sample of data would enable

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me to establish more useful categories. I retained this question.

5. How do student teachers express awareness of parallel process?

After finding such varied responses in the student interviews, this question seemed to have a great deal of potential for uncovering students' perceptions. I retained this question.

6. How does the teacher educator respond to student teachers' comments on parallel process?

7. How does s/he incorporate this into his or her professional development?

These two questions overlap with question 2 and I merged these two questions with question 2. Because of the unavoidable influence of the researcher in sensitizing the teacher educator to the topic, I added a further question to include the influence of the observer on the teacher educator's development: How does the teacher educator respond to the presence of the observer and how does the dialog between observer and teacher educator affect the teacher educator's professional development?

8. How are student teachers influenced by the teacher educator's awareness of parallel process and how do they think it will affect their teaching?

This overlaps with question 3 and I merged these two questions with question 3.

9. How have the views expressed by teacher educators and student teachers above affected my view of the topic?

The process of carrying out the pilot study challenged a number of my implicit assumptions about the topic. I retained this question as part of the focus of my research. I extended this question

In addition to these changes, I introduced three levels of questions in order to cope with the three different viewpoints represented in the study: that of the student teacher, the teacher educator and myself, the researcher/ observer. My developing awareness of the topic reflects an increasing attention to the participants' perceptions of parallels and how these perceptions are expressed. (See pp.103-4 for a full list of the revised research questions).

3.2.2 Evolution of research methods

A second aim of the pilot study was to trial different research methods to find out if they would obtain the data I needed to answer my research questions (see p.56). As a result of carrying out the pilot study, my research design evolved in the following ways.

1. What are the best ways of gathering information about the context of this site?

The pilot study had comprised only one class observation for each course. In order to obtain a better picture of how parallels are used and how awareness of them develops over time, I would need to observe classes over the course of one semester and interview all students as well as the teacher educator at various points along that time continuum.

In order to answer my research questions, my methods would have to focus more closely on the perceptions of the individuals in this context and for this I would need more detailed in-depth interviews and more background information about their attitudes and beliefs about teaching and learning. However, I also realized that asking questions student teachers' teaching practice would lie outside the scope of this study for practical reasons and I would have to restrict my questions to the context of the teacher education class.

2. Can I observe examples of parallel process by observing sessions passively or will it be necessary to play an interventionist role?

My class observations in the pilot study had been non-interventionist. However, as previously discussed, the fact that I chose to disclose the topic of my research already had some influence on the awareness of the teacher educator. The developing awareness of the teacher educator in relation to the topic resulting from my presence in the classes and from our interviews was an aspect of the study that could not be avoided and one that I felt was worth investigating. I decided to make this an integral part of the research design (see question 5 below). The disadvantage of this would be that I might over-influence the teacher educator in favor of using parallels which would not provide sufficient negative examples to show the problems associated with the topic. The advantage would be that the teacher educator would derive some potential personal benefit from collaborating on this aspect of the study.

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3. What is the best way of recording these data?

My observations of the classes gave me an overall picture of the context of learning, but the parallels I perceived were so different from those perceived by the participants that they could form only one part of the whole picture. In other words, I moved from 'observing and recording parallels' to 'understanding parallels from different points of view' by comparing my view, the view of the teacher educator and that of the student teachers.

4. What is the best way of categorizing these data?

My preliminary set of categories had provided only a very superficial analysis. I decided to suspend judgment about what types of categories to use until I had completed the observations and the interviews to see if any significant patterns emerged from the data. In this approach, I was guided by the qualitative research methods that allow the data to generate the categories, rather than setting up hypothetical categories before generating the data.

5. What kind of interview questions will best enable me to find out about teacher educators' and student teachers' awareness of parallel process?

My student teacher interviews had attempted to structure the interview in relation to my perceived dimensions of the topic. I would need a much more flexible and open-ended approach to interviewing students in order not to 'lead' them to the answers I wanted and to let them choose the parameters of the topic, whilst still maintaining relevance to my overall theme. I had focused attention mainly on the teacher educator, but in order to get a more rounded picture, I would need to focus attention not only on the teacher educator's style of teaching, but also on the processes of the course in general and on specific incidents in the class. I therefore decided to use more flexible and more varied interviewing methods in order to access students' perceptions in different ways.

My interviews with the teacher educators showed that all were very articulate about their beliefs concerning the use of parallels, but the issue mentioned above in relation to question 2 meant that their developing awareness, as well as that of their students, would be a key issue. Therefore my interviews with the teacher educator would need to take on a more explicitly facilitative role with the stated mutual aim of benefiting the teacher educator's professional development.

The issue of development of the teacher educator's awareness of the topic raises the parallel issue of my developing awareness of the topic, and of my role in the study. This aspect would also become an integral part of the study.

The decision to take a more facilitative role in relation to the teacher educator reflects my underlying belief that educational research should be educational for the participants. A facilitative collaborative relationship with the teacher educator fits this emancipatory model more closely than a neutral observer's role. However, a drawback of this approach was that I would not be able to observe the teacher educator's developing awareness of the topic independently of my influence on her. My decision was influenced by the fact that I expected to elicit more authentic interview data by taking a collaborative and avowedly empathetic approach towards the teacher educator as collaborator in this aspect of the research.

Summary
The answers to these questions about the research design led to some refinements of the research questions. It also led to some significant changes in my overall research design. The revised questions and research design will be described in the next chapter.

Chapter 4 Research design

4.1 Global research design

4.1.1 Global research questions

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Chapter 4 Research design

4.1.1 Global research questions

In the discussion of the literature on language teacher education, I found that the concept of parallels was widely referred to, particularly in the literature on experiential learning, reflection and process approaches to teacher preparation. Literature on making implicit learning explicit and on teacher-led versus student-led approaches to learning was also found to be relevant. Although the importance of parallels is emphasized by many researchers and authors in the field, the concept has not yet been researched in any detailed empirical way. Parallels play an important role in experiential learning activities in the teacher education classroom. But how are these parallels made explicit? How do student teachers become aware of them? How do teacher educators use them in their course design? How relevant are they to student teachers' and teacher educators' learning cycles? These are the global questions that I wish to address in this research.

4.1.2 Research approach

My goal is to obtain a holistic, complex and detailed picture of the relationship between the different contexts of learning in teacher education and to find out how this relationship is perceived by student teachers and teacher educators. I expect that each participant's response will be highly individualistic and influenced by many personal and contextual factors. I do not believe that a complex holistic picture can be achieved through the use of structured data collection methods commonly associated with quantitative research. I have therefore chosen a qualitative approach to my overall research design.

Denzin and Lincoln state that qualitative researchers 'study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them' (Denzin and Lincoln 1994 p.2). According to Mason, qualitative research is 'grounded in a philosophical position which is broadly 'interpretivist' in the sense that it is concerned with how the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced or produced' (Mason 1996 p.4). Qualitative researchers attempt to understand why. Their research recognizes that reality is not stable, but dynamic and changes with people's perceptions. It attempts to create a detailed, rounded picture of the context under study.

Whereas quantitative researchers attempt to reduce researcher bias to provide a value-free version of reality, qualitative researchers recognize that values are important and need to be understood during the research process. Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) emphasize the reflexive character of qualitative research, 'Rather than engaging in futile attempts to eliminate the effects of the researcher, we should set about understanding them' (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983 p.17). Wolcott (1992) encourages researchers to take up strategic positions in the face of the many alternatives presented by qualitative inquiry.

In qualitative research, the system of interpretation of data is influenced by the nature of the setting and the developing awareness of the researcher to the patterns and categories in the data, which evolve as the research develops. This allows for theoretical sensitivity as the theories and the questions will inevitably change as the research develops in a process of 'reciprocal shaping.' Hammersley and Atkinson describe this as a characteristic 'funnel' structure since the research is progressively focused over time. The analysis of the data is not a distinct stage of the research but begins in the pre-fieldwork phase, in the formulation and classification of research problems, and continues into the process of writing up. In this way, 'theory building and data collection are dialectically linked' (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983 p.175).

Another important characteristic of qualitative research is the fact that it incorporates room for the description of the role of the researcher. The researcher brings a personal history, personal strengths and limitations, as well as a particular cultural perspective, all of which influence the way the data is viewed. Mason (1996) asserts that 'qualitative research should involve critical self-scrutiny by the researcher, or active reflexivity' (Mason 1996 p.5). Similarly, Ely et al. (1997) regard the 'surfacing' of researcher stance as an indispensable part of the method of qualitative researching. 'As qualitative researchers we feel obligated to inform our readers of the positions we have taken as we collect, interpret, and write up reports. If such stories of stance can be told, the reader has multiple ways of seeing and thinking about what is being researched and the researcher's journey towards understanding' (Ely et al. p.40). In their view, by making explicit the multiple range of perspectives (including that of the researcher) of the setting within the study, the researcher can empower readers to draw and add their own conclusions to those presented in the study.

4.1.3 Personal stance

'Research approaches inherently reflect our beliefs about the world we live in and want to live in. When we do research what we see reflected is ourselves located in our biography, culture and social practices' (Usher 1999 p. 73). As a researcher it is important for me to clarify my personal viewpoint, in order to understand and make transparent the background assumptions and beliefs from which I am approaching this research, both for myself and for the reader. This is an ongoing process of development that will be referred to again at several points throughout this work. I will start this process by trying to answer the following questions about my personal stance.

a) How did I come to choose this topic?

I first became aware of what I am now calling parallel process when I started giving language training classes for teachers first in Japan and later for teachers from Hong Kong who had come to the UK on a language improvement course. I tried to encourage teachers to reflect on their own language learning process and see how this could help them to understand their students. I hoped that this would help to improve teachers' language skills and also their pedagogical repertoire.

My later experiences of working with student teachers, teacher educators and mentors in the Czech Republic and in Poland led me to be fascinated by techniques for integrating method with content. I became dissatisfied with the role of 'teller', which I felt was often expected of me, and wanted to increase the opportunities for teachers to reflect on and adapt the material and ideas I was presenting, so they would work in the teachers' own classrooms. I felt that one way of doing this was to bring teachers to the point where they could see the parallels between what they were feeling and thinking in the classroom and what their students experience. I wanted to find ways of exploiting this aspect of experiential learning more explicitly.

One approach that I came across was called 'Loop Input' which is described by Tessa Woodward in her book 'Models and Metaphors in Language Teaching' (1988). In this book she makes many practical suggestions for teacher educators to improve the effectiveness of their teaching by focusing on process – how content is taught - as part of the content. This seemed interesting to me because I thought that the insights achieved through combining method and content could be deeper and more memorable. This technique also seemed to fit into the larger picture of experiential learning and reflection in teacher education and development.

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My next experience was a course for teacher educators and mentors led by Michael Wallace at the Moray House Institute in Edinburgh. As course participants we were acutely aware that the methods we were experiencing on this course were ones that we could use in our own practice. I was impressed by the way the lecturers peer-observed each others' classes and used pair and group work and microteaching techniques to illustrate and illuminate points made in their lectures.

Thus I came to this topic through a series of teaching and training experiences, through tackling problems in preparing courses for teachers and trying to place those problems in a broader professional context.

b) Why does this topic interest me?

I find this topic interesting in an abstract way, insofar as such insights have the potential to generate many more insights and therefore can establish patterns of thinking. I find it interesting from the teacher trainer's point of view. It is a practical and an intellectual challenge to implement this kind of training session and to learn how to encourage and respond to the development of insights within the group. I was interested in how trainers and student teachers switch roles within a session and how these can mirror their concerns and attitudes about the teaching/learning process.

I also find it interesting from the student teacher's point of view. When I was a student teacher, I felt there was a lot to be learned from the experiential components of the courses I attended but there were few opportunities to reflect or share any of them with the trainer or with other trainees. I also noticed that trainers who seemed least interested in their own teaching methods were the ones who least exploited experiential learning opportunities. I thought there might be a correlation between being interested in process and the trainer's own professional development.

c) Why did I choose the term 'parallel process'?

I first came across the term used by Houston in her book 'Supervision and Counselling' (1990). I later found that it is a term used in psychotherapy to refer to therapists in their roles as patients, or therapists reflecting the roles of their patients in their interactions with their supervisors. Houston writes about the behaviour of supervisors being carried over by therapists to their interactions

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with clients. This resonated with my experience as a teacher educator and as a student teacher. There seemed to be a complex relationship between the way student teachers interact with the teacher educator and how they later interact with their students. The term 'parallel process'might be a useful metaphor and tool for exploring this relationship.

d) How do I want to write about it?

At first I wanted to write about process choices in teacher education and ways of reflecting on them. Now that I have read more on this topic, I realize that I would like to present this in the larger context of experiential learning and a reflective approach to teaching. I'd like to write about this topic in a way that shows a holistic picture of the complex interactions between teacher educators and student teachers and how each can contribute to the others' learning.

e) What do I hope to achieve by doing this study?

I hope to reach some insights into the process of learning within teacher training courses which will enable trainers and student teachers to make more effective use of learning opportunities, empowering them to develop both as teachers and as learners. I am particularly interested in the opportunities parallel process creates for mutual professional development of teacher educators and student teachers (and therefore of teachers and learners). I am also interested in the potential application of this concept to the professional development of teacher educators. The aim of my research is to provide data that help to define the topic so that it can be further explored in practice by teachers and teacher educators in the field.

f) What is my personal bias in the study of this topic?

Having been a teacher educator for a number of years, I will probably tend to look at things more from a teacher educator's than a student teacher's point of view. I should try to avoid the stance of mentor trying to improve or evaluate what I observe. As my background is in teaching English as a foreign language to adults, I should try to be aware of the applications for teaching of other languages and possibly of other subjects.

In this research project, I am starting from the assumption that parallels are present in any kind of methodology course. I should be careful to keep in mind that my aim is not only to describe them but also to learn more about how they work and how they can be systematically applied and integrated into a teacher education program. Another assumption that I make (and would like to

test out) is that awareness of parallels will be perceived as beneficial by student teachers alike and that they will agree that such an awareness is an essential component of a teacher preparation course. By stating these assumptions here at the outset, I wish to show that my research objectives will be achieved whether or not the data confirm or disprove these personal assumptions.

g) What is my ontological stance?

My ontological stance is one that sees interactions, actions and behaviours and the way people interpret these and act on them as central to our understanding of social reality.

h) What is my epistemological stance?

My epistemological stance is that knowledge of the social world can be gained by observing the interactions of people in their natural settings and by examining the meaning of experiences for individuals. By observing these interactions and interviewing participants about their interpretations, I hope to identify patterns that will illuminate key dimensions of the phenomenon of parallel process. I expect that each person's view of this phenomenon will be different and that by reconstructing the personal subjective theories of the participants (including my own), I will reach a complex and multi-faceted picture of the phenomenon. This stance is consistent with a phenomenological approach which states that 'objective understanding is mediated by subjective experience, and that human experience is an inherent structural property of the experience itself, not constructed by an outside observer' (Creswell 1998 p.86). This choice of epistemological stance will allow me to understand individuals' experience of parallel process. By establishing the common aim of exploring the experience of this phenomenon, and making this aim transparent to all participants, I can avoid the concerns of intervention and bias that would be involved in using other approaches. Correspondingly, I intend to use research and data analysis methods that avoid over-interpretation of the data and allow each individual's voice to be heard. In addition, by reflecting on my own response and my changing theory in relation to the research topic, I hope to add a further layer of interpretation which can be used by the reader to critically evaluate the findings of this study.

4.2 Research plan for main study

4.2.1 Research questions

The overall aim of the research questions is to find out about parallels, how they operate, how they can be described and how they are perceived by student teachers and teacher educators. These research questions are based on the assumption that perceptions of parallels can be accessed by analysing participants' verbal and written reports. By analyzing data from different sources, I hope to find emerging patterns that would enable me to describe and categorize this phenomenon and that this would lead me to identify the key dimensions of the concept.

The revised research questions show greater attention to the three different levels of participant perspectives represented in the study: that of the student teacher, the teacher educator and myself, the observer-researcher. The reason for separating the questions into these three levels is to reflect my developing awareness that perceptions of parallels are highly dependent on individual's perceptions and that these are influenced by the individual's background cultural assumptions, history of learning and teaching and assumptions about teaching and learning. The relevance of these issues was discussed in the review of the literature on experiential learning (see Chapter 1 pp.14-16).

The revised research questions also show more attention to the development of awareness over time and as a result of the influence of this study. They show more attention to my role as researcher, my influence and the influence of my methods on the participants and their influence on me. A full list of the revised research questions is on pp.103-4.

4.2.2 Research methods

In order to obtain a better picture of how parallels are used and how awareness of them develops over time, the fieldwork for the main study would involve observing classes over the course of one semester and interviewing all the students as well as the teacher educator at various points along that time continuum. I decided to use a blend of two different research models: a facilitated action research model and an observational model.

Facilitated action research

Action research as a mode of investigation typically carried out by practitioners in their own classrooms. It is a form of self-reflective inquiry with the stated aim of improving practice

(Kemmis and McTaggart 1988, Cohen and Manion 1985, Elliott 1991, Wallace 1998). It is defined as 'a small-scale intervention in the functioning of the real world and a close examination of the effects of such intervention' (Cohen and Manion 1989 p.217). An important facet of this type of inquiry is that it is self-initiated, that the research focus springs directly from practice and that the categories and definitions used in the research are developed by the teachers themselves. The action research cycle (or spiral) involves several steps: initiation, preliminary investigation, hypothesis, intervention and evaluation (Nunan 1992 p.19). The results are then used to initiate to a further cycle of investigation.

In addition to action research that is initiated and implemented solely by the practitioner, a number of models have emerged that utilize facilitated action research as a mode of inquiry. Carr and Kemmis (1983) identify three types of facilitated action research model: (1) Technical action research, where facilitators co-opt practitioners to work on externally formulated questions not based on the practical concerns of the practitioners; (2) Practical action research, where outsiders form co-operative relationships with practitioners, helping them to articulate their own concerns. In this model, 'The facilitators' role in practical action research is Socratic: to provide a sounding-board against which the action researchers may try out ideas and learn more about both the substance of the action research project, as well as the process of self-reflection.' (Carr and Kemmis 1983 p.175); (3) Emancipatory action research, where members of a group, which may or may not include outsiders, take joint responsibility for action and reflection (Carr and Kemmis 1983 pp.173-7). These models are consistent with the distinction made elsewhere between cooperative and collaborative forms of research: Collaborative research is characterized by 'mutuality of benefit and purpose within the relationship,' whereas cooperative research is one that is imposed from outside (Cole and Knowles 2000).

The facilitated action research model (defined above as 'practical action research') seemed particularly appropriate to this topic, as part of my research aim was to find out if parallel process could be used as a source of teacher educator development. Another reason for the use of this model was that the action research component of this study would afford greater freedom to the teacher educator to influence her role in the study and be more valuable for her as she could use the data for her own professional development. I would also be able to develop a more trusting, mutually beneficial relationship with her that would generate more authentic data. A drawback of using this model would be that I might influence the teacher educator too much in favor of the

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topic and would not generate sufficient negative examples to clarify the problems and difficulties associated with it as well as the benefits.

Of the three teacher educators who took part in my pilot study, Isabel volunteered to collaborate with me on the research for my main study. The stated reasons for her participation were that she was very interested in the concept of parallel process and curious to see how it would benefit her own development. She was also interested in trying out some ideas that would enhance her course design and eager to have the opportunity to have an observer whom she could discuss her classes. I acknowledge here with gratitude her kindness and generosity in giving me her time, sharing her reflective processes with me and allowing me to observe her classes. Although the topic had been initiated by myself, Isabel, who is an experienced and respected researcher in the field, voluntarily chose to participate in the action research component of the study. We discussed a number of possible interventions that might be appropriate for her class and finally decided on the introduction of journal tasks for facilitating student reflection on parallels. We would design these tasks together to enhance the existing course design (see Appendix 1 for a list of the journal tasks) and share the journal data for our joint research purposes.

Observational model
In addition to collaborating with Isabel on the facilitated action research aspect of the study, I planned to observe the classes in the role of a passive observer-researcher. The purpose of these observations was to get a general picture of the context of learning, so that I could better understand participants' reflections on classroom events, and to build up my own record of events that I considered to be examples of parallels. I planned to audiotape the classes, transcribe the tapes and analyze them, supplementing them with my own observation notes. I considered videotaping the classes but after discussing this with the teacher educator decided this would be too intrusive.

In my interviews with the students, I would also be playing the role of observer-researcher, attempting to understand the students' point of view on their learning. In my conversations with the teacher educator, I would be playing a dual role: that of facilitator (described above) and that of observer-researcher, observing the teacher educator's response to the action research aspect of the study. In this way, I hoped to be able to cross-check interpretations from three viewpoints:

students, teacher educator and observer-researcher. Finally, I would also be observing my own role to find out the effects of the research on the observer-researcher.

Interviews

Interviews in qualitative research are generally characterized by a relatively informal style and a loosely structured format where there is not a fixed list of questions, but perhaps a list of themes or topics. They are based on the assumption that data are generated by the interaction. It is not a neutral exchange of asking questions and getting answers. The text created by the interview is co-constructed by the interviewer and the interviewee. In qualitative interviewing, 'interviewers are seen as active participants in an interaction with respondents, and interviews are seen as negotiated accomplishments of both interviewers and respondents that are shaped by the contexts and the situations in which they take place'(Fontana and Frey 2005 p.716).

An aspect of my study that changed significantly from the pilot study was the interview methods used with the student teachers. I decided to use two different styles of interviewing methods. One format would be a background interview with each student at the beginning and at the end of the study that would attempt to elicit underlying beliefs about teaching and learning. In these interviews, I would first ask more general questions about beliefs and then ask directly about awareness of parallels. The interviews at the beginning and that the end of the course would be similar in purpose and format (see p.98 for lead-off questions) and would focus on general beliefs about teaching and learning and finding out what general kinds of parallels students noticed.

For the second type of interview, I decided to ask students to comment on a transcript of one of their classes. Class transcripts are frequently used for stimulated recall of language teaching classes with teachers. It derives from the format known as 'stimulated recall' which 'typically involves the use of audiotapes or videotapes of skilled behaviour, which are used to aid a participant's recall of his (sic) thought processes at the time of that behaviour' (Calderhead 1981 p.212). Studies using stimulated recall typically attempt to recreate the thought processes of teachers during their practice. Calderhead identifies a number of factors that may undermine the accuracy of such reports, including the stress encountered by teachers reviewing their own practice and the structuring of responses through prompts (Calderhead 1981).

Another use of stimulated recall, Interpersonal Process Recall, was developed by Kagan as a means of increasing counsellors' awareness of interpersonal interactions during counseling interviews (Kagan 1967). There were two aspects of the IPR procedure that I found relevant to my study. In the IPR procedure participants can stop and restart the tape whenever they want, and the person who reviews the tape with the students has the role of 'inquirer.' 'The inquirer role requires nonjudgmental but assertive probing and consists entirely of asking exploratory questions' (Kagan 1975 p.236). In the pilot study, I had found that my questions imposed too much structure on the interview responses. The transcript format offered participants' control over what to select for commentary and provided flexibility for students to choose their own topic (within the theme of parallel process framed by the lead-off question). A further motive for choosing this format was that my role could be an exploratory one, asking students to elaborate on their viewpoints, in a spirit of helping them to explore their views, not evaluating or checking their views against my pre-existing assumptions. This spirit of openness would be important, in my view, for generating trust, and therefore authentic and trustworthy data. A third reason for using this transcript format was to provide a way of reminding students of what had happened in the class that would not impose my own view of what had happened (see Appendix 2 for transcript used in interviews). As students were not reviewing their own teaching performance in these transcripts, this use of transcripts would be relatively stress-free. However, there could be a danger that students would feel they were being asked to evaluate their teacher educator's performance (see Chapter 3 p.60). This might incur risks for the validity of the data, since evaluative comments would necessitate issues of confidentiality concerning, for example, whether students trusted me not to share their data with the teacher educator. I decided to minimize this risk by focusing attention on classroom events, not on the teacher educator, and avoiding questions that seemed to ask for an evaluative response.

My procedure for conducting all the student interviews was to first explain the purpose of the interview and to reiterate that participation was voluntary and that the data would be confidential and only used for analysis after the end of the course. I then described the general topic of my research. Interviews were conducted in informal settings, such as the student lounge, concourse or coffee shop. I tried to make the interviews as informal and as similar to normal conversation as possible. During the interviews, I was careful not to interrupt students and to respond by using encouragements (to all kinds of responses), low-inference paraphrasing and active listening responses. I avoided medium and high-inference responses which can seem oppressive and

conflict with my own ethical conviction that the participants should feel reassured that their voices are listened to and not re-interpreted by the researcher (Carspecken 1996 pp.158-162).

The assumptions and expectations that I attempted to convey in the student interviews were:

1) After the initial lead-off questions, students should be able to control the direction of the conversation

2) I had no fixed 'correct' answers in mind for my questions and that whatever students answered would be valuable and valid. The conversation would be an exploration of the student's view of the topic, where I the researcher was honestly seeking to understand the student's point of view. I would react positively to *all* types of responses

3) I would sometimes question students as to the reasons behind their responses or opinions with the stated intention of eliciting more detail, but not to challenge their views.

My initial lead-off question in the interview was: 'Please read the transcript of the class and tell me what things about the class you find useful for your teaching.' I chose this question format because it was open-ended and would allow the students flexibility in choosing to talk about, for example, experiences, methods or possible problems. It also made a link with their future teaching (not their past experiences of language learning) in line with my intention to find out if they thought parallels were relevant to learning teaching skills. I avoided yes/no questions such as 'Are there any parallels between this class and a language class?' for the reason mentioned earlier because they were too leading (it pre-supposes a positive answer which then has to be fulfilled). I considered alternative questions, such as: 'What parallels do you notice between this class and a language class?' This was similar to the question in the initial interview. This time, I wanted to generate reflections that were more concretely based on this specific class, but which could also be examples of general principles. Another question might have been, 'Could you use any of these techniques or activities in your language class?' This narrows the focus to look at specific classroom procedures. I am aware that the structure of the question plays a vital role in determining the kinds of answers that are received. I therefore chose a question that I thought would elicit the greatest possible variety of answers.

Validity

Issues of validity and reliability are most commonly associated with quantitative research. Validity is most often used to refer to the accuracy of research findings. Quantitative researchers

attempt to isolate specific variables in order to ensure that his/her explanation for the results can be the only possible or feasible one. Reliability is most often used to refer to the replicability of the research findings, such that the research could be transferred to a different context and repeated with the same results (Denzin and Lincoln 1998).

Validity and reliability are therefore connected with the truth claims of the specific research methodology being used. Quantitative researchers are concerned with the ultimate or objective truth of their findings. Qualitative researchers recognize that social reality is concerned with the negotiation of truths through a series of subjective accounts. Whereas quantitative researchers attempt to minimize their influence on the research process, qualitative researchers acknowledge and seek an understanding of that role through the research process. This means that the traditional criteria for validity and reliability need to be significantly adapted when applied to qualitative research.

The relevance and meaning of the term validity in qualitative research has been much debated. Many researchers have questioned the relevance of this concept to qualitative inquiry and have adopted other categories such as dependability or confirmability (Guba and Lincoln 1985). Nevertheless, the term has been retained by some researchers to describe internal validity. 'An account is valid or true if it represents accurately those features of the phenomena, that it is intended to describe, explain or theorise' (Hammersley 1987 p. 69).

The first validity issue relates to whether the research measures what it intends to measure. In this study, the topic under investigation is the perceptions of parallels within a teacher education context. The research questions aim to get at these perceptions in a number of different ways, with the purpose of comparing different accounts from the participants to see if any patterns emerge. No claim will be made that any one of these accounts is objective, but it is hoped that together they will form a picture that will help to conceptualize the key dimensions of the phenomenon.

The second issue relates to whether this representation is accurate. One potential threat to validity is researcher bias. Researcher bias tends to result from selective observation and selective recording of information and also from allowing one's personal views to affect how data are interpreted and how the research is conducted. In this study there was a danger that, because I

was interested in looking for parallels, I would find them. For this reason, I altered the focus of my research from finding out what kinds of parallels there are, to finding out how they are perceived. The accuracy of self-reporting may be judged to be authentic and accurate (given appropriate conditions). This aspect is important in the facilitated action research section of the study, because the purpose of the action research was not to find out *whether* parallels would affect the course design (which would involve comparing classes with and without interventions), but *how* parallels influenced the teacher educator's development.

There are several strategies that the researcher can use to promote validity in qualitative research. In this study the measures taken to ensure validity are:

1. *Prolonged engagement on-site:* By participating in the research context over an extended period of time (three months) I am able to get a better picture of general attitudes and behaviour and to gain access to participants' perceptions at different moments along the time continuum. This contrasts with visiting the site just once or just a few times during the semester when data can be influenced by lack of familiarity with researcher, or by external events specific to that day (for example, an exam, or a class inspection).

2. *Low inference descriptors:* My descriptions of the participants' views are based closely on their verbatim accounts and my interpretations attempt to use descriptors arising from their data.

3. *Triangulation:* I use multiple data sources, both written and verbal (classroom data, interviews, and journals). I use multiple research methods (observation, in-depth interviewing, action research) in order to cross-check my interpretations. I use different sources and methods to cross-check interpretations of events.

4. *Negative case sampling:* I search for examples that disconfirm my expectations and explanations. By doing this, I make explicit my expectations of patterns and question the extent to which the actual results agree them.

5. *Reflexivity:* Throughout the study, I reflect on my own role in an explicit and critical manner in order to detect potential biases and inclinations that may affect my conclusions. I have incorporated into my account a description of my personal stance and how the study has affected my approach.

Finally, the concept of external validity is important when the researcher wants to generalize from a set of research findings to another context. Typically, generalisability is not the major

purpose of qualitative research because the people and settings are rarely randomly selected and because it is difficult if not impossible to control variables. However, careful documentation of the site, the participants and the research methods can enable other researchers to evaluate whether similar research could be conducted in other contexts. It is the purpose of this study to illuminate the key dimensions of the topic in order to make it accessible to further investigation, and not to prove that these findings are replicable in other settings.

Interpretation of Data

The main aim of the data analysis was to identify the common themes in the participants' perceptions of parallels. After transcribing the interviews and the classroom tapes, I used the following procedure (Creswell 1998 p.147).

  a) I identified statements that related to the topic of parallels.

  b) I grouped these statements under the headings of the research questions.

  c) I focused on negative and contrasting examples that identified problems with the concept. In my interpretation of the participants' verbal and written reports, I have purposely taken the reports at face value and presented a low-inference interpretation of their statements. The reason for this is that the aim of this research is to present a picture of how the phenomenon of parallels is experienced by the participants and to show how their articulation of their perception of parallels reflects the construction of their learning theories.

4.3 Description of main fieldwork study

4.3.1 Context

The classes from which I obtained the data for my main study were from a course in methods and materials in foreign language education at a university in North America. The course is for graduate students completing a Masters degree in education. It is one of the core courses that must be completed in order to obtain a state teaching license for secondary schools. These courses operate on a credit system. Students can sign up for these courses whenever the course is offered and do not need to stay with one group of students throughout the whole of their study.

The teacher educator

The professor, Isabel Racine, has lived in the U.S. for over ten years. She has a Ph.D in linguistics and has taught modern languages at university level for many years and language teacher education courses for about four years. Isabel was interested in participating in my research project for her own professional development and for the chance to develop ideas for her own research.

The professor had taught this course several times before and had established a course syllabus which she intended to follow as before, adding only the new element of journal tasks designed to facilitate awareness of parallels.

The student teachers

The students in this group were all highly motivated and were usually attending courses at the same time as working full-time which implies a great deal of commitment. There were eight students enrolled in this class.

1. Karin is from Russia. She completed a degree in English at university there and taught EFL and Russian as a foreign language for a year. She had already completed several graduate courses in applied linguistics. She was not currently teaching but planned to teach English again in the future in the U.S. or in Russia.

2. Myra is from the US. She grew up using both English and Yiddish bilingually. Later she learned Hebrew and Spanish. She was teaching Spanish at a community college for adults. She had taught English (academic learning support for native speakers) and Spanish for about five years. Marilyn returned to education after many years spent raising a family.

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3. Mike is from the US. He was teaching French at a high school. He had been teaching for about ten years. He had completed many graduate courses in linguistics and teaching and was very familiar with the work of Krashen and the Natural Approach which he says has been the biggest influence on his language teaching. He was having some problems dealing with persistent lack of motivation of his students and was considering a career change.

4. Peter is from the U.S. He had been doing volunteer ESL teaching for the Red Cross, which runs a program for ESL learners through the public library system, for about 4 years. His experience of foreign language study includes Latin (5 years at high school) and French (4 years at college). He had not previously done any courses in linguistics or methodology.

5. Mary is from the U.S. She was completing a Masters in education. She studied French for her undergraduate degree and planned to teach French or possibly ESL in the future. She did not have any teaching experience. As part of her work as a graduate assistant, she helped to collect research data by observing high school foreign language classes 20 hours a week.

6. Sigrid is from the U.S. She had been teaching Spanish at a middle school (10-14 year-olds) for 6 years. She started teaching before she had finished her degree and she describes her teaching development as a 'process of trial and error,' that is to say, she was faced with the practical problems of the classroom before having had a lot of the theoretical background. She grew up bilingual in English and German and she feels that this gives her a common ground with many of her students who are also in bilingual (Spanish and English) families. She is very enthusiastic about her job and is very involved with her students both in class and out of class as a tennis coach.

7. Rengin is from Turkey. She completed her degree in English language education at university there and taught English in a private primary school for four years in Turkey before coming to the U.S. to do her MA. She was not currently teaching but planned to teach English again in the future in Turkey, possibly at a university.

8. Leah is from the U.S. She teaches Spanish in a private Catholic high school for girls. She had been teaching for about two years. She has traveled a lot in South America and lived in Ecuador for one semester as part of her studies. She is very serious and reflective about her teaching, concerned not only about the content of her class, but the overall learning development of her students.

4.3.2 Methods of obtaining data

The fieldwork phase included the following methods of obtaining data:

a) Pre-class planning sessions with the teacher educator (audio recordings)

b) Classroom observations (audio recordings, observation notes).

c) Post-class conversations with Isabel (audio recordings)

d) Journal entries from students

e) Interviews with individual students (audio recordings)

f) My journal

g) Course materials and documentation

a) Pre-class planning sessions with the teacher educator

I met with Isabel in her office each about 40 minutes before the class was due to begin and together we planned the journal task for that class (if there was one on the schedule) or discussed the general outline of the class. I audiotaped these discussions, a total of about 10 hours of tapes. Inevitably there were time issues, as Isabel often had other duties, and there were two weeks when we were not able to meet, but on those occasions, we talked on the phone or by email. I later listened to these recordings in order to identify Isabel's reactions and responses to implementing the reflective tasks.

Aims of pre-class planning sessions

The main aim of the pre-planning session was to plan the journal task together. These tasks were closely related to the class topics, so it was essential to know the class topic before devising the journal task. We also were able to take into account the students' responses to the previous journal task when planning the next one. (Although the journal tasks were mentioned in the syllabus outline, the exact tasks were given at the end of the relevant class sessions.)

Issues with pre-class planning sessions

One issue with the pre-class planning sessions was the extent of my influence on Isabel's general use of parallels in her course. We devised these tasks together specifically to enhance students' awareness of parallel process. It was Isabel's opinion, and something I asked her about at the end of the course, that the content of the course (apart from the journal entries) did not change substantially from the way she had taught this course before. However, and this will come up later in the analysis of my interviews with Isabel (see Chapter 6), she did find her own awareness

of the course changing and focusing more on process in general and on parallel process in particular.

My original goal was to enhance her course, not to mould it to my research aim, so I decided to avoid suggesting specific tasks. The main direct influence that I had at this stage was in the collaborative planning of the journal tasks.

b) Classroom observations

There were 14 classes, held once a week from 7pm – 9.30pm, a total of 35 class hours. I brought with me one main audio recorder and two small recorders for group work. I sat at the back of the classroom and took notes throughout the class time. If there was small group work, I stood up to move my tape recorders into position and chose one group to listen to. I didn't participate in any of the activities (except on the first day in a get-to-know you icebreaker activity).

I later transcribed the class sessions and used some of the transcripts in my interviews and in the group discussion. I also shared the class transcripts with Isabel. I later categorized these transcripts using the categories set out in Chapter 5.

Aims of classroom observations

The initial aims of the classroom observations were to record my own observations of what type of parallels were occurring in the classes, and later compare these with the students and with Isabel's views. These three viewpoints would ensure some measure of validity as to the existence of parallels. I later used some of the class transcripts in the interviews.

During my observations, I made notes of any tasks or activities which seemed to enhance awareness of parallels and noted students' reactions to them. I noted whether Isabel made any reference to parallels in these activities and tried to notice how and when she decided to verbalize these moments. I noted any significant moments in the classroom when parallels seemed to be playing a crucial role, implicitly or explicitly. At the observation stage, I tried not to think of these moments in terms of categories, though I knew I would be trying to sort them into categories later.

Issues with classroom observations

In general, the recordings were very successful. The tapes were clear enough for me to make transcriptions and match them up with my observation notes. I was able to transcribe large segments of certain classes in time for the interviews and the group discussion. Ideally, it would have been nice to have had time to transcribe each class week by week and then go over it the following week with Isabel or with the students, but practically this was impossible as transcribing each two-and-a-half hour class takes many hours. The fact that I attended every class was an advantage as the students became very familiar with my presence and it did not seem to inhibit their general behaviour in any overt way. In small groups, students seemed more inhibited by the presence of the recorder than in the whole class setting where I was at the back of the class and they couldn't really see me or the recorder.

c) Post-class conversations with the teacher educator

I call these 'conversations' or 'discussions' because they differ from the interviews in that they were loosely structured, directed mainly by the teacher educator, and had a facilitative purpose. I discussed each class with Isabel for about half an hour after the class had taken place. My role was that of a 'sounding board' (Carr and Kemmis 1983) facilitating Isabel's ability to reflect about her classes and her teaching methods, as well as on the information gained from the journal tasks. I audiotaped these discussions and later transcribed them, analyzing them according to the aims of my research questions.

Aims of post-class conversations

The aims of the post-class discussion were: to find out what kinds of issues had been important to Isabel in the class and facilitate her reflection on them; to find out if Isabel's views of parallels in the class corresponded to my own; to find out about her developing awareness of parallel process and explore whether it was benefiting her development; to observe her interaction with myself the researcher/observer, to see if there were lessons I could learn from that interaction concerning my own role.

In addition to the conversations described above, I also carried out one interview with Isabel using the transcript of one of her classes. This was in order to compare Isabel's interpretation with that of the students who had analyzed the same transcript (see section e) below).

Issues with post-class conversations

As always, shortage of time and the fact that class was not usually over before 10pm made this problematic, but we somehow managed to talk after every class. As an observer/researcher, it was sometimes difficult to distinguish my roles of mentor and researcher. Sometimes, Isabel asked me for advice or for an evaluation of her class, and I steered away from this. I also tried out different reflective techniques in these conversations in order to help her reflect by using parallels.

d) Student journal tasks

Before the start of the semester, I discussed the syllabus with Isabel and how best to integrate the journal entries within the syllabus so that they would encourage reflection and awareness of parallel process. We decided on 6 journal tasks. In keeping with Isabel' course aims, each task would reflect the topic of the class, rather like informal 'homework tasks.' Isabel would reply to each student's journal entry with her own responses (see Appendix 1 for list of journal tasks).

Aims of journal tasks

Our decision to use journals was influenced by the literature in on use of journals for reflection in language teacher education (see Chapter 1 pp.26-7). The advantages of the journal tasks was that they would allow time and space for the reflection process. The tasks would be designed to complement and enhance the existing course syllabus by raising awareness of parallels. We planned to introduce a gradual development from describing (What happened in today's class?) to evaluating (If you had to answer a self-evaluation questionnaire about our class, what kind of criteria would reflect your learning in this class?). This decision was influenced by the discussion in the literature on observation and self-observation (see Chapter 1 pp.31-2). The aim of the journal tasks was to ascertain students' existing awareness of parallel process and to monitor their varying levels of awareness of it as the course progressed.

Issues with journal entries

The entries were a course requirement (6 entries were required as stated in the course outline) and guidelines and criteria for their evaluation were provided at the beginning of the course. This ensured that all students completed all 6 entries. It also meant, however, that students were also to some extent trying to write what they thought the instructor would want to hear as this was part of their evaluation. Isabel and I discussed the idea of voluntary journal entries but we thought that

it would be unlikely that students would complete all entries if it was not a requirement. This possible lack of authenticity would be counterbalanced by comparing journal entries with the interview data.

Another positive aspect to the journal entries was that they were a way for Isabel to dialogue individually with each student. It gave her extra information which helped her to adapt the material on the course to their needs. As with all participation on this project, students' participation in allowing their journals to be used as data was entirely voluntary and made with their informed consent. Isabel and I had discussed whether to make any of the entries public to the whole class, to use in a group discussion for example, but decided against this as it would have taken up a lot more class time. It was a private correspondence between Isabel and each of her students, except at the end of the course when Isabel wrote her own journal entry which consisted of one entry for all the students.

e) Interviews with student teachers

I carried out three individual interviews with each student teacher: one at the beginning of the course, one mid-way through the course and one at the end of the course.

1. Initial individual interview of about half an hour, designed to get a baseline idea of students' initial awareness of the topic.

My initial interview questions were:
- What is most important to you in language teaching? (This question aims to get an overall idea of beliefs and assumptions.)
- What has been useful in the classes so far that could help you in your teaching?
- What are the similarities and differences between the language teacher education context of this class where you are a student, and the language teaching context of your class where you are a teacher? (These two questions aim to establish existing awareness of parallel process.)

2. A second individual interview of about half an hour where I asked students to read a segment of transcript (see transcript in Appendix 2) and to select any points which might be useful to them in their teaching.

3. A final individual interview with each student where I asked the same questions as in the initial interview in order to compare their answers. This was designed to get an idea of how students' awareness of parallel process had developed.

There were approximately 16 hours of tapes. I transcribed all the students' interviews and later wrote a brief student profile for each student tracing their attitude and awareness from beginning to end of the course (see sample student profile in Appendix 3).

Issues with interviewing

At first, the students' attitude to me was respectful and somewhat in the teacher-student mode. I say this because they were very eager to answer my questions, sometimes asking me if they had given the 'right' answer, and rarely asked me any questions unless I specifically encouraged them to do so. As students became more familiar with me, their attitude became more relaxed and they were able to say if they had no specific response to my question, or felt it was irrelevant.

Apart from the issue of possibly leading students to affirmative responses (see Chapter 3 p.57), another issue was that students often didn't remember exact details of what had happened in class or what they had thought at the time. The use of transcripts to stimulate recall of events in the class was a great help with this. However, the class transcripts focused attention on only one or two of the classes. This limitation was unavoidable due the limited time available to interview all subjects. This was balanced by the use of journal tasks throughout the course.

Finally, it was implicit in our interaction was the understanding that I was not asking for any evaluative judgments about their course or their teacher. If necessary, I was prepared to make this explicit, but in the context of our conversations, it was made clear that my research was a collaborative one with Isabel and all comments they made to me would eventually be shared with her.

f) My journal

I kept a journal throughout the time period of the fieldwork phase of my research project, making entries after any conversation with Isabel, before and after each class, and after each interview and post-class discussion. I also made notes whenever I came across anything in my readings of the literature that offered insights into the topic. In my journal, I attempted to ask questions that would help to lead me further in my later analysis of the data. I also sometimes tried to apply the parallel process idea to myself by asking myself reflective questions that stimulated awareness of parallel process.

I used my journal, as well as my observation notes, and transcribed interviews to understand the influence of the research on my own view of the topic and on my professional development as a researcher and observer?

g) Course materials

Course materials included syllabus outline, assignment guidelines, class handouts and final exam questions. These materials were helpful in gaining an overview of the values implicit in the course design.

4.3.4 Ethical issues

When carrying out research in the social sciences, it is important that ethical considerations be taken into account. Ethical issues relate not only to the internal ethical integrity of the project, but also to the ethical safeguards given to all participants in the study. Both issues will be discussed below.

At the beginning of a research project, it is important for the researcher to clarify the purpose of the research. There are usually several answers to this question. In this project, I have a personal aim of achieving a higher educational degree, as well as wishing to contribute to the advancement of knowledge and understanding in my field. I have chosen a topic that interests me and I have outlined some of those reasons for that choice in the description of my personal stance on pp.79-82. I think that the results of my research could be of general interest to students and teachers on the field of teacher education, not to any specific group or political interest, nor has my research been sponsored or funded by any external organization. It has been important to me in the design

of this study to represent the viewpoints of the participants equally with my own and, where these conflict, to represent that conflict honestly so that readers can make up their minds about the issue using the data presented. It has also been important for me that my work is 'emancipatory' in that I hope that my research will contribute to the improvement of practice that will allow a greater degree of empowerment and autonomy for both students and teacher educators.

The methodological design of the study also incorporated decisions that were taken with a view to benefiting and protecting the participants. First, I took the decision to openly disclose the topic of my research to the participants. As I have recorded in the description of the development of my research design, this decision was not without risks. I decided to do this because of my ethical standpoint regarding openness and transparency which I believe to be congruent with the nature of my research topic. The risks resulting from this decision were that, once I had mentioned the topic, that students and teacher educators would become more sensitized to the topic than would normally be the case. I recognize that, had I not shared that information with the participants, the results of the study would have been quite different, but I felt that it would have been ethically dishonest of me to conceal the true purpose of my research. The resulting work is a study of how the participants reacted to the topic, given their awareness of it, and this was congruent with my research aims. The data analysis focuses on how parallels were perceived and expressed, not whether they were noticed.

Secondly, the study was carried out in collaboration with a teacher educator, providing a model to students of how research and practice can be combined for mutual benefit of both. This approach was also chosen because it was congruent with the research topic. In this study, I had been invited by the teacher educator to collaborate with her on an action research project which would benefit her practice and I would also collect data of benefit to my own research. This decision also entailed certain risks as the data would be affected by the wish of the teacher educator to generate examples of parallels. My discussion of the results, however, shows that despite her wish to implement parallel process, the teacher educator encountered many difficulties with doing so, and these difficulties then became the focus of my data analysis.

A third ethical issue related to confidentiality. It was anticipated that a potential ethical conflict might arise if students thought that their data would prejudice the course evaluation given to them by the teacher educator. It was for this reason that the teacher educator and I were careful to make

clear to the students that none of the data collected would be analysed until after the course had been completed and there would be no danger that it would influence their grading assessment on the course. We asked all students to sign written consent forms to show that they understood this and had no objection to their data being used after the course and the grades had been administered.

The conduct of the study also involved ethical decisions relating to protecting the participants. In order not to disrupt the normal flow of the teaching and learning process, I was careful to be as unobtrusive as possible during the classroom observations. I tried to make all interviews as friendly and informal as possible to reduce stress and to show students that their opinions were valued. It was important to me that our conversations would have validity to them in helping them to explore their views, and not merely take up their time to fulfil the goals of my research. In my conduct with the teacher educator, I tried to balance my roles as observer and facilitator, so that she would feel my presence in her class and our conversations after class had benefited her and allowed her to develop her own ideas about directions for further professional development. Finally, during the data analysis phase of the project, and during the writing of this thesis, names of participants have been changed in order to preserve their anonymity.

4.3.4 Summary of research questions and methods		
Research questions	**Data sources and methods**	**Justification**
The student teachers		
1. What awareness do the student teachers have of parallel process and how relevant do they think it is to their learning cycle?	Initial interviews with student teachers	General questions will elicit reports that will give a picture of students' perceptions of parallels and their perceived relevance.
2. What are the different categories of parallel process evident in the data?	Classroom observation data, interviews and journals	Comparing students' verbal and written responses to topic from a variety of contexts may support or disprove significance of categories.
3. When does reflection on parallels tend to occur?	Classroom observation data, interviews and journals	Identifying and comparing reflection on parallels at different times may illuminate the thought processes involved.
4. How do student teachers express awareness of parallel process?	Classroom observation data, interviews and journals	Analysis of students' verbal and written responses may reveal patterns.
5. How does student teachers' awareness of parallel process develop as the course progresses?	Final interviews with student teachers	Replicating initial interview questions after a two-month time interval may show development in response to the topic.
The teacher educator		
6. What awareness does the teacher educator have of parallel process?	Classroom observation data, pre- and post-class conversations and interview with teacher educator	Comparing data from classroom teaching and from interviews/conversations will create a picture of the teacher educator's implicit and explicit awareness.
7. How relevant does she think it is to her own and to student teachers' learning cycle?	Pre- and post-class conversations with teacher educator	Teacher educator responses will indicate perceived relevance of parallels which can be compared with classroom teaching data.
8. How does the teacher educator respond to the use of reflective tasks and to student teachers' responses?	Pre- and post-class conversations with teacher educator	Teacher educator's response to the student tasks may indicate development.
9. How does the interaction between observer-researcher and teacher educator affect the teacher educator's professional development?	Classroom observation data, pre- and post-class conversations with teacher educator	Changes in teacher educator's awareness (perceived by her and/or observed by the researcher) may indicate response to the influence of the study and the researcher.

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The observer-researcher		
10. How has this research affected my view of the topic?	Observer's journal	Self-observation by the researcher may show development in response to the fieldwork.
11. How has this research affected my professional development as an observer and researcher?	Pre- and post-class conversations with teacher educator, observer's journal	Analysis of teacher educator conversations may show development in the researcher's facilitation strategies.
12. What further questions have arisen as a result of this study?	Pre- and post-class conversations with teacher educator, observer's journal	Issues emerging from the conversations and journal may suggest avenues for further investigation.

Table 2: Summary of research questions and methods used in main study

Chapter 5 The student teachers

5.1 Awareness of parallels

5.2 Categories of parallels

5.3 Timing of reflection

5.4 Expressing parallels

5.5 Development of awareness

Chapter 5 The student teachers

This chapter presents the data relating to the student teacher participants in the study. The data are linked to the research questions presented in Chapter 4 pp.103-4. Critical reflective commentary on the role and development of the observer-researcher is presented throughout this chapter as boxed text.

5.1 Awareness of parallels
Research question 1: What awareness do the student teachers have of parallel process and how relevant do they think it is to their learning cycle?

In my initial interviews, all students were easily able to come up with similarities between their teacher education class and a language class (with one exception, described below). Students responded with a variety of topics in response to the question, 'What are the similarities between the language teacher education context of this class and the language teaching context?'

- It is an open forum where people bring their own perspectives and interpretations into class. They are very excited to bring all of their ideas. (Leah, Interview 1, 27/02/03, p.39)
- I hope I will be able to establish a good relationship with my students, as I think Isabel did, she was warm and friendly, and seemed open, smiling, eye contact. And I made the decision that I would like to be like her when I am a teacher. (Mary, Interview 1, 13/02/03, p.49)
- My role as a teacher and the role of my students where they will be very active and responsible for their learning and I will be just an invisible co-ordinator. (Karin, Interview 1, 18/02/03, p.31)
- The similarity for all of us is that we're all learners. What we're learning is a little different. We're all learners. That's the one common bond.[...] We're learning how to learn. (Myra, Interview 1, 13/02/03, p.68)

The responses to this question were all of a very general nature and did not refer to specific task or procedures used in the class. They focused on general class atmosphere and the similar relationship of learners to teachers in the two different contexts.

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There was one exception. I will focus on this response in more detail since, as a negative example, it may illuminate some of the problematic aspects of this topic. In response to the question about similarities between contexts, Mike replied,

- I think they are very different. We're not learning language here. As I said in the journal entry, a lot of that stuff about design and approach was quite specifically about language learning, and we aren't learning language. (Mike, Interview 1, 18/02/03, p.56)

I repeated my question. Mike took a few moments to reflect and then suggested,

- OK here's something: Both are structured with grades and assessments. That's a similarity. It's structured slightly differently than it is in the classroom. We are very constrained at school. I have to get through a certain number of chapters in the textbooks. I am told to give regular tests and assignments and they will be graded. I'm not very happy about that. Another similarity, I don't really have a choice about the textbook. But what I have tried to do is kind of follow a college model of giving a syllabus. Our book is divided into 35 lessons, and I have tried to give students more responsibility for when they hand in assignments. I want them to look and decide when to start working on their assignments. (Mike, Interview 1, 18/02/03, p.56)

Mike's initial response shows understanding of the question, but expresses a perceived lack of relevance. In response to further prompting from myself, he mentions two issues that reflect a personal preoccupation: frustration with grades and assessments at school and lack of choice of textbook. These illustrate a similarity that is negative, in other words, it is something that he dislikes about both contexts (slightly mitigated by his final comment that he is attempting to find ways of giving students more choice).

Mike's views were supported by data from his journal entries.

- In terms of how material was presented, I do see a small problem in comparing what we have been reading and learning about and comparing it to what we are seeing in class. I say this because in class, we are not learning a second/foreign language, but rather *about* pedagogical techniques. (Mike, Journal entry 2, p.165)

- In looking at how approaches and methods are defined (and in looking at some different examples), my question is this: how does most of this apply/relate to teaching high school foreign language as high schools exist today? (Mike, Journal entry 2, p.166)

> *Reflection:* I was surprised by Mike's response. This made me realize my own implicit assumption that if students were aware of parallels, they would immediately see its relevance. I also noticed that the differences he noticed were in terms of content, not process.

In my initial interviews with students, I also asked them about the differences between the two contexts, 'What are the differences between the language teacher education context of this class and the language teaching context?' The differences they mentioned were also of a general nature.

- Age, motivation, we're paying to be here, we're choosing to be here. (Mary, Interview 1, 13/02/03, p.49)
- Getting them to say that in the TL. [Observer comment: Getting students to speak in the target language.] (Leah, Interview 1, 27/02/03, p.39)
- I would probably have more structure and try to keep, consider my time. […] I will probably have a more rigid schedule. (Karin, Interview 1, 18/02/03, p.31)

My interpretation of these responses is that they show an awareness of the positive impact of parallels and also of its limitations.

My second interview with students focused on class transcripts. Students described their awareness of parallels in the moment-by-moment time of the class. Their responses revealed some interesting reasons why students might not want to be aware of parallels. An example of this was in my interviews with Peter.

- She was teaching, so I was trying to learn what she was teaching, I wasn't thinking about *how* she was teaching. I know this is a class in thinking about how you teach, but when you're in a classroom, you're not really thinking about how, I don't think that I think about how the professor is teaching me. She explains it, but when she's just trying to

teach me, I'm just trying to learn. So I'm not thinking on that conscious level. [...] Seeing something like this [the transcript] shows me those spots ...it shows me *how* she was teaching this, especially in this task-based kind of learning. (Peter, Interview 2, 10/04/03, p.84)

- It amazed me how looking at transcriptions made you think about your own thoughts, so instead of just kind of doing it and then forgetting about it, you did it, you looked at it and you changed your behaviour. [...] It's something I'd like to use as a tool, recording myself and looking at how I teach and going back maybe and changing my behaviour based on what I had seen. (Peter, Interview 3, 15/05/03, p.85)

In the first example, Peter explains why he did not really think about his classroom experience more deeply *at the time*. In other words, he didn't have time to reflect on methods or processes as he was more concentrated on absorbing the content of the class. In the second example, he sees the benefits of using the transcript *in his own class*. In other words, the opportunity to carry out 'postponed' reflection has not only given him some reflective insights into the methodology of the class, but has also enabled him to draw a parallel with using transcripts to improve his own teaching.

In my interviews with Sigrid, she gives a similar perspective:

- I think for me it's more content stuff, that I'm more focused on picking up the right vocabulary and understanding concepts more than looking at the structure of our class and certainly the things that we're reading, I think about that in the classroom and would that work and yes and no maybe, but as far as sitting in our class as a student and looking at myself as well you know, what if I were in the teacher position here, I haven't done that [...] I come to that class knowing that my role is a student and I'm supposed to learn and to me that role is defined by keeping my notes and paying attention and getting my work done as opposed to looking at it as the experience I guess in general of what's working for us and would that work with our students. For the most part I would say a lot of things would, but because of the age of my kids it would need a little bit of tweaking. (Sigrid, Interview 2, 24/04/03, pp.107-108)

Sigrid expresses awareness and understanding of the concept, but other things in the class are more important for her and give her very good reasons for *not* paying attention to parallel process while a learning activity is going on.

Karin also comments that students may be too busy in the moment-by-moment activity of the class to remember reflections on parallels.

- ... I may think of something but I may forget about it right away because we move to something else. It might not register. (Karin, Interview 2, 04/04/03, p.36)

These comments suggest a difference between *awareness* of parallels (understanding the concept and appreciating its relevance of lack of relevance) and *attention to* parallels (thinking about them and using them as a reflective tool). Parallel process assumes an ability to distance oneself, to disengage oneself from the emotions of the moment in order to reflect.

These comments on the difficulties of role-switching relate to the discussion in the literature of problems associated with switching roles when reflecting on experiential learning activities (see Chapter 1 pp.20-21 and Powell 1985, Woodward 1998). In my pilot study, I had suggested that parallels might be categorized according to the roles played by the participants (see Chapter 3 p.65). I therefore analyzed the data according to how and when roles were made explicit. How did student teachers judge when to look at an activity from the learner's, the teacher's, the participant's or the observer's point of view? How confusing was the process of role-switching, given that two or more roles co-exist in almost any learning activity in the teacher education context?

The most explicit use of roles was in the mini teaching demonstrations. Here, the roles of 'language learner' or 'observer' were specifically assigned by the teacher educator and each were given different tasks. Nevertheless, after the demonstration, all student teachers were asked to participate in the feedback, so I think it was assumed that all 'language learners' would be simultaneously playing the role of 'observer' during the teaching demonstration, though in a less task-focused manner. Roles were also made explicit after the observation in the written feedback phase. The feedback questionnaire posed the following questions: *'Being a student 1. I was bored when... 2. I was very active when I spoke a lot with my classmates because...3. I*

learned.... ' The journal task also focused on the role of learner: *'Reflect on your role as a learner. What did you learn about yourself as a learner?'*

The fact that this role-switching could sometimes be confusing was shown by these comments from class 6.

- Karin: Well, as a student, I learned some new words, some grammar. But as a teacher, I actually learned that the thing I read about in this book, that uneven proficiency pairings are good.

[...]

- Rengin: I want to say that all the answers I gave were as a student of Myra's class not as a student of methods and materials of foreign language.

- Isabel: Very good. Thank you for saying that. It's two different levels that I'm asking you to look at.

(Class 6 transcript, 27/03/03, p.254)

In these examples, students felt the need to clarify their roles. They were aware that this was something the teacher educator wished them to do, but they felt it was necessary to make these different levels of roles explicit. Rengin makes some additional commentary on this in her journal entry. She connects the specifics of observing the mini teaching demonstration with the more general skill of observing:

- I do feel that my observation skills have developed over the course of the semester. In each teaching demonstration for one time I was the observer. For the rest of them, I was a student who not only pretend to be the artificial student of that demo, but also a Methods & Materials in Foreign Language student who was observing and looking for the things that I read in the books and their application to the class environment. I also tried to observe my teacher educator in terms of her ways of conducting the class, framing the lesson, her ways of interaction with us, her ways of creating a discussion environment and trying to make everyone to bring their opinions about the topic. (Rengin, Journal entry 6, p.210)

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One student expressed confusion over role-switching. In the group discussion, the following exchange between Karin and Myra shows some reasons why Karin felt confused and Myra's attempt to help her.

- Karin: It's so confusing! Is this a question about us as students or as teachers? I 'm just confused! [...] When you're a student, you talk about the content. Then when you change your perspective and you look at strategies, about how we did something, reflecting on what we did to get this content, I guess this is the difference and even when discussing the transcript, first we concentrated on the content of what we discussed in that class, but then we reached to discuss the structure, the strategies that Isabel used to elicit some discoveries. [...] Because right now are we discussing, should we focus on how to teach something to students or how to teach teachers? Are we talking about regular students or teacher students? This is something I couldn't understand.

(Karin, 24/04/03, pp.151-152)

This example and the comments quoted earlier from Sigrid and Peter suggest that role-switching can cause confusion and may need to be clarified at the beginning of an activity or during the debriefing stage. This confirms the discussion in the literature which had indicated that the most difficult parallels for students to notice were those between their own 'real' learning processes and those of their students (see Chapter 1 pp.20-21 and Powell 1985, Woodward 1998). Student comments quoted earlier, however, on the class atmosphere and group discussions, also indicate that the students were very aware of these parallel roles and did not have difficulty perceiving their relevance. The following comments showed more in-depth reflection on this aspect of their learning.

- I was very nervous about this class because I haven't been in school for a long time. I forgot how much being a student is a skill. Being a student is a lead skill and I had forgotten all those skills, the note-taking, the listening, the perception, the reading even, I mean I read at home, but not with the same level of attention to it. So it's re-learning all those skills and actually gives me a better appreciation for them as students, because you know, they may not have those skills. Focusing on the skills as a student may be something I want to bring into the classroom. (Peter, Interview 1, 27/02/03, pp.76-77)

- Portfolio is a very good thing because you do not have the exam anxiety so that you are just preparing something, put in your luggage and then show it to the professor: 'ok, these are the things that I have in my luggage.' It's not that stressful, and always you are preparing it with the assistance of the professor. Of course she doesn't give us the ideas, but she gave us the structure. You have the plan, you are not alone, so that feeling is really comfortable. (Rengin, Interview 1 18/02/03, p.89)

These examples are taken from interviews where students have had some time to reflect on the issues. They show students making a direct link between their own experience as students and the experience of their students without any problem at all. This suggests that the issue of role-switching is problematic only within the class context of immediate reflection.

Summary

The general nature of the comments suggest that students were more aware of global issues related to teaching and learning when asked about parallels. The data showed a variety of responses to the topic. Leah, Mary, Rengin and Myra all responded positively to the concept of parallels, though aware of its practical limitations. Peter, Sigrid and Karin were also positive, but felt they did not always have time to reflect on parallels. They reported that they might reflect on it later, but at the time they are too busy concentrating on the role of being a student and felt that other aspects of their learning were more important to their learning cycle. In contrast, Mike did not see the usefulness of reflecting on parallel process. His responses indicate that he did not find parallels useful, not because he was occupied with other aspects of the class, but because he did not find them to be relevant to his teaching. For him, the two contexts of the language teacher education classroom and his language classroom were too different to draw any useful comparisons.

These patterns did not seem to be related to experience of classroom teaching or graduate study. Both Peter and Sigrid reported feeling somewhat insecure in the academic setting and this may have influenced their need to concentrate more on the tasks at hand. Karin was taking this course in her second language, so this may also have been a factor. Mike had ten years' teaching experience and had completed many courses. It is possible that his general disillusion with teaching and frustration over the lack of motivation of his students may have contributed to his response.

The data show that students switched roles frequently in class and when reflecting on class activities, whether or not such roles were explicitly assigned. Explicit delineation of roles may have helped to elucidate their reflection processes, but the process of role-switching itself took place regardless of whether it was explicitly guided. In some cases, students back and forth with ease, in other cases they found this role-switching distracting.

> *Reflection:* When interviewing students about parallels, I was again aware of the danger of the 'demand' effect, that is, by asking students about the topic, I might encourage them respond positively. My aim in these interviews was not to find out *if* students were aware of the parallels, but *what kinds of parallels* they noticed. The validity of the data is supported by the variety of responses to the question and the occurrence of some negative responses. It is possible that non-disclosure of the topic and more indirect methods may have resulted in different data.

5.2 Categories of parallels

Research question 2: What are the different categories of parallel process evident in the data?

(i) Implicit or explicit?

What kinds of parallels did the student teachers notice? How much of student learning related to parallels is implicit and how much is dependent upon making the parallels explicit? I first categorized parallels according to whether or not they were explicitly mentioned by the teacher educator. I then categorized the examples according to whether or not student teachers had noticed the parallel. I am using the term 'noticed' to mean that student teachers explicitly reflected upon or verbalized their awareness of the parallel. These categories were chosen because of their relevance to the issue of implicit versus explicit learning (see Chapter 2 pp.39-53).

Type	Implicit or made explicit by the teacher educator?	Noticed or not noticed by the student teachers?
1	Explicit	Noticed
2	Implicit	Noticed
3	Explicit	Not noticed
4	Implicit	Not noticed

Table 3: Categories of implicit and explicit parallels

Types 1 and 2: These categories, whether made explicit by the teacher educator or not, were noticed by the student teachers, either in class, in journals or in the interviews.

Types 3 and 4: Although explicitly referred to by the teacher educator, these examples of parallel process were not explicitly noticed by the student teachers. This is not to say, however, that they were not noticed at all. Students could have noticed these examples and said nothing at the time although they may remember it later. I have offered some suggestions in my commentary as to why they were not explicitly noticed. Type 4 examples are based on my classroom observations of possible potential parallels. The range of examples in this category is highly dependent on the perceptions of the observer-researcher.

Type 1 (Explicit / noticed)

The teacher educator sometimes used guiding questions in class that helped to make parallels explicit. An example of this was in the first class which included some introductory get-to-know-you activities. The teacher educator asked, *'What did you see in the previous game? What did we achieve?'* Some student responses to this question were:

- Mary: it was an excuse to talk to people.
- Myra: You lowered our affective filter.
- Karin: We got to know about each other, we broke the ice.
- Rengin: It creates a relaxed mood.
- Mary: You started a relationship with someone. It was a real conversation.
- Myra: I think it would be a wonderful activity to try out with my students.
- Mary: For shy people who don't like to talk in class.
- Leah: You really do remember the names better.
- Karin: You could use this to practice the present perfect or another grammatical aspect.
- Leah: From one sentence a lot of language is generated.

(Class 1 transcript, 30/01/03, pp. 219-220)

As these examples show, these statements can only be interpreted as expressing parallels within the context of being asked to reflect on the class. In themselves, they do not make the parallels

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explicit. In the context of answering this question, they express what is similar about their experience and that of language learners doing this activity.

The opening class has a specific function as a 'frame' for the course. It is usually at the beginning of a course that students and teacher are defining and negotiating their roles and probably all participants are particularly alert to clues that will help them to understand and navigate these roles successfully. Reflection on parallels in this class may have influenced students to notice parallels in other aspects of the course.

There were also short reflection tasks on the students' role as language learners in the teaching demonstrations. In class 4, for example, there was a mini-teaching demonstration of a Turkish lesson. The reflection task for this teaching demonstration was, *'What was easy? What was difficult? What did you learn?'* Some responses to *'What was difficult?'* were:

- Mary: I was insecure about my comprehension and embarrassed to make mistakes in case I didn't understand.
- Mike: It was hard for me to distinguish one word from the next or to see where the separation of the words came.

(Extracts from Class 4 transcript, 27/02/03, p.238a)

The main method of making parallels explicit was through the introduction of the journal tasks. In some of these tasks, explicit attention was drawn to parallels and students were asked to reflect on them. For the first class, the journal task was, *'Reflect on today's class. Describe the various phases of the class. What could be helpful in your teaching?'* One response was:

- Since the course is about teaching methods and most of the students are teachers, the class was also a kind of teaching demonstration showing the students several non-traditional ways of avoiding the routine of the introductory class. (Karin, Journal entry 1, p.153)

After class 2, which had used the format of a debate, the journal task was, *'What did you notice about the method, approach and design of today's class and what does it tell you about the instructor's view of learning?'*

- This strategy of debate presents the material on many levels. First, in the reading and preparation for the debate, the arguers and defenders got to know the material in order to present and defend. Then, in the presentation of the information, both the presenters and the listeners were engaged – especially since the listeners were asked to do something with the information they were receiving. From this point, once the material had been presented, the discussion that followed between the presenters, the defenders and the listeners helped clarify some misunderstandings through demonstration and through negotiation of the ideas (it works in the native language for sorting meaning, too!!!) (Mary, Journal entry 2, p.164)

The majority of all explicit reflections on parallels in class were in response to these explicit questions and tasks. In other words, students rarely commented on parallels unless they were asked to do so.

Type 2 (Implicit / noticed)

In addition to explicit tasks used by the teacher educator, students were also aware of implicit parallels. In my observation data, a large number of comments referred to a more general recognition of pedagogical principles underlying the teacher educator's philosophy of teaching. These reflections tend to relate to general observations taking place over a period of time, not to specific learning activities.

I have described these examples of parallel process as implicit because they were not mentioned by the teacher educator in class. They were made explicit by students in my subsequent interviews with them when I asked them about similarities between the teacher education and the language learning contexts. Some examples were:

- I'll create a classroom environment like Professor Isabel has been doing, to make everybody speak, but not forcefully, just try to give, she is doing this great. She is making everyone speak as if it is part of the class structure, but we are not aware of it. (Rengin, Interview 1, 18/02/03, p.89)

- I like the format of her class in general, I like the open communication from student to student. It's very non-threatening, very learner-friendly. (Sigrid, Interview 3, 08/05/03, p.112)

- Well one of the things that I like about the professor's style is that she will pose a question to you and try to get you to think towards the answer. She won't give you it directly, she'll try to lead you down that path. (Peter, Interview 1, 27/02/03, p.76)

- I shall take with me the strategies for group/pair work. It's really important to me to establish and create a comfortable, safe learning environment with free discussion where students won't feel embarrassed or uneasy. (Mary, Journal entry 1, p.156)

These responses suggest that implicit awareness of parallel process tends to focus on patterns observed over a period of time, such as general principles of pedagogy or teaching philosophy, and that explicit awareness of parallel process tends to focus on concrete instances of a pattern or a principle.

Type 3 (Explicit / not noticed)

An example of this category was in class 4. After a mini-teaching demonstration, Isabel used a guided reflection task to ask students, 'What did you learn?' After finishing the de-briefing, Isabel mentions that they could also use this type of task with their students. There is no verbal response to this from the students. Later discussion of a transcript of this class by the students revealed no awareness that this suggestion had been intended as a useful activity for their language classrooms.

One interpretation of this could be that students had been so engrossed in the learning task that it was difficult to suddenly switch roles and think about it from the point of view of a teacher. It is also possible, that the way the comment was phrased, as a statement, not as a question, simply did not engage students in the process of reflection, and was soon forgotten. It is difficult to say whether the students did not respond because they were preoccupied with processing other input, whether they understood the comment but said nothing, or whether they did not recognize the full impact of the suggestion.

Type 4 (Implicit / not noticed)

One example of this category was in class 5. Isabel used a small group information-gap activity to introduce the concept of communicative language teaching. In my interviews with students about this segment of the class, this use of information gap was not at all obvious to the students. Though several students commented on the use of group work, the delegation of roles in a group, the use of instructions and the seating arrangement, only one student noticed this use of different tasks for different groups and he did not identify it as an information gap or notice its particular congruence with the topic of communicative language teaching (see section (ii) below).

A further example of this category was in class 7. At the end of the class, which was on the topic of evaluation, Isabel asked students to come up with some questions that they felt would be appropriate for the final examination of their course. There was potential here to make explicit how this task was itself an illustration of student-centred assessment, but this aspect was not made explicit by Isabel or by the students.

There were many implicit aspects of Isabel's general teaching style that students could have noticed on an experiential level, but did not. There were no comments by students on, for example, Isabel's general use of student collaboration in the course. This is a principle that she mentioned several times as being important in her teaching philosophy and was most strongly exemplified by her use of student mini-teaching demonstrations, but also carried through in each of the examples given above for category 4.

Summary

In answering the question 'what categories of parallels are evident in the data?' it must be remembered that others' perceptions of parallels can only be accessed when they are verbalized. Students responded to parallels which were explicitly mentioned by the teacher educator (Type 1: explicit/noticed). On the other hand, students also noticed many implicit parallels which were not made explicit by the teacher educator (Type 2: implicit/noticed). These were verbalized in their journals and in their interviews with me. The largest number of responses were in this category. There were also some parallels pointed out by the teacher educator which students did not respond to verbally (Type 3: explicit/not noticed). In this case, it is difficult to say if they noticed them or not, but they were not mentioned at the time or in subsequent interviews. Finally, the majority of parallels were those that neither teacher educator not students mentioned, but which I

observed in my role as observer (Type 4: implicit/not noticed). These could vary greatly in type and number according to the pre-dispositions of the observer.

> *Reflection:* The results of this analysis made me more aware that accessing implicit learning is restricted by the ability to access student thought processes at the time. Their in-class comments and subsequent verbal reports of their thinking processes present just part of the picture.

(ii) What kinds of parallels did students notice?

a) Comments on the course in general

In the initial interviews, I tried to elicit parallels that students noticed on the course in general. The following table summarizes their responses by topic.

Parallels noticed by students on the course in general	Students	Total number of comments
1. Classroom atmosphere (good relationship, warm and friendly, open, learner-friendly)	Mary, Rengin, Sigrid	3
2. Discussion and meaningful communication	Karin, Mary, Sigrid	3
3. Role of the teacher, relationship to learners	Karin, Myra, Sigrid	3
4. Learning how to learn	Peter, Myra	2
5. Teacher's way of asking questions (pulling it out of us, leading you down the path)	Sigrid, Peter	2
6. Variety of methods	Mary, Karin	2
7. Use of journals	Leah, Myra	2
8. Seating arrangement	Mike, Rengin	2
9. Assessment and course books	Mike	1

Table 4: Summary of parallels noticed by students on the course in general

This summary shows that students responded mainly by describing general impressions of the course and general features of the procedures used. Categories 1-5 focus on similarities in the relationship of teachers and learners. Categories 6-9 focus on more concrete methods and procedures. Another feature of these responses is that they are not specific to language teaching. They are more about the general feeling they have as students in the class that could apply to any class, their own or those of other subjects. They are viewed from a 'student's eye' view of the

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class, not that of a teacher reflecting on aspects of professional practice. This suggests that students are more likely to reference their experience as learners, using empathy to attempt to understand their learners' experience.

As noted in section (i), there were some general aspects of the course, such as the emphasis on student participation, that were not commented on.

b) Comments on a class transcript

In the transcript interviews, I attempted to elicit three different viewpoints on the same set of data. I used a transcript of the first part of class 5. I analyzed the transcript to identify my own perceptions of parallels and I asked each of the students and the teacher educator to do the same. This approach was chosen to establish a method of cross-checking perceptions in relation to the same set of data. The transcript used for these interviews is in Appendix 2.

At the beginning of this class transcript, Isabel divided the class into two groups with different tasks for about ten minutes, preparatory to a whole class discussion.

Observer-researcher's comments:

The main parallel I noticed was the choice of different tasks for different groups that reflected the structure of an information-gap activity. I also noticed that Isabel handed out written instructions and was strict about the time limit. I recorded in my journal that the activity of analysing an excerpt of a class transcript paralleled my use of transcripts in the interviews.

Teacher educator's comments:

I asked Isabel to read the transcript and comment on any possible parallels. Her main comment concerned the structure of the task.

- I divided the class into two groups and each group was looking at a different excerpt, a different classroom interaction and the purpose was to, you know, create an interest for the sharing, since they were not working on the same thing. And obviously this is mirroring an information gap, which is like something I use over and over. (Isabel, transcript interview, 04/10/03 p.136)

Student teachers' comments:

This table summarizes the parallels noticed by students.

Parallels noticed by students in class transcript	Students	Total number of comments
1. Language of instructions: *'Do you want to read the dialogue aloud?'* Mary, Rengin *'We'll all think together'*: Mary, Peter, Sigrid Open-ended questions: Rengin Giving both oral and written instructions: Sigrid, Rengin	Mary, Rengin, Sigrid, Peter	8
2. Delegation of roles in groups	Myra, Karin, Leah, Mary, Mike, Rengin, Sigrid	7
3. Group discussion as a way of learning	Mary, Karin, Leah, Sigrid, Peter	5
4. Teacher did not visit groups	Leah, Karin, Mary, Mike, Peter	5
5. Setting a time limit	Karin, Mary, Peter, Rengin	4
6. Seating arrangement (one group sat in a cluster, one group sat in a row)	Leah, Sigrid	2
7. Information-gap structure of task (noticed by teacher educator and observer)	-	0

Table 5: Summary of parallels noticed by students in Class 5.

This summary shows that students noticed both general and detailed parallels in the transcript. General parallels are those that represent general principles such as the value of group discussion. Detailed comments are those represent practical strategies, such as giving instructions.

'Teacher did not visit groups.'

I had noted in the transcript that Isabel did not visit the groups while this activity was going on, but remained at the teacher's desk, sorting through some papers and checking the overhead transparencies and projector. This note in the transcript attracted several students' attention and also a variety of interpretations which are summarized below:

- Leah's interpretation was that Isabel was encouraging groups to work autonomously and it would be more communicative for groups to report to Isabel if she did not already know what they had discussed. (Leah, Interview 2, 10/04/03, p.43)
- Mike's interpretation (based on his own teaching experience) was that groups tend to clam up if the teacher interferes too much. (Mike, Interview 2, 10/04/03, pp.58-59)
- Mary's interpretation was that Isabel needed the time to prepare for the next phase of the class, and that she was also monitoring 'peripherally'. (Mary, Interview 2, 27/03/03, p.51)
- Karin's interpretation was that if the groups were working well, she needn't interfere. (Karin, Interview 2, 04/03/03 p.33)
- Peter's interpretation was that Isabel was encouraging groups to work autonomously. He also speculated that the groups were given different tasks so they would not copy each other and could comment on each others' task more spontaneously. (Peter, Interview 2, 10/04/03, p.82)

Each student came up with different (but not necessarily conflicting) reasons for why the groups were left to work on their own. In my interview with Isabel about this transcript, she reported that there had not been any particular reason for her choosing not to visit the groups during that activity. My own interpretation at the time was that this was a ten-minute pre-discussion activity and she did not want to run over the time limit and possibly preempt the later discussion by getting involved with extended discussions with the separate groups. These differing interpretations of a single classroom event suggest that a lot of information is being processed implicitly at the time of the event. And that such learning can be accessed later and used to uncover aspects of students' assumptions or of their emerging personal theories of learning.

In these interviews, each student initially favored just one interpretation. Coming up with alternative interpretations of events that took place in the classroom was not something they normally thought about doing. Connecting classroom events to general pedagogical principles also seemed to be quite difficult. It would be interesting to see what would happen if students shared with each other their different opinions of this classroom event.

Reflection: Some of the responses to the class transcript may have been influenced by the interview method. Reading the written transcript focused attention on the language used and

this may have resulted in more detailed attention to Isabel's phrasing of instructions. Students rarely commented (and were not asked to comment on) non-verbal aspects of the class which were not noted in the transcript.

Summary

The main conclusions to be drawn from this analysis are:

1) Students noticed many general and detailed parallels in the class which were not specifically or consciously planned by the teacher educator. Their observations coincided quite closely with each other. Their interpretations of the reasons for these parallels varied.

2) Students' observations tended to focus on experiences from the student's point of view which they transferred to thinking about experiences of language students in their classroom. They did not tend to observe the procedures used in the class critically from a teacher's point of view.

3) None of the students noticed the 'information-gap' aspect of the activity in class 5, which had been the main and most important parallel for the teacher educator. They came up with a variety of different interpretations for the use of group work in the activity. This suggests that implicit aspects of experiential learning are not always apparent to students and can possibly create conflicting or confused interpretations if not made explicit.

5.3 Timing of reflection
Research question 3: When does reflection on parallels tend to occur?

A second part of my research question focused on *when* parallels occurred. I wanted to find out if there were differences between reflections on parallels taking place at different times and how they influenced each other. I categorized the data according to when the reflection on parallels took place: immediate or delayed. This method of analysis was influenced by discussion n the literature of reflective development over time (see Chapter 1 pp.25-6 and Freeman 1982, Laboskey1994) and the use of journals in facilitating delayed reflection (see Chapter 1 pp.26-7 and Thornbury 1991, Jarvis 1992, Richards and Ho 1998).

(1) Immediate reflection consisted of in-class observations verbalized at the time or later reported in the transcript interviews.

(2) Delayed reflection consisted of responses to written tasks (in class or in journals) and later reflections on class transcripts.

There were almost no examples of spontaneous noticing of parallels. In other words, almost all reflections on parallels were in response to a specific task or question. This is not to say that students did not notice parallels in class, but only that they did not express it verbally. By asking student teachers to look at transcripts of the class, I was able to obtain self-reported data about what they had been thinking at the time. The following interview extract shows how reactions at the time of the event can lead to deeper reflection at a later time. The episode relates to Rengin's comment on Isabel's use of instructions. When reading the transcript of the class where this episode occurred, Rengin noticed that Isabel asks a pair of students to read a dialogue and she asks the student which role she wants to take, that of the teacher or of the student.

> Rengin: Well even here, she doesn't sacrifice anything for the sake of not disturbing this class's democratic environment. That's what I realized.
> Ingrid: Did you notice that at the time, or did you notice that just now?
> Rengin: Oh no! I noticed that. And I said to myself, why isn't she just saying, 'Sigrid, be the teacher' and 'Leah, be the teacher', to save the time, because I remember that we are running against the time.
> Ingrid: You noticed it then?
> Rengin: Yeah, but not as a democratic perspective.
> Ingrid: Just as a time-saving thing?
> Rengin: Yes! Now I'm realizing that it's a democratic thing to do.
(Rengin, Interview 2, 03/04/03, pp.93-94)

Rengin's observations point to the fact that, for her, there were two different levels of reflection. In her immediate (non-verbalised) response at the time, she noticed Isabel's use of instructions and wondered why she was giving students a choice when it would be quicker to assign roles. Later, she thought about it again and recognized what she saw as a pattern in Isabel's teaching: that she tried to give students choices and decisions in the classroom (a pattern that corresponded to Rengin's own personal theme of democracy and empowerment of learners in the classroom).

A second example of the connection between immediate and delayed reflection comes from Sigrid. Here is Sigrid's reaction to an experiential learning activity. The first comment is her immediate reaction during the class and the second is her later reaction when looking at the transcript of that class in my interview with her. The episode occurred in class 10 when students read a short ambiguous paragraph written in English that could be interpreted in a number of different ways.

- I was just going to say. I'm trying to relate this to the relevance of teaching a language. Here we have English in front of us, we all speak English, we can't figure out how to make meaning out of this and what it means, so we do force ourselves to write something down. Our students probably do this all the time. You throw a text up on the board and they might not understand the flow, the meaning, but they're going to find their keywords, they're going to interpret and throw up things like we all did. (Sigrid, Class 10 transcript, 01/05/03, p.263)

- Like last week, the paragraph that she had given us where we had to make sense of something that seemed so random and just making a connection of what it might be like or how that's tied in to someone learning a language. [...] It made an impact on me. I went 'wow!' It's been a long time since we've been at such beginning stages [of learning a foreign language] and we all teach beginners for the most part. It was just kind of like 'oh my!' You sometimes forget what the anxieties are and what the confusions are [...] I think it struck me so hard because it was my own language. And that was a really strange event because we could have defined every single word, but put it together and suddenly there wasn't enough information, there wasn't the outline we were used to in trying to figure out what was going on, it was missing something, it was missing the picture and you couldn't make sense of it and it made me feel silly. (Sigrid, Interview 3, 24/04/03, pp.111-112)

In the first extract, Sigrid makes the different levels of parallels (and the pedagogic purpose of the activity) explicit. In her later reflection on this episode, Sigrid emphasizes what for her is a very significant theme, the feelings of anxiety and insecurity engendered by the use of such a text and how students must feel when presented with large chunks of unfamiliar language. At the time of the experience, Sigrid focuses more on the variety of strategies students use for interpreting

unfamiliar language, paralleled by the strategies used by everyone in the class. Perhaps the other students also noticed these parallels, but when Sigrid verbalized this and put this into the domain of class discussion, there was more room to analyze and compare exactly how the different levels operate and what can be learned from them. In her later reflection, Sigrid focuses more on her personal feelings of anxiety which parallel those of a language student and which are part of her personal learning theme.

These comments reveal a distinction between reflection at the time, taking place in a group learning context and later individual reflection. Sigrid's comments in class focused on shared aspects of the experience. Her later comments in our interview were more personal. Experiential learning can be experienced on the level of the group (what is our shared experience of this concept?) or on the level of the individual (what is my personal reaction and feeling about this concept?). In this case, Sigrid's spontaneous realization and verbalization of the parallel process aspect of the activity helped her and others in the group to think more clearly about its implications for language students. It also triggered a reflective sequence in her own thought process which made her realize the key affective factor in this activity for her: feelings of anxiety and stress experience by beginners.

A significant difference between Rengin's observations (supported by other students' comments on the transcripts) was that, in Rengin's case, her observation was not verbalized at the time. A second difference was that Rengin's later observation adds another interpretation to the event. She noticed things that she had not noticed at the time, or had noticed in a slightly different, perhaps more superficial way. In Sigrid's case, she reflected on the event in a more personal way on later reflection, elaborating in more depth on her earlier reflection.

It should be noted here that a number of responses to the transcript referred to parallels that students had not specifically noticed at the time, but which fit into a general pattern of things they noticed generally in class, for example, use of group work, or setting time limit.

Another example of the connection between immediate and delayed reflection occurred in class 4. In class 4 there was a mini-teaching demonstration of a lesson in Turkish given by a student who was a native speaker of Turkish. The reflection task for this teaching demonstration was: *What was easy? What was difficult? What did you learn?*

Here are some responses to the question, '*What was difficult?* '

- Leah: I thought I was slow picking things up compared to other people. I was nervous about standing in front of the class.

- Karin: It was hard for me to understand the teacher's commands in Turkish. I mean I guess I could guess what she meant but I was never sure what exactly she wanted us to do.

- Myra: Without prior knowledge of Turkish, it presented me with a challenge. I discovered I needed more repetition, more repetition...

(Extracts from Class 4 transcript, 27/02/03, p.238a)

These ideas were later developed by students in their journals and the sharing of these comments in class was mentioned by student teachers as facilitating their ability to reflect on and compare their own reactions in their later journal entries.

The journal task for class 4 asked students to take their reflection in class a step further. The journal task was: *Use the notes you took today after the teaching demonstrations and reflect on your role as a learner. What did you learn about yourself as a learner? What did you learn about your peers' learning styles?*

Some examples of student responses to this task were:

- I did learn that I, as a learner, do need time and do need support to achieve. I felt as though I could not understand fast enough and felt nervous that others were getting it faster than I. Afterwards though, as I listened to their comments, I think that they were thinking much of the same thing. Then, perhaps, I wonder if I give my own students enough time and support to achieve what they may want to or what I want them to...We cannot throw our students into the ocean and expect them to be able to swim without providing the floaties or the stroke instruction to support their successful survival. (Leah, Journal entry 4, p.184)

- When I was listening to my fellow students sharing their impressions of the teaching demonstrations, I could see that they learn differently. Thus, some of them wanted to repeat after the teacher for a longer time in order to memorize the new material, because

they couldn't make themselves pronounce something they weren't sure about. Some were trying to analyze the teacher's utterances. Others wanted to start using the language right away despite the fact that they knew very little of it. (Karin, Journal entry 4, p.182)

- Some of us were trying to learn the words by repeating them while others were trying to learn the words by formulating hypotheses with linguistic connections. It is important for me to learn how to refine my skills in observing my students' reactions and learning styles in my desire to foster communication and customizing corrective feedback. (Myra, Journal entry 4, p.188)

These responses move easily between the parallels of student teachers as language learners and as language teachers. Although the journal task does not ask them to talk about the applications for understanding their students, this is made explicit in the journal responses.

The journal comments show that in the time interval between experiencing the teaching demo and completing the journal task at home, students had reflected on their experience as learners and tried to make connections with more general principles of learning and teaching. The fact that the immediate reactions were shared in class contributed greatly to their ability to make those generalizations. This suggests that reflection is facilitated by group dialogue which enables individuals to compare responses and make judgements as to whether generalizations are possible or justified. This confirms the discussion in the literature (see Chapter 1 p.27 and Richards and Ho 1998) which claimed that students' reflective skills were not developed by journals alone and indicates that reflection can be enhanced when complemented by immediate 'on-the-spot' reflection.

Summary
In these examples, students noticed parallels in class at the time and reflected on them again later. There was a significant development in reflective thought between these two time points. The fact of noticing the parallel at the time facilitated their ability to reflect on it later. The delayed reflection showed evidence of deeper processing, attempting to integrate immediate reflection into a larger framework and relate it to larger concepts.

In the first example, Rengin and Sigrid noticed parallels spontaneously (not in response to a specific task or question). In the second example, the process was guided by the post-observation

reflection task and the later journal task. Both examples showed a similar relationship between immediate and delayed reflection, though in the second case, the choice of topic was guided by the teacher educator.

The main difference between these two examples is that in the first example, reflection on parallels was taking place even though there was no specific task to do so. This suggests that at least some observation of parallels takes place 'implicitly'. Students may not be paying attention to them at the time, but they can emerge later, or can be surfaced by use of explicit tasks.

Using the class transcripts to stimulate recall of what happened in the class prompted students to talk about what they had thought 'at the time.' They also prompted students to talk about what they thought about those events 'now.' The use of the class transcripts created a 'distancing effect' allowing students to notice and observe things they had not noticed at the time (see Chapter 1 p.32 and Tripp 1993, Mason 2002).

Reflection: When interviewing students about implicit observations, it must be remembered that they may or may not remember clearly what they thought at the time. Other intervening factors can also affect their reports, such as how they felt about other people in the group, or whether they enjoyed a certain learning activity. The 'demand' effect means they may produce 'idealized' reports of what they thought at the time for the benefit of the interviewer.

5.4 Articulating awareness of parallels
Research question 4: How do student teachers express awareness of parallel process?

(i) Language used to express parallels
In this section, I analyze the different ways in which students expressed their awareness of parallels. The choice of categories was influenced by the work discussed earlier of Tripp (1993) and Mason (2002) (see Chapter 1 pp.31-3). The aim of using these categories was to see if any patterns would emerge concerning the overall development of the group or of individuals within the group and to explore whether the noticing of parallels had the potential to lead to any potential for professional development.

I used the following categories:

1. Describe	Comments that indicate awareness of parallels, usually descriptive
2. Explain	Comments that justify or explain why a certain parallel is appropriate or useful
3. Compare	Comments that compare similarities between parallels
4. Contrast	Comments that contrast differences between parallels
5. Adapt	Comments that indicate awareness of how an activity or idea could be adapted to be more appropriate or useful for a different context

Table 6: Categories for analyzing comments on parallels

1. Describe: It was rare to find examples of descriptive comments of parallels that did not include evaluation. Factual comments such as 'we did a warm-up activity' or 'we were given a time limit' were unusual, whereas comments such as 'I liked the warm-up activity' were fairly common. I placed comments in this category if they involved noticing a parallel without saying why or how it is relevant to teaching. These comments should be interpreted by the reader in the context of being asked about parallels. Some examples of comments in this category are:

- I think making clear what will be expected of you through the semester is always good and we did that, we went through the syllabus.... (Mary, Interview 1, 13/02/03, p.49)
- I like the format of her class in general, I like the open communication from student to student. (Sigrid, Interview 3, 08/05/03, p.112)
- I think it's really important to let students discuss. I know that was the whole point, but I like exercises like that that let students hash out ideas and agree and disagree. (Mary, Interview 2, 27/03/03, p.52)
- 'Today I'm going to start by framing this class.' I like this introduction before a class. (Rengin, Interview 3, 01/05/03, p.96)

2. Explain: These comments attempt to give an explanation for events that were noticed as examples of parallel process. I will repeat some examples from the 'Describe' category in order to show they lead into 'Explain' comments. Some examples of comments in the 'Explain' category are:

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- (This activity is good ...) For shy students who don't like to talk in class (Mary, Class 1 Transcript, 30/01/03, p.219)

- Making the connections with one another really engaged us. (Sigrid, Journal entry 1, p.160)

- [Describe] Sitting all facing each other and having a relaxed atmosphere [Explain] serves to make everyone more at ease, which will facilitate any kind of learning. (Mike, Journal entry 2, p.165)

- [Describe]'Today I'm going to start by framing this class.' I like this introduction before a class. It's like writing an introduction before an essay. It was really useful. [Explain] From the very first moment of the class, we know what's going on. No surprises going to happen. There is a planned schedule for this class and the teacher is sharing it with us, which I liked a lot. Because it's a real guidance. (Rengin, Interview 3, 01/05/03, p.96)

It can be seen from some of these examples that a 'Describe' comment sometimes leads into an 'Explain' comment. It is interesting that these comments start with an example and then go on to extrapolate a general rule which is an example of inductive reasoning. This requires deeper-level processing than, for example, if I had asked students to find examples of student-centred teaching. The comments show evidence of reflecting on the pedagogical reasoning behind these classroom experiences and being able to analyze events from a teacher's point of view.

This category could be further subdivided into comments that attempt to utilize 'technical' language to explain class events. Those quoted above, for example, use language that is non-technical, but other comments show students trying to apply the language of pedagogical methodology. In the quotes below, I have underlined the phrases that are more technical.

- The <u>activities and discourse</u> were really geared toward *us* and our *personal* experiences. This method of <u>creating relevance</u> and establishing a reason for us to <u>personally invest</u> in the course make the process more interesting and fun. (Mary, Journal entry 1, p.156)

- Speaking in terms of Lee and Van Patten, the teacher was <u>an architect</u>, while the students were <u>builders, coworkers, and negotiators</u>. Communication in the class was based on <u>negotiation of meaning</u>. (Karin, Journal entry 2, p.162)

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This use of technical language to interpret classroom events may be interpreted as an attempt by the students to give accounts from an 'objective' methodological standpoint.

3. Compare / 4. Contrast: These two categories are similar in that they made explicit references to both the context of the language learner and the context of the student teacher. Although these categories are sometimes combined, these comments differ in their starting point. The first focus on looking for points of similarity and the second focus on looking for points of contrast. Both categories show evidence of reflection that either took place at the time of the class, or at the later interview stage when looking at the transcript. Some examples of comments in the 'Compare' category are (I have repeated some examples already quoted to show how one category often leads into another.):

- The students are negotiating the meaning and trying to agree on something and talking and I would like to have discussion like that in my classroom. (Karin, Interview 2, 04/03/03, p.33)

- This is a good reminder that as language teachers and people who are supposed to be good at languages, if we had so many diverse reactions to the lesson, surely our students do as well, although they may not be as adept in expressing that. As a result, we need to be aware of this. (Mike, Journal entry 4, p.186a)

- I'll create a classroom environment like Professor Isabel has been doing, to make everybody speak, but not forcefully, just try to give, she is doing this great. She is making everyone speak as if it is part of the class structure, but we are not aware of it. I'm gonna do the same thing with my kids. I'm not gonna make them speak just because I wanna hear their answers. (Rengin, Interview 1, 18/02/03, p.89)

- Well one of the things that I like about the professor's style is that she will pose a question to you and try to get you to think towards the answer. She won't give you it directly, she'll try to lead you down that path. And I think that is something, that's a skill that I could learn for my teaching, for my classes because I think I may be too readily offering the answers to my students, getting them to get there on their own is a much better way to go. (Peter, Interview 1, 27/02/03, p.76)

Some examples of comments in the 'Contrast' category are:

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- Teenagers would have a hard time with this activity. (Mike, Journal entry 1, p.157)

- It is difficult to connect what we have done in class, in terms of how that material was presented, to the theories we have read about. In Richards and Rodgers' paper, they are talking about language learning, whereas the goal of our class is not developing language proficiency but analyzing the methodologies presented in the papers. (Mike, Journal entry 2, p.165)

- It would be interesting, however, to be able to observe peers who weren't in a class to become language teacher educators. I am guessing that since we've all chosen to be teacher educators, we were all, most probably, quick learners of the foreign languages we speak. So our style of learning may have been similar. We may have all been in conversation-encouraging classrooms. We're all talkers! (Mary, Journal entry 4, p.185)

- As an adult learner I have the metacognitive awareness of my own learning styles and have developed strategies around them. However, a middle school student most likely does not yet have the experience or the awareness that learning styles even exist. (Sigrid, Journal entry 4, p.191)

- I think all of us being the age that we are and having done this kind of stuff for so long understand that when we're given the piece of paper we have to get the work done and we're here for a reason, whereas some middle school students they think that the reason is so they can try to sit next to Susie or Billy or whatever. So keeping the middle-schoolers motivated is I think a little harder. I didn't mean that to sound weird, I mean Isabel keeps us very interested, but I think she's also dealing with a group of eager learners. (Sigrid, Interview 2, 24/04/03, p.108)

Comments in the 'Compare' and 'Contrast' categories show evidence of some further interpretation from student and teacher's point of view. Additionally, they show the beginning of analysis of why something would or would not work in another context. These comments not only make implicit parallels visible, they start to open them up for discussion. The comments in the 'Contrast' category were similar to those already mentioned in section 5.1 where students identified differences between the two contexts that might make parallels less useful.

5. Adapt: Comments in this category show an attempt to use the knowledge gained from observing a parallel and discuss its implications for a different teaching/learning context. This

category of comment was the easiest to find and classify as it involved generating adaptations of a principle that would work in a different teaching context. This implies that students have thought about the parallel and have considered its advantages and possible drawbacks. Some examples of comments in the *Adapt* category are:

- You could use this to practice the present perfect or another grammatical aspect. (Karin, Class 1 transcript, 30/01/03, p.219)
- I would definitely use a debate in my language class. The details would depend on the level of proficiency of my students and on the curriculum [...] We could record the debate on video and watch it and analyze at the next class. (Karin, Journal entry 4, p.181)
- In an AP [Advanced Placement] French class, there will be a unit on the Passé Simple. One side would debate for striking the Passé Simple and no longer using it and also would argue that all the old writings should be translated into the spoken Imparfait. The other side would argue that the written language should be preserved, for literary sake – or for whatever sake they come up with to argue! (Mary, Journal entry 2, p.164a)
- ...this type of activity can be transferred into a target-language lesson. Presenting a quote in Spanish can give me the opportunity to contextualize a specific grammar lesson that can be a beginning approach to looking at a new concept. (Myra, Journal entry 1, pp.158-159)

Some of the examples mentioned above point to one of the dangers of (over-) attention to parallels. It may encourage student teachers to look for similarities and suppose that all activities used on the course may easily be transferred to other contexts. It should be remembered, however, that not all parallels were seen by students as positive, as shown by examples in the 'contrast' category above and also in the negative examples given in section 4.3 (p.).

Critical questioning

The *Adapt* category included two examples that showed evidence of critical reflection (see Chapter 1 p. 24 and Bartlett 1990). Critical reflection involves asking, 'Why do I usually teach this way and what implications does that have?' This question is consistent with the process of

problematization and generalization discussed earlier as central to the development of professional expertise (see Chapter 2 p.41 and Tsui 2003).

Two students in the group used parallels to ask questions that showed evidence of critical reflection. Here are two examples from interviews with Peter:

- Well one of the things that I like about the professor's style is that she will pose a question to you and try to get you to think towards the answer. She won't give you it directly, she'll try to lead you down that path. And I think that is something, that's a skill that I could learn for my teaching, for my classes because I think I may be too readily offering the answers to my students, getting them to get there on their own is a much better way to go. [...] getting the student to take those steps toward learning, and not giving them the answer, because if I give them the answer, then they haven't learned anything. (Peter, Interview 1, 27/02/03, p.76)

For Leah, the opportunity to reflect on parallels also creates opportunities to ask critical questions about her use of reflection in her own teaching:

- I do not think I encourage enough reflection on our own learning in my classes and I would like to think more about how I can integrate this into my classes. My students do keep journals, but until now their topics have been centered around the theme which we are studying. I do see a place for this, but I want to think more how to perhaps use them for more self reflection specifically on learning. (Leah, Journal entry 4, p.184)
- Maybe I should make more time in my classes too to ask students questions like that. [...] Or ask them: 'Why am I doing that?' and 'Why are they doing that?' so that we can all be more aware of why we do what we do and hopefully make it more meaningful. (Leah, Interview 3, 08/05/03, p.47)

These examples show evidence of the 'critical reflection' that may lead to action (see Chapter 1 p.24 and Bartlett 1990). For the other student teachers, noticing of parallel process did not seem to generate critical questioning of their own teaching. Sigrid, for example, seemed more concerned with confirming that what they were doing in the classroom was 'right'. Myra tended

to notice examples of activities that could be easily transferred to the language classroom. These comments did not generate critical questioning.

Critical reflection generated by reflection on parallels occurred both in the context of the journal tasks and of the student interviews for two students in the group. However, in general, the noticing of parallels did not provoke critical questioning. Those students with a predisposition to question themselves and their teaching used parallels to ask questions, but the other students would probably need further prompting to use noticing of parallels for critical reflection.

The general pattern in the data was for students to avoid purely descriptive comments. They tended explain the reasons why an activity was good or useful. Even in response to guided tasks, for example, the journal task for class 1 (*Describe the phases in today's class. What could be helpful in your teaching?*), there were few responses in the *Describe* category and most responses were in the *Explain* or *Adapt* categories (responding to the second part of the question).

Compare and *Contrast* comments were the most numerous in the data. *Describe* and *Adapt* comments were the least numerous in the data. This may be because 'looking for parallels' implies making a comparison and does not imply describing events that may lead to a comparison, or using a comparison to lead to a further idea.

(ii) Personal Themes
In my interviews with students about the class transcripts, I asked them to read the transcript and identify aspects of the class that could help them with their teaching. Some students responded to this by identifying a personal theme which had come up previously in our earlier interview. Here are three examples:

Example 1: Mary emphasized the importance for her of creating a comfortable class atmosphere both in a foreign language class and in this class.

- Especially the first couple of classes before you're comfortable knowing your classmates, what the teacher does to create a community environment is really important. I loved everything about the first class and I wrote about that in my journal. Everybody was really welcoming [..] I hope I will be able to establish a good relationship with my students, as I

think Isabel did, she was warm and friendly, and seemed open, smiling, eye contact. (Mary, Interview 1, 13/02/03, p.48)

- I like 'we'll all think together' I like that, the way that she phrased it right there made it sound like, ok you don't have to give me the answer now. Let's continue in our process of working on it, working it out, see if we can all come up with it together, I like that because it's less pressure, makes you excited to share our ideas without being on the spot. (Mary, Interview 1, 27/03/03, p.49)

Example 2: In our initial interview, Leah expressed concerned about managing groupwork in her class.

- ... in my class, they're excited and they want to say their things, but at the expense of practice in the target language, I let them go back to their first language and they have discussion that I think will help them to understand themselves and other people, which is a serious goal of mine, but I feel that I short-change them in terms of language use and practice. And I don't know how to force them into expressing themselves in the TL, especially in the earlier levels, when they can't. (Leah, Interview 1, 27/02/03, p.48)

This aspect of her teaching come up again when looking at a transcript of class 5.

- Just the very first thing, the fact that one group sits in a cluster and the other sits in a row, is I guess the first thing that strikes me because when I say, 'hey we're gonna work in groups', the girls will, well some of them will still be sitting in a row, and I say, 'no let's work in groups' and they'll be like 'heh heh' and then I'll want them to put their desks specifically in a certain way and they don't like it. So sometimes there are ones that like to stay in a row. So that's the first thing, and I guess I didn't notice that as much about ourselves which is we were making a choice to sit in those positions. (Leah, Interview 2, 10/04/03, p.50)

Example 3: Rengin was concerned about the themes of 'democracy and empowering learners.'

- They [teachers at this university] have all easy access. Teachers from the course are all approachable. You can go and ask the silliest question to them and they can answer. However in Turkey, teachers are at the top and reaching them is kind of difficult. They have spent most of their lives in reading and making research. And in order to bother

them, you have to have a really important issue to take their time. [...] And it's very hard for me to go to the professor to ask questions or to state my idea. But when we think of Professor Racine's classes, she made everyone else speak, she made everyone else to have a contribution to the dialogue that has been going on in the class. (Rengin, Interview 1, 18/02/03, p.88-89)

Rengin mentions this again when looking at a transcript of class 5:

- ...again it's a democratic situation that the teacher educator has created because students are coming up with a decision, who's going to be who. So in order to save the time, the teacher may say, ok Sigrid, you're going to be the teacher, Leah you're gonna be the student, read it. She didn't do something like that. Although it has no importance who is going to be who, she left it to students' decision, I mean, because to be an authority figure in class, you kind of make your students...your students is having a lot of hard times to reach you, if you present yourself as an authority figure. Do you see what I'm saying? (Rengin, Interview 2, 03/04/03, p.93)

Rengin, like Mary, also notices the phrase 'Let's think together' but interprets this from her own perspective of seeking ways to create democracy in the classroom.

These comments show a link between students' past experience, their concerns about teaching and learning and the aspects of classroom interactions that are significant for them. In asking students to reflect on the transcripts, I saw that they selected issues that they connected with on a personal level. These issues were often related to problematic issues in their own teaching or learning experience. It is also possible that – if we view parallel process as blocking development – it can limit the number of visible interpretations. These insights could be a useful way of accessing implicit beliefs about teaching and learning. It challenges the earlier discussion of using journals to access implicit assumptions and supports the value of seeking alternatives to narrative approaches (see Chapter 1 p.16 and Usher 1999).

Summary

The use of the categories: *Describe, Explain, Compare, Contrast* and *Adapt* revealed some interesting patterns.

Compare and *Contrast* comments were the most numerous in the data. *Describe* and *Adapt* comments were the least numerous in the data. This may be because 'looking for parallels' implies making a comparison or a contrast and does not imply describing events that may lead to a comparison, or using a comparison to lead to a further idea.

One possible interpretation of the low frequency of Describe comments was that this was a reflection of the structure of the task. This is contradicted by the fact that students responded with *Explain* comments even when the task used the word 'Describe.' Students tended to avoid purely descriptive comments, instead preferring to explain the reasons why an activity was good or useful. A possible interpretation of this is that perhaps students tended to notice and remember things about which they had formed a judgment. Or perhaps they judged descriptive comments to be less interesting or valuable within their cultural context. This suggests a pattern of processing that merges two possible steps in the reflective process and corresponds with the view proposed by Mason (2002) (see Chapter 1 pp.31-2) that observational skills can be enhanced by focusing attention on the skill of separating description from evaluation.

Explain comments were interesting in that they revealed assumptions about what is good (or bad) in teaching and learning and offered insights into students' beliefs and assumptions about teaching and learning. They may also have helped the students to explore some of their emerging beliefs in this area.

Some students used noticing of parallels to start questioning aspects of their own teaching practice. These examples moved away from more specific incidents to general principles of teaching and learning, seeking to make generalizations that might help them improve their practice. This confirms the view proposed by Tripp in the analysis of critical incidents (Tripp 1993) that generalizations from particular incidents can generate critical self-reflection (see Chapter 1 pp.32-3).

Finally, some students used parallels to identify themes of personal relevance to them in their teaching and learning. This provided insights that could potential to be used to articulate personal beliefs about teaching and learning.

The patterns emerging from this system of categorization suggest that this might be a useful way of structuring and training observation and reflection skills.

5.5 Development of awareness
Research question 5: How does student teachers' awareness of parallel process develop as the course progresses?

As a group, the student teachers became more sensitized to and aware of parallels throughout the course as a result of the journal tasks and of my interviews. The question I wished to investigate was *how* this awareness developed.

Apart from a general enhanced awareness of the topic, I was not able to discern any overall patterns of development that applied to all or most members of the group. When looking at the *Describe, Explain, Compare/Contrast* and *Adapt* categories, I did not see any evidence to suggest that there was a progression from one type of noticing to another within the individual student profiles. It was more often the case that an individual showed a tendency to use one type of response more than another. Mike, for example, tended to look for contrasting examples to support his viewpoint that the course was not relevant to his teaching context. Mary tended to look for similarities, hoping that her future classes would be small and motivated enough to use many of the activity types used on the course.

There were varying patterns of development in the perceptions of individual members of the group. Here are three contrasting examples.

Karin made some comments early in the course which indicated that the concept of parallels might be confusing for her.

- Because right now are we discussing, should we focus on how to teach something to students or how to teach teachers? Are we talking about regular students or teacher students? This is something I couldn't understand. (Karin, 24/04/03, p.151)

She seemed to enjoy the intellectual puzzle of it, however, and actively engaged with the topic in her journal as well as in our interviews. In her final interview, she expresses her ideas about it usefulness.

- The [My] first two journal entries were written from the perspective of a student who is used to receiving knowledge without thinking about how or why it happens. Looking at the last couple of journal entries I notice that I am becoming more observant of what everyone (the teacher, the students, the presenter, myself) is doing in class, and of how everything that is happening in class is related to the content of the class... I have realized how important it can be to be aware of the process you are involved in and to be able to change perspectives in order to see clearly what different participants of the teaching event are experiencing. (Karin, Journal entry 6, p.199)

Mike started the course by viewing the two contexts as completely different.

- When we started, Isabel was kind of trying to bring out points about, kind of what you're doing, how do you connect what you're doing with teaching a foreign language? My answer was there's no connection whatsoever because we're not teaching a second language, we might as well be studying physics or chemistry. I don't really see a real connection. (Mike Final Interview 08/05/03 p.62)

At the end of the course, he is much more willing to find similarities on the level of process. At the beginning, his objections were based on differences of content. By the end, he was more aware of similarities of *process*.

- I think a similarity would be that a lot of the readings we are doing, really the things we are learning about how to do a reading activity for your French or Spanish classes aren't really necessarily a whole lot different than how she is approaching it. [...] What I mean is, reading comprehension is reading comprehension you know, at least that is kind of what I got from last week's class. [...] the difference is I'm not focusing on the language. I don't have to worry for a second that I'm not going to understand something she'd saying. [...] She's not teaching English grammar. She's not focusing on my grammar, and

she's not going to come along and say 'this is not the right way to say this, let's talk about this grammar.' That's clearly a difference. (Mike Final Interview 08/05/03 p.62)

A contrasting example is that of Sigrid. In our initial interview, her view of the similarity between the two contexts was:

- I think, you know, how the teacher learns from the students and the student also learns from the teacher, I think I would classify that as a similarity. [...] A difference would be: the type of student here is different from what you would find in the middle school. Our interest levels are slightly different. (laughs) Here we're certainly here because we're interested in the topic and we want to learn about this. We all share some common motivations about why we're sitting in this class and about why we want to teach a foreign language. My students at middle school are there because they have to be there. So there is a motivational issue. (Sigrid, Initial interview, 13/02/03 p.104)
- A similarity being or could be argued, I guess, now this could be a difference too, thinking about the role of being the beginners and novices in the material, we're just novices in the material that Isabel is teaching us, and hopefully we will get to absorb. The similarity being that when I go into my classroom it's the same situation [...] My role is a difference. But I feel like it's the same set up or environment I guess. OK now for a difference. (speaking positively and confidently) Certainly the motivation. There's a big difference as to why we're sitting in this class in this program as oppose to why my students are sitting in my Spanish class. (Sigrid, Final interview, 08/05/03 p.112)

Sigrid's comments from the beginning and end of the course are almost identical in identifying a global awareness of the similarity in the relationship of teaching and learning versus the differences in specific contextual factors.

Summary
There were no significant patterns of development within the group in relation to development of awareness of parallels. One student who had initially rejected the relevance of parallels on the grounds of differing content, started to see its possible value on the level of process. One student that initially found the role-switching confusing, came to find it more familiar and of benefit to her learning. Two other students maintained their view that it might be distracting in class to

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switch roles, but possibly useful in later reflection. The other four students maintained their (positive) view of the topic.

Conclusion

Awareness: Investigating students' awareness of the topic of parallels, I found that students were very aware of the topic and had no difficulty with coming up with positive and negative examples of similarities between the different contexts of language teaching and teacher education. Their comments suggest that students were more aware of global issues related to teaching and learning when asked about parallels.

The data showed a variety of responses to the topic. Contrary to my expectation that those who were aware of it would immediately see its relevance, out of eight participants, two commented that it was distracting to focus on parallels at the time of the class, and one did not see the relevance of parallels to his learning. For him, the two contexts of the language teacher education classroom and his language classroom were too different to draw any useful comparisons. These data indicate a difference between 'awareness of' and 'attention to' the topic of parallels. All students were aware of the topic, but had different views of the relevance of attending to it.

Categories: Parallels were categorized according to whether they were explicit or implicit and further categorized according to whether they were noticed explicitly by the students or not. Many implicit parallels in the class that seemed self-evident to both the teacher educator and myself were not visible to the student teachers unless their attention was specifically drawn to them. On the other hand, the students also noticed many parallels that the teacher educator had not specifically intended, but were more general aspects of her teaching style. Analysis of the data supports the view that implicit learning through parallel process tended to focus on patterns observed over a period of time, such as a general principles of pedagogy or philosophy and that explicit learning depended on an explicit question or task from the teacher educator.

Students noticed both general and detailed parallels in the class. Their observations coincided quite closely with each other, but their interpretations of the reasons for these parallels varied. When asked to speculate about possible explanations of classroom events, their responses revealed some of their implicit assumptions about teaching and learning. This supports the argument that implicit aspects of experiential learning are not always apparent to students

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(despite being obvious to the teacher educator or the observer) and can possibly create conflicting or confused interpretations if not made explicit.

The data show that students switched roles frequently in class and when reflecting on class activities, whether or not such roles were explicitly assigned. Explicit delineation of roles may have helped to elucidate their reflection processes, but the process of role-switching itself took place regardless of whether it was explicitly guided. In some cases, students back and forth with ease, in other cases they found this role-switching distracting.

Timing: Reflection on parallels took place at different points along a time continuum (immediate and delayed) and could also be described according to whether it was student-directed or teacher-led. Immediate verbalized reflection on parallels contributed significantly to enriching later reflection. A comparison between immediate and delayed reflection showed interesting developments in thought processes on parallels. The use of class transcripts to stimulate recall provided unique insights into this process, helping to articulate observations that were not verbalized or not observed at the time.

Expressing parallels: When student teachers' reflections on parallels were categorized using a system of five categories: Describe, Explain, Compare, Contrast and Adapt, it was found that Compare and Contrast comments were the most numerous whereas Describe and Adapt comments were the least numerous. This may be because 'looking for parallels' implies making a comparison, it does not imply describing events that may lead to a comparison, or using a comparison to lead to a further idea. Some of the comments pointed to a possible danger of (over-) attention to parallels as it may encourage student teachers to suppose that all activities used on the course may easily be transferred to other contexts.

Reflection on parallels did not itself generate critical questioning. On the contrary, most students tended to stay with one initial interpretation, though between them coming up with a wide variety of interpretations.

The general tendency of all student teachers was to explain and interpret events and to neglect the descriptive phase of their observations. Nevertheless, these categories provided a possible way of evaluating levels of reflection and providing a structure for development of observation skills.

Development: Students became more aware of parallel process as a result of my interviews and the journal tasks. The majority of students maintained their view its relevance without significant change. Two students showed a development in favor of the topic. Drawing students' attention to parallels enabled them to articulate some of their implicit beliefs about teaching and learning and also helped them to develop a language to talk about their experiential learning, in some cases, applying the technical language of teaching to describe their experience.

Chapter 6: The teacher educator and the observer-researcher

6.1 The teacher educator

6.1.1 Awareness of parallels

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6.1.3 Response to reflective tasks

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6.2 The observer-researcher

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Chapter 6 The teacher educator and the observer-researcher

This chapter presents the data relating to the teacher educator and the observer-researcher. The data are linked to the research questions presented in Chapter 4 pp.103-4. Critical reflection commentary on the role and development of the observer-researcher is presented throughout this chapter as boxed text.

6.1 The teacher educator
6.1.1 Awareness of parallels

Research Question 6: What awareness does the teacher educator have of parallel process?
As was seen in the pilot study (see Chapter 3 section 3.4.2), Isabel reported that her choice of teaching methods was based on an awareness of parallels. Her choice of practical activities balanced with theoretical discussion is described in the course syllabus and Isabel explained the reasons for this in the first class.

- Why do I like this format? Because I think it's very important to link theory and practice. Asking 'why.' This is what I want to foster in you. Trying to find different answers to all the 'whys' we have about language teaching and learning. (Isabel, Class 1 transcript, 01/30/03, p.221)

Throughout the course, Isabel consistently used a variety of teaching methods that offered many opportunities for experiential learning. These methods included foreign language learning, simulations, transferable processes, modeling and microteaching (see Chapter 1 pp.14-21). This course design is consistent with the views discussed in the literature of the importance of reflecting content in process (Woodward 1988, Wallace 1991, Jamieson 1994).

As with the student teachers in this study, Isabel's awareness of the topic developed as the course progressed in response to the action research component of the study (the design and implementation of the journal tasks) and interactions with the observer-researcher. The development of the teacher educator's awareness of parallel process will be discussed in answer to research questions 6 and 7.

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6.1.2 Perceived relevance to learning

Research Question 7: How relevant does the teacher educator think parallel process is to her own and to student teachers' learning cycle?

(i) Relevance to teacher educator's development

One of Isabel's stated reasons for participation in this study was to enable her to gain some insights that would help her to improve her teaching. In my interviews with Isabel before starting the observations, she was very enthusiastic about the potential of parallel process to help her do this.

During the course of the study, Isabel reported that she found thinking about parallels especially helpful when planning her classes, as it helped her to think about the possible different parallels that were implicit in the activities she chose. It helped to clarify her goals. She also found that, when reflecting on her classes, it helped her to think about the reasons behind her choices of methods.

- Isabel: When I drafted and planned the exercise, I had a parallel idea in my mind.

  Ingrid: What was that?

  Isabel: Well it's a type of jigsaw exercise, where you are responsible for one issue in a text and you figure out your part and then you see how it connects to the other part and you figure out meaning in cooperation with the others. It could be used with any reading.
  (Post-class 8 conversation 10/4/03, p.127)

The following is an example of how she utilized parallels within the context of the post-class conversations to question and problematize her established routines.

- Isabel: Should I have made it more explicit to the other students and to Mike saying that in fact I rely for their own learning on their own participation and that it's our (student – teacher) collaboration which is something they should always use in their class? I didn't make that explicit, I said I'm going to do that and you'll see that it's going to help. But the fact of using one student to participate in teaching the class by doing a teaching demonstration and me using what he does to learn, could have been made more explicit, for him and for the others. (Transcript interview 10/04/03, p.135)

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This comment shows Isabel turning a critical eye on her own methods. Examining parallels for the students made her examine her own practice more closely. It provided a way of illuminating the implicit reasons in her decision-making process. Asking questions about whether she should have made a specific teaching strategy explicit generated a process of explaining and justifying her methods to herself. This illustrates the 'reflexivity' of parallel process, simultaneously creating learning opportunities for both student and teacher educator.

In general, it was difficult to separate the effects of using parallel process questions from the general effect of observing and discussing Isabel's classes with her. Isabel reported that the most significant improvement to her teaching was in the feedback phase of the demonstration lessons where she developed a more 'student-centred' approach. This happened as a result of our discussion attempting to clarify the goals of the feedback. Isabel was able to clarify that the goal of the feedback was to make sure students had understood the method they were demonstrating. She began to focus on getting students to describe the steps of the lesson and relate each step to the method under discussion. She also tried to use the learner feedback more as a springboard for her own comments, instead of focusing on her own critique of the lesson and restricted her comments to whether or not the teaching method had been accurately illustrated. Isabel felt this was a significant aspect of her teaching in which she was able to make some improvement.

- Isabel: In terms of parallel processing, what I described as doing with my students a year ago, I was doing a teacher-student interaction in my class, and now I am turning my feedback into more of a task-based approach. Now one step further would be to draw their attention to that, to show them that I am doing that. Maybe we could work on that for the last classes. We have never asked them for detailed report of how I give feedback.

(Post-class 9 conversation 17/04/03, p.131)

This again illustrates the 'reflexivity' of parallel process. Isabel tried to develop her approach by making her 'espoused theory' (the theory she is telling her students to use) more congruent with her 'theory-in-use' (the methodology she is using in her class) (Argyris and Schön 1974 pp.23-4). It may represent one step in the process of refining her teaching methods so that they are more student-centred. It is possible that in future Isabel will continue thinking of ways that might make her feedback more student-centred and that, if she were to follow this through, she might start to

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question the extent to which she controls and guides student input. If she were to take the step of asking for feedback on her feedback, it would also be a way of incorporating a more student-centred approach.

Towards the end of the course, Isabel had begun to question her new feedback strategy. She felt she was putting too much emphasis on description in the debriefing stage of the class and this was taking up too much time.

- Isabel: I felt the debriefing was good but I felt they might have been a little bored doing it because I was hairsplitting maybe? you know what I mean? I was getting too specific and too picky on stuff maybe [...] today this approach of describing the steps and then analyzing that... today I thought maybe I pushed it a little too much, and invalidated my nice approach.

(Post-class 11 conversation 08/05/03, p.132)

This shows Isabel again going through the reflective cycle: problematizing, acting, reflecting, adapting and trying out new hypotheses (Elliott 1991, Tripp 1993, Wallace 1998, Tsui 2003).

(ii) Relevance to student teachers' development
Isabel was positive towards the idea that thinking about parallels would encourage students' reflective skills. The concept and design of the journal tasks were based on the assumption that raising awareness of parallels would benefit students' reflective development. When reflecting on her classes, Isabel often suggested ways of making parallels more explicit in order to benefit the students more (quoted above).

Towards the end of the course, however, Isabel had some reservations about the relevance of parallel process for her students. Her concern was that she had paid too much attention to 'learning activities' in her planning and not enough to the content. This related to her more general doubt about the relevance of experiential learning activities to her teaching goals.

- Isabel: I just have this doubt or insecurity that sometimes I feel that maybe they would like just content explained to them, once in while, without all these games. ...I wonder how satisfied they are about the format? Maybe they felt today 'well it's so content-

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heavy, why doesn't she start with: 'A' this is this term, it means that' ...make sure
everybody understands, you know...

(Post-class 8 conversation 10/04/03, pp.127-128)

Summary

Isabel's response to the relevance of parallels was positive. She reported that the opportunity to
discuss her classes, articulate her beliefs and discuss problematic issues with the observer-
researcher using the perspective of parallels was a very beneficial process for her. At the
beginning of the course, she was positive about its relevance to the students, but by the end of the
course, she reported some negative effects in detracting from the focus on content.

6.1.3 Response to reflective tasks

**Research question 8: How does the teacher educator respond to the use of reflective tasks
and to student teachers' responses?**

(i) Journal tasks

As described in the research plan (see Chapter 3), the action research component of the study
involved the introduction of journal tasks to facilitate student reflection on parallels. In this
section, I present my observations of the teacher educator's response to implementing these
journal tasks, as well as her responses to students' responses.

There were six journal tasks altogether (see Appendix 1 for list of tasks). These tasks were
designed in collaboration between myself and Isabel.

In analyzing Isabel's responses to implementing the journal tasks, the tasks fell into two
categories: 'low-risk' tasks where she appeared to feel confident of predicting the students'
responses, or where reflection was not on her teaching but on some other aspect of the class. And
'high-risk' tasks where students were asked to comment directly on her teaching.

An example of a low-risk task was journal task 1: *Reflect on today's class. Describe the various
phases of the class. What could be helpful in your teaching?*

Isabel was very positive about this journal task. The class had included a variety of mixer and small group activities and Isabel had already elicited some reflection on them in class. The student responses to this journal task were all extremely positive, commenting on both practical and theoretical principles illustrated in the class and containing suggestions for adapting them to their language teaching. Isabel's response to this journal task was that she found the students were almost too knowledgeable about parallels and there was nothing to teach them.

> *Reflection:* Here I discovered a difference in our understanding of the purpose of the journal tasks. Isabel had expected that the journal tasks would *teach* students how to be aware of parallels, whereas I had expected the tasks to encourage students to explore and articulate their perceptions of parallels.

An example of a high-risk task was journal task 2: *What did you notice about the method, approach and design of today's class and what does it tell you about the instructor's view of learning?*

This journal task was intended to encourage deeper reflection by the students on Isabel's general teaching style and principles. Class 2 had been a student debate where each pair of students had to argue the case for a different teaching method (for example, the natural method versus the audio-lingual method). The assigned reading had been about the differences between the terms: design, approach and method. This journal task was intended to check whether students were able to apply the concepts of the class to their experiential learning in the class. At the same time, it would show Isabel what aspects of her course design, approach and method were evident to the students in this class.

Isabel was nervous about this journal task. Although, as these journal tasks were part of the students' course evaluation, it is questionable whether they would contain anything but positive feedback. This seemed to be a 'high risk' task in that the results could be quite difficult to predict and might elicit some possibly negative feedback. The main difference between this class and the previous one was that the focus had been on the content, not on the method.

The student responses to this task provided some illuminating interpretations of the debate process.

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- These procedures seem to indicate that you, the professor, view the content of this class not as something to be mastered, but rather as something to be wrestled with and further understood. It seems that you believe there is trustable evidence to better understand but that you also believe that there is not a clear answer, a sure method. Learning for us, then, is not mastering the material but rather takes place as we undergo this process of making sense of the experiences, interpretations and work of others as well as our own. It is clear that it is very unlikely that there will ever be a moment in which this process will end. Rather, it is infinite evolution and lifetime learning. (Leah, Journal entry 2, p.163)

- It was at this point, in the lesson, that you, the instructor gave feedback through the guise of participation in the discussion. By inserting positions or previously unmentioned rebuttals, feedback was given in the form of both clarification and illumination. Where an idea we hadn't thought of was going unquestioned, you presented the question. (Mary, Journal entry 2, p.164)

When Isabel received the journal entries, she was surprised and relieved to see how well students had understood the principles behind her choice of methods in this class.

Reflection: Isabel's response to this journal task challenged my expectation that she would be too biased in favor of using parallel process because of my influence. At this point, I became aware of the difficulties involved in using tasks that raised awareness of parallels and I began to focus on this aspect of the teacher educator's response.

As the course progressed, Isabel opted for low-risk tasks that would avoid focusing on her teaching and served more as a comprehension check of whether students had understood the concepts covered in the course (Journal tasks 3, 4 and 6. See Appendix 1).

Another opportunity to use the journal task to get feedback on teaching methods came up in class 7. This class was about evaluation and testing. In my pre-class conversation with Isabel, we had discussed whether students could design their own test for this course as a classroom task. We developed the following task:

Journal Task 5: What kind of questions/tasks do you expect on the final exam? Please write 1 or 2 questions that would reflect what we've done in this course so far.

Isabel decided to turn this into a short reflective class at the end of the class. She reported feeling nervous about the possibility that she might get negative feedback from the students and that she might find out that they had not understood what she had wanted them to learn. She reported starting to doubt the pedagogical purpose and validity of the task during the class.

- Isabel: And during the whole class I was looking at this (the task) and I was thinking, am I going to say it or not? Is it really...I am using the class content to get something for me. Am I really...? In other words, I am asking them, I am showing them that I am constantly modeling because I am asking them to do something about our testing that they should do with their students. But I was like, I don't know why, I was thinking, well that's really for my own interest. It's not...but how does it help them learn? Does it help them? Suddenly I was not too convinced about the pedagogical reason. Except my own interest, OK I want them to feel that my testing is related to the class content. But I was not too sure that by doing that they were learning something about how to design a test for their own class. I was not too sure about that.

(Post-class 7 conversation 3/4/03, p.125)

When it came to the end of the class, Isabel had run out of time to do the task in class, so she read the question aloud, saying that she had intended to do this task in class, but they didn't have time. The students immediately asked if this was to be the next journal task. In fact, it seemed so logical to them to that this would be the journal task that they all immediately wrote down the task and were eager to answer it.

There was potential here for Isabel to make explicit how this task was an illustration of student-centered assessment, but it is possible that this aspect did not seem very evident to Isabel at the time. The queries and self-doubts mentioned above revealed one of Isabel's deeply-held criteria for pedagogical validity: 'What input will students gain from this task?' She seemed confused about whether the task was an example of modeling ('Let's experience how student centered assessment can work.') or an example of getting feedback on her teaching ('I'd like to check whether your opinions about what you have learned match my intended learning outcomes.')

This suggests that the role-switching noted earlier as confusing for students, may also be confusing for teacher educators.

The results of this journal entry were mixed. They ranged from very reflective suggestions for exam questions to responses from students who said they did not like exams and did not think they were an appropriate way to evaluate the course. One of the responses to this journal entry mentioned explicit parallels. The exam question suggested by Leah is a thoughtful application of journal task 2.

- [A suggested exam question] Think back on a 'foreign' language class you have taken. Analyze the teacher's method, describing what you perceive as approach, design and procedure. Identify components of this method that you find yourself utilizing. Are these conscious or unconscious choices on your part? How do you plan to improve such choices? (Leah, Journal entry 5, p.193)

The answer to this question would provoke some deep reflection on the parallels between how student teachers were taught and the way they teach. It utilizes the parallels implicit in the 'teaching demonstrations'. It also focuses on a specific topic of the course, the differences between approach, design, and method.

Isabel picked out one journal entry which caused her particular concern. This was the response given by Karin.

- It is a hard question to write about. I guess questions for the final exam shouldn't be too specific, but they shouldn't be too general either. I would suggest something that would reflect what we have gained from this class and whether there has been a change in our teaching perspective. Perhaps one of the questions could be something like "Name three (five, seven?) major discoveries you've made in this class and you'd like to adopt into your teaching style. Explain why."
(Karin, Journal entry 5, p.192)

- Isabel: What worries me is ... she sent me one, and it was not as specific as Leah and she said, 'Well I could try to ask some question', well she's very vague, but....in her vague attempt she is very ...it's like asking an exam question that is a very impressionist question and by reading that I was a little worried, and I thought maybe it is a reflection of *what* I have taught, not *how*, but also what ....and then there is no.... *how* I have taught has acted a little bit to the detriment of *what* was taught.

(Post-class 8 conversation 10/04/03, p.128)

Karin's question attempts to synthesize the various elements of the course and would ask students to articulate a personal reaction to them. The question may reflect the general nature of the way the journal task was expressed. A more specific task (e.g. Choose three topics from this semester and write exam questions for them) would have produced more specific replies. Isabel's response to this reveals one of her (recurring) anxieties about the course, that is, that she was not specific enough in achieving her intended learning outcomes and that students will emerge from the course without a concrete idea of what content they have covered. This journal response seemed to have a negative impact as Isabel started to worry that her concern with teaching processes had detracted from her focus on the content.

Reflection: As part of my growing understanding of the difficulties of implementing parallel process for the teacher educator, I realized how easily these parallel process awareness tasks could seem to invite evaluative comments from the students. I had assumed that such feedback would be non-evaluative in nature. The process of observing the teacher educator's reactions made me realize that prospect of receiving possibly negative feedback would have a high impact on the self-esteem of the teacher and therefore made this a high-risk activity. This relates to the issues discussed earlier of evaluative versus non-evaluative observation (see Chapter 1 p.30 and Elliott 1990, Mason 2002).

(ii) Reflective tasks in class

There were many opportunities for parallels to be made explicit in class but, for the most part, they remained implicit. The main method of reflecting on parallels was through the reflective tasks used during and after the teaching demonstrations, when students reflected on their roles as learners. Apart from these tasks, Isabel also tended to mention parallels in the opening or closing frame of an activity.

- I'd like to include your comments from the class as I think you would do in your own language class when you assess your students. I think it's nice to have everybody participate in the feedback because it makes students more aware about what successful communication involves.

(Class 7 transcript 04/04/03, p. 256)

- Isabel: So in other words the material we are trying to read tonight together, I'm breaking it down into manageable segments, which are those key concepts, trying to have you relate them among one another, and I'm trying to check your comprehension by all we are doing.

(Class 10 transcript 01/05/03, p.268)

In these examples, Isabel explained the phases of the class and her purpose in using them. This tended to emphasize the modeling aspect of her teaching process, not the experiential aspect. Isabel rarely asked students to reflect on either her teaching methods or on their experiential learning processes in the class.

One exception was in class 1 after the icebreaker, when Isabel asked, 'What did we do? What did we achieve?' and elicited many student comments on the purpose and relevance of the activities to their class and to language learning. Another exception was in class 10 where Isabel elicited students' reading strategies to introduce the topic of teaching reading skills. In both cases, the activities were 'low-risk' in the sense that student responses were fairly predictable and avoided reflection on their learning or her teaching.

Summary
At first Isabel was enthusiastic about implementing journal tasks that would facilitate student reflection on parallels. Later, it became clear that it was easier to ask for reflection on some kinds of parallels than on others. She chose journal tasks that would focus attention on students' experiences as language learners, for examples, but avoided reflection on her teaching methods or on students' own learning experiences in her class. This meant that the opportunities to gain feedback on her teaching methods were reduced. As the course progressed, she started to doubt

the pedagogical validity of reflecting on parallels for students, that is, whether it was consistent with her teaching goals.

Isabel's interpretation of making parallels explicit was usually to 'point them out' or 'tell' students about them, not to ask students to explore and reflect on them. She preferred tasks that would help her check students' comprehension of the content. This was consistent with the overall context of the course content which was carefully guided and structured. This illustrates how the concept of parallels is interpreted according to the model of teacher education held by the teacher educator.

Reasons for not using reflective tasks to raise awareness of parallels
I had originally anticipated that the action research aspect of the study might lead the teacher educator in this study to be too willing to implement reflective tasks connected with parallels. On the contrary, there were many difficulties associated with implementing these tasks from the teacher educator's point of view. Several reasons for this emerged in our post-class discussions.

1. *Conflicting goals.* Isabel saw this type of reflection as taking too much time away from real content. It did not fit her concept of the learning outcomes of this course. This reason was most often expressed as 'lack of time'.

- ...I should plan like a 15-minutes little talk, pointing out parallel processing and using what happened today.

(Post-class 5 conversation 13/03/03 p.118)

- I really felt, I really think it's interesting, but I felt it's like ten more minutes debriefing about...it's hard with time...and [...]and I leave things at the level of the experience without debriefing enough maybe and relating it to the content, so then it was another thing.......

(Post-class 11 conversation 08/05/03, pp.133-134)

This comment shows that for Isabel, reflection on other issues is more important.

Combined with this reason is the fact that, despite paying a lot of attention to the teaching methods in her classes and using a variety of methods that were consistent with a communicative

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view of language teaching, Isabel found it 'too simple' and probably not 'academic' enough to spend class time on describing and reflecting on the experiential learning that was taking place. She felt that it would divert attention from the focus on content. As can be seen from previous comments, she feels that her job is to check comprehension of the content and she is worried about not achieving this goal. The methods are an interesting way of conveying information, but she does not consider it useful to spend time on making explicit the implicit learning gained from them. She feels that students will observe her methods implicitly, but there is no need or justification in spending class time on making them explicit.

2. *Being caught up in the moment of teaching.* Just as students sometimes found it difficult to observe and notice parallels whilst in the process of carrying out learning activities, Isabel also found it difficult to distance herself from the immediate flow of the class and notice metalevels of parallels. Focusing on parallels requires stepping back and creating space to switch viewpoints for the teacher educator, too. Not only noticing parallels, but deciding *which* parallels to make explicit could distract from the flow of the teacher's thinking process in class and make her less responsive to other aspects of learning (see Chapter 2 p.51 and Loughran and Berry 2005). This supports the view discussed earlier that excessive self-consciousness can inhibit more intuitive skills of teaching (see Chapter 2 p.40 and Claxton 2000).

3. *Presenting a model.* The problem of seeming to provide a model was a troublesome one for the teacher educator. She did not wish to be seen to offer one right way of teaching, but rather wished to enable students to read the theories, think for themselves and come to their own conclusions. She also reported it would be very stressful for her to feel that she had to model perfect classroom teaching all the time and didn't want to set up this expectation with the students.

- Isabel: I thought that my framing lately, I was always saying 'well we're going to do that' and 'this is going to be the activation of the background for our class' and 'this is going to be that' and 'this is what we were going to learn', and then - OK what did you learn? You learned what I planned! what I planned we would learn!

(Post-class 11 conversation 08/05/03, p.134)

4. *Anxiety / Lack of confidence.* Asking for feedback on one's teaching methods entailed the possibly of inviting possibly negative feedback. The results could be transforming, they could

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also be disorienting and could result in loss of self-esteem. For this reason, restricting the field of observation to avoid reflection on her teaching methods or on how students learned from them seemed a more comfortable option.

5. *The observer effect.* It must not be forgotten that the presence of the observer and the audio recording of all these classes may have contributed to Isabel's reluctance to risk any possible criticism. This must surely have added to the stress of asking students such open-ended reflective questions.

Conclusion

From the data obtained through my pre- and post-class conversations with the teacher educator, I found that she was aware of parallel process in her choice of teaching methods and was interested, curious and enthusiastic about the use of parallels to generate professional development for herself. She reported that awareness of parallels helped her to reflect on her own teaching when planning and looking back on her classes. It also helped her to articulate her teaching goals and improve her methods for achieving them. She noted improvements in her teaching by trying to create congruence between her 'espoused' theory and her 'theory-in-use', illustrating the reflexive nature of parallel process (Argyris and Schön 1974 pp.23-4).

Despite acknowledging the similar usefulness of parallel awareness for students in principle, the teacher educator did not see it to be of sufficient value to spend time making such parallels explicit in her own classroom practice. The reasons for not doing so relate to her teaching goals and her perception of the value versus the risk of obtaining potentially evaluative feedback.

In the use of journal tasks, Isabel avoided discussion of her own teaching methods and of students' real learning experiences in the class. There was a tendency to view student feedback as a source of potentially negative evaluative feedback. In the use of reflective tasks in class, the field of observation was carefully restricted. She also found it easier to tell or point out parallels than to ask students to explore and reflect on them.

Various reasons for Isabel's reluctance to use reflective tasks became apparent. These reasons included: an ongoing tension between the content- and a process-oriented approach; lack of

familiarity with the process of 'stepping back' from the flow of the class to make implicit goals explicit; feeling uncomfortable with the role of 'modelling' teaching methods; lack of confidence in asking for student feedback; anxiety caused by being observed.

If we are to agree with the view that *how* we teach is itself part of the content of *what* we teach (Wallace 1991, Russell 1997, McGrath 1997), then it may be useful to ask why, in a course on teaching methods, where teaching methods are chosen and planned carefully by the teacher educator with attention to congruence between method and content, would discussion of those teaching methods and the learning experience gained from them be considered inappropriate? What view of teaching and learning is being transmitted?

This question may be answered in a number of ways:
From the teacher educator's point of view, there was an ongoing tension between the goal of checking comprehension of content and the use of experiential learning methods. This conflict was apparent in the teacher educator's comments as to whether students might not prefer lectures and a general tendency to evaluate her classes in relation to whether content had been understood.

From the students' point of view, they were engaged in various types of learning activities, which they feel and know to be 'good', but were not asked to reflect on or make explicit the experiential learning gained from them. The reasons for the teacher educator's use of different activities were sometimes explained to them, but they were not encouraged to develop the skills that would empower them to start making such implicit learning explicit for themselves. Their traditional views of teacher and student roles were reconfirmed. More explicitness in the choice of process would help students to understand how they were learning and avoid confusing interpretations. If students do not operate from the assumptions and goals as their instructor, then they are unlikely to learn what their instructors hope for.

From my point of view, I observed that throughout all the learning activities, the content and learning were very carefully guided and controlled by the teacher educator. Her comments tended towards confirming, correcting and telling. This sometimes subverted the student-centred aims of her activities, which she herself acknowledged as her tendency to 'jump in' and 'take over'. A more participatory approach can lead to the gradual empowerment of the students. However, it can be threatening for teachers to lose their position of control.

What would the logical consequences be of introducing more student reflection on parallels on this course? On the negative side, it would not be as easy to cover a set of pre-planned content goals as set out in the course outline. It would demand more flexibility on the part of the teacher educator to deviate from her pre-planned agenda for each session, which may run counter to the culture of the academic environment, and of the students themselves. It would involve opening oneself to possible criticism and being able to deal with it in a way that did not affect one's self-esteem. On the positive side, it would develop the students' ability to think out the purposes and goals behind the teacher educator's choices of activities, bringing their experiential learning to a more conscious level. It would allow students room to negotiate and contribute to the content of the learning. It would enable the teacher educator to maximize learning on levels of content and experience. It would provide her with ongoing feedback on the effectiveness of her methods and generate transformative input for her to use in her ongoing professional development.

6.1.4 Interaction between the observer-researcher and the teacher educator
Research question 9: How does the interaction between observer-researcher and teacher educator affect the teacher educator's professional development?

By analysing the interaction between the teacher educator and myself I hoped to find out if there were any aspects of parallel process involved in these interactions and whether these were helpful or not to the teacher educator's professional development. It was during the post-class conversations that I started to realize that parallel process might be used to generate questions to help the teacher educator reflect on her classes. As the course progressed, I consciously attempted to apply a variety of reflective strategies in our post-class conversations. Below is a description of the different strategies I used.

(1) I focused on one aspect of the class that I perceived as a parallel and, by making the parallel explicit, asked Isabel if it would help her to improve the activity. For example, class 2 had used the structure of a debate and Isabel had reported feeling dissatisfied with students' understanding of the task. I asked her to compare the debate with how it might be used in a language class. I also tried to compare her feedback style with principles of corrective feedback in order to focus her attention on the style of the feedback, rather than the content.

Isabel's responses to these questions appeared to focus on the negative aspects of the class and why they did not work.

The easily observable parallels – for example, when students were involved in walk-around activities – did not seem to have a lot of importance for her.

- Isabel: I'm a little ashamed to say it was fun and it kept them active and they were moving. And I made them responsible.... [...] I just have this doubt or insecurity that sometimes I feel that maybe they would like just content explained to them, once in while, without all these games. ...I wonder how satisfied they are about the format? Maybe they felt today, 'Well, it's so content-heavy, why doesn't she start with: 'A' this is this term, it means that, make sure everybody understands', you know....

(Post class 8 conversation 10/04/03, p.127)

I had the feeling that these questions were not perceived as relevant by Isabel because they did not address the real goal of the activity which was to convey content. Reflecting on the method was not significant for her, or not academic enough, and she did not feel this was an appropriate way to generate reflection on her teaching.

(2) My second strategy was to describe each stage of the class and ask Isabel to reflect on it, hoping that she would mention some parallels. Parallels existed in all the procedural aspects of her classes and, given the context of our conversations - i.e. to talk about parallels – this might have revealed some of Isabel's intentions and observations concerning parallels. In these cases, Isabel's more important concern was with evaluating each stage of the class and saying whether it had gone well or not according to her existing criteria.

> *Reflection:* At this point I was aware of the differing nature of our expectations in the post-class conversations. My expectation was to talk about parallels. Isabel's expectation was to get feedback on her teaching. Again, my assumption that usefulness of parallels to generate reflection would be obvious to the teacher educator was challenged. However, I did not see these two aims as necessarily conflicting and I focused my attention on finding ways to resolve these two points of view.

(3) My third strategy was to point out parallels that I noticed in the class and see if Isabel had any comments on them. For example:

- Ingrid: Another thing I noticed was that you were using more personal experiences in this class, referring to when you taught French and Spanish. You don't usually do that?

  Isabel: I don't do that all the time...yeah for some reasons ... one particular reason is just showing them that it's a process and that I've been where they are and that you also understand that the important thing is to reflect – I didn't say it, I should have said it – to set up a reflective cycle, you read more, you learn more, you discuss, you reexamine what you have done in the light of what you have suddenly understood and gained.

  Ingrid: That was implied, wasn't it?

  Isabel: Yes, I should have made it more explicit. You see it's interesting. You say I haven't done it, I have always done it in my class but now that we talk about it, I can see how I might verbalize more about that. Saying: You see I'm doing this because...

(Post class 7 conversation 03/04/03, p.126)

- Ingrid: there were so many things there that they could turn around and use: the strategy training, the reflection, the group work, the dialogue, the little mini tasks, the pair work ...

  Isabel: Yes, but definitely I have to ...we can use all that...because I should plan like a 15 minutes little talk, pointing out parallel processing and using what happened today.

(Post class 5 conversation 13/03/03, p.121)

This strategy produced more interesting responses. Isabel reflected on parallels in a way that generated suggestions and further ideas. She frequently responded with comments that she 'should have' made the parallel more explicit and would do so next time. Although these plans rarely materialized in this course, it is possible that Isabel will continue thinking about how to introduce such reflective tasks in her class.

(4) A fourth strategy was to ask Isabel about what parallels she had used and how she had drawn attention to them.

- Isabel: When I drafted and planned the exercise, I had a parallel idea in my mind.

  Ingrid: What was that?

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Isabel: Well it's a type of jigsaw exercise, where you are responsible for one issue in a text and you figure out your part and then you see how it connects to the other part and you figure out meaning in cooperation with the others. It could be used with any reading.

(Post-class 8 conversation 10/4/03, p.127)

- Ingrid: What strategies did you use for bringing to their awareness the framework of your lesson?

Isabel: At the end of the game I said 'You see, it's guided interaction because I focused your attention on some segments, some key words.' I mean, I debriefed a lot!

Ingrid: So you mentioned it at the beginning of each segment, you kind of introduced it, and then at some other points you also referred to it ..?

Isabel: Mmhm, and I tried to refer back to what they had activated [...] but I wanted to do it because that's what they don't do. They activate the background but they leave it like this. What is important is the follow-up to brainstorming. For the students to see how the schemata helped them or don't help them, and how you use schemata by comparing your schemata with the data you find in the text, so it's like teaching them this hypothesis-testing process.

(Post class 10 conversation 01/05/03, p.131a)

This strategy helped Isabel to clarify her aims in using the activities and could possibly lead to improvements when using them next time.

Reflection: In using this strategy, I observed that asking 'How did you draw attention to parallels?' was interpreted by Isabel to mean that she *should have* drawn attention to them. It reinforced my awareness that in this context of asking for and giving feedback it is very difficult to avoid evaluative interpretation of feedback, even if that feedback is not intended evaluatively.

(5) A fifth strategy was to suggest some possible ways for Isabel to draw attention to parallels and see if she would start to introduce them into her class. One technique we discussed was to use opening and closing 'frames' as an example of good pedagogical practice. Perhaps as a result of this discussion, Isabel used opening frames at the beginning of classes 6, 7 and 8. Isabel reported feeling uncomfortable when she used an opening frame in class 6 because students' attention was very closely focused on her and it felt less interactive. 'Is it that they want me to lecture, that I

adopt this tone of just framing and lecturing?' (Post class 6 teacher educator interview 27/03/03) I later asked Isabel to reflect on the usefulness of these opening frames.

- Isabel: You asked me: Did the framing help me in some way? And my answer is: No, it didn't. It might have helped the students. But it didn't help me because I had framing on my notes every single time. From every class preparation.

  Ingrid: But you don't give it to the students? So it made no difference to you, but it might have made a difference to the students.

  Isabel: No, although maybe I am not honest saying it didn't make a difference, because as soon as you say something, you are more committed to it.

(Post class 7 conversation 03/04/03, p. 126)

Isabel did not seem convinced of the usefulness of this strategy for her, perhaps because it felt too teacher-centred, but perhaps also because it focused attention on process, not content. It also makes the class seem more self-conscious and less intuitive. This related to the discussion in the literature of implicit versus explicit teaching and learning (see Chapter 2 p.40 and Claxton 2000).

In our conversation after class 5, I identified several points in the class where explicit parallels could have been made, mentioning the reflection on learner strategies as an example. Isabel herself said that she had intended the reflection on strategies to be a model (but had not mentioned this to the students).

- Isabel: I wanted to at the same time have them reflect on their own learning strategies and model how you can teach your students about strategies by making them aware of their strategies and I'll probably do a little debriefing of what we did today next time at the beginning of class.

(Post class 5 conversation 13/03/03, p.119)

Perhaps as a result of this discussion, Isabel began the next class by making some parallels from the previous class explicit.

- Isabel: Basically, I wanted us to reflect on what we did or learned about listening comprehension in French and become aware of our own strategies, sharing them, assessing them, trying to find more strategies to add to our own repertoire would help us understand more about what we can do with our own students.

(Class 6 transcript 27/03/03, p.253)

It is in this class that one student notices and makes explicit a key parallel. (Mary: 'Can I ask a quick question? Are you modeling for us the strategy of thinking about strategies?') This spontaneous remark shows conscious awareness and uptake of what Isabel has been trying to demonstrate. It also clarifies the ambiguity of the last sentence as to whether Isabel means that teachers should encourage a variety of learner strategies, or get learners to reflect on their strategies. This is an example of how explicit attention to parallel process helped students to articulate the implicit learning in the previous class.

(6) A sixth strategy was to re-use some of the same questions that were used by Isabel in class and see whether Isabel would respond to the parallel and whether it would encourage any critical questioning. For example, after the class about learner strategies, I asked about her strategy for helping a student.

- Ingrid: So what kind of strategy are you using to help her learn?…as we've been talking about strategies.
  Isabel: My strategy is giving her feedback, and pointing this out and saying well this is very good but it's not for this topic.
  Ingrid: So what is your strategy? Name your strategy.
  Isabel: I'm telling her, re-read. Please read the chapters again. I have to make her aware.

(Post class 6 conversation 27/03/03, p.122)

As Isabel had used the question 'What did you learn?' at the end of the teaching demonstrations and had recommended that students could use this question at the end of a lesson, I also used this question with Isabel.

- Ingrid: What did you learn?

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Isabel: Today? Oh! If I wrote my journal! That's what I should write in my journal. Well since I had this awareness of what I was doing, speeding up, rushing things, I was also seeing how I would do it differently, so I reinforced what I call my new skills for giving feedback although I didn't necessarily implement them tonight, what I was telling you when I wrote the steps, I could see all the benefits I could get from writing the steps on the board and ...

(Post class 9 conversation17/04/03, pp. 130-131)

This question had positive results as it encouraged Isabel to summarize and articulate her perceived learning outcomes. Isabel noticed this strategy explicitly.

- Isabel: And being my observer, you are asking me the same question, I am asking them: 'what did you learn?' ...I'm just noticing...what I'm saying is that you are asking me the same question I ask them.

(Post class 9 conversation17/04/03, p.131)

Conclusion

By analyzing the data of my interactions with the teacher educator in this study, I discovered a variety of reflective strategies were used to try to elicit reflection on parallels. These developed intuitively over the course of the several months of this study. There was a development in my use of questioning strategies from more implicit and indirect (strategies 1,2 and 3) to more direct (strategies 4, 5 and 6). My expectation had been that the teacher educator would naturally respond to the topic of parallels by searching for ways to apply it to her teaching. Although Isabel reported benefits from discussing and thinking about parallels, there were few responses to these specific strategies to indicate significant insights into her own teaching. This may explain the development from indirect to direct questions as the course progressed.

As a result of using these strategies, Isabel seemed to become aware of parallels in her classes that she had not previously considered. Her response to this was that she might in future try to make these more explicit to the students. A second insight for me was that many of my questioning strategies were interpreted evaluatively, whereas I had intended my questions to convey a more neutral exploratory mode of inquiry. As with the student teachers, it was difficult

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to for me and for Isabel to separate description of parallels in her class from interpretation and evaluation.

It is possible that parallel process may be used as a way of raising the teacher educator's awareness of process-oriented approaches to teaching methodology and if teacher educator is already using such an approach – as in this case - may help him or her to clarify his or goals. This ability to articulate and justify methods may be described as a desirable teacher educator competency. Recent research in this field indicates that there is a growing awareness of the need to define such competencies for teacher educators (Korthagen 2001, Loughran and Berry 2005).

The concept of parallel process provides a structure for reflection (as it did for the student teachers) in that the question is framed quite differently, not by asking: 'Why are you using these methods?' but rather more indirectly by asking: 'How does your choice of process parallel a language learning class and how are you making this explicit?' Such strategies could be developed within a peer mentoring or self-study context. This type of questioning would allow the teacher educator to explore their own assumptions and develop their own strategies for making implicit learning explicit, whilst intentionally mirroring a learner-directed approach to teacher development appropriate for their classroom.

6.2 The observer-researcher

In this section, I will analyze the effects of the study on my development as an observer-researcher.

6.2.1 View of the topic

Research question 10: How has this research affected my view of the topic?

When I started this research project, I assumed that if a teacher educator were already aware of parallels and using them, that they would automatically see the benefits of making them explicit, thus benefiting more from their potential. As a result of interviewing the teacher educator in this study, I have a better understanding of why it might be difficult to make parallel process explicit. It may be difficult from a personal confidence point of view and it may also run counter to the teacher educator's beliefs about appropriate goals for the teacher education classroom. On the other hand, the responses I received from students have convinced me that whether or not the teacher educator makes the parallels explicit, they do in fact have a powerful impact on students' perceptions of learning, far greater than I had anticipated.

In observing Isabel's classes, I realized that at the time of teaching it is not always easy to notice the parallels or decide which of them should be made explicit. There are so many possible parallels at different levels that it involves on the spot decision-making about what might be helpful to highlight and how to draw attention to it in a useful way. It would be time-consuming and probably quite boring to draw attention to every parallel in every class. The skill of selecting which parallels are useful is probably one that takes time to develop. It can also be a little confusing, if the teacher educator is not entirely certain of his or her goals. It is probably also necessary for the teacher educator to develop a variety of strategies for eliciting reflection on them and feel confident in using them, just as language teachers need to develop skills for eliciting language from students.

As result of discussing these classes with Isabel, I developed a variety of strategies for generating reflection on parallels. I developed these strategies intuitively as the interviews progressed. If they had been planned, I would have introduced them more methodically and also I would have attempted to frame the strategies and describe them to Isabel before using them, in order to improve their effectiveness. Similar to the experience of students and teacher educator in my

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study, it was easier for me to see the parallels in retrospect, especially with the help of looking at the transcript.

6.2.2 Professional development

Research question 11: How has this research affected my professional development as a observer and researcher?

The process of carrying out this research has revealed to me a number of my own implicit assumptions concerning the topic. I understood that I had hoped and expected the topic to be interesting and beneficial to all the participants. As a result of the research, I started to understand why the various participants might disagree with this view and find it irrelevant or even have a negative impact on their learning.

I realized that the topic of parallels, far from being an observable and describable phenomenon which can be dispassionately described and analyzed, is one that is intimately bound up with the view of one's role in the learning / teaching process is and how one expresses the nature and purpose of that role.

My interactions with the teacher educator revealed that the topic of parallel process can seem to invite evaluative feedback. The dangers to self-esteem of receiving possibly negative feedback therefore become a barrier to trying to implement this sort of reflection. In retrospect, I realized that I could have been clearer about my goals of using parallel process to obtain non-evaluative feedback.

My research project developed from an emphasis on 'what is parallel process?' to an emphasis on the question 'what kinds of parallels do students notice?' My stance as a researcher became that of someone trying to understand the different points of view held by the participants in the study and resulted in a picture that was far more context-specific than I had anticipated. Nevertheless, I feel that the study has illuminated some key dimensions of the topic that extend current research in the field and would be worthy of further investigation.

6.2.3 Questions for future research

Research question 12: What further questions have arisen as a result of this study?

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The findings presented here raise many questions about the potential use of parallel process as a tool for teacher and teacher educator development.

(i) For teacher development

I have focused here on the possible usefulness of parallels for current or future teaching contexts. An avenue that emerged as a result of the study, and would be worth investigating further, was that perceptions of parallels revealed something about past experiences of learning. This would alter the focus to establishing connections between past, present and future learning experiences, perhaps within a narrative biographical research approach.

I combined interviews and transcripts to access student beliefs and perceptions, but it became clear that they gave only a partial picture of this complex topic. A variety of other research instruments could be used to generate relevant data.

Finding that the parallels noticed by student teacher tended to be of a general nature, and not always specific to language teaching, it would be worth investigating whether the concept of parallels was applicable to the teaching of methodology of other subjects than language.

A further issue which lay outside the scope of this study would be whether perceptions of parallels changed over longer intervals of time as a result of subsequent teaching and learning experiences, and whether they influenced subsequent teaching practice.

(ii) For teacher educator development

This study focused on one teacher educator within a specific cultural context. It would be interesting to compare the experiences of a group of teacher educators, perhaps within different cultural contexts, and explore the possible problems, drawbacks and benefits of introducing parallel process. More attention could also be paid to the origin and development of the teacher educator's beliefs and how perceptions of parallels integrate with these beliefs.

The connection between parallels and the development of teacher educator competencies is also one that could be investigated further. Finally, the issue of what kinds of parallels operate between levels of academic environment, organizational culture and course content is one that has yet to be explored.

Chapter 7 Findings, implications and conclusion

7.1 Summary

7.2 Findings and implications

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Chapter 7 Findings, implications and conclusion

7.1 Summary

The introduction to this study began with a definition of the term 'parallel process' and a description of its use in psychotherapy and therapist supervision. The definition of this term was then adapted to describe certain features unique to the teaching of methodology in teacher education. Various models of teacher education were presented in chapter 1 and followed by a discussion of the role of experiential learning, reflection, observation and self-study in language teacher education. Some examples of the use of parallel process in language teacher education were described and discussed. It was found that although references to parallel process are widespread, the concept has not been explicitly investigated in a detailed or systematic way.

Chapter 2 presented the connections between implicit and explicit learning in language teacher education. The advantages and disadvantages of articulating implicit learning were discussed and it was suggested that parallel process might provide the link between implicit and explicit learning.

Chapter 3 described the pilot study and the evolution of the research questions and design. Chapter 4 presented the background to the research design, methods for collecting data and ethical issues. Chapters 5 and 6 presented analysis and interpretation of the data and some tentative conclusions.

7.2 Findings and implications

In this section I summarize the findings, locate them within the larger framework of language teacher education and the literature discussed in chapters 1 and 2 and suggest possible implications. The findings are linked to the corresponding research questions presented on pp.103-4.

In this description of findings and their possible implications, it should be remembered that the context of this study was that of a graduate course in language teaching methods at a university in North America. The group of students, though ranging widely in terms of teaching experience, age, personality and ethnicity, were not randomly selected, nor were they selected as being

representative of any specific group. Further discussion of the limitations of the findings will be discussed in section 7.3.

7.2.1 The student teachers
1. What awareness do the student teachers have of parallel process and how relevant do they think it is to their learning cycle? (research question 1)

Within the chosen research context of a methodology course where a variety of experiential learning techniques were employed, it was found that students were very aware of both positive and negative examples of parallels, whether or not the teacher educator specifically drew attention to them. The concept of parallels was one that all students responded to with ease, though responses varied.

Contrary to my expectation that those who were aware of parallel process would perceive its relevance, out of eight student participants, two commented that it was distracting to focus on parallels at the time of the class. One other student did not see the relevance of parallels to his learning as he thought that the two contexts of the language teacher education classroom and his language classroom were too different to draw any useful comparisons.

The data show that students switched roles frequently in class and when reflecting on class activities, whether or not such roles were explicitly assigned. Explicit delineation of roles may have helped to elucidate their reflection processes, but the process of role-switching itself took place regardless of whether it was explicitly guided. In some cases, students switched back and forth with ease, in other cases they found this role-switching distracting and confusing.

These issues relate to the discussion in the literature of experiential learning (see Chapter 1 p.13-22 and Wallace 1991), the value of making implicit learning explicit (see Chapter 1 p.19 and Korthagen 2001) and the significance of role-switching from that of participant to that of observer (or self-observer) in developing professional expertise in teaching (see Chapter 1 p.32 and Richards 1990, Tripp 1993, Fanselow 1987, Mason 2002). The data confirm the importance of implicit learning from the methodology chosen by the teacher educator and also confirm the very individual nature of each student's response which makes such learning difficult to evaluate. They challenge the notion that role-switching is difficult and needs to be guided by the teacher

educator, suggesting instead that student priorities at the time of the experience play a more significant role in determining whether or not role-switching is of personal relevance. The data suggest that the parallels most clearly noticed by students are those that allow them to empathize with the experience of their students, viewing their own experience as students through their students' eyes, rather than viewing them through the eyes of a teacher.

Implications:

Students' general awareness and response to the topic show that they absorb impressions of the teacher educator's underlying pedagogical stance, whether that is explicitly intended by the teacher educator or not. The students in this study were very articulate about their observations of such parallels. Their comments revealed the importance of empathy in understanding how teachers develop an understanding of their learners. The student as teacher observes his or her own experience as a student and transfers this to his or her teaching context. For students, exploring both the benefits and the limitations of empathetic responses could be an important way of accessing the development of their attitudes and beliefs. For the teacher educator, an awareness of how students respond to parallels could facilitate a better understanding of student learning.

The data indicated a distinction to be drawn between 'awareness of' and 'attention to' the topic of parallels. All students were aware of the topic, but had different views of the relevance of attending to it. Teacher educators may overestimate the extent to which students have time and attention available in class to be aware of the specific procedures they employ. This is an important factor for teacher educators to remember when planning and carrying out classroom learning activities. It is sometimes easy to forget that students – even those who are studying in their own language, as in this case – can sometimes struggle in academic contexts and need to focus their attention on absorbing new material.

A further implication is that teacher educators may also overestimate the extent to which all students agree with the value of experiential learning. This may be due to a lack of familiarity, in cultures where such learning is unusual for example, but may also be the result of a well-informed personal choice. For teacher educators who wish to use experiential learning activities, this implies a need to spend time on understanding students' perceptions of experiential learning

and if necessary creating a 'frame' for interpreting and articulating this experience, through debriefing or other types of structured reflection.

2. What are the different categories of parallel process evident in the data? (research question 2)

Parallels on this course were categorized according to whether they were implicit or explicit, noticed by the students or not noticed. In the case of implicit parallels, students were more aware of general pedagogical principles than of specific strategies or techniques. In the case of explicit parallels, the teacher educator in this study chose to focus students' attention on specific concrete techniques or strategies. Students did not always notice the reasons behind specific choices of procedures in the classroom (as, for example, in the use of the information gap activity in this study) unless they were made explicit. They experienced these activities as students, but did not step back to observe it 'from the outside' or from a teacher's point of view.

When interpreting the transcript of one of their classes, students noticed both general and detailed parallels. Their observations coincided quite closely with each other, but their interpretations of the reasons for these classroom events varied. When asked to speculate about possible explanations, their responses revealed some of their implicit assumptions about teaching and learning. In some cases, these assumptions emerged as personal themes.

The predominance of implicit parallels in the data shows the importance of implicit learning from methods and approaches used on teacher education courses. The significance of implicit learning seemed more powerful than that of explicit learning. This challenges the theory that implicit learning needs to be made explicit in order for it to be effective (see Chapter 1 p.19 and Wallace 1991, Korthagen 2001). However, discussion of this implicit learning enabled students to articulate and discuss their emerging theories of learning. In other words, it supported other aspects of learning on the course.

The development of personal themes confirms the discussion in the literature (see Chapter 1 p.32 and Tripp 1993, Mason 2002) of the importance for teachers to identify events of personal significance for them in order to generate genuine critical reflection which bridges practice and theory. It also confirms the value of uncovering students' prior assumptions about teaching and

learning by attention to significant incidents, approaching them in a non-linear way that accesses personal experience more directly than through the creation of narrative (see Chapter 1 p.16 and Usher 1999).

Implications

Teacher educators may overestimate the extent to which students have time and attention available in class to be aware of the specific procedures they employ. For teacher educators who use experiential learning activities, this implies a need to spend time on creating a 'frame' for interpreting and articulating this experience, through debriefing or other types of structured reflection.

Implicit awareness of parallels, when verbalized, revealed differing interpretations of classroom events. Such learning is highly individualized, determined at least partly by the individual's own past and current teaching and learning experiences. Such parallels can possibly create conflicting or confused interpretations if not made explicit. For the teacher educator, this implies greater explicitness in the use of parallels should be accompanied by the awareness of the highly individual nature of such learning and the potential it has for helping students to explore their own learning development.

The exploration of students 'personal themes' through parallels offers a possible non-linear approach to accessing students' personal preoccupations (possibly linked to prior experience of teaching or learning) and points towards a dynamic and student-centred way of structuring exploratory reflection

3. When does reflection on parallels tend to occur? (research question 3)

Reflection on parallels took place at different points along a time continuum (immediate and delayed). A comparison between immediate and delayed reflection showed that perceptions of parallels developed significantly over time. Immediate verbalized reflection on parallels contributed to enriching later reflection.

These issues relate to the discussion in the literature of different levels of reflection and the difficulty of facilitating critical reflection (see Chapter 1 p.27 and Laboskey 1994, Stanley 1998,

Richards and Ho 1998). The data support the view that journal writing alone is not sufficient to facilitate reflection and is enriched by other types of reflective dialogue. It confirms the view that different types of reflection occur at different times and that there is a linear development. The data also confirm that reflection through interaction is more likely to encourage critical questioning.

Implications:

For teacher educators, this means that attending to parallels at the time of (or just after) the experience may not always yield the richest form of reflection. Making such parallels explicit at the time stimulates the process of reflection and is more teacher-led. The main benefit, however, may be that it facilitates subsequent deeper and more individual student-led reflection. This suggests ways of using reflective activities that combine spontaneous or immediate reflection with later individually reflective tasks, such as journals or homework tasks.

4. How do student teachers express awareness of parallel process? (research question 4)

When student teachers' reflections on parallels were categorized using a system of five categories: Describe, Explain, Compare, Contrast and Adapt, it was found that Compare and Contrast comments were the most numerous whereas Describe and Adapt comments were the least numerous. Some of the comments pointed to a possible danger of (over-) attention to parallels as it may encourage student teachers to suppose that all activities used on the course may easily be transferred to other contexts. The general tendency of all student teachers was to explain and interpret events and to neglect the descriptive phase of their observations.

Students' expression of their perceptions of parallels revealed something of their general preoccupations and underlying assumptions concerning teaching and learning. It also provided opportunities for them to apply newly acquired theoretical language to their experience. These issues relate to the issue of training observation and self-observation skills (see Chapter 1 pp.31-2 and Mason 2002). The data confirm the view that descriptive observation tends to be conflated with evaluative observation and suggests that such skills can be broken down into separate steps in order to develop higher level reflective skills.

Implications:

It is possible that the concept of 'looking for parallels' seems to imply making a comparison. It does not seem to imply describing events that may lead to a comparison, or using a comparison to lead to a further idea. When asking students to reflect on parallels, it is also important to indicate the range of different observations that can be made. It suggests that some training in the difference between describing and explaining, or in evaluative versus non-evaluative observation might be needed.

7.2.2 The teacher educator

What awareness does the teacher educator have of parallel process? How relevant does she think it is to her own and to student teachers' learning cycle? (research questions 6 and 7)

The teacher educator's response to the relevance of parallels was positive. She reported that she was conscious of this concept in her course planning and that the opportunity to discuss her classes, articulate her beliefs and discuss problematic issues with the observer-researcher using the perspective of parallels was beneficial. Despite acknowledging the similar usefulness of parallel awareness for students in principle, the teacher educator did not find it to be of sufficient value to spend time making such parallels explicit to students in her own classroom practice. The reasons for not doing so related to her teaching goals and her perception of the value versus the risk of obtaining potentially evaluative feedback. At the beginning of the course, she was positive about its relevance to the students, but by the end of the course, she reported some negative effects in detracting from the focus on content.

This relates to the issue of implicit versus explicit learning (see Chapter 2 pp.39-53). In this case, the teacher educator chose not to make her implicit learning agenda explicit and her reasons for doing this became clearer to her as the course progressed. There was a tension between her explicit and implicit agenda which, though not detrimental to learning, could possibly result in confusing interpretations. Many of the 'hidden' implicit goals (such as the planned congruence between content and process) were not perceived by students, or interpreted in different ways (see Chapter 5 p.123).

Implications:

The usefulness of parallels may be perceived by teacher educators in different ways, depending on their model of teacher education. In this case, I observed that the teacher educator came to a gradual realization that parallel process awareness – though interesting for her own professional development - was not relevant to her teaching goals. This implies that teacher educators who seek to enhance awareness of this concept should first clarify the goal and the possible effects of this approach and decide whether it is congruent with their teaching model. It also implies that greater self-awareness of implicit and explicit agenda will enhance the teaching and learning process.

How does the teacher educator respond to the use of reflective tasks and to student teachers' responses? (research question 8)

At first the teacher educator was enthusiastic about implementing reflective tasks that would facilitate student reflection on parallels. Later, it became clear that it was easier to ask for reflection on some kinds of parallels than on others. She chose tasks that would focus attention on students' experiences as language learners, for example, but avoided reflection on her own teaching methods or on students' own learning experiences in her class. There was a tendency to view student feedback as a source of potentially negative evaluative feedback. She preferred reflective tasks that would help check comprehension of the course content. She also found it easier to tell or point out parallels than to ask students to explore and reflect on them.

In the case of this teacher educator, various reasons for not using reflective tasks became apparent. These reasons included the tension between a content- and a process-oriented approach, lack of familiarity with the process of 'stepping back' from the flow of the class to make implicit goals explicit, feeling uncomfortable with the role of 'modelling' teaching methods, lack of confidence in asking for student feedback and anxiety concerning possible loss of self-esteem.

This relates to the discussion in the literature of teacher-guided versus student-led learning (see Chapter 1 pp.48-53 and Jamieson 1994, Loughran 1996). The teacher educator's response in this study brings together many issues centering on control of the learning process, and shows the teacher educator framing and reframing her interpretation of the concept of parallels to fit the

framework of her existing teaching goals. As with the student teachers, the data revealed many reasons why parallel process would be problematic for the teacher educator.

Implications

Contrary to my expectation, using parallel process to facilitate feedback on one's own teaching methods was not necessarily perceived as beneficial by the teacher educator. This implies that using such reflective tasks may be seen as negative and may in fact have negative consequences. The teacher educator's use such tasks will depend on a variety of factors such as the teacher educator's view of their relevance, personality and teaching goals.

How does the interaction between observer-researcher and teacher educator affect the teacher educator's professional development? (research question 9)

By analyzing the data from my interactions with the teacher educator in this study, I discovered a variety of reflective strategies for eliciting reflection on parallels. This use of parallels to develop and elicit reflection is one that emerged during the course of my post-class conversations with the teacher educator.

A second insight for me was that many of my questioning strategies were interpreted evaluatively, whereas I had intended my questions to convey a more neutral exploratory mode of inquiry. As with the student teachers, it was difficult to for me and for Isabel to separate description from interpretation and evaluation.

Implications

It is possible that parallel process may be used as a way of raising the teacher educator's awareness of process-oriented approaches to teaching methodology and if teacher educator is already using such an approach – as in this case - may help him or her to clarify his or her teaching goals. This ability to articulate and justify methods may be described as a desirable teacher educator competency. Recent research in this field indicates that there is a growing awareness of the need to define such competencies for teacher educators (Korthagen 2001, Loughran and Berry 2005).

Such strategies could be developed within a peer mentoring or self-study context. This type of questioning would allow the teacher educator to explore their own assumptions and develop their own strategies for making implicit learning explicit, whilst intentionally mirroring a learner-directed approach to teacher development appropriate for their classroom.

As with the use of parallels with students, the need to be aware of evaluative and non-evaluative strategies in such peer mentoring context would necessitate training and awareness from both sides.

7.2.3 The observer-researcher
How has this research affected my view of the topic? How has this research affected my professional development as an observer and researcher? (research questions 10 and 11)

In the process of carrying out this research, my view of the topic changed considerably. At the start of the project, I viewed parallels as external phenomena that could be observed and described. My view was biased towards looking at this from the teacher educator's point of view and observing how student teachers noticed parallels that had been planned by the teacher educator. In the process of carrying out the research, I realized that the concept could only be understood by building up a picture from the different perceptions of all the participants. Parallels in themselves had no meaning unless they had been perceived by the participants and in each case they were perceived differently according to the worldview held by that individual. Furthermore, my access to those perceptions was restricted by the extent to which those perceptions could be verbalised by the participants. In other words, I moved from a position of looking at parallels, to looking at how parallels were perceived, to looking at how perceptions of parallels were expressed. My stance as a researcher became that of someone trying to understand the different points of view held by the participants in the study. I realized that the topic of parallels, far from being an observable and describable phenomenon which can be dispassionately described and analyzed, is one that is intimately bound up with the view of one's role in the learning / teaching process is and how one expresses the nature and purpose of that role.

The methodology used in this study stems from this development of the observer-researcher's awareness. It became important to listen to the participants' reports of what they perceived and

how they expressed their reports. Only by taking their reports at face value and assuming that all reports were accurate and true for the individual concerned, could I contrast the different viewpoints to build up a bigger picture. My starting point was that students would already have some perceptions of parallels and my role as a researcher was to find out how they expressed those perceptions. In other words, I did not approach the question of whether parallels exist or not. The essential aspect of the topic that I wished to address was how are they perceived and what does this tell us about the nature of parallels? This decision was taken in response to reactions from students in the pilot study and was dependent on this specific context, but it is conceivable that students in other contexts might have difficulty responding to this research approach. This point is discussed further in section 7.3.

My epistemological stance is that knowledge about how parallels work can be gained by comparing and contrasting the different viewpoints of the participants and their way of expressing them. I have presented a literal low-inference interpretation of the data, purposely aiming to present the perceptions from the participants' point of view and quoting extensively from the transcripts in order to allow their voices to be heard. I also contrast my own voice so that the reader can juxtapose the assumptions and bias of the researcher with the data and reach his or her own conclusions.

Implications

This methodological approach used in this study is one that could be developed further and may have the potential to be used to explore the perceived experience of other features that influence teacher learning. It may also have relevance to developing research skills of teachers as the question of interpreting data from students is a significant aspect of teacher knowledge.

7.3 Limitations of the study

Whilst no claim has been made regarding the generalisability of these findings to other contexts, it is necessary to consider some of the factors which are specific to the context of this study in order to define the limitations of any findings. These limitations relate to the cultural context of the study, the influence of the research methodology on the data and the observer-researcher's personal bias.

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1. Cultural context

The cultural context of the study was that of a graduate studies course at a university in North America. The medium of instruction was English. The student teachers were a group of mixed ages, nationalities and languages. The teaching experience of those in the group ranged from none to ten years. All the students were familiar with the cultural assumptions and expectations of this type of graduate course, having completed either undergraduate study programs and / or other graduate study courses at this or other U.S. universities. Although two of the students and the teacher educator came from different cultural contexts, they were already acclimatized to the North American cultural study context. A detailed analysis of these cultural factors lies outside the scope of my study. However, some idea of what these assumptions might be are signaled in the data.

One example concerns students' perceptions of their role. Both Peter and Sigrid mention that as students they do not expect to be aware of the methodology being used to teach them because they are more concerned with learning and absorbing the content of the class (see Chapter 5 pp.108-110). Similar cultural factors emerge in the tension experienced by the teacher educator in finding a balance between structured input, which she believes the students want and expect, and a more student-centered approach to learning (see Chapter 6 p.151).

Another cultural factor to be considered is that all the student teachers in this study were very articulate about their responses to the topic. That is to say, they were operating in a verbal culture where students are used to expressing their opinions and did not see it as inappropriate to have opinions about how they learned. In another culture, it may be more difficult for students to say anything that may be seen to imply a critical awareness of how the teacher educator was conducting the course. Alternatively, my questions may have elicited negative evaluative feedback. The quality of the interview data in this study were very dependent on the informal and friendly relationship between the teacher educator and her students which encouraged students to approach me in a similar relaxed and informal way.

2. Influence of the research methodology on the data

The decision to inform the teacher educator of my topic and to be transparent with her about the aims of my research, whilst consistent with my ethical standpoint of transparency and openness (see Chapter 3 p.57), created a context which focused attention on parallels. The decision to

combine the two types of research role, that of observer/researcher and facilitator of action research, also created a context biased towards the noticing of parallels. This was a bias in the research design influenced by my findings in the pilot study that the aims of my research would be better served by asking participants what parallels they noticed, not by trying to find out if or whether they noticed any parallels. A decision to research the topic using indirect methods would have caused our relationships to be less honest and less trusting. The data should be read with the understanding that the participants were aware of the topic and were co-operative in trying to help the researcher.

3. Observer bias

As I have stated from the outset of this research study, I started with the assumption that perception of parallels is beneficial to student teachers and teacher educators. The process of carrying out this project has made me aware that this is not always the case. Nevertheless, I am aware that my assumption is a very context-specific one, based on my own experience of teacher education in an Anglo-Saxon cultural context, and includes the emancipatory goal that a greater degree of involvement by student teachers in how they are taught will benefit the quality of their courses. The purposes of teacher education, however, can vary widely in different cultures, as can the motivation of those participating in them, and therefore I would add the qualification on the limits of applicability of my study that it is appropriate to contexts where the participants agree on the mutual benefit of collaborative participation.

7.4 Refining the Model

In this section, I will build on the implications outlined in section 7.2 to develop a possible model for describing and implementing parallel process.

What is parallel process in the context of language teacher education?

Parallel process in the context of language teacher education can be defined briefly as the occurrence of similarities between processes in different contexts of learning: language learning, language teaching, teacher education and teacher development. These parallels exist implicitly and can be made explicit (by teacher educator or student teacher) in the context of teaching methodology. They can also be created, extended and more fully exploited using a variety of strategies which I describe below as a 'parallel process framework'.

These parallels can be described as operating on three different levels:

1. *Student teachers as participants / observers of their own 'real' learning and teaching experiences*

Student teachers observe their own learning process as student teachers, observing themselves and their peers. They also observe the processes being used by the teacher educator to facilitate their learning. This type of experiential learning often takes place on an implicit level, whether intended by the teacher educator or not, and is often highly individualized. Student teachers are not playing a 'role'. They are observing a real process from a different perspective.

These experiences can mirror language learning and teaching processes, although the similarities between contexts may not always be immediately obvious to the student teacher. There are probably many features of learning taking place that would not be relevant to a language classroom. These are still open to observation and attention, but student teachers would need to select those features of most relevance to language teaching.

2. *Student teachers as participants / observers of 'transferable processes' used to teach 'real' content (emphasis is on content)*

Student teachers participate in a process that mirrors language learning (for example, an information gap activity), but the content is relevant to the student teachers' real learning needs (for example, theories of learning). This type of experiential learning can be designed to create congruence between process and method as proposed by Woodward (1988) in her description of Loop Input. In Loop Input, learning activities are designed where the content mirrors the process. The parallels on the level of process are used to enrich learning on the level of content.

3. *Student teachers as participants / observers of 'contrived' learning and teaching experience (emphasis is on process)*

Student teachers play the role of language learners or teachers, observing themselves and their peers. They observe their own language learning and the process being used (by themselves, another student or the teacher educator) to facilitate their language learning. This type of experiential learning is often guided by the use of explicit tasks which are later debriefed by the

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teacher educator. These experiences are designed to mirror real language learning and teaching processes. The parallels between contexts are quite explicit. Student teachers are explicitly playing a 'role' or 'game'. The purpose of the role is to observe the process. Therefore, student teachers' attention is guided by the type of 'game' that has been chosen and the tasks they are given in how they are to talk to about it. The continuum of roles from 'real' to 'contrived' can be shown thus:

Levels of Parallels in Experiential Learning		
1. Student teachers as participants / observers of their own 'real' learning and teaching experiences	2. Student teachers as participants / observers of 'transferable processes' that facilitate learning of 'real' content (emphasis is on content)	3. Student teachers as participants / observers of 'contrived' learning and teaching experiences (emphasis is on process)
Real	------------→	Contrived

Figure 1: Roles in experiential learning shown as a continuum

The different levels of parallels can also be shown as concentric circles, illustrating how parallel process can work as a general framework or 'mindset' operating throughout the course and selectively highlighted by student teachers or teacher educator. This extended use of parallels can open up possibilities for feedback that can be useful for the teacher educator's professional development.
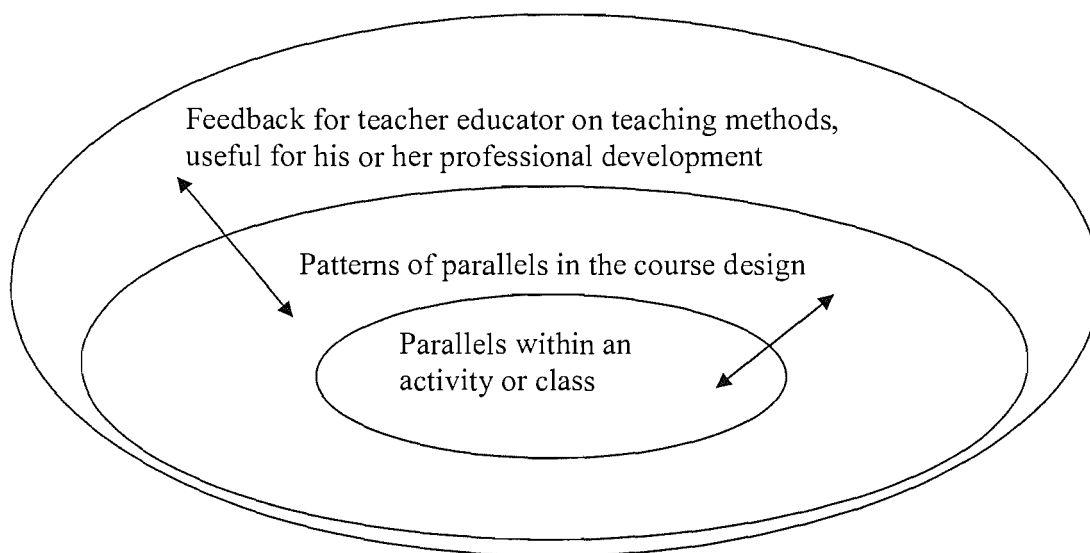
Figure 2: Levels of parallels shown as concentric circles

How does parallel process relate to models of teacher education?

Parallels are implicit in any methodology curriculum, but the extent to which they are made explicit and the types of parallels that are made explicit will depend on the educator's model of learning.

A rationalist model assumes that teaching is a science and as such can be examined rationally and objectively. The results of the latest scientific research are conveyed to student teachers who are to implement them in practice. For educators who hold a rationalist model of teacher education, attention to parallels might serve to highlight some of the content, as it did in this study, where the 'field of observation' was restricted and guided by the teacher educator to focus on the content. However, for education courses where the content of the curriculum is paramount, explicit attention to the process of learning, and of parallels within that process, may be seen to conflict the main goals, as was seen in this study.

An apprenticeship model assumes that teachers learn by observing and imitating the practice of other professionals. For educators who hold an apprenticeship model of teacher education, attention to parallels could serve to highlight strategies modeled by the teacher educator. As shown in my data, however, this has the drawback of putting pressure on the teacher educator to present a 'perfect' model of teaching and also can unintentionally focus on factors which would make the teaching model inappropriate. As the student teachers in my study noted, what works well in a class of highly motivated adults, does not necessarily work well in a class of unmotivated teenagers. Extensive use of parallel process would be problematic for educators who wish to avoid seeming to present a 'correct' model of teaching by modeling learning activities in their classes.

A competency-based model of language teacher education proposes that on completion of their course, student teachers will have acquired a specific set of knowledge, skills and attitudes. This model focuses on outcomes rather than process and tends to attach less importance to experiential learning. However, the approach of making goals and methods explicit is very consistent with a competency-based model and it is possible to see how the ability to relate personal experiential knowledge with theoretical content knowledge by demonstrating an understanding of parallels might itself be perceived as a desirable teacher competency. Such competencies could be seen as

generative starting-points for development, rather than achievement objectives, and provide a valuable link between experiential learning and outcome-based goals.

Explicit attention to parallel process fits best with educators who hold a collaborative and student-centred approach to teacher education, seeking to work collaboratively with their students to explore their own and their students' learning and teaching. Educators who use parallels in this way, without restricting 'the field of observation,' open themselves to direct feedback on their teaching to which there are both challenges and benefits.

What are the reasons for using a parallel process framework?
A parallel process framework can be used to extend and enhance experiential and reflective learning within a language teacher education program, particularly in the teaching of methodology.

One of the reasons for creating awareness of parallels is to create opportunities for a deeper processing of experiential learning. The teacher educator can use parallels to provide a model, but they can also be used to link instruction-based content with experiential learning. This makes experiential learning explicit and allows it to be analyzed and discussed, creating further opportunities for critical reflection. Reflective tasks can provide a systematic framework for developing student teachers' observation and reflection skills. They create opportunities for dialogue that help student teachers articulate aspects of their learning experience (past and present) which are relevant to language teaching.

The teacher educator's awareness of congruence or dissonance when choosing and implementing teaching methods can create opportunities for the teacher educator to reflect and develop. The teacher educator can obtain feedback on his or her teaching methods which provides input for his or her professional development. This leads to higher standards in teacher education and more rigorous self-evaluation in the profession.

What kinds of reflection are facilitated by attention to parallel process?
The data show that awareness of parallel process facilitated the following types of reflection:
- Student teachers were able to connect experiences of learning on the course with other learning and teaching contexts. This helps to bridge theory and practice.

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- Student teachers were able to describe their shared experience in class thus making implicit learning explicit and available for further reflection.

- Student teachers were able to use parallels to create a dialogue (in journals, in interviews) about practical and theoretical aspects of learning. This enabled them to confront different viewpoints and if developed further, this dialogue could lead to critical questioning. This promotes ongoing future professional development.

- Reflecting on parallels within an exploratory framework (by analysing transcripts in the interviews) enabled students to uncover their implicit theories about teaching and learning.

- The teacher educator was able to use parallels to maximize opportunities for experiential learning in class when planning and reflecting upon her teaching methods.

- The teacher educator was able to use awareness of parallels to pose critical questions to herself, creating a 'reflective dialogue' about her own teaching.

What are some of the problems of using a parallel process framework?

One problem for which I found evidence in my data, was the possibility that for some students, particularly those who struggle with academic learning, or who have little or no experience of teaching, it is an added burden that may seem to take away from valuable time spent on absorbing the new concepts and ideas being presented on the course. They need all their processing time and energy to play the role of 'student teacher in a language teacher education classroom' and do not need or want to expend energy by taking on other additional roles. This does not mean, however, that reflection at a later time might not be appropriate.

A second problem was that a student may understand the concept of parallel process, but not see its relevance. One student in my study, for example, was more concerned with finding specific answers to problems in his teaching and could not see the connection between a class of adults learning to be language teachers and a class of high school students learning French. For this student, the use of parallel process was irrelevant to his perceived learning goals.

Thirdly, a danger of using (or over-using) parallel process is that it may seem to over-emphasize the similarities between learning contexts. I do not see this as a drawback of a concept itself, since parallels can be used to draw attention to differences as well as similarities (as shown by the

contrastive comparisons made by students in the data), but there is a danger that students will over-generalize similarities if their attention is constantly drawn to parallels between contexts, especially if they do not yet have classroom teaching experience to draw upon.

The biggest problem I found with using a parallel process framework was reluctance on the part of the teacher educator.

One difficulty from the point of view of the teacher educator is that although the teacher educator may think that implicit parallels are very obvious to the students, this is not always the case. As examples from the data show, the students sometimes felt it necessary to clarify and make explicit the various levels of parallels in order to benefit more from the discussion. This may seem to take up valuable class time that the teacher educator would rather spend on more explicitly content-related topics.

A second difficulty related to that mentioned above is that the teacher educator may not wish to overemphasize the importance of process over content. This priority affects the teacher educator's choice of activities, as well as the choice of reflective tasks and the time to be spent on them.

Finally, as with any change-generating process, the greater the probability of generating real change, the more threatening it will seem to be. Parallel process acts as a 'mirror' to one's teaching methods, goals and view of learning. It can make the 'observed' person self-conscious. It can be very intimidating. A teacher educator would need to use this framework with courage and conviction to make it work.

What are some possible solutions to the problems mentioned above?
One way of approaching the problems for the student teacher is for the teacher educator to make explicit why reflection on parallels might be useful. This would model the process of making implicit theories of learning explicit and would also establish a common vocabulary for talking about parallels. For students who find it distracting to focus on process when their attention is absorbed by concentrating on content, it may help to clarify roles so that the tasks are separated in time. If students are used to thinking of their learning on the course from a 'student's eye

view', this will help them to transition to a pedagogical point of view. This frame will facilitate referring to parallels at later times without having to go into extensive explanations.

One way of approaching the difficulty of using parallel process from the teacher educator's point of view is for the teacher educator gradually to introduce elements of parallel process awareness and keep a record of the learning process, sharing this with students. These tasks could develop from more prescriptive teacher-directed tasks (which are easier to use) to more exploratory tasks (which are less predictable). Using a peer/mentor learning environment and a variety of mentoring strategies as suggested in this study might be another way of enabling a teacher educator to consider using a parallel process framework.

7.5 Practical Implications

The following are some suggestions for implementing a parallel process framework. Some or all of these strategies may be incorporated into an existing course syllabus to enhance student teacher and teacher educator awareness of parallels.

1. Framing experience

Providing a frame at the beginning and ending of a course can help student teachers to become aware of the concept and make explicit the ways in which it can be used to facilitate observation and reflection skills. In my observation data, the 'get-to-know-you' and discussion activities in the first class acted as a frame in conjunction with reflection tasks to help students discuss and reflect on aspects of experiential learning in these activities. Once the concept has been established, it can be referred to more briefly at subsequent points in the course, and need not involve repeated time-consuming explanations or discussion.

2. Framing roles

An intrinsic part of making the concept explicit is the naming and framing of roles. Student teachers can be encouraged to look at learning activities from multiple viewpoints (as language learner, student teacher, teacher and observer) using different role-framing strategies. In my observation study, an example of this type of framing was provided by pre- and post- activity mini questionnaires e.g. 'What did you learn from this as a teacher/ as a learner?' which were used to facilitate de-briefing. Student teachers were also assigned specific roles with differentiated tasks within learning activities i.e. specific students were assigned specific roles of

language teacher, learner or observer. The data show that such role-framing helped student teachers to move from one role to another without confusion.

3. Training observation skills

Developing the ability to stand back and observe one's own and others' teaching/learning behaviour is an important feature of using this framework. Establishing stages of observation and breaking it down into its component parts can help to train this skill. The data show, for example, student teachers' tendency to combine descriptive and evaluative comments and the danger of over-emphasizing similarities. Both of these risks can be minimized by making explicit the phases of observation that distinguish description from explanation and evaluation. Establishing the role of the (self-) observer in the reflective process can also be done by collecting classroom data in the form of microteaching observation notes, journals, class transcripts or videos in order to emphasize the different skills of description, interpretation and evaluation.

4. Establishing the field of observation

Establishing exactly what is to be viewed as within the parameters of observation is also an important consideration from the point of the student teacher as well as of the teacher educator. The data show that student teachers were not always able to notice aspects of classroom events while they were participating in them, but on later reflection they were able to speak about these events and remember what they had felt and noticed at the time. This kind of reflection can be guided, to a greater or lesser extent, by the teacher educator. In my study, for example, students were guided by reflective tasks to look at non-verbal behaviour or learning strategies used by other students in class. In my interviews using transcripts, they reflected more generally and with less guidance on methods used by the teacher educator.

5. Using parallel process questions

By developing a variety of strategies to elicit and generate observations and reflection on parallels, students may learn to generate questions that will enable them to move forward in their teaching. These questions may be:

a) For individuals: to reflect on individual experiences of learning and teaching, enabling student teachers to identify personal themes in their own teaching and learning assumptions, for example, through the use of journals or individual class-based tasks.

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b) For groups: to reflect on shared group learning experiences enabling student teachers to verbalize their teaching and learning assumptions in a reflective dialogue with their peers.

c) For the teacher educator: to question and make transparent the choices available to the teacher educator in his or her course design and implementation, for example, through sharing explicit use of student feedback, through a journal shared with the group, through verbalizing inner reflective dialogue in the classroom, through dialoguing with a peer or mentor and sharing the results with the group.

In the framework described above, parallel process is used as an analytical tool to facilitate systematic reflection. I believe it is a powerful tool that can develop observation and self-observation skills and can be used to generate genuine critical reflective questioning which will establish the foundations for lifelong professional learning.

7.6 Conclusion
By investigating the topic of parallel process, this study contributes to knowledge in teacher education in the following ways.

1. It was found that the concept of parallels, though widely referred to in the literature of experiential learning and reflection, has not yet been systematically described or investigated in detail. This study has shown that this topic is a complex one that changes over time, according to each individual's perceptions and according to their view of the teaching-learning process.

2. By investigating the effects of introducing the concept of parallels, this study has illuminated some of the key dimensions of the topic. It has shown the pervasive influence of parallels on implicit and explicit levels of learning. In addition to showing how parallels can benefit professional development, it has also shown examples of reasons why they might be confusing, difficult or unhelpful.

3. By recording the steps of the process of carrying out this study, it is hoped that other studies may be carried out to compare these results with other contexts in order to evaluate the transferability of these findings.

Appendices

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Appendix 1: Journal Tasks

Journal Task 1: Reflect on today's class. Describe the various phases of the class. What could be helpful in your teaching?

Journal Task 2: What did you notice about the method, approach and design of today's class and what does it tell you about the instructor's view of learning?

Journal Task 3: Describe an interaction in your class that shows an example of real communication.

Journal Task 4: Use the notes you took today after the teaching demonstrations and reflect on your role as a learner. What did you learn about yourself as a learner? What did you learn about your peers' learning styles? How did your peers' reactions as foreign language students help you to learn about the method demonstrated? How important is it for you as a teacher to refine your skills in observing your students' reactions and learning styles? Give some examples from your classes.

Journal Task 5: What kind of questions/tasks do you expect on the final exam? Please write 1 or 2 questions that would reflect what we've done in this course so far. If you had to answer a self-evaluation questionnaire about our class, what kind of criteria would reflect your learning in this class? What changes or improvements would you like to make in your own way of gathering information, assessing proficiency, and awarding grades in your own teaching context?

Journal Task 6: (Final journal entry completed after end of course.)
a) On the first day of class you wrote in which area you wanted to improve most. Has this happened or not? If so, how did the class help you to do so?
b) Are there patterns in your journal entries? Does rereading these entries help you to better understand what you have learned throughout the semester?
c) Have your observation skills developed over the course of the semester?
d) How has your understanding of the quote used in the first class changed over the semester?

Appendix 2: Transcript used in interviews

[Note: This is the first part of class 5, March 13, 2003. See pp.239-251 for full transcript]

[Isabel stands behind the desk at the front of the class.]

Isabel: I want to start right away.

[Isabel gives out hand-outs to be passed to each student. The handouts contain two short excerpts of transcripts from two different lessons. It also contains written instructions on analyzing the communicativeness of these interactions.]

Isabel: Look at page 3 of this handout. Page 3 tells you what to do.

[Isabel reads the instructions aloud. The class divides into two groups, according to the instructions. The first group looks at excerpt 1. The second group looks at excerpt 2.]

Isabel: So start right away. You have 10 minutes to do that. Only 10 minutes.

[Group A (Sigrid, Karin, Rengin, Leah) sits in a cluster, group B (Mike, Peter, Mary, Myra) stays seated in a row.]

Isabel [to whole class]: You might want to divide the work.

[Group B]

Mary [to Peter]: Do you want to do why it is? I'll be the delegator.

Peter: Sure.

Mary [to Marilyn]: OK then you'll do why it's not? [to Peter] and you and I will work on how we would change it?

[Isabel stands at the teacher's desk while the group work is going on. She sorts through the papers on her desk. She checks that the OHP is functioning. She does not visit the groups.]

Sigrid: We don't know what we're doing. It's very quiet for groupwork!

[Group A]

Peter [to Mary]: Does SS mean...

Mary: students.

Peter: But they're different students right?

Mary: Oh ..yes

Peter: So in communicative language teaching that means negotiation of meaning, right?

Mary: The instructor needs to ask open questions, these are all yes/no....So another way to make it more communicative, they wouldn't stop to say Do you understand, they would just keep going

and then using context clues they would negotiate the meaning, instead of stopping and saying, do you understand the word twins?

Peter: Or change it from the yes/no format to a more interactive .... Wouldn't we actually want to take this part of the conversation...

Mary:....And put it at the top, yes.

Peter: To start the discussion.

Isabel: You have 4 more minutes. [Isabel remains standing at the teacher's desk and checks the OHP.]

Mary: I wonder if they could ask each other questions? They could get in pairs and ask each other what they know about twins.

Myra: That's a wonderful idea.

Peter: They're mostly getting yes answers or not even responding. There is not really any negotiation of meaning. And then at the very end when you finally have some communication, some meaning is being exchanged, the bell rings and the class is over.

Mary: She could have focused on that from the beginning. I still don't know what the instructor's goal was. To teach them about twins or to get them to know....Why would she ever allude to the fact that it might be bad to have a twin? Who's gonna say it's bad to have twins when there are twins in the room?

7. 13 pm

Isabel: OK let's get back together and finish up thinking and we'll think all together. We're going to look at the first interaction.

[Isabel switches on the OHP to show the first dialog.]

Isabel [to Sigrid]: Do you want to read it?

Sigrid [to Isabel]: Should I be both the student and the teacher?

Isabel: No, Leah you can read the other ...

Sigrid: Who do you want to be Leah?

Leah: I'll be the teacher.

Sigrid: OK

[Leah and Sigrid read the script aloud.]

Isabel: OK, so what are some of the principles of communicative language teaching that you can see here? How or why is this interaction communicative?

Appendix 3. Sample Student Profile: Sigrid

[Note: This student profile is interspersed with questions that I wrote to myself as a researcher while reflecting on my analysis.]

Sigrid is from the U.S. She has been teaching Spanish at a middle school (10-14 year-olds) for 6 years. She started teaching before she had finished her degree and she describes her teaching development as a 'process of trial and error,' that is to say, she was faced with the practical problems of the classroom before having had a lot of the theoretical background. She grew up bilingual in English and German and she feels that this gives her a common ground with many of her students who are also in bilingual (Spanish and English) families. She loves her job and is very involved with her students both in and out of class.

Sigrid's presence in the classroom is bright, cheerful and enthusiastic. She also seems fragile and vulnerable, often self-deprecating, saying that she doesn't understand, or that something is difficult for her. Academic study is both a challenge and an achievement for her.

At the beginning of the course, Sigrid says that her weak point in teaching is planning and organization, but also lack of time for reflection:

- I have all my lessons planned. But then I sometimes just crumple up my lesson plans when I see the kids. The problem is after I change my plans, I don't go back and write down what I did and all my good ideas. (Class 1 transcript, p.216)

Sigrid contributes rarely to the whole group discussion, but when she does it is right to the point, brief and always insightful. She tends not to speak at length or to elaborate her ideas, but says a great deal with few words.

What is Sigrid's key concern in teaching and learning that could help or hinder her awareness of Parallel Process?

In our first interview, I had the feeling that Sigrid wanted to give the 'right answers' and was repeating some of the key philosophical statements from her previous courses in an effort to find the appropriate vocabulary to talk about her teaching. She several times mentions the importance

of a supportive learning atmosphere, for herself and for her students, which may reflect her predisposition to empathize with students who feel insecure in an academic learning environment.

- Em, things like, building a comfortable learning atmosphere, is I think hugely important. (Interview 1, p.103)
- The other activity about "what I'm good at/what I'd like to be good at" was interesting in the respect that it made me reflect on how I perceive myself in the classroom. It's not often we get to verbalize how we feel about ourselves as teachers. I'm comfortable enough in the class to admit my weaknesses and I loved how everyone was so willing to share thoughts and ideas. (Journal entry 1, p.160)
- I like the dialog from student to student and also teacher to student. It's relaxed, it's comfortable, it's ok to say you don't understand and I think in a lot of upper level courses that's not the right thing to say. (Interview 2, p.108)

After the foreign language teaching demonstration, when asked to reflect on her role as a learner (of Turkish and of Russian) her description is very vivid:

- Hmmm...These teaching demonstration confirmed something I already knew about myself. The battle with my insecurity raged on. Self doubt and fear of not comprehending the material was my biggest obstacle. I would have to admit that it was not necessarily a hindrance though. Perhaps it made me work/listen harder as to avoid making a mistake. I was, however, relieved that others were struggling with the same issue. (Journal entry 4, p.191)

Insecurity, self doubt, fear, relieved, struggling...these emotions are all vividly described. Does Sigrid experience all these emotions all the time in the normal class? Is this a recurring feature of her learning experience?

What was Sigrid's awareness of Parallel Process at the beginning of the course?

Sigrid says that she has not tried out any specific ideas from this course (though she mentions one lesson she did using authentic material which was influenced by her course last semester). There

is probably a conflict for her between the current public school policies of standardization and reform, and the liberal creative educational philosophy espoused by the faculty at the university and this may cause her reluctance to try out the ideas she is learning on the course in the classroom.

When asked about similarities and differences between the two contexts, she notices the symbiotic nature of teaching and learning and makes an explicit parallel with her own class.

- That's hard. A similarity: I think, you know how the teacher learns from the students and the student also learns from the teacher, I think I would classify that as a similarity. Where maybe it's the way Isabel asks the questions in the class, I'm not sure, but I feel like she's pulling out of us and we're all sort of learning from that all together and I think I'd like to see that happen as the teacher in my class too. I'd like to ask those questions to pull things out of the students too, so I learn from them and they learn from me and I think that's happening here too. I would hope. Just getting perspectives. A difference would be: the type of student here is different from what you would find in the middle school. Our interest levels are slightly different (laughs) Here we're certainly here because we're interested in the topic and we want to learn about this. We all share some common motivations about why we're sitting in this class and about why we want to teach a foreign language. My students at middle school are there because they have to be there. So there is a motivational issue. (Interview 1, p.104)

The following journal entry also shows that she has no problem making the connection between activities in the class with activities in her teaching context. She finds a parallel in the more general aspect of the activity (reflection and using feedback) rather than in the specific activity itself.

- The quote was also interesting. I love quotes. Especially when I believe in them...they become inspirational in a way. As part of student council, I do morning announcement at school, and every Monday, Wednesday and Friday I do a quote. They can really get you thinking about great things. Of course I cannot possibly follow the quote with small group discussions as we did in class. Which is sad because the sharing of thoughts and ideas is what helps internalize and process the message. At least it does for me. I do use

the reflection technique quite a bit in class. on cultural things as well as just reflecting on a lesson or an activity. I like to ask the student's feedback on things...it not only makes them feel more important, but it also helps me figure out what they like and don't like. (Journal entry 1, p.160-161)

> How is Sigrid using the terms *reflection* and *feedback* here? Does reflection mean thinking back or evaluating? Why does she make the jump from *sharing thoughts* to *reflection and feedback*?

What is her opinion about being observed?
Her experiences of observing classes have not been positive.

- We had to do some very informal observing as part of my undergrad. But to be honest I didn't find it helpful at all. We were told just to find a cooperating teacher and to sit at the back of the classroom and we weren't given any guidelines as to what to look for, and it was still so early in the program that there wasn't anything relevant in the classes that I could see. (Interview 1, p.104)

But she was currently working with a student intern whom she was observing and helping, and she says that this has been a positive learning experience for both of them.

At the end of the course in answer to the question of whether her observation skills have improved, she writes:

- Observation in conjunction with analysis are constant processes happening throughout classroom life; Teacher to student, student to teacher, and student to student. Again, whether or not my observation skills have sharpened or not, I don't know; but my heightened awareness of what can be learned through observation has sharpened. (Journal entry 6, p.212)

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How did Sigrid's awareness of Parallel Process develop as the course progressed?

Sigrid notices the following features when reading the transcript of Class 5. All of the points she mentions are connected with classroom management and her elaboration of these points relate to experiences she has had in her classroom.

- Reading instructions aloud (to support audio learners or learners with poor reading skills)
- Seating arrangement for group work
- Assigning roles within the group
- Using group work
- Teacher instructions that encourage collaborative work

In the class on reading skills, Sigrid responded to the use of the ambiguous text in a remarkable way. After reading the ambiguous text and hearing several other students trying to explain what it was about, Sigrid comments to the class that this is how her students must feel when faced with a text in Spanish. Though her comment was brief, it was sincerely and strongly felt and clearly expressed. She mentioned it in her interview later, too.

- Sigrid: Like last week, the paragraph that she had given us where we had to make sense of something that seemed so random and just making a connection of what it might be like or how that's tied in to someone learning a language. Ingrid: I noticed your comment in that class, You really... Sigrid: Yeah, it made an impact on me, I went 'wow!' it's been a long time since we've been at such beginning stages (of learning a foreign language) and we all teach beginners for the most part. It was just kind of like 'oh my!' You sometimes forget what the anxieties are and what the confusions are [...] I think it struck me so hard because to was my own language. And that was a really strange event because we could have defined every single word but put it together and suddenly there wasn't enough information, there wasn't the outline we were used to in trying to figure out what was going on, there was missing something, it was missing the picture and you couldn't make sense of it and it made me feel silly. (Interview 3, 111-112)

The fact that she struggles in her own role as a learner provides her with an opportunity for empathy and experiential learning. It also takes up a lot of her attention, just to understand the material and the assigned tasks.

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- You're so involved in the task I guess and wanting to accomplish the given task that you're not really paying attention to what other people are doing. I wouldn't have the slightest clue what Isabel was doing. I mean if I had to think back on other lessons, I remember her that she does come over to the groups and listen, in this particular instance she didn't. I don't know if that was an experiment on her part or not. But certainly not aware of that kind of stuff.........I think for me it's more content stuff, that I'm more focused on picking up the right vocabulary and understanding concepts more than looking at the structure of our class and certainly the things that we're reading, I think about that in the classroom and would that work and yes and no maybe, but as far as sitting in our class as a student and looking at myself as well you know, what if I were in the teacher position here, I haven't done that [...] I come to that class knowing that my role is a student and I'm supposed to learn and to me that role is defined by keeping my notes and paying attention and getting my work done as opposed to looking at it as the experience I guess in general of what's working for us and would that work with our students. For the most part I would say a lot of things would, but because of the age of my kids it would need a little bit of tweaking. (Interview 2, p.107)

This comment gets right to the heart of parallel process, yet for Sigrid, other things in the class are more important which give her very good reasons for NOT paying attention to Parallel Process. Her awareness of parallels seems not to change significantly, but she does not consider it a priority for her learning.

How is Sigrid's definition of a good student similar or different from the way she expects her students to behave?

Does the process used in the language teacher education class seem less relevant to Sigrid because of the age difference of her students?

What was Sigrid's opinion of Parallel Process at the end of the course?
When asked about what she has found useful from Isabel's way of teaching the class, Sigrid again mentions the supportive atmosphere of the class.

- I like the format of her (Isabel's) class in general, I like the open communication from student to student. It's very non-threatening, very learner-friendly. I feel very comfortable, And I don't feel comfortable easily, I am very intimidated by….(laughter) no really…. but I have become very comfortable in Isabel's class and I think it has a lot to do with her personality, she seems to respect us and value what we say, from a professor's standpoint but also from someone who is also a teacher, a learner of a second language and were all teaching here together. (Interview 3, p.112)

When asked about a similarity and a difference, the similarity is different, but the difference is the same as in her initial interview:

- (speaking thoughtfully and slowly with many pauses, in a doubting tone) A similarity being or could be argued, I guess, now this could be a difference too, thinking about the role of being the beginners and novices in the material, we're just novices in the material that Isabel is teaching us, and hopefully we will get to absorb. The similarity being that when I go into my classroom it's the same situation, I have my novices in front of me that I'm trying to get to absorb my information. Is that a similarity or a difference? [...] OK now for a difference. (speaking positively and confidently) Certainly the motivation. There's a big difference as to why we're sitting in this class in this program as opposed to why my students are sitting in my Spanish class. (Interview 3, p.112-113)

The similarity focuses more on her role as a learner of content and is less generalized than her earlier observation. Her perception of Parallel Process is weaker at the end than at the beginning of the course. This may be partly because by the end of the course, she is concerned with keeping up with her coursework

What general patterns can I see in Sigrid's awareness of Parallel Process?
As a teacher, Sigrid is very concerned to create a comfortable supportive learning atmosphere for her students and appreciates that same concern in the class where she is a student. Because of her own struggles with learning, she is able to empathize with learners that are struggling and this gives her tremendous insights into the different perspectives on a learning activity. The fact that she often finds her self struggling with new ideas and theoretical ideas an concepts also means that this has a higher priority in taking up her mental time and energy in class than making observations relevant to Parallel Process.

Sigrid seems more concerned with learning about theories that will back up or reinforce her classroom practice, than in learning to reflect on and analyze her everyday classroom practice.

What is Sigrid's ability to monitor her own practice?

Sigrid sees the recordings and transcripts as a good opportunity to 'observe' her own teaching, though she has never tried recording her own lessons in practice. When looking at the transcript and noticing things that Isabel says to give instructions, she comments that this would be an interesting thing to learn about herself:

- Sigrid: I'll have to start paying attention I guess to what I say. May be I should do one of these little recordings. It's interesting! Ingrid: Do you think that would be helpful? Sigrid: Absolutely! Yeah! It's almost like a little 'out of body' experience because you get to see it now from somebody else's perspective. (Interview 2, p.106)

In her final journal entry, she makes this comment in response to whether her observation skills have improved:

- Sometimes in the classroom (mostly at random times, too) I think to myself..."If there were a hidden camera somewhere in this room, would I be happy with what I see." It's a great reality check for me. There are a few key items I would hope to see: #1. Students are actively participating and engaged. #2. Teacher's presence is felt, but not in an intrusive or domineering way. #3. Everyone looks content. #4. The room décor is intriguing. #5. Spanish is everywhere. For me personally, observation is a helpful tool for reminding myself of the realities that take place within my classroom. I suppose the observation I am discussing so far encompassed visual observation, but that is not to exclude the value of observation and analysis from students' work as well. (Journal entry 6, p.212)

In general it seems to me that Sigrid is still not confident enough in her teaching skills to step back from the moment and analyze what she is doing. She tends to think of her teaching in terms of whether what she is doing is 'right' according to some higher authority. Her idea of observation depends on having someone come into her class and observe her. Her mental energy

– both as a student and as a teacher – is taken up with the many practical tasks at hand that need to be accomplished. Her journal entries and her interviews show reflective insights, but not a willingness to spend time elaborating on them in a reflective way.

Summary:

Sigrid's experience tells me that use of Parallel Process awareness activities should not supercede that of understanding the content of the material at hand, and should be clearly differentiated as a task. Parallel Process assumes an ability to distance oneself, to disengage oneself from the emotions of the moment in order to abstract and generalize.

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