

**How teachers experience learning and change: A phenomenographic study of
internationalized teacher professional development**

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A dissertation submitted to
The Faculty of Graduate Studies
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Graduate Programme in Education
York University
Toronto, Ontario

September 2016

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Abstract

This dissertation explores the internationalization of teacher professional development by investigating the experiences of teachers who have undergone an internationalized teacher professional development program and focusing on how teachers learn and change, what they learn and change and the conditions that support teachers' learning and change. This dissertation is motivated by three specific research questions: (1) What personal and professional transformations do teachers report as a result of internationalized teacher professional development? (2) How do teachers learn and change as a result of internationalized teacher professional development? What conditions support and promote this learning and change? and (3) What can be said about the importance of internationalized teacher professional development for teacher learning and change? What makes for effective internationalized teacher professional development? Previous research has focused largely on experiences of internationalized pre-service teacher education while experiences of internationalization of teacher professional development are less addressed in the literature. This study aims to address this gap by advancing our understanding of internationalized teacher professional development and its impact on in-service teachers. I conducted a phenomenographic study using a sample of eleven teachers who underwent an internationalized teacher professional development program. The findings from the research support the literature on teacher learning that intensive programs with sustained support after teachers return to their local contexts are most effective in teachers experiencing transformational learning and change; challenge the literature that states teacher professional development does not change beliefs and attitudes of

the teachers and it is ineffective in teachers implementing changes to their classroom practices; and add to the literature by showing that important personal and professional learning can occur within a culturally diverse group of teachers learning in a culturally new environment, leading to significant changes to relationships in the classroom and to classroom practice, and that dissonance in teacher thinking can be a very strong motivator for learning and change, lead to important shifts in perspective. This study concludes that internationalized teacher professional development is a highly effective, transformational form of teacher professional development in need of further research.

This dissertation is dedicated to my wonderful parents,

Raza & Zeba Kizilbash

for their unconditional love.

This is your accomplishment too.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the many people who have helped me through the completion of this dissertation. The first is my supervisor, Dr. Roopa Desai-Trilokekar, who is brilliant, spirited, honest, and the true embodiment of a mentor. Thank you for your guidance, inspiration, motivation, and friendship that stems back over a decade, when I first met you as an undergraduate and you selected me to go off on my first international experience to the Hong Kong Institute of Education. You set me on a life path of intercultural adventures and intellectual curiosity that led me to pursue this doctoral degree. I could not have imagined a better supervisor and mentor for my Ph.D. study. I hope to one day be to my students what you have been to me.

In combination with the mentorship of my supervisor, my gratitude extends to the dynamic and intelligent members of my supervisory committee: my committee members: Dr. Paul Axelrod and Dr. Qiang Zha, my external examiner, Dr. Ruth Hayhoe, and my internal examiner, Dr. Sheila Embleton. Thank you all for your insightful comments and encouragement, and also for challenging me to widen my research from various perspectives.

I would also like to thank the Faculty of Education at York University, where I first began my studies in education as an undergraduate in the Concurrent Teacher Education program. The knowledge, insight, and experience I gained here through my teacher training and doctoral degree have been an incredibly enriching part of my life. Thank you to all the professors in the Faculty who opened my mind, broadened my scope, and inspired me along the way.

I am also beyond grateful to my group of participants who were not paid to participate in this project. The teachers who participated in my study were not only generous with their time, but with their experiences, thoughts, and ideas. Thank you, dearly.

I especially want to thank my family from the bottom of my heart. I wrote the bulk of this dissertation in the first eight months of my son's life when I was insanely sleep deprived and beyond exhausted from the early months of motherhood. Thank you to my mom, Zeba, and sister, Zehra, for each dropping everything to travel to us in NYC at different times to take care of Abbas so I could do my writing. I love you both so much.

Finally, my deepest gratitude goes to my husband, Adil, who has been my greatest cheerleader and helper through this long journey. I literally could not have finished this dissertation without you. Whether it was cooking amazing dinners, listening while I

vented, being my 24/7 tech support, or supplying me with the necessary sugar treats exactly when I needed them, you were always there with your unwavering support. And not only did you take care of me, but you would step in without a moment's hesitation to take care of our little guy, even though you yourself were exhausted after a long day of work at the hospital. Whether it was taking him out for a walk, giving him a bath, playing guitar for him, or reading him a book, you kept him occupied and happy, so I could be free to get my writing done. Thank you for your love, concern, help, and above all else, your patience. I love you forever.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	ii
Dedication.....	iv
Acknowledgements.....	v
Table of contents.....	vii
CHAPTER ONE: Introduction.....	1
• Purpose of the study and rationale.....	1
○ The internationalization of pre-service teacher education.....	2
○ The importance of examining the internationalization of teacher professional development.....	6
• Contributions of the study.....	9
• Research questions.....	10
CHAPTER TWO: Literature Review Part I.....	12
○ Teacher professional development: clarity amidst confusion.....	12
○ The Internationalization of teacher professional development: a working definition.....	16
○ The (in)effectiveness of teacher professional development: looking at teacher learning & change.....	20
○ Critique of the literature.....	23
CHAPTER THREE: Theoretical framings.....	26
○ Adult learning theory.....	27
■ Transformative learning theory.....	27
• How transformation may occur: activating events and incremental processes.....	30
• A caveat: individual differences.....	34
• Critical discourse and reflection.....	35
• Resistance and when learning shuts down.....	37
• Importance of environment: challenge and support.....	41
○ Unlearning.....	42
■ What unlearning is not.....	43
■ The work of unlearning.....	44
■ What does unlearning feel like?.....	50
■ What can come of unlearning?.....	55
CHAPTER FOUR: Literature Review Part II.....	59
○ Change and learning through teacher professional development.....	59

○ Learning, transformation, and internationalized teacher professional development.....	64
○ A new way of looking at the model of Teacher Change.....	72
CHAPTER FIVE: Methodology.....	75
● A model of internationalized teacher professional development.....	75
○ The program.....	76
○ The participants.....	79
● Research design considerations.....	80
● Methodology: phenomenography.....	84
● Types of methods to be used and data collection procedures.....	87
○ Surveys.....	87
○ Interviews.....	90
○ Data Analysis.....	93
● Methodology limitations.....	95
● Overall limitations.....	98
● Phenomenographic analysis: a detailed look.....	101
○ Ways of looking at interview transcriptions.....	101
○ Categories of description.....	102
○ Structure and meaning.....	104
○ Outcome space.....	105
● Data analysis steps.....	108
CHAPTER SIX: Research findings.....	111
● Final Outcome Space.....	111
○ Category of description 1: Learning.....	114
○ Sub-category 1 (A): Learning from peers.....	114
○ Sub-category 1 (B): Learning from the environment.....	120
○ Sub-category 1 (C): Conditions that promote and sustain learning.....	122
○ Category of description 2: Behavioural.....	131
○ Sub-category 2 (A): Behavioural change in terms of shift in relationships with others.....	131
○ Sub-category 2 (B): Behavioural change in terms of professional practice.....	132
○ Category of description 3: Conceptual.....	135
○ Sub-category 3 (A): Shift in attitudes and beliefs.....	135
○ Sub-category 3 (B): Concepts of self-awareness.....	140
○ Sub-category 3 (C): Concepts of teaching and being a teacher.....	144

• Research findings conclusion.....	145
CHAPTER SEVEN: Analysis - How do the findings speak to the literature?.....	146
○ Supporting the literature.....	146
○ Teacher professional development as a complex process.....	146
○ Intensive and sustained professional development.....	149
○ Importance of teacher networks.....	153
○ The role of discourse with peers.....	154
○ The benefits of group learning within a culturally diverse group.....	158
○ The benefit of a culturally new learning environment.....	161
○ Challenging the literature.....	167
○ Changing beliefs and attitudes.....	167
○ Changes to classroom practice.....	172
○ Filling in gaps and adding to the literature.....	173
○ How teachers learn: avenues to transformation.....	174
○ Critical reflection.....	178
○ Expanded understandings.....	182
○ Relevant content and application.....	184
○ Halted learning.....	186
○ Conditions that promote learning and change.....	191
○ What motivates teachers.....	197
○ Where transformation can lead: changes to relationships in the classroom.....	199
○ Where transformation can lead: changes to classroom practice.....	201
○ Importance of internationalized teacher professional development.....	203
CHAPTER EIGHT: Conclusion.....	209
● Introduction.....	209
● Empirical findings.....	210
● Theoretical implications.....	216
● Limitations/strengths.....	221
● Recommendations.....	222
● Conclusions/reflections.....	223
References.....	224
Appendix A: Survey questions.....	240
Appendix B: Interview questions.....	241

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

This is a research study in the field of the internationalization of teacher professional development. While the importance of internationalizing pre-service teacher education is acknowledged and programs are designed to meet this need, the impact and experience of internationalized professional development for in-service teachers remains an underdeveloped field. The broad purpose of this study is to fill this research gap by investigating the learning experiences and professional changes reported by in-service teachers as a result of participating in international teacher professional development. More specifically, this study will examine *how* teachers learn and change, *what* they learn and change and the *conditions* that support teachers' learning and change from internationalized teacher professional development.

Rationale

As concerns about increasing teacher quality and the quality of student learning continue to grow, the professional development of teachers is continually heralded as one of the most important avenues in reaching these goals (Desimone, 2009; Guskey, 2000; Guskey 2002; Opfer & Pedder, 2011). Accordingly, a significant amount of funds are annually poured into teacher development projects and programs (Birman et al., 2007; Desimone, 2009); at the same time, the literature on teacher professional development has grown substantially, with a wealth of research revolving around a myriad of topics.

However, in spite of both this recognition and the allocation of resources towards teacher professional development, a two-fold problem emerges; firstly, much of the available literature fails to explain how teachers learn from professional development and the conditions that support and promote this learning (D. Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002; Hanushek, 2005; Opfer & Pedder, 2011; Sykes, 1996; Timperley & Alton-Lee, 2008). Secondly, not only is the research on teacher professional development programs limited in ascertaining the effectiveness of these programs on teacher professional development, but much of the research that is successful in ascertaining effectiveness reveals the teacher professional development programs to be ineffective and inadequate (Borko, 2004; Guskey, 2002; Kuijpers et al., 2010). Herein emerges the need for a better understanding of teacher professional development and what makes it effective (Avalos, 2011; Borko, 2004; Desimone, 2009; Gatt, 2009; Guskey, 2002; Opfer & Pedder, 2011; Wayne et al., 2008).

The Internationalization of Pre-service Teacher Education

In contrast, the parallel field of pre-service teacher education appears to be more far-reaching (teacher professional development involves practicing in-service teachers, while pre-service teacher education, of course, involves teacher candidates that are training to become teachers). One area that continues to be explored extensively within teacher education is the internationalization of pre-service teacher education.

Arguments concerning the need to prepare pre-service teachers for the global realities of teaching in this day and age have created a very strong push towards both the internationalization of pre-service teacher education in both practice and research

(Kissock & Richardson, 2009; Tye, 1999). Stemming from the ever-increasing attention to the topic of global interdependence and interconnectedness, there is the recognition that striking demographic changes mean that the populations of schools are increasingly diverse (Rego & Nieto, 2000). This has led teacher educators and faculties of education to address the challenges of preparing new teachers who are knowledgeable about and effective with students of diverse backgrounds, especially evident in Western societies where the cultural, ethnic, racial, and linguistic diversity of the student body is often quite different from the experiences or backgrounds of those who teach them (Rego & Nieto, 2000, p. 413).

Related to trying to raise the intercultural competency of pre-service teachers, the fact that schools are increasingly diverse and the world is increasingly interconnected has also led to the growing critique that new teachers are largely unprepared to bring a global perspective into the classroom (Davies & Pike, 2009). As Davies, Harber and Yamashita (2010) explain, “global citizenship education largely arises from current events and happenings, which are unpredictable, and for which there is no ‘script’” (p. 4); students naturally will have questions and concerns in response to these issues, and the concern is that new teachers who are not prepared to handle such challenges might shirk away from bringing up such topics in the first place.

As such, the recognized importance within the literature on teacher education of preparing pre-service teachers in topics of intercultural competency and global perspectives is one that has grown steadily over the last few decades (Cushner, 2007; Cushner & Mahon, 2002; Phillion & Malewski, 2012; Santoro & Major, 2012; Tan & Allan, 2010; Walters et al., 2009; Zhao, 2010). Enthusiasm continues to mount towards

altering teacher education programs in ways that work to address these challenges. In many cases, changes and inclusions have been made to internationalize the curriculum; for instance, at York University, courses specifically on intercultural competence development and teaching interculturality are offered to pre-service teachers, a practice that has now become common across faculties of education.

Another change/addition that has become increasingly popular as a way to internationalize pre-service teacher education is the offering of teaching experiences in an international context. A number of scholars support the inclusion of this practice in teacher education programs (Cushner & Mahon, 2002; Kissock, 1997; Phillion, Rodriguez, Shirley, Kulago, & Bulington, 2008; Stachowski & Mahan, 1998), including Heyl and McCarthy (2003) who suggest that personal exposure and professional development of international activities can be and may be the most influential factors in enhancing international competencies for pre-service teachers. A number of researchers have outlined the positive impacts, both personally and professionally, of international teaching experiences (Clarke et al., 2009; Colon-Muniz et al., 2010; Cushner, 2012, 2009; Cushner & Mahon, 2002; Gilson & Martin, 2010; Kuh & Kauffman, 1984; Pence & Macgillivray, 2008; Quezada, 2010; Walters et al., 2009; William-Holt, 2001). Some revolve around improved foreign language skills and a heightened interest in future study abroad opportunities (Freed, 1998; Opper, Teichler, & Carlson, 1990), while others cite an increased sense of self-confidence, level of maturity, and personal sense of well being (Kuh & Kauffman, 1984). Yet others encourage teaching experiences in an international context for the benefit it is believed to have on pre-service teachers' understanding of their teaching (Blomeke & Paine,

2007). For instance, such international experiences are thought to have the potential to transform bias and prejudice, such as Gill's (2007) perspective: "It is through profound intercultural encounter and intercultural experience that perceptions of the Other can be updated to serve as avenues for genuine openness and ultimately, personal and social transformation" (p. 176). Guo et al. (2009) echoes this thought, explaining, "Such self-awareness helps them to challenge Eurocentric beliefs and practices and move from a position that assumes a singular, monocultural reality, to adopting a worldview that is respectful of multiple belief systems" (p. 574).

In other cases, it can create the opportunity to have a more critical attitude toward countries of origin (Opper, Teichler, & Carlson, 1990; Segalowitz & Freed, 2004) or sensitivity to one's own cultural background (Wilson, 1982). Alfaro (2008) found pre-service teachers were able to re-think and reorganize their personal and professional value system. Phillion et al. (2009) cite pre-service teachers' gains in understanding as the result of an international cross-cultural experience that translate into "increased openness toward students who are girls or women, bi- or multilingual, or have a cultural background different from the majority...have an increased understanding of what it is like to be an outsider..." (p. 57). There is a recognition that when it comes to intercultural competence, no one really becomes competent, "as awareness and sensitivity are not destinations that pre-service teachers arrive at," but rather that pre-service teachers, regardless of their own cultural identities, can enhance their ongoing awareness and sensitivity" (p. 566).

Suffice to say, scholarship on the internationalization of pre-service teacher education, as a whole, is vast. At the same time, in response to calls to internationalize

pre-service teacher education, teacher professional development has also not been immune to this growing phenomenon. Rather, teacher professional development is also increasingly influenced by internationalization, as internationalized teacher professional development programs increasingly crop up in school boards, NGOs, universities and other institutions and organizations – also largely the result of a world increasingly beset by the effects of internationalization. Such organizations are looking for opportunities to create, further establish, or support internationalized teacher professional development initiatives and projects.

However, as the literature on teacher professional development continues to grow, research concerning internationalized teacher professional development remains unaddressed to a large extent. Particularly compared to the attention that has been placed on the internationalization of teacher education for pre-service teachers (both theoretical and in practice), the attention given to the internationalization of teacher professional development for in-service teachers can be described as minimal at best. This reveals a stark need to address the fact that teacher professional development and the influence of internationalization have yet to intersect significantly in the literature.

The importance of examining the internationalization of teacher professional development

There are many significant reasons why this gulf in the literature needs to be addressed. To begin with, it is important to examine the internationalization of teacher professional development because the many reasons why teacher educators and scholars believe the internationalization of pre-service teacher education is important

are rationales that also apply to in-service teacher professional development. For instance, as previously mentioned, there is increasing attention paid to the fact that schools are increasingly diverse and “culturally competent teacher[s]...would ... facilitate the learning of students from multiple cultural backgrounds while providing them with the skills to succeed in an increasingly culturally diverse world” (Cushner & Mahon, 2009, p. 307). While this rationale is heavily used in support of the internationalization of pre-service teacher education, there is no denying that in-service teachers are also subject to the growing diversity within demographics of the student body and, therefore, should also receive training to becoming skilled global intercultural educators. Further, the global mindset steering teacher education in many ways can be considered a fairly recent development in pre-service teacher training; therefore, it can be assumed that many in-service teachers who went through their teaching training potentially years before this new direction took hold have, in some ways, been teaching in a reality of diversity they might not have been originally trained for and, as such, could hugely benefit from forms of internationalized teacher professional development that address this issue.

As well, in examining these rationales used to encourage forms of internationalized teacher education for pre-service teachers, teacher educators and scholars look to the anticipated challenges of teaching to a diverse student body and bringing a global perspective into the classroom that these pre-service teachers will face, and then attempt to pre-emptively address the necessary issues so these new teachers will be prepared once they reach the classroom. As previously noted, in-service teachers share the same challenges of teaching to a diverse student body and

bringing a global perspective into the classroom that pre-service teachers do; the difference is that in-service teachers are immersed in said challenges whilst keeping up with the daily, regular demands of teaching; this unlike pre-service teachers who – in spite of keeping up with their practice teaching requirements – are not yet managing the workload of full-fledged teachers. In this way, the difference between anticipating the challenges and living the challenges is significant; in-service teachers are, therefore, arguably in even more need of internationalized forms of teacher professional development as they are currently experiencing many of the above-mentioned challenges whilst juggling the demands of full-time teaching.

The point is that different types of internationalized teacher professional development are also relevant for in-service teachers because the investment in and development of intercultural competencies and teaching with a global mindset are not areas that should begin and end with pre-service teachers. In order for these facets of teaching to truly take hold and be impactful, in-service teachers also need professional development in these areas. It is also worth considering that these are the teachers that often hold positions of responsibility within a school. In-service teachers with years of experience are instructional leaders, heads of departments, and mentor teachers to pre-service teachers, just to name a few significant roles they may occupy beyond classroom teacher. As with most school cultures, with more seniority comes more influence; these in-service teachers would likely have more of a say in the tone and direction of the school/departments, and therefore could help bring in more of a global perspective, thus forwarding the agenda of, for e.g. global awareness, intercultural competency and teaching for diversity. These are the teachers, as well, who would be

able to make it possible for pre-service teachers to try out in the classroom the intercultural competencies they are learning in their teacher training.

Finally, examining internationalized teacher professional development programs follows a suggestion from Marginson and Rhoades (2002) of “the need to go beyond nation states and systems to focus on institutions (and on programs within them) as international agents” (p. 303). As they explain, “Such a focus sharpens the significance of the regional and local in the global” (p. 303). Investigating the impact of an internationalized teacher professional development program on teachers both while they are in the program, as well as subsequently in their local contexts, is an important way to examine how “the flow of activity and influence is not simply one way, top down, from global to local” (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002). The study of internationalized teacher professional development programs can bring to light the ways in which global and local influences interact and influence each other.

Taking these points into consideration, the argument is made that the internationalization of teacher professional development is a highly relevant form of professional development for in-service teachers and should no longer be missing in action in the literature. This dissertation delves into this niche in the hopes of uncovering some of the complexities of internationalized teacher professional development and its influence in terms of teacher learning and change.

Contributions of the Study

One of the crucial threads of teacher professional development is the impact that teacher professional development has on practicing teachers’ change personally, as

well as professionally in terms of in classroom practice. This study is significant because it specifically looks at teacher pedagogical/ideological learning and change as a result of internationalized teacher professional development, including the effect on subsequent classroom practice. From the findings of this study, institutions and organizations that administer or are looking to create and implement internationalized teacher professional development programs can have insight into the ways in which teachers may learn and change from this type of professional development. It is also possible to more deeply evaluate the effectiveness of these programs and consider changes that can be implemented to best respond to the needs of the teachers involved. Teachers are also able to more deeply understand the experience of internationalized teacher professional development, either their own experiences if they have undertaken internationalized professional development, or if not, look to incorporate it into their own professional development endeavours. Further, forays into understanding what makes professional development effective, and the bridge between professional development and implementing this professional development into classroom practice is of benefit to students and their experience in the classroom. Thus, this study offers a broad contribution to the field of teacher professional development.

Research Questions

This study investigates the following research questions:

1. What personal and professional transformations do teachers report as a result of internationalized teacher professional development?
2. How do teachers learn and change as a result of internationalized teacher professional development? What conditions support and promote this learning and change?

3. What can be said about the importance of internationalized teacher professional development for teacher learning and change? What makes for effective internationalized teacher professional development?

I now review the literature that will create the necessary context for delving into these research questions. The literature review begins with an examination of teacher professional development itself – what have we learned about it and what are we still looking to figure out?

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review: Part I

Teacher professional development: clarity amidst confusion

While much of the research on teacher professional development is varied and uneven, a point of consensus rests on its importance. Across the board, teacher professional development is regularly cited as one of the keys to reforms in teaching and learning (Borko, 2004; Desimone, 2009; Guskey, 2002; Opfer & Pedder, 2011). Accordingly, both attention and often-hefty funds are allocated towards teacher professional development initiatives and projects (Birman et al., 2007; Borko, 2004; Desimone, 2009). However, a foray into the literature on teacher professional development seemingly offers more confusion than clarity. While the field unquestionably boasts an extensive body of work, what still remains is a lack of understanding of various aspects of teacher professional development.

The variance begins with how to define teacher professional development. Koster, Dengerink, Korthagen, and Lunenberg (2008) state that professional development can be defined in two ways: (1) the process by which a professional group as a whole seeks to acquire more of the characteristics defined as paradigmatic concerning their profession and (2) the improvement in the quality of services provided by an individual professional (p. 570). This study works with both definitions, as it focuses on professional development for teachers as whole, as well as the latter definition, which is the focus of most research on teacher professional development, focusing on the way in which individual teachers learn and change.

Along this stream, Maskit (2011) defines teachers' professional development as a life-long dynamic process that occurs throughout their professional career: "This process is centered on learning and experience, including the various professional insights that they internalize during their work in the classroom, school, and their organizational work environment" (p. 852). Maskit (2011) uses the Teacher Career Cycle Model (Burke, Christensen, Fessler, McDonnell, & Price, 1987; Fessler, 1992), which identifies eight stages of teachers' professional development: pre-service, induction, competency building, enthusiasm and growth, stability, career frustration, career wind-down, and career exit. While it is acknowledged that not all teachers pass through all the stages (Fessler & Christensen, 1992), and the design of the model makes it a practical tool for professional development, the criticism of this model is its linear nature.

Though teacher professional development is presented in many different ways, through her research reviewing the literature over a ten-year period (2000 – 2010) Avalos (2011) draws a useful conclusion for the purposes of this study:

But always at the core of such endeavours is the understanding that professional development is about teachers learning, learning how to learn, and transforming their knowledge into practice for the benefit of their students' growth. (p. 10)

Guskey's (2002) definition captures the same essence of the term: "Professional development programs are systemic efforts to bring about change in the classroom practices of teachers, in their attitudes and beliefs, and in the learning outcomes of students" (p. 381). It is this characterization that forms the foundation of the understanding of teacher professional development to be used in this study. From this base point, it is possible to launch into a deeper analysis of this topic.

Complexity of teacher professional development: teacher learning in multiple contexts

Desimone (2009) explains how one of the limitations of the research on professional development of teachers has been simplistic understandings and conceptualizations that account for teacher professional development as discrete activities such as workshops and courses. Opfer and Pedder (2011) concur, pointing out that the majority of writings on the topic “continue to focus on specific activities, processes, or programs in isolation from the complex teaching and learning environments in which teachers live” (p. 377). The drawback of such has been that the literature fails to explain how teachers learn from professional development (Borko, 2004, p. 3) and the conditions that support and promote this learning (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002, p. 947). Opfer and Pedder (2011) add that the existing literature also does not build on the work of researchers who have shown teaching and learning to be contextually situated, such as in the works of Anderson, Greeno, Reder, and Simon (2000); Ball (1997); and Borko and Putnam (1997).

However, over the past decade, newer and more broad-based views and conceptualizations of teacher professional development have emerged. An important point arising from these studies is that teacher professional development is a complex process (Avalos, 2011; Opfer & Pedder, 2011). This idea that teacher learning must be conceptualized as a complex system rather than an event is one that is shared by many (Clarke & Collins, 2007; Collins & Clarke, 2008; Curtis & Stollar, 2002).

Borko (2004) uses the situative tradition to form a complex conceptualization of teacher professional development. As she explains, the term *situative* refers to a set of theoretical perspectives and lines of research with roots in various disciplines including

anthropology, sociology, and psychology, which allows for multiple conceptual perspectives and multiple units of analysis (p. 4). From a situative perspective, teacher learning is “usefully understood as a process of increasing participation in the practice of teaching, and through this participation, a process of becoming knowledgeable in and about teaching” (Alder, 2000, p. 37). As Borko (2004) explains, “to understand teacher learning, we must study it within these multiple contexts, taking into account both the individual teacher-learners and the social system in which they are participants” (p. 4).

Opfer & Pedder (2011) follow along the same lines, explaining that in order to develop a complex conceptualization of teacher professional learning, there is a need to “bring together multiple, fragmented strands of literature from teacher professional development, teaching and learning, organizational learning, and teacher change that have tended to remain separate” (p. 377). They point out the assumption that teacher professional development consists of a repertoire of activities and methods for learning and that teacher learning follows more or less directly from the frequency with which professional development programs use these specific activities, structures, etc. is flawed (p. 378). In lieu of this process-product approach, they look to a causal explanation to understand under what conditions, why, and how teachers learn.

Opfer & Pedder’s (2011) understandings of teacher learning, then, are imperative for this study. The first is that teacher learning becomes hard to define in a general sense because the nature of learning depends on the uniqueness of the context, person, etc. Further, given that teacher learning tends to be constituted simultaneously in the activity of autonomous entities (teachers), collectives (grade/subject levels), and subsystems (schools within school systems within sociopolitical education contexts), to

explain teacher professional learning one must consider what sort of local knowledge, problems, routines, and aspirations shape and are shaped by individual practices and beliefs (p. 379). Given this complex system of processes, mechanisms, actions and elements, a crucial point Opfer and Pedder (2011) make is that teacher learning is difficult to specify exact outcomes in every instance (p. 379).

Finally, like Opfer and Pedder (2011), the author adopts Marsh's (1982) position that there are many ways to produce teacher learning (p. 70). As Opfer and Pedder (2011) explain, "Some causes may be preconditions, others may be catalysts, others may influence the way learning is produced, and others may be able to directly affect learning, but they also may all work together to produce learning" (p. 381). The line of thought that teacher professional development is not an exact science and, accordingly, outcomes can be unpredictable, and that there are many ways to produce teacher learning, confirms the importance of studying the professional development experiences of teachers. Clearly, there is not much that can be assumed or taken for granted when it comes to teacher learning and change, and more research is necessary to understand the complexity of teacher professional development in various contexts, such as the internationalization of teacher professional development.

The Internationalization of Teacher Professional Development: a working definition

There is first, however, the issue of defining what the internationalization of teacher professional development is. As previously mentioned, for the most part, the internationalization of teacher professional development is still lacking in both the literature on teacher professional development and the literature on the

internationalization of teacher education. What, then, constitutes internationalized teacher professional development? What are the goals/specific objectives of internationalized teacher professional development within teacher professional development? And what forms does internationalized teacher professional development take? The lack of research conducted to date on the internationalization of teacher professional development brings to light the need to both unpack and construct this term. To begin with, it is imperative to have a working definition of the internationalization of teacher professional development, which can be constructed by bringing together definitions/goals of teacher professional development with definitions/goals of internationalization. It is the hope that a working definition will provide structure to this study, as well as be useful to the literature on this field of study.

“Teacher professional development” and “internationalization” are both terms that have a long history and are still subject to differing opinions on what they each, respectively, encompass. However, an important similarity between how both terms have unfolded is that both concepts have emerged with a significant distinction of being defined beyond an activities approach, and as more of a process (Opfer & Pedder, 2011; Schoorman, 1999). A discussion of the definition/goals of teacher professional development has already been presented earlier in this literature study; however, to reiterate, it is the definition of Avalos (2011) that will be used for this study: “Professional development is about teachers learning, learning how to learn, and transforming their knowledge into practice for the benefit of their students’ growth” (p. 10). This definition best suits the purposes of this study, as it presents teacher

professional development as an unfolding process and is centered on the learning of teachers.

Similar to professional development, when it comes to definitions of “internationalization,” there is a wide range of perspectives regarding what the term encompasses. As Knight (2006) observes, internationalization means different things to different people and as a result, there is a great diversity of interpretations related to the concept. In spite of this variance in definitions, we employ Knight’s (2006) working definition of the internationalization of higher education because it holds the distinction of being neither too general nor complex, and conveys internationalization as an ongoing and continuing effort: “Internationalisation of higher education is the process of integrating an international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of the institution” (Knight, 2006, p. 13). While Knight’s definition is specific to higher education and in this study we are looking at the field of teacher professional development, what we can pick out is the concept of “*integrating an international/intercultural dimension into*” and use it as a base point. It is also an important starting point because it offers neutrality; as Knight explains, “a definition needs to be objective enough that it can be used to describe a phenomenon which is in fact, universal, but which has different purposes and outcomes, depending on the actor, stakeholder, culture, and country” (Knight, 2006, p. 13). With respect to the components of higher education, they are arguably universally clearly defined: teaching, research and service. So here we ask the question, what is the international/intercultural dimension being put into when it comes to teacher professional development; in other

words, what is the essential component of teacher professional development in this context?

We return to our definition of teacher professional development – that it is invariably centered upon teachers themselves and their learning. The argument can be put forth, then, that an international/intercultural dimension influences the learning that unfolds within the professional development. This is what makes internationalized teacher professional development distinct. The following working definition is, therefore, put forward: *the internationalization of teacher professional development is the process of integrating an international/intercultural dimension into teachers' learning and learning how to learn in a professional development context.* It will be argued that this international/interculturally-influenced learning is, in fact, at the heart of internationalized professional development. Thus, while the goals of teacher professional development are for teachers to learn, learn how to learn, and transform their knowledge into practice for the benefit of their students' growth (Avalos, 2011), the internationalization of teacher professional development means that learning, learning how to learn, and transforming this knowledge into practice are influenced by an international/intercultural dimension. In this way, the learning route to get there is differently influenced – the teacher's transformation will have been influenced by their internationalized/intercultural learning experience during their professional development. This brings us to the next section of the literature review, which will examine how the current literature deals with change and learning of teachers as a result of professional development in the hopes of building upon this research.

The (in)effectiveness of teacher professional development: looking at teacher learning & change

One important issue that reviews of professional development research consistently reveal is the ineffectiveness of most programs (Borko, 2004; Cohen & Hill, 1998, 2000; Ball & Cohen, 1999; Gatt, 2009; Hanushek, 2005; Kennedy, 1998; Skyes, 1996). While there are a number of factors that may contribute to this ineffectiveness, Guskey (1986) suggests that the majority of programs fail because they do not take into account two crucial factors: (1) what motivates teachers to engage in professional development, and (2) the process by which change in teachers typically occurs. Guskey (2002) states that most teachers engage in professional development because they want to become better teachers, and for the vast majority of teachers, becoming a better teacher means enhancing student learning outcomes (p. 382), a finding drawn in other research as well (Fullan, 1999; Harootunian & Yagar, 1980). In terms of failing to consider the actual process of teacher change, Guskey (2002) explains that professional development leaders often attempt to change teachers' beliefs about certain aspects of teaching, presuming that "such changes in teachers' attitudes and beliefs will lead to specific changes in their classroom behaviors and practices, which in turn will result in improved student learning" (p. 382).

It is this assumption that has come to be deemed inaccurate when considering professional development programs for experienced teachers (Guskey, 2002; Huberman & Crandall, 1983; Guskey & Huberman, 1995). Looking at the three major goals of professional development: change in classroom practices of teachers, change in their attitudes and beliefs, and change in the learning outcomes of students, as

Guskey (2002) points out, of particular importance to efforts to facilitate change is the sequence in which these outcomes most frequently occur. To this point, professional development programs are based “on the assumption that change in the attitudes and beliefs come first are typically designed to gain acceptance, commitment, and enthusiasm from teachers and school administrators before the implementation of new practices or strategies” (p. 383). However, research has shown that these procedures seldom change attitudes significantly or elicit strong commitment from teachers (Jones & Hayes, 1980).

In his research, Guskey (2002) offers the ‘Model of Change’, which presents a different sequence among the three major outcomes of professional development: professional development leads to change in the teacher’s classroom practices, which leads to change in student learning outcomes, which results in change in teacher’s beliefs and attitudes. Thus, this model puts forth the idea that significant change in teachers’ attitudes and beliefs occurs primarily after they gain evidence of improvements in student learning; “these improvements typically result from changes teachers have made in their classroom practices – a new instructional approach, the use of new materials or curricula, or simply a modification in teacher procedures or classroom format” (Guskey, 2002, p. 383). He explains that,

The crucial point is that it is not the professional development *per se*, but the experience of successful implementation that changes teachers’ attitudes and beliefs. They believe it works because they have seen it work, and that experience shapes their attitudes and beliefs. Thus, according to the model, the key element in significant change in teachers’ attitudes and beliefs is clear evidence of improvement in the learning outcomes of their students. (p. 384)

Therefore, this model of change is “predicated on the idea that change is primarily an experientially based learning process for teachers” (Guskey, 2002, p. 384). In this way, practices that teachers find useful in helping students reach desired learning outcomes, that is, practices that work, are retained and repeated; conversely, practices that do not result in any tangible evidence of success are abandoned (Guskey, 2002, p. 384).

Likewise, change in attitudes and beliefs can also be attributed to evidence of improvement in the learning outcomes of students (Guskey, p. 2002). He explains that learning outcomes are broadly construed in the model to include not only cognitive and achievement indices, but also the wide range of student behaviour and attitudes, thus, anything from exam results to motivation for learning (and everything in between). “In other words, learning outcomes include whatever kinds of evidence teachers use to judge the effectiveness of their teaching” (Guskey, 2002, p. 384).

According to this model of teacher learning and change, since experienced teachers tend to only commit to a new instructional approach or innovation once they have seen it work in their classrooms with their students, and the change in teachers’ attitudes follows after this evidence of improved student learning, then it is obviously imperative that teachers do try out what they learned from their professional development in their classrooms. The author reasons that if they do not try the procedures in the classrooms, the entire process of teacher change is halted in its tracks. It cannot be a forgone conclusion that teachers will inevitably use the new procedures in their classrooms; as Guskey (1997) found in a large-scale professional development effort that focused on the implementation of master learning, several teachers took part in the training but never tried the procedure in their classes. A

number of other studies have also shown that knowledge gained during professional development programs is not necessarily implemented (Cohen & Hill, 1998, 2000; Fullan, 1982; Kennedy, 1998; Wang et al., 1999). This begs the question: what is it that makes teachers *willing* to try it out new instructional approaches or concepts in their classrooms following their professional development? And what learning does or does not occur during teacher professional development?

Critique of the literature

Taking into consideration what has been presented about teacher professional development, it is important to take pause and evaluate what applies and what does not given the focus of this study. To begin with, many of the conclusions drawn about teacher professional development also apply to internationalized teacher professional development. The ideas that teacher professional development is a complex process (Avalos, 2011; Opfer & Pedder, 2011), teacher learning is difficult to specify exact outcomes in every instance (Opfer & Pedder, 2011), that teaching and learning are contextually situated (Opfer & Pedder, 2011), and that it should be studied within multiple contexts (Borko, 2004) are all useful and applicable to internationalized teacher professional development.

The distinguishing points, then, have to do with the focus on enhanced student outcomes that is regularly cited as a chief goal of teacher professional development. As previously mentioned, Guskey (2002) states that most teachers engage in professional development because they want to become better teachers, and for the vast majority of teachers, becoming a better teacher means enhancing student learning outcomes (p.

382). Avalos (2011) also includes in her definition of teacher professional development that the purpose of it for teachers is about transforming their knowledge into practice for the benefit of their students' growth (p. 10). This focus on student outcomes does not apply to the same extent when it comes to internationalized teacher professional development because the goals or expected outcomes are more centered around change within the teachers and forms of transformation, so to speak. This is not to say enhanced student outcomes do not come about from internationalized teacher professional development. For example, if an outcome of internationalized teacher professional development is increased intercultural competence of the teacher, students will naturally benefit from such change; it may lead to improved relations between student and teacher, or exposure to more global themes in the classroom etc. thus, positively influencing student performance. However, while this may be a side benefit, the main focus of internationalized teacher professional development remains teacher change and learning. What this change and learning looks like and feels like, of course, varies from teacher to teacher. For some, it could hypothetically be improved self-confidence, for others a broadened worldview, and others an increase in open-mindedness. Regardless of the outcome, the point is that the focus is on a shift or transformation in teacher attitudes, values, beliefs, etc. This is critical to this study, as it is not examining student outcomes; rather, it is focusing on teacher learning and teacher change as a result of internationalized teacher professional development. So what causes transformation to occur? And what does this change and learning look like? Are teachers aware of their own attitudes, belief systems and worldviews and willing to recognize their biases? What makes them open (or not) to new learning and

change? Delving into these questions brings us to lay out the conceptual framework that is used in this study to analyze the learning of teachers.

CHAPTER THREE

Theoretical framings: Adult learning theory

Given that this project focuses on the *experience of learning and change* of teachers, it is exploratory in nature. In this way, there is no one theory of learning that can be used as a theoretical framework for this study, and therefore, the theoretical framework must be one with necessarily blurred edges. However, given that the focus of this study is on in-service teachers, adult learning theory is one that can provide an excellent framework by being used to draw a loose perimeter around what is being explored in this study and help give constructs to examine the learning experiences of our adult teachers.

Malcolm Knowles, largely considered the founding father of adult learning, contrasted the “concept of andragogy, meaning ‘the art and science of helping adults learning,’ with pedagogy, the art and science of helping children learn” (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999, p. 272). Knowles’ based his work on the assumption that there are significant, identifiable differences between adult learners and learners under the age of eighteen. According to Knowles, the differences relate to an adult learning being more self-directing, having a repertoire of experience, and being internally motivated to learn subject matter that can be applied immediately – learning that is especially “closely related to the developmental tasks of his or her social role” (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999, p. 272).

Knowles’ foundational work has led to the field of adult learning developing in further and deeper directions, with a range of studies offering relevant and insightful notions and theories of how adults learn and change. Thus, stemming from the broad

theory of adult learning, we shall consider other sub-theories of adult learning that may help me to investigate the stated research questions, whilst allowing for the theoretical space necessary for the exploration of how teachers learn from internationalized teacher professional development to unfold.

Transformative learning theory

One of the most popular theories that has been guiding adult learning in past decades is the transformative learning theory. In the 1970s, Jack Mezirow put forth foundational work that studied U.S. women returning to post-secondary study or the workplace after an extended period of time out of university or the workforce (Mezirow, 1978). From this study, Mezirow and his colleagues concluded that the respondents had undergone a “personal transformation” and identified “Ten Phases of Transformative Learning” (1978) one could experience:

- Phase 1 A disorienting dilemma
- Phase 2 A self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame
- Phase 3 A critical assessment of epistemic, sociocultural, or psychic assumptions
- Phase 4 Recognition that one’s discontent and the process of transformation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change
- Phase 5 Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions
- Phase 6 Planning of a course of action
- Phase 7 Acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one’s plans
- Phase 8 Provisional trying of new roles
- Phase 9 Building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships
- Phase 10 A reintegration into one’s life on the basis of conditions dictated by one’s perspective

For the next 30 years after this initial theory was proposed, it evolved “into a comprehensive and complex description of how learners construe, validate, and reformulate the meaning of their experience” (Cranton, 1994, p. 22). In 2000, Mezirow defined the theory in the following way:

[Transformative Learning is a] desirable process for adults to learn to think for themselves, through true emancipation from sometimes mindless or unquestioning acceptance of what we have come to know through our life experience, especially those things that our culture, religion, and personalities may predispose us towards, without our active engagement and questioning of how we know what we know. (p. 4).

His original theory has come a long way and taken new shape over the years, such as the major development of adapting Habermas's (1971) domains of learning. Habermas had identified three types of learning: technical, practical, and emancipatory. Technical learning is learning that is specific to task; practical learning involves social norms; and emancipatory learning is introspective as the learner is self-reflective and experiences self-knowledge (Kitchenham, 2008). Mezirow's study of these three domains led to his description of perspective formation in the following way:

The emancipatory process of becoming critically aware of how and why the structure of psycho-cultural assumptions has come to constrain the way we see ourselves and our relationships, reconstituting this structure to permit a more inclusive and discriminating integration of experience and acting upon these new understandings. (p. 6)

As Kitchenham states, "the perspective transformation encompassed the aforementioned 10 phases of adult learning" (p. 109). Mezirow developed his initial theory further by shifting Habermas's (1971) three domains of learning (technical, practical, and emancipatory) into instrumental, dialogic, and self-reflective (Kitchenham, 2008). As Kitchenham explains, "Simply stated, learners ask how they could best learn from the information (instrumental), when and where this learning could best take place (dialogic), and why they are learning the information (self-reflective)" (p. 109).

Based on this work, Mezirow (1981) developed the concepts of "meaning perspectives," which is "the structure of cultural and psychological assumptions within

which our past experiences assimilates and transforms new experience” (Mezirow, 1985, p. 21), and “meaning schemes,” which are “the constellation of concept, belief, judgment, and feeling which shapes a particular interpretation” (Mezirow, 1994, p. 223). In this way, a meaning perspective is a general frame of reference or one’s overall world-view and meaning schemes are smaller components which contain specific knowledge, values, and beliefs about one’s experiences (a number of meaning schemes work together to comprise one’s meaning perspective). Meaning perspectives are seen as changing and evolving in response to life experiences, particularly those that induce powerful emotional responses in the individual.

Within each of the three learning types, three learning processes operate: learning within meaning schemes, learning new meaning schemes, and learning through meaning transformation, explained in the following way:

1. Learning *within* meaning schemes: Working with and present meaning schemes by expanding on, complementing and revising their present systems of knowledge.
2. Learning *new* meaning schemes: Acquiring a new set of meaning schemes that are compatible with existing schemes within the learners’ meaning perspectives.
3. Learning *through* meaning transformation: Encountering a problem or anomaly that cannot be resolved through either present meaning schemes or learning new meaning schemes so that the resolution comes through a re-definition of the problem. (Kitchenham, 2008, p. 112)

This last process requires “becoming aware of specific assumptions (schemata, criteria, rules, or repression) on which a distorted or incomplete meaning scheme is based and, through a reorganization of meaning, transforming it” (Mezirow, 1985, p. 23). As Kitchenham (2008) puts simply, “the learner encounters a problem or anomaly that

cannot be resolved through present meaning schemes or through learning new meaning schemes; the resolution comes through a redefinition of the problem. Transformation occurs by critical self-reflection of the assumptions that supported the meaning scheme or perspective in use” (p. 112). Thus, it is only through this last process that results in perspective transformation.

Although what has been outlined above is a general overview of Mezirow’s transformative learning theory, his ideas have been stretched further in various directions, leading to deeper understandings of adult learning. These understandings will be used to continue to help shape the theoretical framework for this study in an effort to study how teachers learn and change from internationalized teacher professional development.

How transformation may occur: activating events and incremental processes

Mezirow (2000) defines transformation as “a process whereby we move over time to reformulate our structures for making meaning, usually through reconstructing dominant narratives or stories.” But how does transformation actually occur? What can set it into motion? And what are the aspects that make up this process? According to the experts in the field, there is not one avenue to transformation. However, as Patricia Cranton (2002), a leading scholar in transformative learning theory, explains, one common way transformation may come about is through a significant event that causes a person to question or challenge her/his assumptions or beliefs. As Cranton (2002) explains,

Through some event, which could be as traumatic as losing a job or as ordinary as an unexpected question, an individual becomes aware of holding a limiting or distorted view. If the individual critically examines this view, opens herself to

alternatives, and consequently changes the way she sees things, she has transformed some part of how she makes meaning out of the world. (p. 64)

This is known as an “an activating event” (Cranton, 2002), what Mezirow (2000) calls “a disorienting dilemma,” and Sokol and Cranton (1998) call a “trigger event” and can be what sets the transformation process in motion.

However, it need not always be one significant event that causes a person to question or challenge; as Cranton explains, it may be an “incremental process in which we gradually change bits of how we see things, not even realizing a transformation has taken place until afterward” (Cranton, 2002, p. 65). In either case (or anything in between), one’s frame of reference has been shifted. As Mezirow explains, a frame of reference has two dimensions:

A) A Habit of Mind: broad based assumptions that act as a filter for our experiences; these include: moral consciousness, social norms, learning styles, philosophies including religion, worldview, etc., our artistic tastes and personality type and preferences. Sometimes this may be expressed as our point of view.

B) Resulting Point of View: These include our points of view, attitudes, beliefs and judgments. It is here where our sense of self and our values are interwoven. (Mezirow, 2000, p. 17)

Mezirow suggests that transformations come about due to one of four ways:

- Elaborating existing frames of references
- Learning new frames of reference
- Transforming points of view
- Transforming habits of the mind

He explains that when we speak of reframing, we are speaking of two different means of reframing: a) Objective reframing – when learners critically reflect on the assumptions of others; b) subjective reframing – when learners critically assess their own assumptions (Mezirow, 2000, p. 23). According to Mezirow (1997), we do not experience transformative learning as long as the new material fits comfortably in our existing frames of reference.

Likewise, Cranton (2002) shows that while there are different ways in which an individual may experience transformative learning, this is not to say there are not commonalities to the transformative learning process. Mezirow's original (1975) theory of identifying different "steps" in the transformative learning process has since evolved through the idea that transformative learning is not a linear process (Cranton, 2002). Cranton argues that there are facets of transformative learning that can help in setting up a learning environment to promote transformation:

- An activating event that typically exposes a discrepancy between what a person has always assumed to be true and what has just been experienced, heard, or read
- Articulating assumptions, that is, recognizing underlying assumptions that have been uncritically assimilated and are largely unconscious
- Critical self-reflection, that is, questioning and examining assumption in terms of where they came from, the consequences of holding them, and why they are important
- Being open to alternative viewpoints
- Engaging in discourse, where evidence is weighed, arguments assessed, alternative perspectives explored, and knowledge constructed by consensus
- Revising assumptions and perspective to make them more open and better justified
- Acting on revisions, behaviour, talking, and thinking in a way that is congruent with transformed assumptions of perspectives

As such, while transformative learning is not a linear process, she notes that there is some progression to it, because “we cannot critically reflect on an assumption until we are aware of it. We cannot engage in discourse on something we have not identified. We cannot change a habit of mind without thinking about it in some way” (p. 65).

An interesting dimension of how these facets of transformative learning theory can come about is the related concept of experiential learning. Cranton writes that experiential learning projects, where students go out into the real world, can give them a chance to try out their transformed views. Cranton (2002) writes that “critical self-reflection may take place in the classroom, but it is perhaps more likely to take place outside it” (p. 68). Bouchard (as cited in Barer-Stein & Kompf, 2001) would agree, stating that “experiential learning challenges the misconception that learning mostly occurs in formal environments such as classrooms, and replaces it with the notion that all learning is the result of experience, no matter where it occurs” (p. 177).

Shifting focus from how it can occur to where it can lead, Cranton’s summary of facets of transformative learning show that the acts of articulating assumptions and critical self-reflection can lead to a transformed perspective in a learner. She describes this perspective as more open and better justified, likewise, outcomes of transformative learning described by Mezirow (1991) are “a more inclusive, differentiated, permeable, and integrated perspective” (p. 155). Another early authority in the field, Carl Rogers, also identifies that an outcome of significant learning is a more mature person who is open to “new people, new situations, new problems” (1961, p. 115). Both educational theorists would agree with Daloz (1986) who writes that,

Significant learning and growth involve qualitative, developmental change in the way the world is viewed. We grow through a progression of transformations in our

meaning-making apparatus, from relatively narrow and self-centered filters through increasingly inclusive, differentiated, and compassionate perspective. (p. 149)

In this way, the perspective of transformational learning within adult learning centres on development and growth. The different facets of transformative learning will continue to be discussed shortly, however, it is first important to acknowledge the individuality of learners.

A caveat: individual differences

An important point to note is that transformation is largely individual to each learner. For example, activating events/disorienting dilemmas are not one size fits all, nor will everyone experience transformation in an incremental process. As Cranton (2002) explains, it is often difficult to pinpoint what exactly initiated or sustained the transformation process because much of what happens is within the learner, and something in the teaching just happens to hook into that person's thought or feelings (Cranton, 2002). Every learner comes from an individual vantage point, with their own meaning perspectives and meaning schemes and, therefore, it is difficult to predict the exact learning that will take place within each individual. From their study, Merriam, Mott, and Lee's (2006) would agree, finding that while the way in which each person 'makes sense' or interprets his or her experiences is contingent upon culture and personality, and each interpretation is, therefore, unique to that person. This also shows that transformation is unpredictable in a way, and the learning of adults is certainly not a straightforward measure. As previously outlined in chapter two, the literature on teacher professional development also makes room for the individual differences of learners. However, while in both cases this caveat is important to keep in mind as one looks to

examine learning and change in adults, the facets of each theory, respectively, supply a strong framework to pursue this nature of examination. Further, as explained in the case of teacher professional development, the factor of individual differences in the learner means that ongoing research is necessary to understand the complexity of adult learning and change.

Critical discourse and reflection

Sokol and Cranton (1998) write that transformative learning tends to take place following a “trigger event” and is fostered by critical discourse and reflection (Sokol & Cranton, 1998, p. 15). This idea stems from Mezirow’s (1991) work that explains when a person begins to interpret new meaning perspectives and meaning schemes, discussion with peers provides an ideal vehicle for learning (Kitchenham, p. 114). According to Mezirow (1991), under optimal conditions, participation in this discourse would have,

Accurate and complete information, be free from coercion and distorting self-perception, be able to weigh evidence and assess arguments objectively, be open to alternative perspectives, be able to reflect critically on presuppositions and their consequences, have equal opportunity to participate (including the chance to challenge, question, refute, and reflect, and to hear others do the same), and be able to accept an informed, objective, and rational consensus as a legitimate test of validity. (p. 78)

Mezirow (2000) calls this a specialized use of dialogue devoted to searching for a common understanding and assessment of the justification of an interpretation or belief: “This is about making personal understanding of issues or beliefs, through assessing the evidence and arguments of a point of view or issue, and being open to looking at alternative points of view, or alternative beliefs, then reflecting critically on the new information, and making a personal judgment based on a new assessment of the

information” (p. 10). The dialogue has the goal of assessing reasons behind competing interpretations through critical examination of evidence, arguments, and alternate points of view.

Along with articulating one’s assumptions through critical discourse, critical self-reflection is also key to transformative learning (Cranton, 2002). It is the idea that an unpacking of our assumptions can lead to critical self-reflection, which Cranton (2002) describes as “the means by which we work through beliefs and assumptions, assessing their validity in the light of new experiences or knowledge, considering their sources, and examining underlying premises” (p. 68). Mezirow (1995) differentiates between straightforward reflection, which he sees as the act of “intentional assessment” (p. 44), while critical reflection “not only involves the nature and consequence of one’s actions but also includes the related circumstances of their origin” (Kitchenham, 2008, p. 114).

Mezirow presents three types of reflection and their roles in transforming meaning schemes and perspectives: content reflection, process reflection, and premise reflection. As Kitchenham summarizes, content reflection involves thinking back to what was done and, therefore, might involve a transformation of a meaning scheme; process reflection causes a person to consider the etiology of actions and whether there are other factors yet to be unveiled (this form of reflection might also transform meaning schemes); and premise reflection requires the person to see the larger view of what is operating within his or her value system, for instance, and could transform a meaning perspective rather than a meaning scheme (Kitchenham, 2008, p. 115). In this way, critical reflection is the process of premise reflecting. As Kitchenham (2008) explains,

Learners can transform an individual meaning scheme by examining previous actions (content reflection or learning within meaning schemes) or where the

actions and their related factors originated (process reflection or learning new meaning schemes), but when they consider a more global view, the reflection is much deeper, more complex, and involves transforming a series of meaning schemes (premise reflection or learning through meaning transformation). In short, there are two types of transformation: straightforward transformation of a meaning scheme, which occurs through content and process reflection, and a much more profound transformation of a set of meaning schemes (i.e. meaning perspective) by critically reflecting on premises. (p. 115)

Thus, according to Mezirow (1991), critical reflection is considered the distinguishing characteristic of adult learning, the avenue by which one questions the validity of her or his worldview, and rational discourse is identified as a catalyst for transformation, as it leads various participants to explore the depth and meaning of their various worldviews and articulate those ideas to others. Thus, both critical discourse and reflection are integral to transformative learning. However, there are, of course, both impediments and supports to these parts of the process that are key to the understanding of the complexities of this theory.

Resistance and when learning shuts down

A significant impediment to the transformative learning process can be resistance to change on the part of the learner. It should first be noted that resistance is not necessarily part of the transformative learning experience. According to Mezirow (1985), perspective transformation can occur in two dimensions, each of which is related to changing meaning schemes. As Kitchenham (2008) explains, “on the one hand, it can occur painlessly through an accumulation or concatenation of transformations in set meaning schemes” (p. 112). As Kitchenham (2008) explains, “Thus, a teacher may experience a perspective transformation through a series of altered meaning schemes or ‘the constellation of concept, belief, judgment, and feeling which shapes a particular

interpretation' (Mezirow, 1994, p. 223)" (p. 112). In this case, the learner does not experience resistance to the transformation.

On the other hand, perspective transformation can be quite the opposite type of experience for a learner. As Cranton (2002) puts simply, "It is easier and safer to maintain habits of mind than to change" (p. 65). This can result in resistance on the part of the learner. As Mezirow (1985) describes, perspective transformation may be also be an "epochal... [and]...painful" (p. 24) transformation of meaning perspectives, or sets of meaning schemes, as this dimension involves a comprehensive and critical re-evaluation of oneself. Mezirow (1991) also identifies some of the difficulties experienced by learners as "stalling, backsliding, self-deception, and failure" (p. 171). Cranton (2002) would agree that the process may be painful for some as it is often very difficult to be open to perspectives that are different to our own. She writes that learners may be able to articulate their assumptions and reflect on them, but "shut down" when faced with accepting alternatives (p. 68). Brookfield (1987) also observes that the process may be a "wrenching experience" and that there is a "tendency to hang on" to previous assumptions or behaviours" (p. 27). According to Mezirow (1978), the two specific points in the process when difficulties are likely to occur are 1) at the beginning, and 2) "the point at which a commitment to reflective action logically should follow insight but is so threatening or demanding that the learner is immobilized" (p. 1717), both situations that can halt the transformation process in its tracks.

One theory for why the process can be painful is that is that the process begins with some aspect of the self being threatened. Merriam, Mott, and Lee (2006) cite numerous writers who have identified a major threat to one's self image as a barrier to

learning, including Daloz (1986), Maslow (1968) and Rogers (1983). Gurin and Brim (1984) are quoted for their argument that “for change in the self to occur, life events need to be so ‘psychologically compelling’ that the basic forces for stability (need for control, self-respect, and consistency) must first be mitigated in some way (p. 299).

Another explanation for why learners may find transformative learning to be a painful experience is because, as Merriam, Mott, and Lee (1996) explain, the learner must feel safe and secure in order to grow. The authors quote Daloz (1986), who remarks, “Under stress and threat, we tend to hold to those earlier parts of ourselves with which we feel safest; conversely, when we feel safe, we can trust our growing edge more fully” (p. 131). The authors also put forth the idea that “that which stimulates learning might also thwart it” (Merriam, Mott, & Lee, 1996, p. 6). This goes back to the previously explained concept of a “trigger event” or “disorienting dilemma” that sets a perspective transformation in motion. As the authors explain, “However, if the disjuncture is too great, or the disorienting dilemma too traumatic, learning will not take place. Instead, the experience may be only minimally attended to, even dismissed, in order to protect the self” (p. 6). Similarly, learning from experience can result in much of the same. In explaining how life experiences can be “messy,” the authors write,

Experience is sometimes referred to as if it were singular and unlimited by time or place. Much experience, however, is multifaceted, multi-layered and so inextricably connected with other experiences, that it is impossible to locate temporally or spatially. (p. 8)

As Merriam, Mott, and Lee (1996) write, “In those experiences that are too familiar/habitual, or too threatening and hence ignored or rejected, no learning takes place. Learning occurs only when the experience is attended to and engaged in some way” (p. 8). They make the distinction between the value of an experience itself, and the

intellectual growth that follows the process of reflecting on experience. In doing so, they bring attention to meaning-making, which is described as essentially a developmental process involving changes in the cognition organization of our experiences (p. 9). The authors explain that, “meaning is not embedded in the experience itself, but facilitated by one’s engagement, reflection, and interpretation of the experience” (p. 9). In this way, “experience alone does not produce learning; rather, learning comes about as a result of making meaning out of the experience” (p. 9). They argue that the experience itself is neutral, and holds the potential for learning, while the nature and quality of the engagement with a life experience, and its interpretation, is what results in significant learning being growth-enhancing or growth-inhibiting.

If results are growth-inhibiting, the learner may ultimately experience the complete opposite of the intention of transformative learning. As mentioned, the traditional outcome of a transformation within adult learning is one that results in growth: a learner’s ability to become aware of holding a limiting or distorted view, critically examine this view, open herself to alternatives, and consequently change the way she sees things. In doing so, as Cranton (2002) explains, “she has transformed some part of how she makes meaning out of the world” (p. 64). However, in their study, Merriam, Mott, and Lee (1996) reveal the underbelly of transformative learning, which is learning that is largely negative, and results in growth-inhibiting outcomes, such as becoming less open-minded. The authors show that there exists learning as a result of attempted transformative learning that thwarts rather than enhances development, that is destructive rather than constructive, and leads to a constricted rather than expanded

worldview. What, then, can be done to counter these impediments when it comes to the transformative learning process and the experience of learners?

Importance of environment: challenge and support

It has already been established that transformative learning can be a very powerful experience for a learner, yet not always an easy one. Although disorientating dilemmas can end up being too traumatic for learners, such that, as previously described, learning is shut down in order to protect the self, according to Cranton (2002), it is an “environment of challenge” that underlies teaching for transformation. The fact that the adult learner must be challenged is so key to the process means that teaching strategies of transformative learning revolve around creating this environment of challenge. How, then, can an environment of challenge be reconciled with the learner’s need to feel protected?

Cranton (2002) offers guidance, writing that when learners actually revise their assumptions or larger frames of reference, they need support: “this challenge must be combined with safety, support, and a sense of learner empowerment” (p. 66). She suggests encouraging adult learners to connect with one another, and create discussion groups or professional associations. Mezirow (2000) concurs, stressing that “critical to teachers helping effect transformative learning in adults, is the understanding of the importance of supportive relationships in the adult students’ lives, who may be experiencing transformative learning. Having a safe and supportive system of teachers and other significant people may greatly facilitate the student’s willingness to move forward with transformative learning.” Thus, it is a combination of challenge and support that work together to lead adult learners to transformed perspectives.

Unlearning

As explained thus far, adult learning theory, and transformative learning theory in particular, speak to the importance of examining how transformation occurs and under what conditions. These theories also help to uncover what can both thwart and support learning and change in adults. However, in an effort to capture the multifaceted nuances of adult learning and change, we look to include the theory of unlearning, which helps shed further light on these specific components of the learning and change experience. In this way, unlearning speaks to the theory of transformative learning in a number of ways, yet also offers additional insights on learning and change that may very well help to find answers to the questions posed in this research.

Learning, unlearning and not learning: Sketching out a problematic

An exploration of unlearning begins with situating the concept in relation to learning. Deborah Britzman (2009) turns to Bion for a definition of learning. She writes, “Learning disrupts the old ideas, and, if all goes well, allows for new ideas to be enjoyed” (p. 40). This process of destruction of old knowledge and the embracing of new knowledge is what we can deem ‘unlearning’, and directs us to the first part of this analysis which explores the question, *what is the work of unlearning?* Unlearning is distinctive in the way that it focuses on the learning as starting off as a disruption or destruction of ideas. As previously described, transformative learning theory, on the other hand, typically describes the learner as becoming aware of specific assumptions or going through critical self-reflection of assumptions. While both theories focus on learning as a change or transformation of ideas, by portraying part of the process of learning as disruption and destruction unlearning inherently offers a deeper inroad into

the experience of loss associated with learning. In this way, one could consider that unlearning puts a spotlight on what is left behind or taken apart, more than transformative learning theory. This focus naturally leads to more attention to any trauma associated with this disruption/destruction, as seen in this next section.

Britzman also describes learning as “an emotional acceptance of our ignorance because we do not really know what will happen with this new knowledge, nor will we be able to prepare for the destruction of the old knowledge” (p. 40). Her assessment of how progress is unconsciously equated with loss will usher us into the emotional situation of unlearning - that is, *what does unlearning feel like?* Britzman goes on to explain that learning means “understanding that knowledge does not exhaust what is unknowable and that we act from not understanding. We may then become receptive to what has not been thought or understood without evacuating the uncertainty...Reality becomes larger, not smaller” (p. 40). This is similar to the underpinnings of transformative learning theory; as previously described, the learner becomes aware of specific assumptions on which a distorted or incomplete meaning scheme is based. Just as reality becomes larger, not smaller, with unlearning, in transformative learning theory, the resolution comes through a redefinition of the problem (reality also becoming larger, not smaller). The situation where one becomes receptive to new ideas leads us to delve into the question, *what can come of unlearning?* These guiding questions will help in unraveling the journey that is unlearning.

What unlearning is not

Before getting into what unlearning is, it is important to distinguish what it is not. In a literal sense, unlearning appears to run counter to learning. However, this

supposition is dispelled when we consider what actually runs counter to learning, which is not learning. Britzman (2006) states that not learning “designates the destination of an individual’s failure, her or his negation, resistance, ignorance, or refusal to learn” (p. 3). Herbert Kohl’s (1994) definition of not learning follows along the same lines, defined as “the conscious decision not to learn something that you could learn...for example... refusing to...yield to community pressure to become a racist or a sexist...” (p. xiii). It then becomes clear that unlearning, the process of destroying old knowledge and the embracing of new knowledge, and not learning, the refusal to learn, are very different concepts. Not learning can be considered a potential way in which unlearning breaks down. This brings us to our analysis of the work of unlearning.

The work of unlearning

In examining the work of unlearning, we first turn to Paulo Freire. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* Freire (2000) sheds insight on the concept of unlearning, though he does not use the term itself. Rather, Freire argues that a good education demythologizes; that getting rid of our myths is necessary in order to learn how to think. This closely mirrors the concept of unlearning by presenting the idea that one must destroy knowledge (what can be seen as the first phase of unlearning), in order to learn the new. This idea of destruction of knowledge is one that is central to unlearning, and is a perspective that differentiates it from transformative learning theory. Both learning theories view the learner as encountering a problem in their cognitive thought, however, unlearning focuses on the destruction of some knowledge in order to see anew.

Mythologizing

This begs the question of why one needs to mythologize. The answer to this question is largely based in the emotional situation of unlearning (discussed in detail in the next part of this paper) where one cannot cope with the anxiety and sense of loss demythologizing entails. As Bion (1994) explains, “If the learner is intolerant of the essential frustration of learning he indulges phantasies of omniscience and a belief in a state where things are known” (p. 65). Britzman (2009) illustrates this point with the example of teacher education:

If we now understand that even our metanarratives wear out, their replacement with a thousand tiny relative narratives is just as fatiguing. And if we are no longer dependent on metanarratives, we are subject to how quickly they slip away and to the mental pain of trying to think. Before our eyes, we see the world wear out. This loss may provoke us to defend nostalgia, causing us to turn our backs on the crisis of education by fixating on what we imagine as a time before, when everything about experience was certain, when experience itself idealized its own structure of belief... (p. 43).

This example sheds light on what work the myth does, and what sort of persuasion is involved in mythic knowledge. From this example we see the myth works to make knowledge certain and stabilize the object lest it escape one's effort (Britzman, 2009). It also gives rise to a resistance to thinking. In his discussion of the banking model of education, Freire (2000) explains how this form of education transforms students into receiving objects: “It attempts to control thinking and action, leads women and men to adjust to the world, and inhibits their creative power” (p. 77). Problem-posing education, on the other hand, “sets itself to the task of demythologizing” (p. 83). With this comparison Freire presents how mythic knowledge can play out in an educational setting.

Freire's work can also be seen as informing Mezirow's initial theories of transformative learning (Kitchenham, 2008). Freire's concept of *conscientization* – “learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions – developing a critical awareness – so that individuals can take action against the oppressive elements of reality” (Freire, 2000, p. 19) and its related critical consciousness, which Freire argues is actualized through three stages of conscious growth, are found in the seeds of transformative learning theory. As Kitchenham (2008) explains,

The highest level of “critical transitivity” is reflected in individuals who think globally and critically about their present conditions who decide to take action for change. These people are able to merge critical thought with critical action to effect change in their lives and to see what the catalyst for that change could be. It is this last stage of critical consciousness that clearly influenced Mezirow in his notions of disorienting dilemma, critical reflection, critical self-reflection on assumptions, and critical discourse. (p. 108)

This inclusion of the quintessential work of Freire brings unlearning and transformative learning theory to greatly overlap. This overlapping continues as we examine demythologizing under the umbrella of unlearning more closely.

Demythologizing

If mythic knowledge involves making knowledge certain and resisting the act of thinking, what would be demythologized knowledge? Shoshana Felman's (1991) study, in which she investigates the relation between trauma and pedagogy by using the process of the testimony as the basis of her graduate seminar, offers an important insight. In the following quote, Felman presents two tentative pedagogical objectives that she had in mind at the onset of the term which draw a connection to the study at hand:

To make the class feel, on the other hand, and – there again – progressively discover, how the testimony cannot be subsumed by its familiar notion, how the texts that testify do not simply *report facts* but, in different way, encounter – and make us encounter – *strangeness*; how the concept of the testimony, speaking from a stance of superimposition of literature, psychoanalysis and history, is in fact quite unfamiliar and *estranging*, and how, the more we look closely at texts, the more they show us that, unwittingly, we do not even know what testimony is and that, in any case, it is not simply what we thought we knew it was. (p. 7)

Felman's students encountering *strangeness* is a characteristic of demythologized knowledge. Where mythic knowledge works to make knowledge certain, demythologized knowledge takes the learner into the unknown. By wanting her students to realize that they "do not even know what testimony is and that, in any case, it is not simply what we thought we knew it was," she is indicating that it is imperative for the students to "unpack" what they believe a testimony to be; in this way, they must destroy what they know or believe about testimony – a type of self-shattering experience, so to speak. Felman shows what is destroyed when one unlearns by revealing that there is "baggage" one brings to concepts (for Freire, this would be evidence of banking education) and one must unpack the clutter in order to see with a new light. Blasco's (2012) observation that "understanding is an open-ended process of gradual unconcealment" (p. 485) can also be seen as revealing this process of unpacking. In this way, certainty and familiarity are destroyed when one unlearns, and are replaced by strangeness and the unknown.

In thinking about entering into the unknown, we also must consider what is unbroken in the break from the known. Though meaning may be lost, what can remain is the need to think, what Britzman calls the "wish to know" and Freud terms "a thirst for knowledge". In other words, what is the motivation for learning to occur? Britzman

(2009) describes this want in the following way: “In the dream work of education, we act without knowing in advance what becomes of our efforts and meet again ignorance and hubris, but also our passion and desire” (p. ix). Passion, desire, the wish to know, and the overall need to think are what can carry one through the dense fog of strangeness and onto pastures of new knowledge. This is seen in the case of Felman’s graduate students. The loss of meaning and knowledge initially kept them silent, though this very quickly “fermented into endless and relentless talking in the days and weeks to come” (Felman, 1991, p. 47). In spite of the fact that the students felt set apart from others who had not gone through the same experience, they made these friends and roommates “coerced listeners”. As Felman observes, “There was a great *need to talk* about the class experience, and everybody mentioned that. People frantically looked for interlocutors...” (p. 49). What we see here as unbroken in the break from the known is a desperate wish to know and need to think.

Thus, demythologized knowledge is clearly characterized by the act of thinking. This action is what allows one to work through the fears and anxieties spurred by the destruction of knowledge and the embracing of new ideas. Britzman (2009) describes thoughts as imposing themselves on the mind “and thinking is the apparatus for digesting thoughts” (p. 11). She draws from Bion’s (1993) ideas that, “I repeat, thinking has to be called into existence to cope with thoughts” (p. 111). Britzman puts it bluntly: “The choice is stark: one either thinks thoughts or evacuates them” (p. 11). A demythologized knowledge, therefore, must involve thinking in order to enter into new knowledge.

In this way, the idea within unlearning of demythologizing overlaps greatly with Mezirow's description of perspective formation, particularly, "the emancipatory process of becoming critically aware of how and why the structure of psycho-cultural assumptions has come to constrain the way we see ourselves and our relationships" (p. 6). These constraints can be seen as overlapping with the idea of "baggage" Felman described. As we have seen, transformative learning theory also shows that a process is at hand. Cranston's (2002) assertion that the way a person questions or challenges may be an "incremental process in which we gradually change bits of how we see things, not even realizing a transformation has taken place until afterward" (p. 65) is like Blasco's (2012) observation that "understanding is an open-ended process of gradual unconcealment" (p. 485). A crucial element of the process unlearning brings to the table is the idea that those who have been through a transformation or unlearning have a need to talk about the experience, a feature also outlined in transformative learning theory, of the importance of discourse with peers – an especially relevant feature to keep in mind as we study the learning and change of teachers.

Destruction and remaking

Finally, given that unlearning involves the destruction of part of the old self, in a certain sense, the work of unlearning also involves the remaking of oneself (a point of differentiation between unlearning and transformative learning theory). In describing the "conversion" the oppressed must undergo in order to break out of this role, Freire (2000) calls it a "profound rebirth...those who undergo it must take on a new form of existence; they can no longer remain as they were" (p. 61). This idea of a "rebirth" is echoed in Maxine Greene's description of wide-awakeness (a concept that will be discussed in

detail later in this dissertation). She describes it as an experience requiring emotional and political labour that brings us into contact with people as we make and remake ourselves (Salvio, 1998). Greene (1995) stresses the necessity of new beginnings, of the necessity of trying “over and over again to begin” (p. 16). The embracing of new knowledge, the latter phase of unlearning, can be seen as representing the new beginnings referred to by Greene. In this way, unlearning involves reconstruction - the continual encountering and constructing of new realities and identities for oneself. This idea of remaking oneself overlaps with the idea of transformation in some ways. Early on in his work, Mezirow (1981) describes perspective transformation as,

The emancipatory process of becoming critically aware of how and why the structure of psycho-cultural assumptions has come to constrain the way we see ourselves and our relationships, reconstituting this structure to permit a more inclusive and discriminating integration of experience and acting upon these new understandings. (p. 6)

In this way, the idea of reconstituting the structures of our assumptions aligns closely with the ideas of reconstruction involved in unlearning. As such, whether one looks through the lens of unlearning or transformation, the fact remains that through the process of change, the learner emerges different from the point they began. However, the perspective of the learner’s knowledge first needing to be torn down before then being built up is one that is still more emphasized in the unlearning theory, as opposed to transformative learning theory. This emphasis feeds into the next area of analysis, which is the emotional situation of unlearning.

What does unlearning feel like?

An exploration into the emotional situation of unlearning also helps us in further understanding the process of learning and change. Freud opens the gates with his

observations of education carrying “physical consequences” (Britzman, 2003, p. 1). Britzman (2003) accounts for this in the following succinct way: “Something about education makes us nervous” (p. 1). What, then, are the physical consequences of unlearning? What role does unlearning play in making us nervous? By attempting to trace the emotional situation of unlearning, we may also consider what it is about our emotional situation that holds us back in thinking.

Discomfort, fear, and pain

As has already been discussed, unlearning must involve the toleration of the destruction of ideas. It is the destruction of preconceptions and previous ideas that gives rise to the anxiety and nervousness one feels. If we consider that our knowledge is something we hold most dear, the prospective loss or chipping away of part of that knowledge can be frightening. One may perceive unlearning as an uncertain path – destination unknown. Part of this anxiety may be the fear that with the loss of this knowledge, all that will be left in its place is emptiness; that is, the fear of something lost, nothing gained. As Britzman (2009) writes, “new ideas mean the loss of old ones and so change feels catastrophic” (p. 39). However, it is not only the destruction of old knowledge that can cause fear, but also as Britzman (2003) explains, “When we are first confronted with new ideas, the earliest flutters of learning are made from fear” (p. 78). Thus, the feeling of mental pain is a prevalent one in the process of unlearning.

Transformative learning theory also sheds light on what the process of learning and change feels like; as previously explained, Mezirow (1985) writes that perspective transformation may be “painful” (p. 24), and Brookfield (1987) describes the process as being potentially a “wrenching experience” (p. 27). However, while both theories speak

to some similarities regarding fear and the painful experience of learning, they seem to come from different avenues; that is to say, within unlearning, mental pain and fear appear to arise from the destruction of ideas, while in transformative learning theory, the experience of transforming perspectives is what can be painful (it does not necessarily suggest that old ideas need to be replaced by new ones); thus, like unlearning, transformative learning theory also considers the physical consequences of the process. When it comes to unlearning though, fear and mental pain are somewhat viewed as inbuilt features of the learning process since learning is seen as inherently involving the destruction of ideas. From one angle, this can be viewed as a limitation of the theory. Transformative learning theory seems to account for fear and mental pain should it arise in the learning process, but they are not necessarily a part of it. In this way, transformative learning theory offers more space for the spectrum of experience the learner may go through; on the other hand, unlearning allows a deeper exploration of the situations where the learner does experience fear and mental pain.

Like transformative learning theory, unlearning also takes a close look at how, if these anxieties and fears are not worked through, the process of unlearning can be halted in its tracks. Unlearning sees this as manifesting itself through a feeling of resistance on the part of the learner – an emotional situation is based in the realm of the unconscious. Britzman (2003) suggests there is an unconscious need to defend oneself against insight – what has been called “the passion for ignorance” by Felman (1987). Within transformative learning theory, Brookfield’s (1987) observations that there is a “tendency to hang on” to previous assumptions or behaviours (p. 27) support this line of reasoning. If we consider Anna Freud’s (1930) definition of education as constituting all

forms of interference (a “never-ending-battle”), we see there is an inherent need for the ego to defend itself (p. 101). A “mechanism of defense” is what she calls the ego’s anticipation (which causes anxiety) and protection against what it perceives as danger. Britzman (2003) agrees, stating: “We also can admit that ideas, words, and books arouse anxiety in the learner and then notice that the learner has methods for defending herself or himself against knowledge” (p. 74). Defending oneself against knowledge can produce feelings of frustration and hatred. As aforementioned, those who cannot tolerate the sense of loss and/or anxiety unlearning entails are likely to feel the need to mythologize. As Britzman (2009) explains in the case of teacher education, teachers and student teachers may “wish for a theory without conflict, a perfect practice, and even compliant students. Yet all of these wishes are frustrated and this frustration is projected back into the field now as a hatred of theory” (p. 39). Bion (1994) also writes about this feeling of hatred about having to engage in thinking – again, one of the main tenants of unlearning. Here unlearning again goes deeper into the psychoanalytical underpinnings of the learner shutting down. These ideas, coupled with Mezirow’s (1978) commentary on the two specific points in the process when difficulties are likely to occur will help to examine many of the facets of this study, including how the process of learning unfolds, its complexity, what sets it in motion versus what halts it in its tracks, and how learning needs to be sustained.

Importantly, unlearning also helps us to consider whether the emotional situation of learning and change are only comprised of these feelings of anxiety, nervousness, frustration, hatred, and overall mental pain? In approaching this question we first

consider the emotional situation that often precedes unlearning, described by Greene (1978) as being in a state of sleep:

We are all familiar with the number of individuals who live their lives immersed, as it were, in daily life, in the mechanical round of habitual activities. We are all aware how few people ask themselves what they have done with their own lives, whether or not they have used their freedom or simply acceded to the imposition of patterned behaviour and the assignment of role. Most people, in fact, are likely to go on in that fashion, unless – or until – ‘one day the “why” arises,’ as Albert Camus put it, ‘everything begins in that weariness tinged with amazement’ (pp. 42–43).

This sleep-like state causes one to respond “without thought to life’s situations” (Goodman & Teel, 1998, p. 66). A person can therefore be considered ‘asleep’ until the ‘why’ arises, which feels like an “experience of shock” (Greene, 1978, p. 48). Once this shock throws one into a new “province of meaning,” new visions arise (Greene, 1978, p. 48). Greene visits the ideas of Schutz in her working through of this experience: “I think again of Alfred Schutz pointing to the ‘fundamental anxiety’ that he associated with the feeling that our lives may be...meaningless...Yet out of such anxiety comes ideas for projects and plans of action” (1995, p. 51). Albert Camus also offers insight into what unlearning feels like in his description of becoming ‘wide-awake’: “everything begins in that weariness tinged with amazement” (Greene, 1978, p. 43). Here we see the physical consequences of unlearning can move past the “fundamental anxiety” Schutz refers to; as these scholars observe, the new “province of meaning” can produce feelings of shock, followed by amazement. This feeling of exhilaration one experiences through acquiring new knowledge does overlap with the notions of disorientation and critical reflection found in transformative learning theory. However, unlearning can be viewed as going deeper into the emotional situation of transformation and change than

transformative learning theory and, thus, contributing an important lens to this study. At the same time, unlearning does frame the experience in a particular fashion, which begins with conflict and associated anxiety, before leading to the next area of analysis – the concept of wide-awakeness. As previously mentioned, this can be viewed as a limitation because it necessarily includes conflict and anxiety (and related emotions) as ingrained components of the learning process. If the experiences of learning in this study do account for conflict and anxiety, the theory of unlearning will be of good use, however, if this is not the case, the limitations of the theory will emerge. This is why the combination of unlearning, coupled with transformative learning theory, may cast the most useful net in catching the range of learning experiences of the participants, since transformative learning theory does not hold the limitation as unlearning.

What can come of unlearning?

The concept of ‘wide-awakeness’ is one that speaks to the heart of unlearning. Indeed, it can be considered the result of successful unlearning. The idea of wide-awakeness can be traced back to the works of a number of existential philosophers, including Kierkegaard, Nietzsche and Sartre; however, it is Schutz’s definition of ‘wide-awakeness’ that is most often drawn upon:

By the term ‘wide-awakeness’ we want to denote a plane of consciousness of the highest tension originating in an attitude of full attention to life and its requirements. Only the performing and especially the working self is fully interested in life and, hence, wide-awake. It lives within its act and its attention is exclusively directed to carrying its project into effect, to executing its plan. This attention is an active, not a passive one. Passive attention is the opposite to full awareness. (Greene, 1977, p. 121)

As Pautz (1998) observes, perhaps the most important part of full awareness is that it is an active process; it requires the individual to be alive and attentive. Maxine Greene puts this into practice by challenging her students to join her in “doing philosophy,” which was described by a former student as “becoming more intentional and aware, confronting issues as they emerged in our own consciousness and our lives, integrating our situations carefully, and responding thoughtfully to what we uncovered and discovered” (Ayers, 1998, p. 5). This account of wide-awakeness is very similar to Mezirow’s description of perspective formation that has been laid out earlier in this paper: “The emancipatory process of becoming critically aware of how and why the structure of psycho-cultural assumptions has come to constrain the way we see ourselves and our relationships, reconstituting this structure to permit a more inclusive and discriminating integration of experience and acting upon these new understandings” (p. 6). Both identify the learner’s agency in becoming more critically aware and responding thoughtfully to the new understandings/what was uncovered and discovered. These understandings offer a very useful perspective in understanding how the learning process unfolds. It sheds light on the role of the learner in the learning process and can lead to insights on the decisions the learner makes in this process, such as what determines whether a learner leans towards becoming more critically aware and what might draw them towards wide-awakeness or critical awareness?

Wide-awakeness, therefore, involves being present, aware, and awake to the world. It can be thought of as synonymous to consciousness, and many thinkers do overlap the terms. Schultz’s abovementioned definition describes wide-awakeness as a

“plane of consciousness” and Greene (1978) also turns the spotlight onto the importance of consciousness in the following quote:

Consciousness thrusts toward the world... It is through acts of consciousness that aspects of the world present themselves to living beings. Alone or in collaboration, they bring individuals in touch with objects, events, and other human beings; they make it possible for individuals to...constitute a world. (p. 14)

For Greene, consciousness means moving toward the world and others (Morris, 1998).

Foucault (1984) adds to the discussion by offering thought on how this active process works; he notes that being ‘awake,’

allows one to step back from this way of acting or reacting, to present it [external stimuli] to oneself as an object of thought and question it as to its meanings, its conditions and its goals. Thought is freedom in relation to what one does, the motion by which one detaches oneself from it, establishes it as an object, and reflects on it as a problem. (p. 195)

Jeffers (1998) describes the process as follows: “To take a ‘fresh look’ is to take the view of the stranger – the view that ‘defamiliarizes’ and arouses imagination” (p. 77).

Greene (1991) also cites the importance of this defamiliarizing experience – “the taking of odd or unaccustomed perspectives can make a person “see” as never before” (p.

110). A person who is wide-awake, then, is never the captive of an external world

(Frankl, 1985). As Goodman and Teel (1998) write, “S/he always has the power to

determine his/her own experience of life and thus the way in which s/he chooses to act

upon his/her world. People who are existentially free actively make meaning out of

whatever situations and circumstances confront them” (p. 66). Meaning-making, through

the discussion of meaning perspectives and meaning schemes is, of course, a

dimension of learning and change that the transformative learning theory pays a great

deal of attention to, as previously explained in this chapter.

Thus, both unlearning and transformative learning theory show that wide-awakeness and consciousness do not come automatically; rather, they are an active process. The change that comes as a result of transformation or unlearning, then, can be seen an important avenue by which one can enter into wide-awakeness. Both constitute defamiliarizing and demythologizing one's conceptions, and working through this process can lead one to become wide-awake to new ideas. As such, both aspects and concepts from both transformative learning theory and unlearning will be used to draw the theoretical framings for this study, seeing as they complement each other in terms that will be useful for this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

Literature Review: Part II

Change and learning through teacher professional development

A thread that runs through the literature on teacher professional development is that it is still not entirely clear what can make professional development effective and, accordingly, for the most part teacher professional development programs are ineffective and inadequate. There is, however, a small body of literature that we can draw from to examine what can be effective about teacher professional development and elements that positively contribute to teacher learning and change. The following section of this proposal will speak to this research and draw on the theories of transformative learning and unlearning to further understand and analyze effective teacher professional development and teacher change.

Confronting myths about teaching

The first point to consider is that one of the reasons professional development is necessary – as well as challenging – is because, as Richardson (2003) has shown, the beliefs teachers tend to bring to their work are shaped by the kind of teaching they experienced as students. In general, teachers tend to teach the way they themselves have been taught. Thus, much of what teachers bring to the classroom is myths about what ‘good’ teaching looks like and how students learn best. The effect of the myth is that it seemingly makes knowledge certain and stabilizes the object lest it escape one’s effort (Britzman, 2009). As discussed previously, transformative learning theory and unlearning involve a process of demythologizing or unpacking, as the “baggage” one brings to concepts is revealed (Felman, 1991). This is shown as necessary for professional development efforts to be effective; as Avalos (2011) writes, teacher

professional development requires cognitive and emotional involvement of teachers and the capacity and willingness to examine where one stands in terms of convictions and beliefs. K. F. Wheatley (2002) suggests that dissonance between personal expectations and sense of efficacy may open up the possibility for teacher learning to occur – self-doubt may cause reflection and may motivate teachers to learn.

Along the same wavelength, Cobb, Wood & Yackel (1990) suggest the importance of “cognitive conflict” – described, as challenges to teachers’ approaches and thinking – could be a motivator for change. As Opfer and Pedder (2011) explain, Ball (1988) “too has argued that dissonance in teacher thinking is often required for teachers to unlearn much of what they believe, know, and know how to do in order to learn and adopt new practices” (p. 388). These ideas lend useful questions for the direction of this study. For instance, how can professional development set up the conditions for the teacher participants to examine themselves and confront the myths about teaching and learning they hold? Further, what can help teachers to become self-critical through the professional development and more willing to adopt practices in their classrooms that they were never exposed to themselves? And is the critical self-reflection aspect of transformative learning and the demythologizing aspect of unlearning potentially both effective and necessary when it comes to teacher professional development?

Professional development as a gradual and difficult process

The literature also shows that another impediment that may stop teachers from making changes to their classroom practice following their professional development is perceived risks. As Guskey (2002) observes, for one to change or try something new

means to risk failure, for e.g. teachers may fear their students may potentially learn even less with the new approach than with the current practice. The teacher could also be risking that they may not be able to put the learned professional development – be it an instructional strategy or otherwise – into practice effectively. This would be highly embarrassing as Guskey (2002) points out, but it could also make the teacher vulnerable to criticism from students, fellow teachers, and administrators. There may also be the risk that students may be uncomfortable with the change and thus resistant. Further, fellow teachers and colleagues may feel the change in classroom practice puts pressure on them to also make changes that they may not want to make and the teacher making the changes may fear backlash. Administrators may not agree with the changes in classroom practice or may fear they will have to sort out any criticism that emerges (from parents, outside administration, etc.) and therefore not support the teacher in making the changes.

Additionally, in addition to the outside criticism that could occur, the teacher risks her/his own sense of security in her/his teaching. In attempting changes in classroom practice, the teacher reveals her/himself as a learner/student as well, dismantling the long-standing image of the teacher as a ‘finished product’ so to speak. If the change in classroom practice does not go as intended, the teacher is also vulnerable to her/his own criticism of feeling like an ineffective teacher. In this way, the issue at hand is risk. Following their teacher professional development, teachers are presented with the choice as whether to make instructional changes in their teaching practice or not, a situation which brings with it a number of potential risks. It can be supposed that the higher the teacher believes the risks to be, the less likely she/he is to put their

professional development in practice through changes in their teaching. And the nature and level of risk stems from fears that are specific to the individual and the context.

An interesting exploration in the study will be whether the theoretical framing of transformative learning and unlearning will prove useful in deepening our understandings of teacher professional development when it comes to this element of risk and its ramifications. As explained previously in the discussion on what transformative learning and unlearning feel like, anxiety and nervousness are natural responses in the process. As transformative learning describes an emancipatory process of reconstructing dominant narratives and similarly unlearning entails the destruction of old ideas, this change produces anxiety as the participant is faced with letting go of previously held knowledge, and can result in a resistance against the new ideas being offered. This resistance is evident in the process of transformative learning and unlearning; within unlearning it is previously described as an emotional situation based in the realm of the unconscious. Anna Freud describes a “mechanism of defense” - the ego’s anticipation (which causes anxiety) and protection against what it perceives as danger and what closes the door on unlearning, and Cranton (2002) describes it as a shutting down.

In this vein, the literature show that change is a gradual and difficult process for teachers, a viewpoint that is embedded within the concept of learning for change itself. Further, the fears and anxieties of potential risks that teachers may experience are part of the emotional situation of unlearning; as Britzman (2009) writes, “new ideas mean the loss of old ones and so change feels catastrophic” (p. 39). Guskey (2002) echoes this by stating, “change brings a certain amount of anxiety and can be very threatening” (p.

386). In the study it will be interesting to notice whether the teacher participants who do not push through this anxiety become resistant to the professional development they are receiving and thus leave the professional development without a willingness to try the new practices in their classrooms. Along this route, plausible explanations for why some teachers are not willing to try out new instructional approaches or concepts in their classrooms following their professional development may begin to surface as the teachers share their experiences.

An ongoing journey

Those who acknowledge teacher change as a slow and gradual process, also emphasize the need for continual follow-up and support for these teachers as they start to make changes in their classroom practice. Guskey (2002) writes, “Support allows those engaged in the difficult process of implementation to tolerate the anxiety of occasional failures” (p. 388). He goes on to state that of all aspects of professional development, sustaining change is perhaps the most neglected: “Learning to be proficient at something new or finding meaning in a new way of doing things is difficult and sometimes painful” (p. 388). Improvement, therefore, needs to be seen as a continuous and ongoing endeavor (McLaughlin & Marsh, 1978).

As explained in the discussion of the role of unlearning and transformative learning earlier in this paper, given that both involve a shift from the old self, they also involve the remaking of oneself. Greene (1995) stresses the necessity of new beginnings, of the necessity of trying “over and over again to begin” (p. 16). It will be interesting to take note of whether the teachers in the study attempting to make changes in their classroom practices can be seen as going through this process of

remaking oneself. What new realities and identities are constructed in the world of the teacher?

Continuing with the theme of the ongoing journey, another conclusion that has been drawn about professional development is that activities that effectively support teachers' professional learning need to be sustained and intensive rather than brief and sporadic (Opfer & Pedder, 2011, p. 384). Borko (2004) shares the same sentiment that intensive professional development can help teachers to increase their knowledge and change their instructional practice. It will be interesting to observe whether this point about intensive and sustained professional development will come up in the teachers' accounts of their experiences and whether it played a role in their transformative learning journeys.

Learning, transformation, and internationalized teacher professional development

In addition to being intensive and sustained, it is important to explore what conditions/elements of the professional development being offered will encourage teachers to unlearn or transform in the first place? As shown in the previous section, there are many ties that can be made between the philosophies of learning presented earlier and ideas about teacher professional development, particularly surrounding the importance of dissonance in paving the path towards new ways of thinking. In the literature on international experiences, studies reference dissonance as a pivotal tool in leading to the previously described potential benefits of unlearning. Festinger's (1957) theory of dissonance as an important precursor to learning and change is a theory that variations of are regularly used in studies of international experiences. As Santoro and Major (2012) explain, Festinger argues, "that when we are presented with information,

events and ideas that are in conflict with our existing knowledge and expectations, we are challenged to think differently” (p. 311). As explained earlier, at its heart, unlearning involves a process of destruction of old knowledge, and transformative learning similarly involves a process of becoming aware of holding a limitation or distorted view; this disruption of old ideas, in turn, allow for new ideas and perspectives to emerge. Dissonance, therefore, can be seen as another way to describe the pivotal point where unlearning and transformation can be set in motion.

In their review of studies in which pre-service teachers have been placed in international contexts, Santoro and Major (2012) found that “the dissonance created by presenting students with concepts and ideas that challenges sometimes deeply entrenched views, and the associated discomfort can ultimately, lead to learning” (p. 312). There are a variety of ways in which this dissonance can be sparked, as they explain, “...dissonance arises from being in an unfamiliar environment that may be physically, culturally, socially and emotionally challenging” (p. 312). Specifically in terms of pre-service teachers teaching in a culturally different context, Alfaro and Quezada (2010) write that this can create “cultural, pedagogical and ideological dissonance, a sensation that promotes increased ideological awareness and clarity” (p. 50). These ideas are useful to this study, as they indicate that immersion or being in an unfamiliar environment can play an important role in learning and change. In what ways is dissonance created then? This brings us to examining the different forms of internationalized professional development and the role of transformation/unlearning.

Culturally diverse discourse communities

What forms does internationalized teacher professional development take? In other words, how can the learning that teachers undergo be infused with an international/intercultural dimension? Here we consider that the learning most commonly takes place in groups, as teachers primarily go through professional development with other teachers, be it within the same department, school, or district. The importance of teacher networks and community learning as part of effective teacher professional development is found in various studies (Boyle et al., 2005; Gamoran, Gunter, & Williams, 2005; Leithwood et al., 2001). One term used to describe this is Communities of Practice (Wenger, McDermott, & Synder, 2002), where learning is seen as a natural part of social participation: “social learning is viewed as something that occurs, emerges and evolves when people with common goals interact, and a community of practice is a community that has a group of people who share a common goal where social learning is a natural part of the development of the community” (Cajander et al., 2012). As Cajander et al. (2012) describes, through the process of communicating information and sharing experiences within the group, the members learn from each other and develop both professionally and personally. An overlapping term is discourse communities; as Putnam and Borko (2000) state, these discourse communities also play central roles in shaping the way teachers view their world and go about their work.

When teacher professional development is internationalized, the nature of the group becomes distinct: the group of teachers may be from areas that are geographically dispersed, but most importantly, and/or culturally heterogeneous. What

comes into play is intercultural learning, defined by Alred et al. (2003) as both the experience of encountering two or more different cultures and the learning that occurs through such an encounter (as cited in Gill, 2007, p. 168). As Nsamenang (2003) writes, “cultural learning usually takes place, not in a homogenous society, but in a culturally diverse one, where competing sets of norms and values interplay” (p. 220). He cites Azuma (2000) who observes “every known culture is hybrid; any mind develops through interacting with a multiplicity of cultures” (Nsamenang, 2003, p. 220).

How interacting with a multiplicity of cultures affects the individual learning of the teachers within the professional development will be an important exploration in this study. In the literature, Blomeke and Paine (2008) write that it is worth our recognizing that teacher learning is a cultural practice” (p. 2027). According to Putnam and Borko,

The notion of distributed cognition suggests that when diverse groups of teachers with different types of knowledge and expertise come together in discourse communities, community members can draw upon and incorporate each other’s expertise to create rich conversation and new insights into teaching and learning. (p. 8)

If we consider the diversity of the group to be based on cultural diversity, the variance of knowledge and pedagogical understandings amongst the teachers in the community of practice/discourse community will have been influenced by the variance in cultural contexts – what rich conversation and new insights into teaching and learning might this result in?

This focus on the intercultural learning between the teachers also, in part, addresses a critical perspective of internationalization of higher education put forth by scholars such as Andreotti, Stein, Pashby, and Nicolson (2016), that the “modern/colonial global imaginary” that “projects a local (Western/European)

perspective as a universal blueprint for imagined global designs” (p. 88) is both problematic and can be difficult to challenge. In one way, an internationalized teacher professional development program that draws teachers from non-Western countries around the world to the Western world to learn can be critiqued from this post-colonial framework. However, focusing on the learning that takes place *between the teachers* from different cultures and places, in a neutral setting (discussed in the next section), potentially creates an opportunity to disrupt this modern/colonial global imaginary. Focusing on the peer learning that takes place can also speak to what needs to be considered when programming such internationalized teacher professional development projects, in order to avoid the problematic nature of the modern/colonial global imaginary Andreotti et al. (2016) discuss in their work.

Davies (2006) dissects the word ‘intercultural’ in a way useful to our discussion; he points out that “using the word ‘intercultural’ means putting the whole weight on the prefix ‘inter’: interaction, exchange, opening up” (p. 16). Here we can also consider in what ways this affects the learning within the professional development; while the exchange, opening up, and learning across cultures takes place between the teachers within the intercultural discourse community, does the intercultural learning also encourage the teachers to experience cognitive dissonance or disorienting dilemmas as they critically think about their own pedagogy and practice? Specifically, within internationalized teacher professional development, does the culturally diverse nature of the group of teachers encourage or support transformation/unlearning? What is the significance of this to teachers learning together in an internationalized professional development program? Thus, in this study, we examine how transformative learning

and unlearning can give a new perspective or entry into understanding intercultural learning that takes place between teachers in a professional development context. What is the process of learning and change for these teachers?

Different cultural setting than one's own

It has already been established in this paper that the cultural diversity of the discourse community/community of practice and the intercultural learning that arises out of this dynamic is what can be considered to lie at the heart of internationalized professional development. The lens of unlearning and transformative learning will allow for a new perspective into the experience of teachers within this form of professional development. What will also be considered is the effect of this type of intercultural discourse community/community of practice undergoing their professional development in a physical setting that is outside of the teachers' home environment/culture, i.e. the importance of context. How does this further influence the learning and change of teachers as they receive their professional development?

In their work, Putnam and Borko (1999) offer considerations on new views of knowledge and thinking that help to delve into this topic. As they describe, teachers often complain that learning experiences outside the classroom are too removed from the day-to-day work of teaching to have a meaningful impact (p. 6). They explain, "At first glance, the idea that teachers' knowledge is situated in classroom practice lends itself to this complaint, seeming to imply that most or all learning experiences for teachers should take place in actual classrooms" (p. 6). However, Putnam and Borko reference situative theorists who challenge the assumption of a cognition core independent of context and intention (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989; Lave & Wenger,

1991). The situative theory – already briefly mentioned in this study - is described in more detail as follows:

The physical and social contexts in which an activity takes place are an integral part of the learning that takes place within. How a person learns a particular set of knowledge and skills, and the situation in which a person learns, become a fundamental part of what is learned. Further, whereas traditional cognitive perspectives focus on the individual as the basic unit of analysis, situative perspectives focus on interactive systems that include individuals as participants, interacting with each other as well as materials and representational systems (Cobb & Bowers, 1999; Greeno, 1997).

Using the situative perspective, which holds that all knowledge is, by definition, situated, Putnam and Borko state that the question is not whether knowledge and learning are situated, but in what contexts they are situated. They purport, “for some purposes, in fact, situating learning experiences for teachers outside of the classroom may be important – indeed essential – for powerful learning” (p. 6). Thus, this situative perspective is important for this study because it focuses on how various settings for teachers’ learning give rise to different kinds of knowing. As Putnam and Borko question,

If the goal is to help teachers think in new way, for example, it may be important to have them experience learning in different settings. The situative perspective helps us to see that much of what we do and think is intertwined with the particular contexts in which we act. The classroom is a powerful environment for shaping and constraining how practicing teachers think and act. Many of their patterns of thought and action have become automatic – resistant to reflection or change. Engaging in learning experiences away from this setting may be necessary to help teachers “break set” – to experiences in new ways. (p. 6)

Here Putnam and Borko raise the point that while teachers need opportunities to think about teaching and learning in new ways, it may be difficult for teachers to experience new ways of thinking in the context of their own classrooms – the pull of the existing

classroom environment and culture can simply be too strong (p. 6). In this way, a different and new context can provide the opportunity for teachers to unlearn, or as Putnam and Borko call it, “break set,” and therefore be a rationale for why internationalized teacher professional development should be offered in different environments.

There are some examples of teacher professional development projects that have addressed this concern, as Putnam and Borko point out; intensive learning experiences through summer workshops held in sites other than school buildings are effective in that they free teachers from the constraints of their own classroom situations and afford them the luxury of exploring ideas without worrying about what they are going to do tomorrow. However, as they acknowledge, and what has already been raised as a concern in this paper, is that while settings away from the classroom can provide valuable opportunities for teachers to learn to think in new ways, the process of integrating ideas and practices learned outside the classroom into one’s ongoing classroom practice is – as Putnam and Borko identify – rarely simple or straightforward (p. 6). Thus, the question they raise, which is also a guiding question for this study, is whether and under what conditions teachers’ out-of-classroom learning – however powerful – will be incorporated into their classroom practice.

According to Putnam and Borko, this issue can be successfully addressed by teacher professional development that incorporates multiple contexts for teacher learning. What they describe as one promising model for the use of multiple contexts is one that combines summer workshops that introduce theoretical and research-based ideas with ongoing support during the year as teachers attempt to integrate these ideas

into their classroom practice. From what we have already discussed about what the literature has shown can make teacher professional development effective, this aforementioned model offers both a new context for learning, and as well, it is sustained and intensive. As Putnam and Borko explain, summer workshops appear to be particularly powerful settings for teachers to develop new relationships to subject matter and new insights about individual students' learning. However, the authors maintain that it may be that a combination of approaches, situated in a variety of contexts, holds the best promise for fostering powerful, multidimensional changes in teachers' thinking and practice. This supports the aforementioned discussion of how teacher learning must be conceptualized as a complex system, an idea supported by a number of researchers (Avalos, 2011; Borko, 2004; Clarke & Collins, 2007; Collins & Clarke, 2008; Curtis & Stollar, 2002; Opfer & Pedder, 2011) and a reference point essential to this study.

Thus, this study will examine whether internationalized professional development has the potential to encapsulate the abovementioned ideas of what can make professional development effective and successful, i.e. the combination approach of intercultural discourse communities/communities of practices, ideally coupled with the professional development taking place within the context of a culturally different physical setting. It will be useful to examine in what ways this combination approach influences the learning and change of the teachers.

A new way of looking at the Model of Teacher Change

In examining whether and how internationalized teacher professional development can influence the learning and change of teachers, it is also important to return to the Model of Teacher Change (Guskey, 2002) presented earlier in this

dissertation and look to expand upon it. As Guskey (2002) writes, this Model of Teacher Change, in some ways, oversimplifies a highly complex process; “for example, participants’ attitudes must at least change from ‘cynical’ to ‘skeptical’ for any change in practice to occur” (p. 385). Thus, while the model presents change in teachers’ attitudes and beliefs primarily as a result, rather than a cause, of change in the learning outcome of students, there is still a degree of change in the teachers’ attitudes and beliefs that must take place as a result of the professional development for them to then be willing to try out the new practices and approaches in their classrooms. It can be assumed that then once they have seen evidence of improved student learning as a result of these new practices, change in their attitudes and beliefs will continue to evolve and solidify.

This study will, in part, delve into that space between the initial internationalized professional development occurring and the change in teachers’ classroom practices, focusing on the seeds of change in teachers’ attitudes and beliefs that must occur at this point for the process of teacher change to move forward, hence in large part, how learning and change occurs. This study will examine whether an important determining factor of whether teachers are able to think in new ways and carry this forth into their classroom practice is their experience of transformative learning/unlearning during their internationalized teacher professional development. The author wonders how teachers experience transformation/unlearning during and following their internationalized professional development and what influence this has on their subsequent teaching practice, especially trying out new instructional approaches and concepts in their classrooms; conversely, how the experience of transformation/unlearning may result in a teacher less willing to make changes in their classroom practices.

This brings us to a new way of looking at the Model of Teacher change. If, for example, an initial change in teachers' beliefs and attitudes, which can be viewed as a degree of transformation/unlearning, takes place within and following their internationalized teacher professional development, can this then lead to teachers being more willing to change their classroom practices, which would lead to a change in the learning outcomes of students, followed by the major change in teachers' beliefs and attitudes? And if transformation/unlearning is shown to begin within and following the internationalized professional development, does it also continually reverberate throughout the entire teacher change process? Do teachers continue transforming/unlearning as they make changes in their classroom practices and see evidence of improved student learning, which then leads to more changes in teachers' beliefs and attitudes? This would address Opfer & Pedder's (2011) objection with the original model, in that it presents parts of teacher change as separate, distinct processes. The author of this study agrees that the process of teacher change is not a linear one. Rather, it is considered whether the process of transformation/unlearning continually unfolds throughout the entire the process of teacher change.

CHAPTER FIVE: Methodology

Selecting a model of internationalized teacher professional development

There exist many different models of internationalized teacher professional development. For the purposes of this study, it was important to select a group of teachers who had all experienced the same model of internationalized teacher professional development. The model of internationalized teacher professional development needed to include a physical setting that was outside of the teachers' home environment and culture. As well, the teachers should be collectively comprised of a culturally diverse group. These are the two essential elements needed to create the intercultural learning environment that lies at the heart of internationalized teacher professional development and are necessary to examine if and how transformation occurs through the teacher learning and change process.

In this way, the model is a combination approach. Teachers who have undergone a model of internationalized teacher professional development with these elements are the most suitable subjects for the purposes of this study because the research questions are perfectly applicable to such a group. Such teachers can relay personal and professional transformations they have experienced as a result of their internationalized professional development. The information they relay can also lend insight into how teachers learn and change as a result of internationalized professional development, as well as the conditions that support and promote this learning and change (and alternately, the conditions that cause learning to shut down and change to be halted). Finally, the teachers' experiences will allow me to conclude on what can be

said about the importance of internationalized professional development for teacher learning and change, including what makes it effective.

Overall, this model of internationalized teacher professional development is ideal to address aspects the literature has shown are important and in need of further investigation in the field of teacher professional development, such as investigating what makes teacher professional development effective, how teachers learn from teacher professional development, what are the conditions that support and promote this learning, and what are the experiences of teachers who have undergone teacher professional development, all within the realm of internationalization.

A model of internationalized teacher professional development

The model of internationalized teacher professional development selected for this study is a program run by an independent non-profit and non-governmental organization that seeks to promote educational leadership for critical thinking, open inquiry, cross-cultural understanding and regional cooperation. To preserve anonymity, this organization will be referred to throughout the study as Project Y. Project Y works to empower secondary school teachers of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region through teacher training, leadership and organization skills. Based in a major city in the United States of America, Project Y works with educators at the grassroots level as well as with educational, institutional and governmental institutions on a systematic level in the MENA region and the United States.

The program

In July 2011, twenty-four secondary school teachers from nine different Middle Eastern and North African countries came to a major city in the United States for this

four-week foundational teacher professional development program centering on how to promote critical thinking, civic education, and mutual understanding in the classroom. For anonymity purposes, the program will be referred to throughout the study as Program Z. This intensive month-long intellectual, cultural and professional exchange program was the flagship program of Project Y.

Project Z was sponsored in large part by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau for Education and Cultural Affairs Exchange Programs, which offers exchange programs for students, teachers, professionals, and others that cover a wide range of interests. The Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs serves as a part of the Public Affairs arm of the U.S. Department of State. The Bureau encourages the involvement of international participants from traditionally underrepresented groups, including women, racial and ethnic minorities, and people with disabilities under a commitment to fairness, equity and inclusion. Through public-private partnerships and tax payer funding the Bureau manages these professional, academic, cultural, and athletic exchanges, with education and teaching being one of its special focus areas. The Bureau administers these programs to support personal growth, lead to a deeper understanding of foreign cultures, and improve international relationships, all under the Bureau's central mission: "To increase mutual understandings between the people of the United States and the people of other countries by means of educational and cultural exchange that assist in the development of peaceful relations" (Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs).

The overall objectives of Program Z were to equip the teacher participants with the skills and knowledge to broaden young peoples' perspectives, strengthen their theoretical knowledge and practical skill base around critical thinking development, civic

engagement, arts integration, conflict resolution, global citizenship, youth workforce development, develop expertise that makes classroom content relevant to the current social, political, and economic context of their region, and gain the tools as educators to connect their classrooms to the local and global community and facilitate their students' learning, and civic participation, and exchange best practices as educators.

Program Z took place at a small liberal arts college where the teachers both lived in residences and classes were held. During the program, the teachers participated in approximately 100 hours of interactive classroom time, focused on fostering skill development in teaching pedagogy and exposure to education theory through academic readings, self and group reflection exercises. The instructors of the program were mainly comprised of Education professors from neighbouring universities and colleges; however, other sessions were led by range of other professionals, including local secondary school teachers, community activists, psychologists, and other relevant professionals.

Program Z's curriculum worked to foster active learning, with an emphasis on discussion and group work. Classes spanned numerous disciplines, and encouraged collaboration across cultural, disciplinary, professional and linguistic lines. Through interactive class sessions, research projects, and visits to cultural and educational sites, the goal was that participants develop and exchange innovative teaching practices to actively engage their students in the learning process, enhance critical and creative thinking, foster student involvement in their local and global community, and encourage cross-cultural understanding. Specific topics addressed in the program were: cross-cultural frameworks for education, critical theory and pedagogy for inclusive classrooms,

conflict and cooperation in educational settings, civic engagement and service learning, workplace readiness and 21st century skill building, arts-based tools for promoting critical thinking development, strategies for successful public speaking, special education inclusion, secondary education theory and practice (including curriculum design, instructional strategies and/or classroom management). Following the program, participants were expected to go on to transmit their newly acquired skills and knowledge to colleagues and students in their communities and beyond.

Program Z meets the definition that has been set out in this study of what internationalized teacher professional development entails because it integrates an international/intercultural dimension into teachers' learning and learning how to learn in a professional development context by being comprised of a culturally diverse group, taking place in a physical setting that is outside of the teachers' home environment and culture, incorporating international/intercultural themes and comparisons, and overall intercultural learning.

The participants

The twenty-four 2011 participants were secondary school teachers from diverse communities in the Middle East and North Africa. The teachers collectively came from nine MENA countries: Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Palestine, Jordan, Turkey, Israel, Algeria, and Lebanon. According to the organization, the participants of 2011 all demonstrated a deep commitment to their vocations as educators and to their students' learning and growth.

As a reflection of the region it serves, Program Z included significant numbers of participants from the region's major religious, ethnic and linguistic communities,

highlighting the importance of diversity amongst the group. Because Project Y was able to provide full scholarships, educators from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds and varying levels of teaching experience participated, including participants from urban and rural areas. They were selected through an extensive application process and in-person interviews. All participants possessed a high standard of English speaking skills and taught various subject areas including: languages, social studies, science, technology, art, math, and vocational studies.

Thus, Program Z modeled a combination approach of intercultural discourse communities/communities of practices, which is ideally coupled with the professional development taking place within the context of a culturally different physical setting. From the participants of this model, I was able to investigate my research questions surrounding personal and professional transformations teachers report as a result of internationalized teacher professional development, how they learn and change as a result of it, the conditions that support and promote this learning and subsequently offer commentary on what can be said about the importance of internationalized teacher professional development, including what makes it effective. Thus, this was a model that suited the investigative purposes of this study.

Research design considerations

In determining an appropriate and effective research design, there were a number of possibilities (Creswell, 2014, Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). However, the work of Desimone (2009) ended up offering much guidance to this study. To begin with, she provides useful direction to this study with this advice:

Here I suggest we be vigilant in not relying on conventional wisdom to shape our biases for or against certain modes of inquiry in studying teacher learning, but

instead use the wealth of empirical literature we have to assess the quality of a particular mode of inquiry in a particular study, and its appropriate use. (p. 190)

As such, in her assessment she sheds important light on the common biases against methods to measure professional development and its effects on teachers. This is important in piecing together the research design of this study because of certain restrictions. For example, classroom observation, one of the most commonly used methods of data collection for studies of teachers, is not feasible for this study, given time and cost limitations. While as Desimone points out, observation is often seen as the most unbiased form of data collection, the question then becomes, will teacher self-reports on surveys and interviews be able to accurately capture the teachers' classroom practice in lieu of observation? Especially since interviews, while allowing for the development of a trusting relationship between the interviewer and interviewee that will elicit comprehensive and truthful information about actual implementation (Wengraf, 2004), are subject to interviewer bias; and surveys are criticized for eliciting biased, socially desirable responses that overreport "good" implementation and underreport "bad" implementation (Desimone, 2009, p. 189).

Through a careful review of the reliability and validity of these three approaches, Desimone finds that while the answer to this question in much of the early literature is often *no*, many of these early studies that may have shaped views on the comparability of classroom observation, interviews, and surveys had fatal flaws according to current standards. For example, for studies that showed low correlation between classroom observation and teacher self-reports on surveys or interviews, there were a range of problems, including unclear length or frequency of the observation, and other undefined or mismatched observation protocols (189).

Instead, Desimone finds substantive correlations between observation and self-report shown in studies (e.g., Koziol & Moss, 1983; Newfield, 1980) when self-report questions focused on a teacher's practice in a single class assignment and covered a clearly delineated and understood time frame. She states that recent research also supports these findings; studies that use multiple observations and the exact same observer and teacher self-report protocol and that focus on behavioural rather than evaluative constructs (e.g., questions about what teachers did rather than how well they did it) show that findings from observations have moderate to high correlations with findings from surveys (Mayer, 1999; Ross, McDougall, Hogaboam-Gray, & LeSage, 2003). Desimone concludes that a careful look at the research shows that when teachers are reporting on concrete professional development and teaching behaviours and activities, observations and surveys can elicit much the same information (p. 189). She also adds that in comparing interviews with written or telephone surveys, the research overwhelmingly suggests that both are valid forms of measurement.

As aforementioned, her work is very helpful to the part of this study that will focus on behavioural constructs (questions about what the teachers did and how they did it). However, this study is primarily focused on cognitive and psychological constructs, therefore, the assurance that teacher self-reports can be relied upon through interviews and surveys is still relevant and allows the study to move forward. There is, of course, social desirability bias that can occur in any form of data collection; as Desimone (2009) acknowledges, in interviews, respondents are likely to feel pressure to answer in a socially desirable way when they are face-to-face with their questioners; observers run

the risk of including a rater's own biases; and survey respondents can have a natural positive or negative bias in how they scale their answers.

Also, Desimone makes the point that programs that aim to change teachers' behaviour might instead change beliefs – and consequently self-reports – about behaviour (Wubbels, Brekelmans, & Hooymaters, 1992), leaving the actual behaviour unaffected. In this way, relying on self-reports of behaviour might provide a too-optimistic view of the effects of a program (Wubbels et al., 1992) and she adds the same can be true of interviews (Desimone, 2009). To deal with this, Desimone (2009) suggests that such interactions could be tested if surveys and interviews included questions designed to elicit teacher beliefs about their professional development and teaching, and the responses were then analyzed in the context of those beliefs (Cohen & Hill, 2009). This works for this study, since it is focused on teachers' attitudes, belief systems, and worldviews in terms of teacher learning and teacher change. Thus, following along these lines, this study will follow these suggestions, as well as her advice that teacher surveys that ask behavioural and descriptive, not evaluative, questions about the teachers' professional development experiences and teaching have been shown to have good validity and reliability, citing such studies as Mayer (1999), Porter et al. (1993), and Yoon, Jacobson, Garet, Birman, and Ludwig (2004).

Finally, Desimone suggests that “a well-constructed and administered interview, observation, or survey protocol, when used appropriately, can provide similarly useful data, just as a poorly constructed or administered interview, observation, or survey protocol can provide skewed and biased information” (p. 190). This shows that it is

important to focus on the quality of how the method is designed and administered, because that is what is of utmost importance in the pursuit to collect data.

Methodology: phenomenography

The qualitative research methodology of phenomenography is used for this study. Used primarily in educational research, this empirical research tradition was designed to answer questions about thinking and learning (Marton, 1986). It is concerned with the relationships that people have with the world around them. In his work, Marton (1981) suggests that there are two ways to approach questions about learning: 1) to orient ourselves toward the world and make statements about it and its reality, or 2) to orient ourselves towards peoples' ideas or experiences of the world. In other words, we can either choose to study a given phenomenon, or we can choose to study how people experience a given phenomenon. Phenomenography is the latter kind of approach; its aim is to define the different ways in which people experience, interpret, understand, perceive or conceptualize a phenomenon, or certain aspect of reality.

In his words, Marton (1986) defines phenomenography as “a research method adapted for mapping the qualitatively different ways in which people experience, conceptualise, perceive, and understand various aspects of, and phenomena in, the world around them” (p. 31). What is emphasized here is that different people will not experience a given phenomenon in the same way. Rather, there will be a variety of ways in which different people experience or understand that phenomenon. Marton (1994) also says that the different ways of experiencing different phenomena or concepts are representative of different capabilities for dealing with those phenomena. Some ways of dealing with phenomena are more productive than others. Thus, the

ways of experiencing, and their corresponding descriptive categories cannot only be related, but also be hierarchically arranged. The ordered and related set of categories of description is called the outcome space of the concept being studied. In describing the nature of phenomenography, as Linder and Marshall (2003) explain, phenomenography is a research approach that takes a non-dualist, second-order perspective describing the key aspects of the variation of individuals' experience of a phenomenon. Marton, Dall'Alba, and Beaty (1993) provide the example instead of studying learning per se, a phenomenographer taking a second order perspective would study *the experience of learning* and the outcome of such a study would be qualitative descriptions of the variation found in the experience of learning.

The phenomenographic approach is suitable for this study for a number of reasons. First of all, it is a methodology that is often used for educational research primarily centered on learning, which aligns with the broad purpose of this study. Further, the phenomenographer seeks to identify the multiple conceptions, or meanings, that a particular group of people have for a particular phenomenon. This also fits with this study, as we are looking at teachers experiencing internationalized teacher professional development.

As well, this methodological approach was suitable for this study because, as aforementioned, it allows a researcher to investigate the qualitatively different ways in which people experience something; in this case, the phenomenon to be studied is, of course, internationalized teacher professional development. From the analysis of transformative learning presented earlier in this proposal, it is clear that transformation is a very personal process and there are a range of ways in which a person may

experience this process. As such, this lines up with the phenomenological ontological assumptions that the world exists and different people construe/experience it in different ways; this methodology, therefore, allowed me to investigate the qualitatively different ways in which people experience internationalized teacher professional development and allow for these different experiences of transformation to come through the research.

Further, the question is posed as to whether certain experiences of transformation within internationalized teacher professional development can be more productive than others in leading to the intended outcome of professional development, which is teachers learning, and learning how to learn. The concept of the outcome space, where descriptive categories can be hierarchically arranged, was therefore also useful to this study in trying to find what experiences of transformation are most productive to the teacher learning and change process. This helps to explore the research questions of what conditions support and promote the learning and change that can happen as a result of internationalized teacher professional development.

Finally, the last reason why the way the results of phenomenographic analysis as a hierarchical set of categories of description describing the variation in the way a phenomenon is experienced is also useful (Reed, 2006). A main component of this proposed study is to fill a gap in the literature on teachers' experiences of internationalized teacher professional development, because as previously mentioned, very little literature exists on the features and nature of internationalized teacher professional development, as well as teachers' experiences of this phenomenon. Using this methodology, the results of the analysis – being a set of categories of description

describing the different ways in which teachers experienced internationalized teacher professional development – will help to fill this gap in the literature. Specifically, when teachers share their experiences of personal and professional transformations, and experiences of learning and changing as a result of internationalized teacher professional development, this information will help me to paint a more detailed picture of what the effects are of internationalized teacher professional development by being able to create this set of categories of description of the phenomenon.

Types of methods used and data collection procedures

Survey

The first step of the data collection procedure was administering a survey to the participants of Program Z. The purpose of the survey was to collect personal and professional information that was relevant to the study from each participant since all the teacher participants had diverse backgrounds and teaching/educational experiences. Although they all had in common full participation in Program Z, they varied in the types and amounts of additional professional development.

The number of teachers that responded to the initial contact was 15 in total. Four of these teachers who did respond positively to the research project in general cited logistical reasons why they would not be able to actually participate in the required timeframe. This brought the number of teachers willing to be a part of the research down to 11. Trigwell (2000) and Dunkin (2000) recommend that with phenomenology research the ideal number of interviews rests around 12-15. While one participant shy of the original number I had planned for, I believe I had a solid number of teachers to interview.

As there was not a need to narrow down the participants to a smaller group to interview, I asked all 11 teachers to complete a short survey to collect personal and professional information that would be relevant to my interview questions. The survey asked the participants educational background, years of teaching experience, subjects taught, grades taught, positions held in their school(s), types of professional development they had taken in the last five years and a follow up question of whether any of it was internationalized in nature i.e. in a culturally different setting than their home countries/consisting of a culturally diverse group of teachers. (Please see Appendix A for the survey that was administered).

I chose not to have the survey inquire about the participants' experience of their internationalized teacher professional development, including questions about their attitudes and beliefs and how these may have been affected, nor about their teacher practice post the internationalized professional development, specifically looking at whether or not they made changes to their teaching practice, what these changes were and how they were implemented in the classroom. Instead, I chose to reserve inquiries into these topics in the interviews. I believed that it would be more fruitful to my research to gradually bring the teachers into discussion of these topics through the open, deep interview. As explained earlier, it is difficult to get participants to discuss their intentions underlying their conceptions of phenomena (Prosser, 2000), so I felt creating a comfortable, safe feel to the interview and reserving examination of these topics in those interviews would garner the most honest, thoughtful answers.

Because phenomenographic studies strive to discover the different ways in which people experience certain phenomena, ideally the participants of the study would

collectively demonstrate a range of ways the phenomena (internationalized teacher professional development) was experienced. A range of teachers from different areas, with different backgrounds, and of different subject areas would help me to investigate the qualitatively different ways in which people experience internationalized teacher professional development and ultimately conclude with an outcome space, where the descriptive categories can be hierarchically arranged, and indicate which experiences of transformation/unlearning are most productive to the teacher learning and change process within internationalized teacher professional development.

Quite serendipitously, the teachers that agreed to participate in the study did make up a broad range. The characteristics of the participants are shown in the following Table:

Participants	Country	Educational background	Positions held	Subject(s) taught	Grades taught	Years of teaching
Teacher 1	Egypt	B.Sc, B. Education, MA Physics	Teacher, head of Science	Physics/ Science	Grade 1-12	12
Teacher 2	Egypt	BA English, B.Education	Teacher	English	Grade 9-12	14
Teacher 3	Israel	BA, MA in Education	Teacher, Coordinator ESL writer	English/ ESL	Grade 7-12	21
Teacher 4	Israel	MA English literature, B.Education	Teacher, Counselor, Coordinator Inspector	English	Grade 10-12	16
Teacher 5	Jordan	BA Chemistry, MA Analytical Chemistry	Teacher	Chemistry	Grade 9-12	6
Teacher 6	Tunisia	BA English, B.Education	Teacher	English, Social Science	Grade 10-12, College	15
		BA English,	Teacher,	English/	Grade	

Teacher 7	Tunisia	MA Applied Linguistics, PhD Applied Linguistics	Assistant professor, Head of English	ESL, Linguistics, Semantics	9-12, College	14
Teacher 8	Morocco	BA English, MA Cultural Studies	Teacher	English/ESL	Grades 8-12	11
Teacher 9	Algeria	BA English, MA Didactics	Teacher, Education consultant	English, Literacy, TEFL, Research methodology	Grade 7-12, University	19
Teacher 10	Palestine	BA English, B.Education	Teacher	English, Literature	Grade 9-12	10
Teacher 11	Palestine	B.SC Math, ICT	Teacher, ICT supervisor	Technology Math	Grade 6-12	9

Overall, the group that ended up agreeing and being able to participate in the study turned out to be a diverse one in many significant ways. This bode well for the phenomenographic methodology of the study, as it supplied a range of teachers from different areas, with different backgrounds and of different subjects areas and roles for me to investigate the qualitatively different ways in which people experience internationalized teacher professional development.

Interviews

Interviewing is the most common method for collecting data in phenomenography (Walsh, 2000). Thus, the following step was to conduct in-depth individual semi-structured interviews with the selected participants. All interviews were recorded and transcribed and lasted approximately 60 to 90 minutes. As Booth (1997) explains, although many possible sources of information can reveal a person's understanding or conception of a particular phenomenon, the method of discovery is usually an open,

deep interview. Open indicates that there is no definite structure to the interview. Phenomenographers are advised that while they may have a list of questions or concerns that they wish to address during the interview, they should also be prepared to follow any unexpected lines of reasoning that the interviewee might address, as some of these departures may lead to fruitful new reflections that could not have been anticipated by the researcher. Deep indicates that the interview will follow a certain line of questioning until it is exhausted, until the participant has nothing else to say and until the researcher and participant have reached some kind of common understanding about the topics of discussion (Marton, 1994).

The aim of the interviews was to have the participant reflect on his or her experiences and then relate those experiences to me in such a way that we were able to come to a mutual understanding about the meanings of the experiences (or of the account of the experiences). Most phenomenographers seem to agree that the participants should have sufficient flexibility to describe the experiences as they wish in their own way. Hence, most of the questioning and probing was open-ended. Also, a suggestion made by Bowden and Walsh (2000) that was used in this study was to offer “problem questions” that the participants are asked to resolve. By asking participants to work through problems “interviewees are encouraged to reveal, through discussion, their ways of understanding a phenomenon, that is, to disclose their relationship to the phenomenon under consideration” (p. 9). (Please see Appendix B for the full set of the interview questions used).

Prosser (2000) writes, “While it is relatively easy to get interviewees to describe their strategies, it is much more difficult to get them to discuss their intentions underlying their

strategies and their conceptions of phenomena” (p. 44). This is an important point to note, because internationalized teacher professional development is less about strategies and more about changes to the teacher her/himself (in terms of new attitudes, beliefs, etc.). Thus, to approach the participant’s conceptions, the researcher is advised to consider the interview/discussion as a whole. According to Marton and Booth (1997) interviews take place on two levels: the interpersonal contact between the interviewer and the participant and at a metacognitive level in which the participant relates her/his awareness of an experience (Marton & Booth, 1997). Thus, while I attempted to maintain focus on the target conception(s), I also provided room for the participant to fully express related nuances and details. It is suggested that in some cases, it might be helpful within the context of the co-constructed interaction for the researcher to share her own experiences; however, Bowden (2000) warns against “leading too much” to avoid influencing the participants. As such, most the questions in a phenomenographic interview follow from comments of the participants (Trigwell, 2000). Some sample questions that Bowden and Walsh (2000) supply and were used in my interviews are:

- Could you explain further?
- What do you mean by that?
- Is there anything you would like to say about this problem?

Finally, during my interviews I kept in mind that a phenomenographic interviewer will ask similar questions in different ways so as to elicit a number of different views on the phenomenon, as “typically, a range of questions is used to provide views of each conception from several angles in order to make the description of the conception as rich as possible” (Dall’Alba, 2000, p. 94). The interviews are what allowed me to get to

the crux of the investigation, where the participants shared their different experiences of internationalized teacher professional development. The survey, on the other hand, helped me collect preliminary data and set the stage for the interviews.

Data Analysis

During the data analysis, qualitatively distinct categories that describe the ways in which the different participants experience internationalized teacher professional development were identified. According to Booth (1997), phenomenographers believe that a limited number of categories are possible for each concept under study and that these categories can be discovered by immersion in the data, which, in most cases, are transcriptions of the interviews. Thus, these categories will be able to be determined during the data analysis, but will follow along the lines of the research questions, i.e. categories for the different personal and professional transformations teachers report as a result of internationalized teacher professional development, how teachers describe learning and changing as a result of internationalized teacher professional development and the different conditions that support and promote this learning and change.

As such, I examined the transcripts of the participant interviews, looking for both similarities and differences among them. In this process, I developed initial categories that described the different teachers' experiences of the internationalized teacher professional development. Since the interviews covered multiple topics and multiple aspects of the phenomenon, I developed an outcome space for each topic. Then, with these initial categories in mind, I re-examined the interview transcripts to determine if the categories were sufficiently descriptive and indicative of the data. This second review of the data should result in modification, addition, or deletion of the category

descriptions and a third examination of the data for internal consistency of the categories of description. This process of modification and data review continued until the modified categories seemed to be consistent with the interview data. As Marton (1986) explains, the definitions for categories are tested against the data, adjusted, retested, and adjusted again; there is, however, a decreasing rate of change, and eventually the whole system of meanings is stabilized (p. 43).

Once a stable outcome space was defined, I attempted to develop as deep an understanding as possible of what had been said, or rather, what had been meant, following what has been laid out by Marton (1994). To do this, I needed to consider not only specific categories of description, but also how the individual categories relate to each other and how one person's conceptions compare across different topics.

Marton (1986) argues that a careful account of the different ways people think about phenomena may help uncover conditions that facilitate the transition from one way of thinking to a qualitatively better perception of reality. Thus, phenomenographic information about the different conceptions that, for example, students hold for a particular phenomenon may be useful to teachers who are developing ways of helping their students experience or understand a phenomenon from a given perspective. In the same way, the results of this study should, therefore, be useful to those who teach internationalized teacher professional development and are attempting to help their teacher participants to understand this form of professional development from the perspective of, for example, transformation. Following the lines of transformation, a possible benefit of phenomenographical research is that the teachers may become conscious of contradictions in their own reasoning and become more open to alternative

ideas as they reflect on their perceptions and understandings of their world experiences (Marton, 1986). The data analysis may also lead to insights on concepts the literature suggests are important to explore, such as the significance of context, the conditions that support learning and change prior, during and after trigger events that lead to transformation, and other facets of the learning and change process.

Methodology limitations

While it is my opinion that phenomenography is the best-suited methodology for this study, it is important to address some of the potential limitations of this approach. One of the criticisms of phenomenography is its tendency to equate peoples' experiences with their *accounts* of those experiences. Saljo (1997) reports that, at times, there appears to be a discrepancy between what researchers observe of a participant's experience with a particular phenomenon and how the participant describes her/his experience with the phenomenon. In order to avoid equating experiences with accounts of experiences, Saljo (1997) suggests that researchers refer to studying people's different accounting practices of phenomena, which are public and accessible to study, instead of referring to studying people's experiences. One must keep in mind, however, that such accounting practices may be socially and environmentally influenced (i.e. the teacher may say what the interviewer wants to hear). It may be true that people's accounts of their experiences with a particular phenomenon are not equivalent to the ways in which they experience the phenomenon; however, the only way we can begin to understand the ways in which people experience a given phenomenon is to ask each person to describe his or her experience (Saljo, 1997). The point is made that, as a researcher, one can make

observations of what people experience, but those observations will not tell us how they experience a given phenomenon, especially if one accepts the idea that conceptions, or ways of experiencing, are products of an interaction between the person and the phenomenon she/he experiences. As such, phenomenographical results may not be truth, in that they may never accurately describe the ways of experiencing, but they may be useful. Thus, along this line of reasoning, it may then not matter if accounts are equivalent to experience.

A critique of Webb (1997) is the assumption of researchers using phenomenography that they can be neutral foils while analyzing research data. It is more reasonable to assume that researchers have had certain experiences and hold certain theoretical beliefs that will influence their data analysis and categorization. Webb calls for researchers to make their backgrounds and beliefs explicit, because readers and users of phenomenographic research need to be informed about all variables that have potentially affected the study results. Such self-examination may also lead to additional insights into the data and, to some extent, a more critical examination of how the researchers' own beliefs have affected the research and results of this research.

Thus, in my study I will make my background and beliefs visible and clear, especially since I am a secondary-school teacher who has been exposed to internationalized teacher professional development myself. First of all, I had direct experience with Program Z selected for this study, as an intern. I was with the teachers throughout much of their internationalized teacher professional development experience, including sitting in on and taking notes during their classes and activities.

This inside exposure gave me an understanding of the internationalized professional development experience.

I have also had experience administering internationalized teacher professional development myself as part of an Education Beyond Borders team that traveled to a small village in Tanzania in the summer of 2012 to run workshops on student-centered learning and inquiry based learning with local secondary school teachers in five districts. In this way, I have had a wealth of experience and exposure to the topic of this study, and therefore, do hold certain theoretical beliefs that will influence my data analysis and categorization. As long as I make my background and beliefs explicit as Webb suggests, they will likely lead to additional insights into the data and, to some extent, a more critical examination of how my own beliefs have affected the research and results of this research, enhancing the study, rather than taking away from it.

Finally the last limitation regarding the use of phenomenography is the questioning of the reliability and repeatability of phenomenographic studies. On the issue of reliability, Marton (1986) says that it is possible for two different researchers to discover different categories of description while working on the same data individually. However, once the categories have been found, they must be described in such a way that all researchers can understand and use them. Thus, while it is highly probable that another researcher would develop qualitatively different categories than I would, once I have developed and described a category, it will be useful to others who use the results of the study.

Overall limitations

While there is, in spite of the abovementioned methodology limitations, high potential for substantial data to be generated from this research, there are potential overall limitations to this study that are important to identify. Beginning with the participants and the internationalized professional development program they participated in, the issue of the length of time between when Program Z took place and this research project should be noted. Program Z took place during the month of July 2011 and the participants were interviewed during the summer of 2014. This roughly three-year passage of time could mean the participants' recollection of their experiences may not be as sharp as if they had been interviewed more immediately following the program. However, there are benefits to the three-year passage of time. Firstly, they will have had three years of classroom practice following their participation in Program Z; the fact that three years have passed means the teacher participants have an extensive amount of classroom experience to draw upon and reflect on in relation to this part of the study. Also, over the course of Program Z, the participants completed a number of reflections, academic papers, and other relevant documents that they will be asked to revisit, as a way to refresh their memories of their experience in and following Program Z. Another benefit of the three-year passage of time is that within this time, the participants of this study may have undertaken other forms of internationalized teacher professional development; this would be useful to this study, as they can draw upon these additional experiences to inform their answers to the interview questions.

In addition to the time lapse, another seemingly potential limitation is that the participants are scattered across different physical regions and, thus, due to financial

and time constraints, the interviews for this study had to be conducted over Skype. While the traditional way to conduct interviews is face-to-face, it is the researcher's opinion that the use of Skype was a suitable substitute. Just like face-to-face interviews, the researcher and interviewee will be able to see each other, albeit through a screen. This is significant, because it is useful for a researcher to observe body language during an interview; however, a limitation is that Skype typically only allows the upper body and face to be visible, making it important to pay closer attention to facial cues. Also, during the Skype interviews both voices will be audible, making it possible to record each interview and subsequently make successful transcriptions (Cater, 2011). Overall, using Skype allowed me to interview a wide range of teachers, all situated in different physical contexts, and allowed me to offer them flexibility in scheduling interviews.

Another potential limitation is the nature of the program in terms of the teachers that are selected. As this was a government-funded program, it was able to cover nearly the full cost of the program for each teacher, such that the teachers paid a very small amount to none to participate. This has meant that that Project Y was able to bring a mix of teachers, including many who would otherwise not be able to cover the costs of participating and/or are from low-income schools. However, the fact that the selection process was very selective (only 3% of applicants were admitted into Program Z), it can be assumed that there was a feeling of responsibility that the teachers hold as program participants. It can be assumed that they were aware of the money that had been invested in them and that they have been given the opportunity to participate over many others. Consequently, they may have felt an expectation placed on them to respond to their professional development in a positive way and/or show the effectiveness or

results of the program. The interview questions will try to push past any particular representation or effect of Program Z the participants may feel they have to subscribe to and create space for them to share their accounts of the experience in an honest and reflective way.

A further limitation of this study is related to research by Desimone, Smith, and Ueno (2006), who state that the most qualified teachers are the ones who seek out professional development with effective features. This characterization does apply to the participants of this study, as they are all highly motivated teachers; they would not have been selected for Program Z were they not. The fact that they were all highly motivated teachers who want to change or try something new could mean that these teachers were more likely to be open to transformation during and following their internationalized professional development than teachers who are not as highly motivated. This limitation could be avoided by studying professional development that uses nonvolunteers, an area for future study identified by Desimone (2009). However, while internationalized professional development programs are rapidly increasing in number, they are not so common as to have nonvolunteers as participants; rather, internationalized teacher professional development programs are still selective in nature. As such, the fact the study participants are likely highly motivated teachers to begin with is something that I should be mindful of throughout the research process. Rather than a limitation, I anticipate that it will offer more wealth and depth to my data collection. Perhaps the fact that the participants are all highly motivated will mean there will be a more diverse range of described experiences of learning and change and

learning how to learn, which will help me to explore my research questions with more depth and scope.

Phenomenographic analysis: a detailed look

Ways of looking at interview transcriptions

There are two broadly defined ‘schools’ of data analysis with contrasting approaches in phenomenography (Forster, 2013). The traditional method is called the ‘Marton method’ (1986), which reduces the collection of transcripts to ‘utterances’ or ‘quotes’, each with a perceived and distinct meaning. These are then brought together into categories on the basis of their similarities; although part of the ‘meaning’ ascribed to an utterance comes from its context in a transcript, the transcript is no longer a data unit in itself in this method (Forster, 2013). Instead of this approach, I will be following the ‘Akerlind method’ (2005) where the transcript is treated as a significant unit of data and retains its significance throughout the analysis (Forster, 2013). The emphasis with this method is that the emerging categories and the transcripts must be focused on as a set, not individually, so as to understand the collective experience and the eventual outcome space (Forster, 2013).

Prosser (2000) also deals with transcripts as a whole; however, as Collier-Reed (2006) explains, Prosser argues that the only workable course of action for dealing with the process of analysis is to divide the transcripts into what he calls ‘related parts’ (Collier-Reed, 2006, p. 45) and then analyze these parts in relation to each other and in relation to the categories constituted: “In this approach, there is no pool of meaning in the Martonian sense, but rather a set of sections of interview – each still firmly located within the context of the interview from which it originated” (Collier-Reed, 2006, p. 7).

Svennson and Theman, as cited in Akerlind, 2003, p. 62) suggest selecting excerpts that seem to 'exemplify meanings' present in the larger interview, while removing 'perceived irrelevant or redundant components' of the interview to make the data more manageable. There is a different approach by Bowden (2000) who prefers to deal with the whole transcript all of the time to avoid the risk of complete decontextualisation from the original transcript; however, researchers who deal with interviews as a whole agree that it is difficult to hold 20 interviews in their head simultaneously during analysis (Trigwell, 2000), therefore, this will be avoided.

Categories of description

As explained in the previous chapter, phenomenography is not directed at the phenomenon itself, but rather peoples' *experience* of the phenomenon. In this way, the researcher is not making statements about a phenomenon, but rather about, in this case, teachers' ideas of that phenomenon (internationalized teacher professional development); research of this nature is referred to as a second-order perspective (Marton, 1981). More than just looking at peoples' experience of phenomenon, phenomenography focuses on the variation in what people understand and how they understand it; as Marton and Booth (1997) explains, a phenomenographic research project reveals the qualitatively different ways in which a phenomenon can be experienced, understood or perceived.

This brings us to the next step in the data analysis: to develop the limited number of internally and logically related, qualitatively different, hierarchical categories of description of the variation in the way the phenomenon is experienced. This range of qualitatively different ways of understanding a particular phenomenon is captured in

what are known as *categories of description*. These categories of description become the phenomenographic essence of the phenomenon (Uljens, 1996). As Marton explains, they are the primary outcomes and are the most important result of phenomenographic research (1986). They refer to a collective level and describe the different ways the phenomenon can be understood (J. Larsson & Holmstrom, 2007). Marton and Booth (1997, p. 152) proposed three criteria for the quality of a set of categories of description:

- i. Each category should reveal something distinct about a way of experiencing a phenomenon.
- ii. Each category should stand in a logical relationship with other categories.
- iii. The number of categories in a set is determined by the extent of variation. In any event it is limited in number.

In addition, each category of description is accompanied by a prose description of the category along with illustrative quotes sourced from the interview data (Bruce, 1997). These quotes from the interview transcripts serve to illustrate how each category differs from the other categories identified (Booth, 1997; Bowden, 2000; Marton, 1994). Thus, as Akerlind (2012) explains, a primary feature of the constitution of categories of description is the search for key qualitative similarities within and differences between the categories. In practical terms, she explains that transcripts or selected quotes are grouped and regrouped according to perceived similarities and differences along varying criteria. As times the groupings precede explicit description of the similarities and differences, at other times the groupings are made according to tentative descriptions for categories, as a checking and validation procedure: "Categories are tested against the data, adjusted, retested, and adjusted again. There is, however, a decreasing rate of change and eventually the whole system of meanings is stabilized" (Marton, 1986, p. 42).

This process of analysis can be seen as either a construction of these categories or as a process of discovery of these categories (Walsh, 2000). I prefer a more organic approach, so I choose to see it as the latter. This means the understanding of the categories of description is already 'present in, and constitutive of' the data and the process of analysis is to let these categories 'emerge from the relationships between the data and the researcher' (Walsh, 2000, p. 20). In the discovery approach, emphasis is placed on similarities and differences that exist in the data; a category is developed by focusing on the similarity in the data constituting the category while differences between categories emerge through focusing on the differences between data (Hasselgren and Beach, 1997). Reassuringly, both these approaches are seen as valid according to other researchers; Bruce (1997) writes that "analysis is a process of discovery because the conceptions reveal themselves through the data, and it is a process of construction because the researcher must identify and describe these in terms of referential and structural elements (p. 103). Aklerlin (2012) advises that reading through transcripts is characterized by a high degree of openness to possible meanings, subsequent readings becoming more focused on particular aspects or criteria, but still within a framework of openness to new interpretations, and the ultimate aim of illuminating the whole by focusing on different perspectives at different times.

Structure and meaning

As Collier-Reed (2006) explains, in describing an experience through a set of categories of description, it is possible to describe the structure of the experience as well as the meaning of the experience:

This follows from the fact that in order to experience a phenomenon as a phenomenon (i.e. its *structure*) it is important that a person discerns this phenomenon from its environment *and* is focally aware of the relevant aspects simultaneously. To give it *meaning*, it is important that this phenomenon be seen in the context of the situation in which it is found. (p. 3)

J. Larsson and Holmstrom agree that the structural and referential (meaning) aspects of the studied phenomenon are essential: “We study both the ‘what aspect’ of the phenomenon, and the ‘how aspect’ of it. When the informants talk about this phenomenon: what do they talk about and how do they talk about it?” (2007, p. 57).

Stamouli and Huggard (2007) agree that the experience of learning is something that can be seen through the *how* aspect and *what* aspect of the experience. As they explain, the *what* aspect constitutes the direct object of learning which is the contents of the construct that is learnt and, furthermore, the phenomenon under investigation. The *how* aspect refers to the learner’s approach in achieving her or his task. As they put it, “how does the learner go about understanding and learning the construct in question” (p. 183). The *how* aspect is broken down into the act of learning and the indirect object of learning. In this way, the act of learning refers to “the experience of the way in which the act of learning is carried out” and the indirect object of learning refers to the goals that the learner is trying to achieve, i.e., their motives (p. 183). They add, however, that this distinction between the *what* and the *how* aspects is entirely analytical and is only used by the researcher to assist in the analysis.

Outcome space

Constituting the outcome space is the next step in the analysis. As explained, phenomenographic research has as its outcome a set of categories that describe the variation in the way a phenomenon is experienced (Collier-Reed, 2006). The categories

of description constituted by the researcher to represent different ways of experiencing a phenomenon are thus seen as representing a structured set, the 'outcome space'; "This provides a way of looking at collective human experience of phenomena holistically, despite the fact that the same phenomena may be perceived differently by different people and under different circumstances" (Akerlind 2012, p. 3). As Akerlind notes, ideally the outcomes represent the full range of possible ways of experiencing the phenomenon in question, at this particular point in time, for the population represented by the same group collectively. Marton and Booth (1997) present three primary criteria for judging the quality of a phenomenographic outcome space:

1. that each category in the outcome space reveals something distinctive about a way of understanding the phenomenon;
2. that the categories are logically related, typically as a hierarchy of structurally inclusive relationships; and
3. that the outcomes are parsimonious – i.e. that the critical variation in experience observed in the data be represented by a set of as few categories as possible.

Collier-Reed explains this second point, that the categories will be logically related to one another, typically hierarchical in nature, with each successive category being a more complex way of experiencing the phenomenon under investigation, is central to the outcome space (p. 3). In order to arrive at this hierarchy, the relationships between the categories of description will have been analyzed in terms of factors such as their inclusiveness and the encapsulating understanding (Stamouli & Huggard, 2007). Stamouli and Huggard (2007) concur that the categories of description form a hierarchy that extends from basic to more complex understandings. They point out,

however, that this is not passing judgment on better or worse ways of understanding. Rather, the hierarchy is formed based on both logical premises and, more often, on the inclusiveness of the understanding: “Some categories that are more complex often presuppose the understanding that is encapsulated in a simpler category, and this imposes a hierarchical structure” (p. 185). As Yates, Partridge, and Bruce (2012) explain, the outcome space may be illustrated as a table, image or diagram and serves the purpose of depicting how each category relates to each other (p. 106). Marton (2000) describes the outcome space as being “the logically structured complex of the different ways of experiencing an object,” acting as a “synonym for phenomenon” (p. 105). Yates, Partridge, and Bruce (2012) explain that “therefore in phenomenography, the outcome space represents both the phenomenon as well as the various ways in which it can be experienced” (p. 106).

Thus, the process of phenomenographic analysis that leads to outcome spaces is strongly comparative; it involves continual sorting and resorting of data and ongoing comparisons between the data and the developing categories of description, as well as between the categories themselves (Akerlind, 2005). She adds that the researcher needs to be willing to constantly adjust her/his thinking in light of reflection, discussion and new perspectives. She advises that maintaining a focus on the transcripts and the emerging categories of descriptions as a set, rather than on individual transcripts and categories, is also essential in order to main focus on the collective experience. Marton (1981) agrees, describing phenomenographic analysis as seeking a “description, analysis, and understanding of experiences,” with the focus on variation – both in the perceptions of the phenomenon, as experienced by the subject, and in the “ways of

seeing something” as experienced and described by the researcher, this being described as phenomenography’s “theory of variation” (Marton & Pang, 1999). In this way, it aims for a collective analysis of individual experiences. This reminds us that phenomenographic focus is on the collective rather than the individual experience; it aims to explore the range of meanings within a sample group, as a group, not the range of meanings for each individual within the group (Akerlind, 2005).

Data analysis steps

The phenomenographic data analysis technique to be used for this study is the Akerlind (2005) method. In this method, the transcript is treated as a significant unit of data and retains its significance throughout the analysis (Forster, 2013). As Forster describes, the Akerlind method emphasizes that the emerging categories and the transcripts must be focused on as a set, not individually, so as to understand the collective experience and the eventual outcome space. This is different from the Marton (1986) method, where the collection of transcripts is reduced to quotes, each with a perceived and distinct meaning, which are then brought together into categories on the basis of their similarities; although part of the meaning ascribed to a quote comes from its context in a transcript, the transcript is no longer a data unit in itself (Forster, 2013). Here are the following steps of Akerlind’s (2005) transcript-centered approach that will be used for this study:

Step 1: At this stage, the transcripts are read through three times as a full set of data.

The first time the transcripts are simply read without making any notes. The second reading is a process of underlining key statements with different coloured pencils so that links to other apparently related statements elsewhere in the transcript can be made.

During the third reading, notes are made on each summarizing the 'issues and themes' that emerge in the context of others.

Step 2: Next, transcripts with similar individual meanings are grouped together after repeatedly re-reading the transcripts and the notes, with the similarities within and differences between the groups clarified. Look for *what* the focus of the teacher's attention is and *how* she/he describes her/his way of learning.

Step 3: Then a description of each category is written with illustrative quotations from the transcripts. These descriptions form the preliminary categories for the set of transcripts. As Green (2005) explains, this first attempt will not necessarily be 'right' and will most likely change; it will, however, provide a different way to see the data, to then revisit and further develop the categories.

Step 4: Next the researcher looks for non-dominant ways of understanding by identifying transcripts that do not seem to fit into any category and, as such, show a different facet that needs to be considered.

Step 5: The descriptions of the categories are clarified with constant reference back to transcripts as wholes. The final descriptions of the categories should be self-contained, in that they are able to be understood as a set of separate, stand-alone statements. Then a label for each category of description can also be developed.

Step 6: Next, the relationships between the categories of description should be detailed. These relationships should specify the similarities and differences between the categories and help to reveal categories that are more comprehensive than others. The categories are then sorted into a hierarchy based on their increasing comprehensiveness. This hierarchical representation of the categories of description is the outcome space.

CHAPTER SIX: Research Findings

This chapter contains the research findings of this study. As explained in the previous chapter, during the data analysis I developed a limited number of internally and logically related, qualitatively different, hierarchical **categories of description** of the variation in the way the internationalization of teacher professional development was experienced by the participants of Program Z. In this chapter, each category of description is accompanied by a prose description of the category along with illustrative quotes sourced from the interview data (Bruce, 1997). The quotes from the interview transcripts serve to illustrate how each category differs from the other categories identified (Booth, 1997; Bowden, 2000; Marton, 1994). The identified categories of description have been sorted so they logically related to one another, and form a hierarchy that extends from basic to more complex understandings. This hierarchical representation of the categories of description is the **outcome space**.

This study identified three categories of description of the participants' experiences of internationalized teacher professional development. The richness of the data led to sub-categories within each main category of description. They are as follows:

1. Learning: **Internationalized teacher professional development experienced as learning from peers, the environment, and conditions that promote and sustain learning.**

- Sub-category 1 (A): Learning from peers.
- Sub-category 1 (B): Learning from the environment.
- Sub-category 1 (C): Conditions that promote and sustain learning.

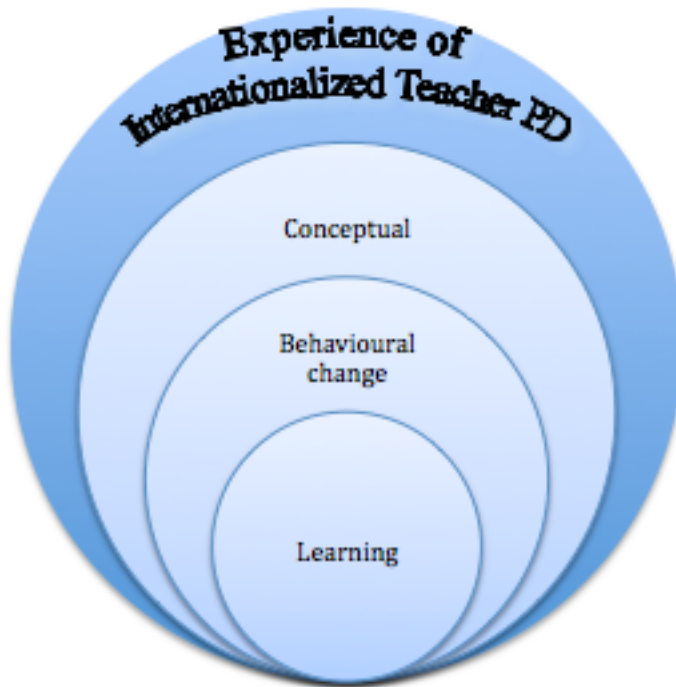
2. Behavioural: **Internationalized teacher professional development experienced as resulting in behavioural change in terms of relationships with others and professional practice.**

- Sub-category 2 (A): Behavioural change in terms of shift in relationships with others.
- Sub-category 2 (B): Behavioural change in terms of professional practice.

3. Conceptual: **Internationalized teacher professional development experienced as conceptual shifts in terms of attitudes and beliefs, self-awareness and concepts of teaching/being a teacher.**

- Sub-category 3 (A): Shift in attitudes and beliefs.
- Sub-category 3 (B): Concepts of self-awareness.
- Sub-category 3 (C): Concepts of teaching and being a teacher.

These categories of description have been titled: *Learning*, *Behavioural*, and *Conceptual*. Each of these categories reveals something distinct about the way the teachers experienced the internationalized teacher professional development. Each category also stands in a logical relationship with the other categories and are hierarchical in nature, with each successive category being a more complex way of experiencing internationalized teacher professional development, as illustrated below in the following diagram:



The relationships between the categories of description and hierarchy are as follows: the first category of description, internationalized teacher professional development experienced as learning from the environment and conditions, contains primarily understandings of *from what/how* the teachers learned from during Program Z and *what* conditions made the learning effective. This category of description rests at the bottom of the hierarchy because it is the most basic and straightforward out of the three. This first category logically relates to the next category of description, internationalized teacher professional development experienced as resulting in behavioural change, because the learning the teachers experienced and accounted for in the first category resulted in the behavioural changes accounted for in this second category of

description. The experience of behavioural change captured in this category of description is more layered and nuanced than the first category of description and thus is higher in the hierarchy. Both the first and second categories of description relate to the third and highest category of description, internationalized teacher professional development experienced as conceptual shifts, because it is a combination of the learning conditions and behavioural changes that results in the more deep and complex conceptual shifts that the teachers experience as a result of their internationalized teacher professional development. This hierarchical representation of the categories of description comprises the **final outcome space** of the study. In the following sections, each of these categories will be explained with illustrative quotes taken from the study.

Category of description 1 - Learning

In this category, the experience of internationalized teacher professional development is conceptualized as learning that occurred from different factors over the duration of Program Z. In addition to the curriculum of an internationalized professional development program, teachers reported learning they experienced outside of the classroom context. These learning experiences are broken down into three sub-categories:

- **Sub-category 1 (A): Learning from peers.**

The teachers' accounts consistent with this category described residing in the same place and engaging in daily activities together led to learning from their peers. Many of the teachers described mutual learning that took place between them, which took the

form of the exchange of ideas, seeing what each other do in their own countries, and getting feedback from each other on their teaching practices. For a number of the teachers, it was the high level of interaction with each other that resulted in so much mutual learning, as this teacher describes: “...*so traveling together, working together, presenting projects together, eating together, so these interactions you know personally gave me a lot of knowledge about other personality styles and other teacher styles... really I benefitted a lot from them.*”

The fact that they were all in a shared profession also led to the high degree of mutual learning, described by this teacher:

I think that half of the development is done from other teachers who are with you going to this course or group learning. Like, you're going there to learn from the professors, but you end up learning half from the other teachers, from their experiences. Because let's not forget, they are teachers who are going through kind of the same problems you are going through. And because we are different, everybody handles problems differently. When you hear somebody handled the same problem and it worked with them, and it didn't work with me, I'm more likely to listen and do what they're doing, especially if I'm in the same environment as trusting the person I'm listening to, the teacher I'm interacting with.

As described by this teacher, the mutual learning that took place was especially strong and impactful because the shared profession of teaching created an inherent sense of trust amongst the teachers. It was the shared profession of teaching that created a bridge across diverse opinions, as this teacher explained: “*Sometimes we don't see the same vision, but we learn from each other.*” Another teacher added that when it came to differing opinions amongst the teachers, “*Even if it is a negative experience, I believe people learn,*” illustrating the depth of the mutual learning that took place. Their shared profession also united them under the shared struggles of teaching, as this teacher

described, “*Frustration from teaching, from correcting papers, from working long hours, from, I don’t know the whole profession of teaching,*” playing a role in deepening their connections with each other.

A different teacher even went as far as to say that the learning that occurred as a result of the other teachers was equally, or even more important than the official professional development being conducted:

Yeah. To tell the truth, when you go for international experience like that, maybe what you learn outside the classroom is more than what you learn in the classroom. We had great discussions with [redacted] and every other professor, but also what we learned as a network of teachers with the similar cause, what you learn from the practices of your friends in other areas of the world... so when you come back, you come back with a mixture of new perspectives of how things are done in different parts of the world, and now it's up to you to take those very positive aspects that you can integrate in your own view of doing things.

The idea that half of the professional development came from the diverse group was echoed by many teachers, some of whom added this facet of their professional development continued after the program through the network that had been created amongst the teachers.

Many of the teachers added that much of the growth that they experienced as a result of the group was personal, in addition to professional. This was displayed through the ways in which the teachers described how the benefits of the experience spanned both in and outside of their classrooms, such as this teacher who described the following:

The very first obvious thing as I said in the beginning it was professional. I came up with a new philosophy new ideas, I extended my learning to outside the classroom, I conducted extracurricular activities, etc. Then on the level of relationships with people, it helped me create a very nice network...these opportunities they can bring other collaboration or cooperation opportunities...So

professionally, personally, the joy or the happiness of being part of a group like that, so even on the psychological level it was very influential, positive.

In this way, the experience of internationalized teacher professional development can be seen as a holistic growth, where the growth in their professional realms complimented and contributed to their personal growth, and vice versa.

Many of the teachers also reported that the cultural diversity of the group was a huge benefit to the learning they experienced. One teacher explained that it was this factor that led to change even in those who were at first resistant: *“I think the experience itself it will force people to be open I think. Because we were different coming from different backgrounds and different countries and we were forced or obliged to work together and to listen to each other...we were all trying and do you understand, even those moments I think the people who resisted or even those moments I think that everybody has changed and has accepted the others.”* Other teachers felt that the experience of being within a diverse group of people allowed them to see beyond what they felt they already knew, much of which was formed as a result of the media, especially from television, as this teacher explained: *“When you listen from the person himself or herself, you get something authentic, right, it's not like when you read or when you watch it on TV or something like that.”*

Being able to be with teachers from a range of different cultures also helped the teachers to learn about the complexity of culture, as this teacher described: *“So I think that I got some ideas I, even [my country] I thought it was just one people one way of thinking, but I observed that [my country] has so many regions and each region has its own way of thinking, I don't know that before.”* Some of the teachers described being

with a diverse group as an advantage over a group that is not as diverse because the former led to much more learning:

I think the reason for that is because if you do it locally, you will only get experience from teachers that are around you, who basically have the same experience as you. Ok, some schools have different, maybe budgets, and have more equipment or whatever, or bring people to talk to the teachers and influence them, but when you're talking about internationally, you're talking about different mentality, different mentality of teachers, of people, of students, so you have a broader aspect of the development. You will have a bigger picture of development. You will bring in the experience of the teachers who are going there with you to learn from the PD.

The favourable sentiments towards the cultural diversity of the group went as far as a teacher wishing that the group had been even more culturally diverse (beyond the Middle East and North African region) as he believed that would have been even more beneficial to the learning within the group.

For some teachers, the learning from their fellow teachers came through a sense of inspiration they felt being part of the group, as this teacher describes: *"When you see a teacher who teaches with passion, who talks about teaches passionately, you kind of have to wonder, what is it that makes them love teaching and be so successful? And when you find someone like that, yes, I'm willing to listen to this person."* One teacher described a sense of inspiration he gained from his fellow teachers in the group, particularly to continue pursuing his own graduate education.

For many of the teachers, they cited personal, casual conversations with other teachers in the group as playing a significant role in helping them learn and change. Described as "hallway discussions" in professional development literature, these took place in various contexts, as the teachers describe, with individual results. This teacher

describes discussions amongst some of the teachers that would take place after the formal day had ended and how they sparked new ideas and initiatives to make changes upon returning to teaching:

Yes, I admit it was very effective in the sense it made me raise questions on the spot, and then when we got back to the dorms and through our discussions with guys especially Moroccan friends because we have a very similar setting very similar educational systems, we conducted discussions most of the time... and we started thinking, sometimes individually, sometimes as a group in general, and we reach conclusions, we found ourselves doing things this or that way, in the same way, and we said, why don't we give it a try differently? Why are we very conservative in doing things in that way? So maybe those moments that they help me raise questions but when I come back I implemented really new activities.

For some less experienced teachers, conversations with others in the group helped them to grapple with fears they had towards being able to help their students be prepared and inspired them to make practical changes once returning to teaching. One of these teachers without many years teaching experience felt she gained immensely from the discussions with other teachers in the group due to the cultural diversity of the group: *“So it's like taking experiences in maybe 25 countries or 25 schools at the same time. So, such experiences enrich your experience with plus three years at least. It's like I gained three or four years of teaching in one month.”*

Overall, the teachers explained how these casual “hallway” conversations had a profound effect on them and their learning, since, as one teacher described, *“it was my first time talking with teachers outside of my small world...we would stay up late and talk, and when we would talk, we would talk about deep things, about teaching. And yes, they did effect me.”* They emphasized that discussions with fellow teachers in the group took their learning to a different level, explaining, *“Yeah, so you might read about*

a theory in a book, but when you discuss it with friends, you get it into more practical basis, realistic basis,” with some of the teachers adding that often this learning that led to significant change when they returned home to teaching was not something formal or planned, as this teacher explained:

Exactly, learning was maybe mostly incidental, it was different from the learning here in class, it was different upon learning as I said sometimes you are drinking a cup of tea and start a very casual discussion and you come up with a project, not only an idea, but you want to try or to implement when you go back home.

In these ways, the participants of the study emphatically relayed the ways in which they learned from their peers throughout the duration of the program.

- **Sub-category 1 (B): Learning from environment.**

Similar to this learning that occurred beyond the curriculum, teachers also reported learning they experienced as a result of being in a new cultural environment. They described being in a culturally different physical environment meant learning was happening continuously, as one teacher described the learning he experienced as not being limited to the official professional development itself, but rather *“It makes learning ongoing from the very beginning until the very end. You learn from the local culture, it gives you some sort of happiness that you are in a different context and this increases motivation to learn more.”* This notion of the new environment resulting in a sense of motivation that has positive effects, described by this teacher as *“Motivation increases receptivity, and motivation increases openness to change,”* illustrates an important benefit for the teachers of being in culturally different physical environment.

For some of the teachers, their experience being in a culturally different physical environment meant they felt more immersed in their professional development

experience. Not having to return to their “regular” contexts had a significant effect, as this teacher described, *“Because here in Tunisia once you get out of your workshop, you are in the context of the family, the familiar context, but in [major American city] for example you feel that you are learning everywhere.”* The impact of the physical distance from homes and regular routines on their learning was brought up by a number of teachers, for example, in this account: *“The mindset that you have no pressures, you don’t have to tutor in the afternoon, and you don’t have to make lunch, so it facilitates learning because it’s more relaxing I would say.”*

Being out of their regular routines also meant their mental routines were shaken up as well, as described by this teacher: *“But when you’re in a new country and new experience, you’re kind of doing everything for the first time, so why not listen to ideas for the first time? At least I think so.”* In a similar way, the culturally different physical environment meant the teachers were more relaxed and free, which also meant have less fear of making changes: *“More open, more relaxed to new ideas, I was kind of willing to do anything new...the whole state I was in was in a state of doing new stuff, so listening to new things...I was kind of less afraid, which kind of played a positive effect on the whole experience.”* Some of the teachers were explicit about how feeling physically free in the culturally new physical environment meant they felt mentally free as well. They described feeling restricted on different levels in their home environments, such as by their schools and societies, but during the program, as one teacher described, *“But there I don’t hide behind anything, I just do whatever I want, it’s in that program or in that environment I felt free, and I felt more creative.”* Another teacher described it as the difference between feeling *“trapped”* or *“chained to any of these*

ministries [of education] and that's why I felt at ease when I went to the States. I wanted to learn more, to... I wanted to be frank and learn more and be open to the ideas without feeling that I'm stuck." In these ways, the culturally new physical environment had a significant impact on the teachers and their experience of the internationalized teacher professional development.

- **Sub-category 1 (C): Conditions that promote and sustain learning.**

In addition to what the teachers described learning from (so far, their peers and the environment), they also accounted for the conditions that promoted their learning, both during the teacher professional development and after. To begin with, the atmosphere they experienced during the internationalized teacher professional development was described as "positive" and "friendly," which had a positive impact on the teachers, as one teacher described: *"I felt relaxed and open to learning new things,"* while another became more open to others: *"But the whole environment was very friendly I started to feel a bit open about people, this was nice."* The supportive and caring atmosphere described by the teachers also meant the teachers did not feel judged, especially because they felt that all viewpoints were accepted and discussed, a practice some of the teachers have now implemented in their classrooms. Part of the friendly atmosphere, the teachers cited the various excursions and activities that made the group feel happy and relaxed as a positive feature of the program.

The teachers also described a supportive environment as playing an important role in the effectiveness of their learning once they returned to their local teaching contexts. Those teachers that cited a good relationship with their administrators, particularly principals, found it easier to implement changes in their teaching and

classrooms. For other teachers, a difficult relationship with their school administrators meant they did not feel supported to implement their new learning and make changes to their teaching. Other teachers added that in addition to the administrations, parents and the community also play a role in whether a teacher implements change in the classroom, describing *“But then I think that we are teachers here in the... region are trapped between parents, the administration, and the beliefs of the community, so we are really trapped, whenever we wanted to move on someone or one of these figures would come and either challenge you or defy your idea or tell you that you don't need this.”* Other teachers described having to *“slow down, until I know them more and until the parents and the administration feels okay with it”* when trying to move forward in implementing new ideas gained from the internationalized teacher professional development.

- External influences (local context)

Zooming out from a supportive school environment, the larger influences of society also played an important role in the effectiveness of the internationalized teacher professional development once teachers returned to their local teaching contexts. This teacher explained that if the revolution in her country had not occurred six months before she arrived in the program, she would not necessarily have been as ready to implement changes upon returning:

The revolution helped me implement the new ideas I came with, and my thinking of the revolution, of the suitable atmosphere now, made me more open to ideas when I was part of [Program Z]. Not my mindset but my readiness to try out [would have been different if the revolution had not occurred]. As I told you, we used to live under very autocratic regime, and the change there was it was really difficult to do things differently. We used to be tightly supervised by experienced teachers and when they discover you are not doing things the way they wish, or

the way the syllabus prescribes, you may get into trouble. So with the revolution, with the great political shift that Tunisia witnessed, I had a new ideas and I was able to implement them. There were no revolution now, maybe I would enjoy all the ideas I enjoyed but I wouldn't be as open let me say to try them out when I come back. So the impact of the revolution not on my ideas there but on my willingness to implement them back home.

For other teachers, it was more the general environment at home that prevented the teacher from implementing changes, as one teacher described, *"You know when you come back here, it's like you go to the same, so you are struggling, you try your best, so what you wanted to do is just really, I didn't do a lot of things...believe me, at most it's the environment."* Some teachers brought up the larger restraints of the national ministry of education, explaining that they have a largely negative impact on teachers trying to implement changes in their classrooms because *"they do not want to change."* One teacher explained that even at a more micro level of the inspector, the level of control exercised over the teachers means they are not free to implement changes: *"You do this, you follow this, you do that, don't do that, so you see, we have certain beliefs and we have to follow them and respect them...we are not really free."* A different teacher felt it was a combination of a rigid local context, including strict administrators that prevent teachers from learning and changing, explaining, *"So our local context is very important in the way we are going to embrace the change... Sure, and even if they are convinced...because of those limitations and those guidelines back home, and that authority of the inspector or of the supervisor they have different things from one place to another, maybe they can't change things the way they wish, simply because that's not what they are supposed to do,"* showing the powerful external influences on the learning and change of the teachers.

- Internal influences

Other teachers felt it was more of a matter of personal will and strength to implement changes in the classroom, as one teacher explained, *“If the teacher is creative enough or the teacher thinks they're strong enough to implement or introduce changes at their school, they can do it,”* and another attested that *“it's something personal”* that determines whether a teacher follows through on implementing changes in the classroom. A different teacher cited personal determination as a significant factor in whether a teacher implements change, stating, *“It takes a lot of work to change... it takes a lot of determination, a lot of pushing yourself...”* while another teacher also put the emphasis on the teacher, but highlighted the personal trait of self-confidence as being the most important because it allows them to accept the risk and judgement from others that change can bring about. For a different teacher, seeing other teachers have successful internationalized teacher professional development experiences led her to *“know I'm going to benefit from something and I'm going to come back home with an experience that will change me”* because she had already seen such changes in other teachers.

On the other hand, some teachers expressed that if a teacher is not open to change, nothing will be effective, explaining, *“I didn't hear you, I didn't see you because I don't want to change.”* A different teacher also believes that it largely depends on the teacher to implement changes, but acknowledges that colleagues play a role in discouraging change, explaining, *“I wanted always to in a way change this...but there's always one person or a staff you know, who puts you down...”* adding that Program Z gave him the confidence to defend the changes he wished to make in his classroom.

For other teachers, the overall culture of their home environment is what made a difference as to whether teachers learned and changed during the program. For some, they believed it was their cultural background, such as having mixed nationalities that made them more open to change, while others cited a familial upbringing in which they were encouraged to question beliefs and exercise critical thinking.

- Intensity and duration

Another condition that the teachers cited supported and promoted their learning and change was the lengthy duration of the program. This teacher described how it is difficult to let go of the way one has been doing things for a long time, but the duration of the program made a big difference:

Sometimes when you teach for a very long time, you kind of get stuck. Not just in teaching, but in doing anything. When you do anything for a very long time, you become kind of like a machine. You do it without thinking. And when someone comes and tells you that “well haven’t you ever thought of doing this this way. It’s faster, it’s more flexible, and it will cost you less.” Sometimes it’s hard to let go of the way you’ve been doing it just because you’re comfortable doing it. You’ve gotten used to doing it. So you’re going out of your comfort zone when you do something differently. So I think that doing something little by little would do the trick. Like, don’t go all the way, don’t expect someone to change 180 degrees from just sitting with them once or twice. It takes a lot of time. Like [Program Z] was a whole month. I think that a long period does the trick. When you kind of keep repeating the same thing, even if it’s saying the same thing in different ways, but going gradually can do the trick.

The duration of the program is especially cited as making an important difference with teachers who seemed resistant to change and new ideas during the program. The repeated exposure to new ideas is described as pushing such teachers to be more willing to change.

Many of the teachers also described the duration of the program as resulting in them feeling “more challenged,” compared to professional development they undertook that was short in duration, as one teacher explained, *“Yes it happened the same thing happened in Egypt, but in a much shorter span. I was more challenged, abroad. And the whole experience was...very enticing, much more enticing than at home, I was feeling proud that I still coming from a poor country but still we are updating with the latest methodologies, that's very good. So it filled me with confidence.”* This teacher shows that feeling more challenged was a positive emotion that was welcomed by the teacher.

- Continuation of supportive environment

In addition to a longer duration to the program, teachers also reported needing sustained teacher professional development support once returning to their respective teaching contexts. The teachers shared how lack of follow-up was quite detrimental to the learning and change process, describing it as a “major problem,” and gave ideas for how follow-up could have been structured, such as through shared Google docs. They also expressed a desire to maintain a network after the program had ended, with one teacher explaining that continued contact with the fellow teachers in the program was a crucial part of her learning and change after she returned home, explaining, *“I share his ideas with my teachers with teachers here. It's what I wanted to tell you really three years now. A lot of time has gone, that's because really the experience is in my mind and my heart.”* The teachers described feelings of sadness at the lack of follow-up, and in response to whether they thought there was any way they could have benefited further from the experience, they expressed a similar longing: *“What we really need is*

meeting again. It was a positive thing, I mean I wanted so badly to go back to this, meet them again..."

The idea that follow-up was necessary for more than emotional or personal reasons was also conveyed by a teacher who explained that it was hard to sustain the changes otherwise: *"I need follow-up... Sure, we are human beings, we release, we relax, we get tired, we might forget, if we are not really planted strongly in the idea...we need reminders."* This idea was also seen in the sentiments of another teacher who expressed that change was difficult to sustain: *"I know that whenever I go for a session, in the next two weeks I've got a zillion ideas in the classroom and I vary it and it doesn't hold for a long time, and then you go back to what you're used to, and the way you teach, which is you know a matter of how you were taught, to a large extent, I think we imitate what we're used to. It's hard to change,"* again showing their want of a continued supportive environment.

- Relevancy and applicability of content

Teachers also reported that the effectiveness of their learning and change both during the program and once they returned to teaching was significantly influenced by the relevance and applicability of the content of the program. The teachers described how a teacher may not implement learning or changes from the program because *"maybe the different insights were received at [Program Z] would not work when she goes back home, and they feel frustrated..."* and *"if the teacher thinks that it can't be implemented in this country..."* showing that they might be discouraged from following through on new ideas acquired during the program if they felt they were not applicable to his local context.

One teacher advised that the professional development could be more effective if close attention was paid to relevancy and applicability of the material: *“Bring them practical ideas and tools and methodologies that they can implement, and general ideas that you can apply in different subjects...”* The issue of applicability and relevancy of the material was also raised in response to a hypothetical question of why a teacher might be experiencing frustration of learning during the program, this teacher cited applicability and relevancy of the material might be the issue, explaining, *“They are sure that they are not going to apply it in their country or where they are working, for them it’s like a waste of time.”*

Further, when speaking about instructors in the program they found extremely effective, the teachers highlighted the fact that these were the instructors who understood the local context the teachers were coming from, *“knew what barriers are we facing,”* and made the material relevant. A different teacher shared that while you may gain many new ideas, not all are applicable because you are not working alone in your local context and others may not see or be open to the relevance of the change: *“You know, maybe I got so many ideas from [Program Z] but not all of them are applicable in our classes because you are not only working in your own, you are working inside a school with its regulations, and maybe we are not familiar with the whole ideas, and when you are trying to inspire some people, maybe they are afraid,”* again showing that there are multiple considerations the teachers have once they return to their home contexts.

- How change occurred

This category of description focusing on the learning experiences of the teachers in Program Z also captured the teachers' accounts of how most of the learning they experienced was not recognized in the moment, but rather, gradually, and especially after returning home, as one teacher described:

I personally think that we cannot change all of the sudden, all at once, I think change is gradual, for me at least I told you at the beginning of the interview that I felt some kind of change after I came back from the [Program Z], and when I participated in Tunisia on education, I felt that I'm developing more and I'm learning more...Change for me was not all of the sudden but was steady and gradually.

Other teachers described making notes during the program of ideas they planned to implement, but once they returned to teaching, they found their teaching had changed beyond what they had intended during the program. Other teachers found the change most prominent after returning to their teaching contexts because the ideas were no longer just in theory, but rather in practice, which made the biggest difference. For other teachers, they were surprised when the new teaching strategies they tried worked in the classroom, showing that they were not certain that they would: *"Yeah, you know when you expect something and it really happens, it gets like a surprise for me, you know why, because when I came back and I tried to apply those methods in my teaching, and then it worked really amazing it worked for me it was like a big surprise."* One teacher shared that he actually did not expect to change in the ways that he did, showing that the change was gradual and unexpected for him, while another teacher explicitly stated that she was not surprised by the changes she experienced because she had

consciously gone into the program seeking change, showing variance in how change occurred for the teachers.

- **Sub-category 2 (A): Behavioural change in terms of shift in relationships with others.**

In this sub-category, the teachers describe behavioural change in terms of a shift in relationships with others, particularly those in the school environment. Many of the teachers described becoming more patient in dealing with others, to such a degree that, for one teacher, “*people around me had noticed that even more than I did.*” The teachers also described becoming braver as a result of the program, such as this teacher who explained how the program allowed her to take her teaching to a different level:

Professionally I kind of got the courage, the confidence to do what I've always believed in, because as I said before, other teachers kind of made me reluctant about how I teach, but having this experience from teachers from outside of my country kind of made me more sure about myself, about how I teach. It gave me the bravery to start off with something that I wanted to do, which was change the curriculum, and I did it, other schools have followed by the way. So in a way, it kind of set me free, if I may say. I was kind of, as if I was tied down and this development was kind of the thing, the trigger that set me free, that made me more sure of myself, made me believe in my self as a teacher more, so that I can do what I always believe in. I kind of lost hope and [Program Z] kind of ignited this flame, which had started to fade. So it kind of sparked that flame as if I was first year as teacher. So I still have this courage, I'm brave, I want to do things, I want to change things. I still believe that I can make a difference as a teacher.

Teachers also described an increase in acceptance of others by developing a strategy of trying to look for positives, rather than focusing on the negatives in another person, as well as by becoming more open-minded as a result of becoming better listeners. For

one teacher, becoming a better listener helped her to more effectively teach different types of learners in the classroom, and in this way, the behavioural changes towards others were a *“like a very rich source for my teaching.”*

Many of the teachers spoke directly to a change in their relationships with their students, with some of the teachers explaining that an increased level of acceptance and understanding of different cultures made them more understanding towards the differences amongst their students. Other teachers shared how in addition to making significant changes to their teaching practice, they felt a very strong bond with their students now, with one teacher describing *“And also the love of my students I feel now is more than what I felt before.”*

The teachers also found that applying the new teaching methodologies and ideas they gained from the program resulted in, as one teacher described, *“enjoying the class with the students,”* which resulted in strengthened relationships with their students as *“the bond between me and my students will be improved and will be better,”* and *“created better relationships between me and them.”* In addition to the application of new teaching methodologies, changes in perspective also resulted in an improved relationship with students, with one teacher describing, *“My vision has become much wider, so the amount of patience and the understanding and love,”* in terms of the new feelings she has towards her students.

- **Sub-category 2 (B): Behavioural change in terms of professional practice.**

Many of the teachers described behavioural changes in terms of their professional practice, particularly a change in how they approached their interactions with their classes as a whole. A number of the teachers shared how they were now more

committed to engaging with their students compared to their teaching before they completed the program. One teacher described her post-program teaching as “*not lecturing, not one is giving and the other is accepting,*” while another teacher described his post-program teaching style as “dynamic” and trying to “*teach in a different way so that I don't feel bored, not only them.*”

Some of the teachers also shared that after experiencing an environment in which all voices are heard (during the program), they became committed to engaging all students in the classroom with their role being more a facilitator of discussion than judging what the students are sharing, as this teacher explained:

I like the way when the teachers accepted all the views and really discussed everything, and I like the neutral side of the teacher, not to be with one side or the other in teaching, to let everyone express himself or herself freely, to know what they want, and I think from that point I understand that to encourage participation, students should talk, express themselves more, we have to listen to them, and not to be with one side, even if it's true.

These teachers described wanting to create space in the classroom for their students to carve out their own opinions, rather than just follow the opinion of the teacher, explaining, “*I want them to express themselves, it's like what they did with us in that training. It's like I think that it's a great way to make everyone express himself or herself really.*” Teachers also shared how after noticing during the program that even topics or answers that were seemingly negative and unclear were accepted and discussed, which led to bridges of understanding and new topics of discussion, they became convinced to bring this practice to their teaching and become more open to discussion in the classroom.

Other teachers described that following the program they had a more relaxed, less rigid approach to teaching, with interactions with students described by one teacher

as having become “*a little more at ease.*” A different teacher became influenced to choose courses to teach where the “*teacher is free to choose to make his own curriculum,*” while another teacher expanded beyond her subject area of language teaching and brought in critical thinking as an overarching theme in her lessons:

So that's the main thing that I got out with from the program. Helping people to think critically. Before I was not really aware of it, it means yes of course critical thinking is important, but for me, as a language teacher, it was not one of my basic roles. But now it changed, and even as a language teacher I still care if people think critically, and that's what I do now.

For others, teaching became more centered on the learner, with the teacher becoming less concerned with following a structured plan than creating space for the students to participate in the lessons, with one teacher explaining: “*I mean when I go to the classroom I don't stick so much to the plan I came with, so I started feeling more freedom in dealing, in letting my students act and interact in the classroom,*” which took the form of debates and other speaking activities.

For many of the teachers, such changes brought about an increased level of enjoyment for the students in the class, as well as the teacher, with their time in the classroom becoming “less tiring,” “more enjoyable,” “less effort and more joy,” and feeling “more confident.” One teacher also shared a renewed, refreshed attitude as a result of an expanded conceptual grasp of what a teacher’s role is and how that energy is passed on to his students: “*So I don't think I'll be able to, even motivate my students without these kinds of programs, because when you are there, you are just got inspired, you are refreshed, your memory even your spirit, and this is for sure reflects on my students' life, and my students' inspiration.*” A teacher with only a few years of teaching under her belt also described a positive impact, sharing that while she previously

struggled with issues of control in her classroom, she was able to successfully address the problems by learning from her fellow teachers who had more experience: *“Every discussion I had with the teachers especially the ones that are more experienced...with every teacher I talked about it, how do you control students how do you let them listen to you how do you let them like the subject?”* Ultimately leading to her trying new strategies in her classroom with beneficial results.

Category of description 3 - Conceptual

In this category of description, internationalized teacher professional development is experienced as conceptual shifts. This category of description rests at the top of the hierarchy that comprises the outcome space because these conceptual shifts are the deepest and most complex understandings of the teachers’ accounts of their internationalized teacher professional development experience; however, as explained in the methodology chapter, this is not passing judgment on better or worse ways of understanding. Rather, these conceptual shifts presuppose the understandings contained in the two previous categories of description. It is a combination of the different ways of learning and the resulting behavioural changes that give way to these more complex conceptual shifts.

- **Sub-category 3 (A): Shift in attitudes and beliefs.**

In this sub-category, the teachers describe a conceptual shift in terms of attitudes and beliefs. One of the dominant changes in terms of attitudes and beliefs relayed by the teachers was how the friendships formed with teachers from different cultural backgrounds played a significant role in helping the teachers to shift their worldviews

and their attitudes towards difference. The teachers described a changed mindset as a result of the program, one that is more open and accepting, with the teachers explaining, *“I became more open to other societies and other people,”* and *“I feel a lot of change because I'm now more open to being cooperative and to exchange information and my ideas with anyone, right, on the basis of mutual respect and understanding.”* Other teachers described becoming more “sensitive than I was before...to the other side,” and *“I can accept the difference...I can give you an example, the word normal for example doesn't make any sense for me anymore, because what is normal for me might be very unusual or abnormal to someone else, so this experience made me really think about many other things.”*

Some of the teachers described a personal transformation of becoming more accepting of other cultures by becoming aware of the dangers of cultural generalizations, explaining, *“I learned a lesson that these generalizations are never true, and we don't have only one West, there are a lot of Wests, and we also don't have, we cannot speak about Arabs and put them in the same basket or Muslims and put them in the same basket, no, there are differences...”* The impact of this change in attitudes and beliefs was described as “life-changing” as the change was felt, as one teacher described, *“When you travel out of your country, when you come in touch with people from different cultural ethnic and religious backgrounds, you revisit and revise your personal habits, your stereotypes you have about other people, the way you perceive and look at the world and also the way you work...”*

The change in attitudes and beliefs towards becoming more open and accepting was also seen to break through closed-mindedness caused by a nationalistic upbringing, as this teacher explained:

Yes, about political lines and differences and problems between people minorities, this was a very critical point to me. I learned about more problems in the Middle East, and meeting with people who are considered enemies before knowing them, it was a big challenge for me because at heart, we were brought up to hate different kinds of nationalities, and this was maybe some of them I left not really on good terms, but when I went back and I reevaluated the whole experience, I felt I was prejudiced, this was wrong. Why have I done this? I shouldn't. If it happened that things are repeated again, I wouldn't do it again, I would be more appreciative and more accepting.

Other teachers described developing an increased level of understanding and acceptance from seeing commonalities between themselves and others of different cultures, explaining, *"Yeah, I felt that we are carrying the same hopes, same dreams, same friendliness, same love and appreciation to life in general..."* revealing a progression in understanding and acceptance towards the other teacher participants as the program moved along, until ultimately finding commonalities taking precedence over all initially perceived differences: *"So I think that from this experience I accept everyone to talk to, and regarding the, what is the differences and what is this person coming from or what is his religion, his country, his... we are all the same, we will meet in some ways."* For other teachers, the change in attitudes and beliefs towards becoming more open and accepting came from becoming *"slower on judging,"* others and seeing the nationalistic hatred that is often spewed in societies as *"a waste, we are wasting our time in prejudice and in judgment of others, and feeding our kids our people on these negative attitudes, it should never lead into goodness, whatsoever."*

Another conceptual change concerning attitudes and beliefs revealed in the teachers' accounts of their experience of internationalized teacher professional development is their reactionary critical views of professional development in their local contexts, which in some cases, extended to their societies as a whole. The teachers described professional development in their local contexts as rigid, with "*no space, no opportunity to be creative,*" and having "*always the same points.*" In addition to the repetition of ideas in the professional development as a main reason why learning does not take place, the teachers criticized the teaching format as being "*always about lectures*" and "*sometimes you just feel obliged to go and attend,*" emphasizing a lack of motivation towards the local professional development. The teachers also expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of engagement and participation, as well as coming back from their local professional development "*without any cultural discovery.*"

Included in the critical views of professional development in their local contexts was feelings of frustration learning with teachers locally. The teachers described a lack of variety of opinions as a reason why learning at home was not as significant compared to learning within a diverse group, as one teacher explained, "*25 teachers from Jordan, 90% of them will think the same way, and will have the same problems the same strategies of solving them, but having those people from many countries, that was the most benefit I think.*" Other teachers described wanting to "go beyond" the problems experienced locally and experiencing frustration as a result of fellow local colleagues who "*are not willing to change the status quo,*" or "*change or kind of, break free from the religion that they're set to...*"

In contrast, the teachers described the internationalized teacher professional development program as “*A really unique experience.*” They highlighted being taught by “actual teachers” rather than lecturers, which made them feel, as one teacher described, “*So the ideas I was listening to were real ideas. That kind of, when they sink in, I know are real.*” They also related appreciation for the participatory quality of the internationalized professional development program and the space for the teachers to be open-minded.

Another significant conceptual change in terms of attitudes and beliefs towards internationalized teacher professional development shared by the teachers was a belief that the importance of internationalized teacher professional development lies in its ability to “*broaden horizons to other cultures and to other ideas or other ways of teaching*” and “*explore new areas, acquire new skills, and build new relationships by making connections with other professionals etc.*” with some teachers adding that there was a huge difference in the effects of the program compared to their local professional development. Other teachers advised all teachers to experience internationalized teacher professional development at least once in their teaching careers because “*it kind of opens up the idea of teaching and how it is done in other schools,*” with one teacher stating her experience “*...was the trigger that changed everything for me as a teacher... It was the changing point of my career.*” Internationalized teacher professional development was also described as being especially important for teachers who come from countries where teacher professional development is not very effective, and for the benefit of “*mutual understanding between cultures and religions.*” Teachers also shared a belief that partaking in multiple internationalized teacher professional

development programs can be even more beneficial because the teacher receives even more exposure to difference.

A few teachers also brought up the importance of internationalized teacher professional development for older teachers, explaining that while it may be more of a challenge for an older teacher to change, it is necessary that they do so *“because we've got bigger posts. So you can't put people like us aside. Our education is as important as the young ones... We still have years of work in front of us, so it's a waste, if we don't work ourselves, for young students.”* Further, the teachers reported that older teachers are often looking for change after doing the same thing for many years, with one teacher explaining, *“I have worked for a good number of years, I have tried many things, who said that what I am trying is the best I can do? Let me see if I can discover new grounds, new ideas...”* and another teacher with over ten years experience also expressing a desire to seek an opportunity *“that can make me question the worth of what I am doing.”* For this teacher, *“The solution came from going for an international program, where you can see different people, different practices, learn from different experiences, and you live in a different culture environment - that's also another important part.”*

- **Sub-category 3 (B): Concepts of self-awareness.**

The second sub-category focuses on the teachers' account that reveal a conceptual shift in their sense of self-awareness, often a quality they developed as a result of their interactions with fellow teachers in the program, similar to the section above. Many of the teachers described becoming more self-aware of their teaching practices, first

explaining, as one teacher described, “*I used to feel what I'm doing was right, and I was so sure about that,*” but through interactions with their fellow teachers, the teachers started to revisit the way they taught, as well as the way they dealt with students. A different teacher similarly also shared sentiments of self-reflection regarding teaching practice as a result of interactions with the group:

So I enjoy those discussion all the time if you want the word about my feelings, so I really enjoyed them. And also I was thinking oh I was saying, I was saying oh, I've been doing things this or that way, so why have I been so convinced that that was the only way things could be done? How come ten years now I am teaching and I've never thought of doing things differently? So these are the types of questions that may reflect my psychological state at that time. So it was mostly about portions of why have I been waiting until now, or what was the obstacle that never let me discover things by myself? It was giving the excitement of, I will try it out and see how things will work.

Likewise, another teacher explained how being part of the group created a heightened self-awareness in her and pushed her towards letting go of previously held ideas:

Even with the simple things, you find it hard to let go of habits that you have, might as well be teaching, like when you do something for a long time, changing this would be hard. Changing habits, changing the way you think, especially if you hold it dearly, if you believe in it with all your heart. But when it's challenged, when you kind of start to have this feeling “could it be that I have been wrong all this time?” and then you kind of have this week when you're kind of yes, no, yes, no and then you're like, I should let go. But it's hard, it's really hard. It differs for what you're letting go, but I think that maybe, an experience or something that had happened kind of clicks with something that you've heard and you realize that, yes, I had been wrong all this time.

For other teachers, being with the group led to an increased sense of self-awareness in terms of seeing aspects of your self-identity through the lens of another, as one teacher put it, “*You have to sometimes go out of yourself and see it from a distance,*” the benefit

of which was described by the teachers as seeing themselves, “*Through the filter of the other,*” and starting “*to explore things not through your own lenses, through the lenses of someone else.*”

For other teachers, the diversity of the group was a welcome break from the nationalistic framework they operated under back home because it “*Opens up new perspectives of cooperation and collaboration among international practitioners, among teachers from all around the globe.*” The teachers explained how the cultural and national diversity of the group countered the mentality they were often raised with, such as being “*told that we are the center of the world, you know, and we are the most important or we are the right people.*”

The teachers described the significance of this transformation, such as one teacher who shared, “*Many many topics were opened on the personal social level that it was shocking at the beginning, and afterwards I re-evaluated it and it makes something inside me. It opens lots of doors inside my mind and it gave me huge amount of ideas about life.*” The self-awareness that sprung through their experience was described as enlightening by this teacher:

When I was in one of the discussions we were talking about a sort of political matter for us in Egypt and I was every enthusiastic about clarifying points, and the person who was talking to me, she just told me that truth and what is right, doesn't always seem so it depends on your place and your time, and what you are given. So there could be something that is seen as very wrong, in my place, and it can be so accepted some other place, so in this current, truth is more or less. Yes, so this was an enlightenment point. Oh my God, I have been living the whole time with one idea, of correct or wrong, but yes, it's true that we may be accepting things or I may be acting in one way two or three different on a different part of the Earth, and be seen in a very different manner, it can be considered wrong some other place, so it was a direct enlightenment point that was done on the spot.

In addition to moving away from seeing things as black or white, the teachers also explained that even when a view was raised that other teachers might not initially agree with, the discussions that ensued within the group allowed them to reconsider opinions they held, as one teacher put it, *“At that time I can really review that idea and see oh yes, so it's true.”*

A number of the teachers also described new-found self-awareness as a result of comparisons to other teachers in the group, such as one teacher who *“Really started thinking about what should and what should not be, and thinking about how I can go back to my country and try to change the status quo,”* and another teacher who stated, *“And these comparisons I think are very effective in making you explore the worth of your thoughts, how you think...”* However, comparisons were also a cause of frustration for some of the teachers, such as one teacher who described making comparisons immediately upon arriving into the program. He explained he began to compare everything – from schools, to buildings, to facilities, which left him feeling frustrated. This continued, as he explained, *“I felt frustration and when we came back from Morocco I felt more frustration because my mind went back every now and then to what I saw and what I knew in [major American city].”* Similarly, comparisons also left another teacher with the same sentiments, explaining he would think, *“They have this facility, we don't have it. Oh, if we had this maybe teachers' performance would be better.”* However, a different teacher shared that such comparisons are not useful during such an experience and focusing beyond your local or national context is what she did: *“Once you meet with people from different countries, you don't think of your curriculum... And you think of something which is much beyond that...”*

- **Sub-category 3 (C): Concepts of teaching and being a teacher.**

The next sub-category captures a conceptual shift experienced by the teachers that reaches beyond a sense of self-awareness. The interviews revealed that the internationalized teacher professional development brought the teachers to experience conceptual shifts by revisiting their very definitions and conceptions of what a teacher is, and as such, their own roles as teachers. Many of the teachers described having a more limited or narrow concept of teaching/being a teacher prior to entering the program, as this teacher explained, *“Maybe I used to see things very technically, I mean I’m a teacher, I’m there to deliver a course, some sort of knowledge to my students, and there is a curriculum I need to respect, I need to follow...”* While a different teacher explained, *“after these programs I observed that I’m not only just a teacher, just to give what I memorized what I already trained before to the students, and then trying to push them just to get the best grades.”*

The teachers relayed a more expanded understanding of teaching/being a teacher after going through the program, such as this teacher who described his conceptual transformation: *“Yeah, the one that was challenged is my understanding of the word teaching itself maybe, or the word teacher...And I came to the conclusion that I’m not only a teacher, I should be an educator. So it’s teacher plus, plus something.”* A different teacher explained, *“When you think of yourself as an educator, I think there is this new dimension of, an educator cares not only about the professional task, not only about teaching or delivering content to learners, to recipients of information, but it is more human in nature...”* And *“I found that...my student is not only just a brain [that] contains just a few information and I’m trying to fill it up. I’m observing that I’m dealing*

with a whole person.” In addition evolving the concept of a teacher to an educator, another teacher also added more terms to her understanding of being a teacher, explaining, *“changing from being a teacher to being a mentor, a leader, I'm not just only a teacher, teacher teaching something and that's it. But being a leader it's I think it's much better than teacher.”* A different teacher explained that she realized that the reach of the teacher extends beyond the classroom into the community and *“all types of tasks we can do outside the classroom as well.”* Similarly, another teacher explained an expanded view of teaching that reaches beyond what is traditionally considered teaching-related and incorporates a more emotional aspect: *“I believe that education is not only what we teach in books, the curriculum, the syllabus, we are teaching other factors. I am giving them part of myself, as a person...and no matter what differences they carry, and how much they grasp, I don't give up on that. Because I believe that what we plant in them will stay and will flourish somehow.”*

Research findings - Conclusion

The categories of description detailed in this chapter, including the logical relationships between the categories and their hierarchical nature represent the full range of possible ways of teachers experiencing internationalized teacher professional development, at this particular moment in time, for the population represented by the sample group collectively. In this way, the outcome space laid out in this chapter represents both the phenomenon as well as the various ways in which it can be experienced.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Analysis: How do the findings speak to the literature?

This section will use the findings presented in the final outcome space to examine how they speak to the literature that has been presented in the previous chapters on how teachers learn and change as a result of internationalized teacher professional development. In what ways are parts of the literature supported; alternately, in what ways do the findings of this study challenge what is concluded in the literature? Further, what gaps in the literature do the findings of this study fill, and what new knowledge can be added to this field of study?

Supporting the literature

Teacher professional development as a complex process

An imperative point made in the literature on teacher professional development is that teacher professional development is a complex process (Avalos, 2011; Opfer & Pedder, 2011). The idea that teacher learning must be conceptualized as a complex system rather than an event (Clarke & Collins, 2007; Collins & Clarke, 2008; Curtis & Stollar, 2002) has been a foundational idea that has helped shaped the direction of this study. In the literature review, the significant work of Opfer & Pedder (2011) is cited, specifically that in order to develop a complex conceptualization of teacher professional learning, there is a need to “bring together multiple, fragmented strands of literature from teacher professional development, teaching and learning, organizational learning, and teacher change that have tended to remain separate” (p. 377).

This study aimed to capture this type of complex conceptualization of teacher professional learning by bringing together these often-separate strands through the

focus on internationalized teacher professional development, research questions that center on teacher learning and teacher change, the conceptual frameworks of adult learning and unlearning that provide the structure for a spectrum of cognitive, behavioural, and emotional experiences, and the phenomenographic methodology that allowed a range of experience to be captured.

To begin with, the findings of the study support Opfer & Pedder's (2011) point that teacher learning becomes hard to define in a general sense because the nature of learning depends on the uniqueness of the context, person, etc. The findings reveal a complex range of learning, alongside the trends that surface in the teachers' experiences. This is illustrated when investigating conceptual shifts that teachers may have experienced; as shown in the previous chapter, a dominant trend was internationalized teacher professional development being instrumental in the teachers developing an increased sense of self-awareness. There were, however, a number of ways teachers developed this increased sense of self-awareness, including through revisiting their teaching practices and how they deal with students, or as a result of interactions with the group as other teachers explained. Whereas for other teachers, being part of the group led to an increased sense of self-awareness by bringing them to see themselves through the lens of another. In this way, while the teachers described one part of their teacher learning as an increased self of self-awareness, it still cannot be defined in a general sense because of the variance of *how* the teachers arrived at this quality and *what* becoming more self-aware meant to each individual person in their unique context.

Going deeper into this topic, the literature also shows that teacher learning tends to be constituted simultaneously in the activity of autonomous entities (teachers), collectives (grade/subject levels), and subsystems (schools within school systems within sociopolitical education contexts); to explain teacher professional learning one must consider what sort of local knowledge, problems, routines, and aspirations shape and are shaped by individual practices and beliefs (Opfer & Pedder, 2011, p. 379). Given this complex system of processes, mechanisms, actions and elements, a crucial point Opfer & Pedder (2011) make is that when it comes to teacher learning it is difficult to specify exact outcomes in every instance (p. 379). The findings showed this to be accurate with an interesting variance in the teachers' experiences of the impact of comparisons: some of the teachers described an increased sense of self-awareness as resulting from comparisons to other teachers in the group. For these teachers, this was a useful and productive experience. However, other teachers reported that while making comparisons did lead to an increased sense of self-awareness, it was not a favourable experience, and actually left them dealing with a high degree of frustration. And for other teachers, comparisons were not useful and were not part of what led to an increased sense of self-awareness; these teachers felt that constantly comparing and thinking about their local teaching context was a stifling and limiting exercise, preferring not to get caught up in comparisons to their local teaching contexts.

In this way, for some teachers, it was very useful to make comparisons between their own local contexts and new contexts they were exposed to during the internationalized teacher professional development. For other teachers, the comparisons were not only automatic and unavoidable, they stirred up feelings of

frustration and inferiority. While for other teachers, comparisons were not only irrelevant and not useful, they did not even occur. Yet, for all these teachers, in spite of the differences in the role comparisons played in their experiences, they reported conceptual shifts that included an increased sense of self-awareness. This example supports the literature on teacher professional development that argues that the exact outcomes of teacher learning are difficult to specify in every instance, as well as the road that unfolded towards these outcomes. To reiterate Opfer & Pedder's (2011) point that teacher learning tends to be constituted simultaneously in the activity of autonomous entities (teachers), collectives (grade/subject levels), and subsystems (schools within school systems within sociopolitical education contexts), we see the findings do support the idea that to explain teacher professional learning one must consider what sort of local knowledge, problems, routines, and aspirations shape and are shaped by individual practices and beliefs. The role comparisons did (or did not) play was individual to each teacher and all the different facets that contributed to their experience.

Intensive and sustained professional development

Another part of the literature on teacher professional development that the findings of the study support is that concerning its duration, intensity, and sustainability. As Opfer and Pedder (2011) explain, activities that effectively support teachers' professional learning need to be sustained and intensive rather than brief and sporadic (p. 384). Borko (2004) shares the same sentiment that intensive professional development can help teachers to increase their knowledge and change their instructional practice. As shown in the previous chapter, the findings of the study also

found that teacher professional development is most effective when the duration of the program is long enough for learning and change to take its course. For teachers who had many years of teaching behind them, it was the duration of the teacher professional development that aided them in their learning and change because it allowed them room to learn and change at their own pace. The words of one of these teachers, "*it takes a lot of time,*" supports Opfer and Pedder's (2011) objection to teacher professional development that is brief and sporadic.

Many of the teachers explained how the duration of the program helped in their learning and change process by comparing it to the much shorter teacher professional development they had experienced in their home country. For these teachers, the longer duration of the internationalized teacher professional development program made a key difference in the effectiveness of the program compared to teacher professional development they had experienced in the past. The duration of the program also helped to create connections with one another and influence the learning taking place. Again the longer duration of the internationalized teacher professional development program was beneficial in the teachers' learning and change process. These findings also support the literature on cultural learning that note that longer immersive experiences are generally more effective at preparing teachers for culturally diverse classrooms (Cushner & Mahon, 2002).

Another way the findings show that intensive internationalized teacher professional development is preferred by teachers and makes a significant impact on how effective it is to the teachers' learning and change, is by comparing it to the teachers' largely critical view of teacher professional development in their home

contexts. As seen in the study, many of the teachers expressed frustration with the limited, sporadic nature of the local professional development they underwent compared to the intensive internationalized teacher professional development experience they had during Program Z. For many of the teachers, the difference between the effects of the local teacher professional development and the internationalized teacher professional development were stark and due to the fact that the local teacher professional development was limited to occasional workshops while the internationalized teacher professional development was an intensive program. In addition to the lack of an intensive nature of the local teacher professional development, the teachers in the study also criticized the delivery of content. Many of the teachers highlighted the ineffectiveness of lectures that comprised the majority of their (already) limited professional development. As the teachers explained, the short duration of the professional development, coupled with the lecture-format of content delivery fell flat in terms of its impact. Some of the teachers described feeling deflated by their local professional development experiences, while others described their criticism in terms of how the local professional development they attended felt like more of an obligation than something to be excited about. As these teachers show, in addition to the longer duration of the professional development, they also seek professional development that is participatory, based on their experience, and not restricted to lecture format.

In addition to the benefit of teacher professional development being intensive and varied in its content delivery, the literature also states that activities that effectively support teachers' professional learning need to be sustained. This point came up as being loudly supported by the findings of the study as teachers reported needing

sustained teacher professional development support once returning to their respective local teaching contexts to help them sustain any learning and change strides they made during their internationalized teacher professional development experience. As Guskey (2010) writes, “Support allows those engaged in the difficult process of implementation to tolerate the anxiety of occasional failures” (p. 388). In explaining the impact of the lack of support and follow-up, some teachers described how the learning and change process was at a vulnerable point once they reached home and were trying to implement change – at this point a lack of sustained support and direction was felt quite strongly.

The study also showed that the sustained support is necessary, again in order for the learning and change experienced during the program to be sustained. For these teachers, it was difficult to sustain change once they were on their own, though the struggle with sustaining change does show that strides were made in terms of the teachers’ learning and changing during the program. However, these strides faltered in the face of absent sustained support. The commentary of the teachers also showed the sustained support needs have to be facilitated in some way. The teachers described needing to have a facilitating figure in order for the continued discussions to be effective. More aimless discussion is less effective than sustained support that is facilitated or directed.

For these teachers who ride a high of learning and change during and shortly after the program, but then begin to run out of steam as time moves on and start to revert back to old ideas and ways, a more sustained teacher professional development effort may have helped to curb this drop off in learning and change. Thus, the findings of

the study support the literature that shows that professional development for teachers needs to be sustained and intensive rather than brief and sporadic.

Importance of teacher networks

Another key point made in the literature on teacher professional development revolves around the importance of teacher networks and community learning as part of effective teacher professional development (Boyle et al., 2005; Gamoran, Gunter, & Williams, 2005; Leithwood et al., 2001). The findings of this study support this notion, particularly in relation to such teacher networks helping the teachers sustain their learning and change. As explained in the previous section, for many teachers, it was difficult to sustain the learning and change they experienced during the program, and they expressed a desire for maintenance of their teacher networks to help them carry on their learning and change once the program was over. The importance of the teacher network they had become a part of clearly had a lasting positive impact on these teachers, such as the teacher who expressed, *“No, I think they influenced me in a good way. I still have for example relations with... all these teachers...It's what I wanted to tell you really three years now. A lot of time has gone, that's because really the experience is in my mind and my heart.”* The findings show that the teacher network continues to play an important role in the teacher professional development, to the extent that the emotional impact of the relationships within the teacher network is mentioned as well.

This was further explained by other teachers who also expressed unhappiness at the strain of connecting with the teacher network post program, lamenting that there were no reunions, in person or online. As explained in the findings, in response to whether there was any way the teachers could have further benefited from the

experience, again reference was made to the importance of the teacher network. Thus, these findings from the study support the idea that teacher networks are extremely important for effective teacher professional development, particularly after the teacher professional development has officially ended and teachers have returned to their home environments. The findings show that the strain or loss of the teacher network leaves teachers feeling disconnected and unhappy, longing for the sense of connection once again, on both a professional and personal level.

The role of discourse with peers

As explained in the literature review, Sokol and Cranton (1998) write that transformative learning tends to take place following a “trigger event” and is fostered by critical discourse and reflection (Sokol & Cranton, 1998, p. 15). This idea stems from Mezirow’s (1991) work that explains when a person begins to interpret new meaning perspectives and meaning schemes, discussion with peers provides an ideal vehicle for learning (Kitchenham, 2008, p. 114). According to Mezirow (1991), under optimal conditions, participation in this discourse would have,

Accurate and complete information, be free from coercion and distorting self-perception, be able to weigh evidence and assess arguments objectively, be open to alternative perspectives, be able to reflect critically on presuppositions and their consequences, have equal opportunity to participate (including the chance to challenge, question, refute, and reflect, and to hear others do the same), and be able to accept an informed, objective, and rational consensus as a legitimate test of validity. (p. 78)

The findings of this study support this tenet of transformational learning in the world of internationalized teacher professional development. The optimal conditions of discourse that Mezirow describes above can be found in the teachers’ accounts of how a supportive atmosphere and environment positively impacted their learning and change.

The teachers heralded the supportive, positive, friendly atmosphere they experienced during the program, which put them at ease and open to receiving new ideas.

While some of the teachers described being ready and open to learning and change, other teachers directly cited discussion with peers, much to the tune of Mezirow's description of optimal conditions for discourse, as helping them in their learning and change processes. The teachers described feeling free from coercion and being able to weigh and assess arguments during the discussion with peers, which not only moved forward their own learning, but also created change in the way they facilitate discussions in class while teaching. The teachers described allowing their students to put forth their ideas and encouraging others with an equal opportunity to participate, an effect of what they experienced during their internationalized teacher professional development experience.

The teachers also shared the power of discussion, describing much of the learning as "mostly incidental," arising out of casual discussions with other teachers. As this shows, transformative learning sparked by the influence of discussion was not only relegated to the formal professional development settings, but the "trigger event" described by Sokol and Cranton (1998) could happen at any time, even as one of the teachers described, over a cup of tea. These teachers' experiences support the idea in the literature that it is often difficult to pinpoint what exactly initiated or sustained the transformation process because much of what happens is within the learner, and something in the teaching just happens to hook into that person's thought or feelings (Cranton, 2002). In this way, transformation is largely individual to each learner. However, discussions and discourse with fellow teachers within the internationalized

teacher professional development seem to profoundly influence learning and transformation.

Related to the discussion on the importance of discourse with peers, the literature on teacher professional development shows that teachers particularly learn well in groups. As previously explained, the importance of teacher networks and community learning as part of effective teacher professional development is found in various studies (Boyle et al., 2005; Gamoran, Gunter, & Williams, 2005; Leithwood et al., 2001). The literature review explored the term 'Communities of Practice' (Wenger, McDermott, & Synder, 2002), where learning is seen as a natural part of social participation: "social learning is viewed as something that occurs, emerges and evolves when people with common goals interact, and a community of practice is a community that has a group of people who share a common goal where social learning is a natural part of the development of the community" (Cajander et al., 2012). An overlapping term is discourse communities; as Putnam and Borko (2000) state, these discourse communities also play central roles in shaping the way teachers view their world and go about their work.

The findings of this study strongly support these concepts of teacher learning. As explained in the previous chapter, many of the teachers in the study spoke emphatically of how mutual learning within the group benefited their learning and change process. Their emphasis on the mutual learning that took place between all members of the internationalized teacher professional development shows how important they felt this dynamic was to their learning and change process.

Putnam and Borko's (2000) view that discourse communities play central roles in shaping the way teachers view their world and go about their work is well represented by the opinions of the teachers in this study. For these teachers, the discourse community had a significant impact, to the point where even after the group dispersed, the teachers continued to learn from the members and be impacted by them. The teachers even explained how learning from fellow teachers often even superseded the learning they experienced from the professional development instructors. They explained that while the learning that took place with the professional development instructors was important, the learning that took place amongst the group of teachers was even more impactful. This is because there was an element of trust between the teachers that proved powerful to their learning and change process. This sense of trust and solidarity that they felt existed within the group since they were all teachers going through similar challenges shows Putnam and Borko's (2000) point that discourse communities play central roles in shaping the way teachers view their world and go about their work to be true.

The significant impact of the discourse community, even (and especially) when there were conflicting or different points of view and opinions, was also evident in the findings, to use one teacher's phrase, "*Sometimes we don't see the same vision, but we learn from each other.*" This teacher's description of differing opinions and viewpoints still leading to mutual learning within the group importantly illustrates the impact of the discourse community and the different ways learning can take place.

In the literature Cajander et al. (2012) point out that through the process of communicating information and sharing experiences within the group, the members also

learn from each other and develop not only professionally, but personally, a point that was also captured in the findings of the study. As shown in the previous chapter, many of the teachers described learning on both a professional and personal level, showing that the relationships with others in the group were a significant benefit to them and their experience.

The benefits of group learning within a culturally diverse group

Moving deeper than the literature that shows the benefits of discourse in groups and teacher networks on teachers' professional development, an important facet of this study was to explore the impact of teacher group learning when the group is culturally diverse. Drawing from intercultural learning theory, this means that the encounters are with people who differ in some substantive way from the people they had interacted with up to that point in their lives - the differences that are most common are race, ethnicity, class, language, and national origin (Merryfield, 2000). The literature on professional development showed that diversity of the group can be seen as influencing the learning experience of the teachers in a significant way (Boyle et al., 2005; Gamoran, Gunter, & Williams, 2005; Leithwood et al., 2001). According to Putnam and Borko,

The notion of distributed cognition suggests that when diverse groups of teachers with different types of knowledge and expertise come together in discourse communities, community members can draw upon and incorporate each other's expertise to create rich conversation and new insights into teaching and learning. (p. 8)

The findings of this study support this important idea. In describing their learning and change process over the course of, and following, the program, many of the teachers referenced the cultural diversity of the group as significantly influencing them in a positive way.

The benefit of having different viewpoints amongst the group was captured by the teachers who compared the diversity of peers in their internationalized teacher professional development experience to the lack thereof in their local professional development context. Many of the teachers commented that being with only teachers from the same background was significantly limiting for them compared to the diversity within the internationalized teacher professional development. Similarly, other teachers referenced being able to come up with new ideas and solutions when learning within a diverse group compared to the alternative.

From these teachers, it becomes clear that the benefits of learning within a diverse group are heightened when compared with the lack of diversity they experience in their local professional development contexts. Teachers report gaining new perspectives and solutions to problems they can then take back to their local teaching contexts. The teachers described learning from varied experiences of their fellow teachers in the group, and being able to get a range of feedback. The teachers showed that learning about how teaching and learning happened in places outside of their countries helped them to improve their teaching practices within their own countries. The teachers also viewed the cultural diversity as being beneficial and leading to change, even if it was not always a smooth process. At times there was resistance to the ideas of others, but it still led to further degrees of understanding. These teachers show that the diverse backgrounds and differing experiences of the teachers in the group all significantly contribute to the learning and transformation that each teacher experiences during the internationalized teacher professional development, particularly revolving around how to deal with and understand difference.

Another way the findings revealed the cultural diversity of the group was a significant factor in the teachers' learning and change is from comparisons made to professional development they underwent in their local, culturally homogenous settings. The teachers enjoyed the "different mentality" that comes with a diverse group, which they saw as beneficial over local teachers who have all had mostly the same experiences. As reported in the findings, one teacher even shared that he wished that the group had been even more culturally diverse as he believed that would have led to even more growth, while for another teacher, the mix of cultural backgrounds in the group meant her learning and change was accelerated, describing the experience as gaining three or four years of teaching in one month.

Thus, the teachers' experiences and reflections reveal that the cultural diversity of the group had a very significant positive impact on their learning and change, thereby supporting the literature on teacher professional development that makes this point. In addition, these findings also support the literature on cultural pedagogy that also emphasizes the important role that experience plays in developing intercultural skills. As Cushner and Mahon (2002) write, "developing the skills that enable an individual to live and work effectively among individuals from cultures other than their own requires significant, long-term, direct personal interaction with people and contexts different from those in which one is most familiar" (p. 45). As the teachers describe, it was the direct personal interaction with each other and the fact that they were from different contexts that made a significant impact on their learning and change, a point that illustrates a powerful sentiment by Hayhoe and Pan (2001): "Of greatest importance is the readiness

to listen to the narrative of the other, and to learn the lessons which can be discovered in distinctive threads of human cultural thought and experience” (p. 20).

The benefit of a culturally new learning environment

In addition to the benefits of cultural diversity of the discourse community/community of practice and the intercultural learning that arises out of this scenario, the findings of the study also support the literature that promotes this type of intercultural discourse community/community of practice undergoing their professional development in a physical setting that is outside of the teachers’ home environment/culture. In this way, the study looks to address Opfer and Pedder’s (2011) criticism that much of the existing literature on teacher professional development does not build on the work of researchers who have shown teaching and learning to be contextually situated, such as in the work of Anderson, Greeno, Reder and Simon (2000); Ball (1997); and Borko and Putnam (1997). As explained in the literature review, Putnam and Borko (1999) see the situative perspective as important because it focuses on how various settings for teachers’ learning give rise to different kinds of knowing. They reference situative theorists who challenge the assumption of a cognition core independent of context and intention (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989; Lave & Wenger, 1991). The situative theory – as previously described - is as follows:

The physical and social contexts in which an activity takes place are an integral part of the learning that takes place within it. How a person learns a particular set of knowledge and skills, and the situation in which a person learns, become a fundamental part of what is learned. Further, whereas traditional cognitive perspectives focus on the individual as the basic unit of analysis, situative perspectives focus on interactive systems that include individuals as participants, interacting with each other as well as materials and representational systems. (Cobb & Bowers, 1999)

Putnam and Borko (1999) state that the question is not whether knowledge and learning are situated, but in what contexts they are situated. They purport, “for some purposes, in fact, situating learning experiences for teachers outside of the classroom may be important – indeed essential – for powerful learning” (p. 6). As Putnam and Borko question,

If the goal is to help teachers think in new ways, for example, it may be important to have them experience learning in different settings. The situative perspective helps us to see that much of what we do and think is intertwined with the particular contexts in which we act. The classroom is a powerful environment for shaping and constraining how practicing teachers think and act. Many of their patterns of thought and action have become automatic – resistant to reflection or change. Engaging in learning experiences away from this setting may be necessary to help teachers “break set” – to experiences in new ways. (p. 6)

Here Putnam and Borko raise the point that while teachers need opportunities to think about teaching and learning in new ways, it may be difficult for teachers to experience new ways of thinking in the context of their own classrooms – the pull of the existing classroom environment and culture can simply be too strong (p. 6). In this way, a different and new context can provide the opportunity for teachers to transform, or as Putnam and Borko call it, “break set.” As the literature also shows, specifically in terms of pre-service teachers teaching in a culturally different context, Alfaro and Quezada (2010) write that this can create “cultural, pedagogical and ideological dissonance, a sensation that promotes increased ideological awareness and clarity” (p. 50).

The literature on intercultural learning also gets tied in, as it shows that immersive intercultural experiences “created a felt contradiction between beliefs, expectations or knowledge and the multiple realities of the experience” and caused the participants to “deconstruct previously held assumptions or knowledge and consider

new ideas and explanations” (pp. 439–440). As Cushner and Mahon (2002) explain, “Specifically, as people’s ability to understand difference increases, so does their ability to negotiate a variety of worldviews” (p. 50). In these ways, being immersed or in an unfamiliar environment is key to intercultural learning and transformation.

The findings of this study show that teachers participating in an internationalized teacher professional development program reported significant learning and change as a result of being in a new cultural environment. As reported in the previous chapter, for all of the teachers, being in a culturally different context allowed them to develop an increased sense of self-awareness, described by one teacher as being able to “*go out of yourself and see it from a distance.*” For this teacher, as with some of the others, it is the distance afforded by being in a new cultural environment that helps to stimulate learning and change.

The teachers’ reports of developing a new perspective on their own identities and countries also speaks to the field of intercultural and experiential education. Firstly, as Trilokekar and Kukar (2011) explain, international experiences are catalysts for an increase in improved self-awareness. Further, as Merryfield (2000) writes, “Contradictions, new knowledge of inequities, and a rethinking of one’s identity and the status quo may come with experiences in other countries” (p. 436). She adds that educators who experience long-term cultural immersion overseas often develop new perspectives on their own identity and on their nation. As the teacher above explains, being in a new cultural environment allowed him to see many aspects of his life from a distance - his country, his school, his students, and his identity as a teacher. This

distance - both physical and metaphorical - is what allowed him to evaluate himself in ways that were not possible in his home context.

Another teacher articulated that the new learning environment helped him to break set and cause a conceptual shift in his worldview. He had been raised to believe *"We are the center of the world, you know, and we are the most important or we are the right people,"* but the new environment led to an increased ideological awareness and clarity for him by revealing the major problems with this mindset. This teacher explained that it was difficult to become more open-minded, even with regular travel, but the new environment of the internationalized teacher professional development was able to have a huge impact on him and result in learning and change. It can be assumed that the difference for him between his regular travel and this international professional development experience was that the latter allowed him to make deep person-to-person connections with the culturally diverse teachers he was with in the group while in this new culturally different environment. His account thus supports the idea in intercultural learning that "experiences alone do not make a person a multicultural or global educator. It is the interrelationships across identity, power, and experience that lead to a consciousness of other perspectives and a recognition of multiple realities" (Merryfield, 2000, p. 440). It is the combination of the two aspects of internationalized teacher professional development - the culturally diverse group and the culturally new environment - that leads him to experience such profound change.

This also speaks to the field of intercultural learning, which finds that "as a result of significant experience in a culture other than one's own, there is an increase in world-mindedness, a reduction in ethnocentrism and the use of negative stereotypes, and

greater sophistication in one's thinking about others" (Cushner & Mahon, 2002, p. 47).

As some of the teachers explained, they were raised to believe that their people were at the center of the world - the "most important or "right" people - but the combined experience of being amongst a culturally diverse group and in a culturally new environment allowed them to change this mode of thinking and have it be replaced by the idea of accepting others, thus revealing an increase in world-mindedness and a reduction in ethnocentrism.

For other teachers, the new cultural environment enhanced the learning process through a new feeling of motivation. The learning was described as continuous, rather than limited to just the professional development sessions, and this positively contributed to the overall experience. For these teachers, they felt – as one teacher described, "*this openness to discover what others are doing,*" showing how this new brand of motivation created by being in the new cultural environment directly led to more openness to change, or as Putnam and Borko would describe it, "break set." The "openness" can be seen as what Albert Camus describes as becoming 'wide-awake,' where there is a feeling of exhilaration one experiences through the learning experience.

As aforementioned, Putnam and Borko (1999) explain it may be difficult for teachers to experience new ways of thinking in the context of their own classrooms – the pull of the existing classroom environment and culture can simply be too strong (p. 6). As shown in the previous chapter, some of the teachers felt a stark difference between their existing classroom environment and culture and the new environment of their internationalized teacher professional development program. They felt more

immersed in the internationalized teacher professional development program, even when they were outside the professional development classes, whereas in their home environments, once they exited their workshops, they were still in familiar contexts. As such, they felt more motivated in the new cultural environment, which positively contributed to their learning and change. Being in the new cultural environment meant continuous learning, which made it easier to experience new ways of thinking in the new cultural environment compared to their own local classroom and context.

As Putnam and Borko explained, when teachers are in their home environment, many of their patterns of thought and action have become automatic – resistant to reflection or change, whereas a new cultural environment helped them to feel more open and receptive to change. The teachers described feeling more open to new things, new experiences and new ideas. Feeling more relaxed and free also meant they had less fear of making changes. The teachers' experiences of learning from everything around them created an opportunity for teachers to learn from a vast variety of experiences, very much to their benefit and enjoyment. From these teachers' reflections, it becomes clear that they strongly feel the new cultural environment played an instrumental role in their learning and change process, thus supporting the professional development literature that purports that "learning experiences for teachers outside of the classroom may be important – indeed essential – for powerful learning" (Putnam & Borko, 1999, p. 6). The findings also support the assertion by Cranton (2002) that "critical self-reflection may take place in the classroom, but it is perhaps more likely to take place outside it" (p. 68). Bouchard (as cited in Barer-Stein & Kompf, 2001) would agree, stating that "experiential learning challenges the misconception that

learning mostly occurs in formal environments such as classrooms, and replaces it with the notion that all learning is the result of experience, no matter where it occurs” (p. 177).

Additionally, beyond the fact that the teachers were outside the classroom and formal teaching time, it is also extremely significant that the new environment was a culturally new place for them. Intercultural learning theory tells us international experiences create the space for teachers to “strengthen their practice and stretch beyond their traditional zone of comfort” (Cushner & Brennan, 2007, p. 6). As the teachers describe, they felt more open in a number of ways, such as being more open to trying new things and to listening to new ideas. Thus, internationalized teacher professional development shows that both being outside the classroom and formal teaching time, and in a culturally new environment, can create the space and place for significant learning and transformation to occur.

Challenging the literature

While some of the findings from the study support many key ideas in the existing literature about teacher professional development and how teachers learn and change, the findings also challenge some of these ideas as well. The findings challenge central questions revolving around how teachers learn and change as a result of teacher professional development.

Changing beliefs and attitudes

As explained in the literature review, professional development programs are based “on the assumption that change in the attitudes and beliefs come first are typically

designed to gain acceptance, commitment, and enthusiasm from teachers and school administrators before the implementation of new practices or strategies” (Guskey, 2010, p. 383). However, research has shown that these procedures seldom change attitudes significantly or elicit strong commitment from teachers (Jones & Hayes, 1980). In this way, the literature argues that it is not the professional development *per se*, but the experience of successful implementation that changes teachers’ attitudes and beliefs. They believe it works because they have seen it work, and that experience shapes their attitudes and beliefs. Thus, according to the Teacher Change model explained in the literature review, the key element in significant change in teachers’ attitudes and beliefs is clear evidence of improvement in the learning outcomes of their students (Guskey, 2010, p. 384).

However, the findings from this study challenge this notion by revealing that internationalized teacher professional development *is* likely to change attitudes significantly and elicit strong commitment from teachers. The study finds that internationalized teacher professional development does have the potential to create a change in teachers’ attitudes and beliefs, before they return home to try implementation of practice, expanding on Guskey’s (2010) point that the Model of Teacher Change, in some ways, oversimplifies a highly complex process; “for example, participants’ attitudes must at least change from ‘cynical’ to ‘skeptical’ for any change in practice to occur” (p. 385). As shown in the previous chapter, the teachers described how discussions with the fellow teachers created a shift in attitudes and beliefs for them, which then led to implementation upon returning home. One teacher described his beliefs and attitudes changing “on the spot,” during the internationalized professional

development. He does go on to implement new ideas once he returns to teaching, but his beliefs and attitudes have already shifted prior to subsequent implementation and a change in student learning outcomes. Other teachers also emphasized how the discussions with fellow teachers during the professional development did lead to a significant amount of enthusiasm and commitment for them, prior to going home and implementing change. Overall, they showed the same pattern of conversations with other teachers during the internationalized teacher professional development leading them to change attitudes and beliefs they held and inspiring them to implement change upon returning home. This shows a shift in attitudes and beliefs taking place during the internationalized teacher professional development. The potential of the teachers' discussions with each other to change attitudes and beliefs and inspire strong commitment and enthusiasm links back to the previous section on how teachers learn significantly from other teachers in the culturally diverse group.

This challenges the literature that purports that teacher professional development seldom changes attitudes significantly or elicits strong commitment from teachers. The findings of the study show that it *is* actually the internationalized teacher professional development per se that can change attitudes and beliefs and create enthusiasm and commitment from the teachers to implement changes in practice once they return home. Thus, while the model of Teacher Change presents change in teachers' attitudes and beliefs primarily as a result, rather than a cause, of change in the learning outcome of students, this study shows there is still a degree of change in the teachers' attitudes and beliefs that can and must take place as a result of the professional development for them to then be willing to try out the new practices and approaches in their classrooms.

Then once they have implemented new practices in the classroom, change in their attitudes and beliefs continues to evolve and solidify. In this way, the process of changing attitudes and beliefs, however, appears to be more of a continuum that begins at the start of their internationalized teacher professional development and follows through beyond classroom implementation, rather than simply and only after successful implementation.

Further, with the literature showing that change in attitudes and beliefs is mostly attributed to evidence of improvement in the learning outcomes of students, Guskey (2010) points out that learning outcomes are broadly construed in the model of Teacher Change to include not only cognitive and achievement indices, but also the wide range of student behaviour and attitudes, thus, anything from exam results to motivation for learning (and everything in between). "In other words, learning outcomes include whatever kinds of evidence teachers use to judge the effectiveness of their teaching" (Guskey, 2010, p. 384).

While the findings of this study have shown that changes in attitudes and beliefs often occur during the internationalized teacher professional development, not only after, they also show that when it does come to implementation, the learning outcomes teachers aim for become largely influenced by their internationalized teacher professional development experiences. For example, for a teacher who experienced a shift in attitudes and beliefs surrounding acceptance and celebration of different cultures when he returned to his teaching practice, he described seeking the same as a learning outcome for his students.

For other teachers, evidence they used to judge the effectiveness of their teaching and learning outcomes they sought for their students upon returning home paralleled what they experienced during their internationalized teacher professional development with their fellow teachers. Some of the teachers described how after experiencing an environment in which all voices are heard (during the program), they became committed to engaging all students in the classroom with their role being more a facilitator of discussion than judging what the students were sharing.

Other teachers referenced how much they appreciated the inclusive dynamic that they experienced during the program and decided to recreate this in their classroom practice, thus focusing more on engaging the students in the teaching and learning process. As such, a learning outcome that these teachers are focused on is the students expressing themselves freely, and encouraging everyone's participation, something they experienced themselves during the internationalized teacher professional development. For other teachers, after they returned from the program, critical thinking became a new learning outcome they strived for with their students after experiencing it themselves in the internationalized teacher professional development program.

Here we see that, as Guskey (2010) explains, learning outcomes for their students include whatever kinds of evidence teachers use to judge the effectiveness of their teaching, however, the learning outcomes set by these teachers following their internationalized teacher professional development experience closely replicate the experiences they had themselves during the program, rather than the same learning outcomes they had for their students before the program or what is the standard in their

school or educational system. This illustrates how what is valued in terms of outcomes has changed for the teachers; outcomes remain important, but a fundamental shift in thinking has taken place that pushes the teachers to uphold different student outcomes.

Changes to classroom practice

The literature on teacher learning and change also examined the implementation of changes to classroom practice, as a result of changed beliefs and attitudes.

According to the literature, studies have found that knowledge gained during professional development programs is not necessarily implemented (Cohen & Hill, 1998, 2000; Fullan, 1982; Kennedy, 1998; Wang et al., 1999). A study by Guskey (1997) found in a large-scale professional development effort that focused on the implementation of master learning, several teachers took part in the training but never tried the procedure in their classes. This indicates that professional development efforts are often in vain, as teachers are not likely to implement changes to their classroom practice.

The findings of this study challenge this notion. As shown in the previous chapter, many of the teacher participants shared experiences of making changes to their classroom practice upon returning home after their internationalized teacher professional development. All the teachers described the changes to their classroom practice as gradual, but at the same time, noticeable. One teacher explained that he was aware of them whether they were changes that worked in the classroom or ones that did not, showing that he was experimenting with changes to his classroom practice. For another teacher, changes to her classroom practice were not only gradual, but also unexpected, showing that even though she was not aware of or anticipating change, it

occurred nevertheless. For another teacher, while she did have expectations for the changes she made to her classroom practice, positive results did come as a pleasant surprise. At the same time, for another teacher, changes to his classroom practice were both expected and intentional.

These teachers show that whether planned or not, expected or surprising, their internationalized teacher professional development led them to implement changes to their classroom practices, challenging the notion in the literature that professional development is not likely to result in changes to classroom practice. Additionally, the fact that the teachers were reporting three years after the internationalized teacher professional development shows that the changes to classroom practice were not short-term. This demonstrates that not only is internationalized teacher professional development likely to result in changes to classroom practice, but that these changes are likely to be quite sustained and long-term.

Filling in gaps and adding to the literature

The literature on how teachers learn and change from teacher professional development shows that there are many gaps that exist in terms of our understanding of these processes. As previously explained, one of the major gaps that has been identified in much of the available literature is that it fails to explain how teachers learn from professional development and the conditions that support and promote this learning (D. Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002; Hanushek, 2005; Opfer & Pedder, 2011; Sykes, 1996; Timperley & Alton-Lee, 2008). Desimone (2009) explains how one of the limitations of the research on professional development of teachers has been simplistic

understandings and conceptualizations that account for teacher professional development as discrete activities such as workshops and courses. Opfer and Pedder (2011) concur, pointing out that the majority of writings on the topic “continue to focus on specific activities, processes, or programs in isolation from the complex teaching and learning environments in which teachers live” (p. 377). There have also not been many ties made in the field of professional development of teachers that investigate the learning and change of teachers connecting it to both adult learning theory and intercultural learning/international education, a gap this section attempts to fill.

How teachers learn: avenues to transformation

The findings of the study support the literature of Opfer and Pedder (2011) and Marsh (1982), that there are many ways to produce teacher learning. As quoted in the literature review, Opfer and Pedder (2011) explain, “Some causes may be preconditions, others may be catalysts, others may influence the way learning is produced, and others may be able to directly affect learning, but they also may all work together to produce learning” (p. 381). The previous discussions of how within an internationalized teacher professional development program, teachers learn from other teachers within a culturally diverse group, as well as learn from a new cultural environment, are examples of ways the study has shown teacher learning takes place. In this way, the literature review showed how according to the experts in the field, there is not one avenue to transformation. However, as also discussed, Cranton (2002) explains that one common way transformation may come about is through a significant event that causes a person to question or challenge her/his assumptions or beliefs. As Cranton (2002) writes,

Through some event, which could be as traumatic as losing a job or as ordinary as an unexpected question, as individual becomes aware of holding a limiting or distorted view. If the individual critically examines this view, opens herself to alternatives, and consequently changes the way she sees things, she has transformed some part of how she makes meaning out of the world. (p. 64)

This is known as an “an activating event” (Cranton, 2002), what Mezirow (2000) calls “a disorienting dilemma,” and Sokol and Cranton (1998) call a “trigger event” and can be what sets the transformation process in motion. As the literature review also discussed - along the same wavelength - Cobb, Wood & Yackel (1990) suggest the importance of “cognitive conflict” – described, as challenges to teachers’ approaches and thinking – could be a motivator for change. As Opfer and Pedder (2011) explain, Ball (1988) “too has argued that dissonance in teacher thinking is often required for teachers to unlearn much of what they believe, know, and know how to do in order to learn and adopt new practices” (p. 388).

The findings of the study reveal that for many of the teachers, one of the shifts in perspective the disorienting dilemma or cognitive conflict led to revolved around closed-minded ideas they held about other cultures coming into the internationalized teacher professional development and how they became aware that they were holding a limiting or distorted view. This makes sense given the fact that, as Hayhoe (2007) explains, “culture is also an arena of potential deep-level conflict as highlighted in the recent discourse around the clash of civilizations” (p. 189). This is also aligned with the research on international education; as Trilokekar and Kukar (2011) state, the transformation begins with disorientation and the experience of being an outsider, which can act as a catalyst for change. As Trilokekar (2014) states, “It is the direct exposure to cultural ‘others’ and the dissonance or discomfort in moving beyond one’s comfort zone

that scholars suggest provides the ‘catalytic’ or cultural ‘transformational’ impact (p. 95). The reflections of the teachers show that the cognitive conflict they experienced was sparked by the cultural diversity they experienced during the internationalized teacher professional development. The cognitive conflict of them experienced was the realization that one cannot make broad, sweeping generalizations about a culture or people; this disorienting dilemma of what they thought they knew led to an unlearning of stereotypes they held in their minds. The literature on the benefits of international and intercultural experiences puts forth the idea that “Such self-awareness helps them to challenge Eurocentric beliefs and practices and move from a position that assumes a singular, monocultural reality, to adopting a worldview that is respectful of multiple belief systems” (Guo et al., 2010, p. 574); however, such findings from the study show that it is not only Eurocentric beliefs and practices that can and should be challenged. Rather, such findings show that any form of cultural-centricity can be disrupted, such as the teachers who viewed “the West” in one singular way, only to subsequently recognize that all cultures are layered and nuanced.

Other disorienting dilemmas experienced by the teachers also related to the cultural prejudice some of them had been raised with and, thus, came into the program with, as one teacher described, “*We were brought up to hate different kinds of nationalities.*” For these teachers, it was a big challenge to interact with fellow teachers that they was raised to hate, some even admitting that by the end of the program, they were still experiencing this cognitive dissonance, showing the importance of follow up and sustained support after the completion of the program. However, they also shared that it was this disorienting dilemma that led them, upon reflection, to see that they had

been holding distorted and limiting views. It also becomes clear that in a very significant way, it is the person to person contact and bonding the teachers have with other teachers who are not only culturally/ethnically different from them, and even in fact, in some cases been raised to believe are enemies, that creates the opportunity for cognitive dissonance to occur and lead to transformed perspectives. This reflects the research on intercultural learning that Merryfield (2000) explains, “Over time experiences in one school, community, or nation may contrast sharply with those in other places or they may provide a cumulative effect in maximizing learning about the interconnectedness of diversity, equity and justice” (p. 435). In terms of the teachers brought up to hate different kinds of nationalities, the internationalized teacher professional development experience brought them to meet people they otherwise ordinarily would not have and showed them that this hatred was wrong upon reflection in their home countries.

As well, the teachers’ experiences showed another facet of transformation to be true – that it need not always be one significant event that causes a person to question or challenge. Rather, the experiences illustrate Cranston’s (2002) assertion that the way a person questions or challenges may be an “incremental process in which we gradually change bits of how we see things, not even realizing a transformation has taken place until afterward” (p. 65), and Merryfield’s (2000) intercultural learning research where she explains that “the experiences were not easy to understand, and it took time for the educators to make sense of them within the contexts of their world views” (p. 439). It also speaks to the work of unlearning, where demythologized knowledge takes the learner into the unknown. The teachers illustrate all of these points as they mostly

realized their perspectives had transformed only after they returned home and reflected upon the experience.

A different teacher shared a similar experience, where he did not fully realize the transformation he had experienced until he returned home and heard from others old views he had held prior to the program. It was then that he realized he no longer held the same narrow views. This teacher's experience supports Blasco's (2012) observation that "understanding is an open-ended process of gradual unconcealment" (p. 485) and as such, while transformative learning is not a linear process, Cranton (2002) notes that there is some progression to it, because "we cannot critically reflect on an assumption until we are aware of it. We cannot engage in discourse on something we have not identified. We cannot change a habit of mind without thinking about it in some way" (p. 65). Similarly, Britzman's point that, "The choice is stark: one either thinks thoughts or evacuates them" (p. 11) shows that even though for both these teachers, the transformation was not necessarily apparent during the program, thinking about it in a thoughtful and meaningful way and, thus, important cognitive work was being done that eventually did lead to transformative learning and change.

Critical reflection

The literature review also included Mezirow's (1991) assertions that critical reflection is considered the distinguishing characteristic of adult learning. He argues that the avenue by which one questions the validity of her or his worldview, and rational discourse is identified as a catalyst for transformation, as it leads various participants to explore the depth and meaning of their various worldviews and articulate those ideas to others. Thus, both critical discourse and reflection are integral to transformative

learning. This specifically requires “becoming aware of specific assumptions (schemata, criteria, rules, or repression) on which a distorted or incomplete meaning scheme is based and, through a reorganization of meaning, transforming it” (Mezirow, 1985, p. 23). As Kitchenham (2008) puts simply, “the learner encounters a problem or anomaly that cannot be resolved through present meaning schemes or through learning new meaning schemes; the resolution comes through a redefinition of the problem. Transformation occurs by critical self-reflection of the assumptions that supported the meaning scheme or perspective in use” (p. 112). Thus, it is only through this last process that results in perspective transformation.

The findings of the study reveal that the internationalized teacher professional development the teachers underwent caused them to engage in this type of critical self-reflection, contributing to transformative learning. Mezirow’s explanation of a person questioning the validity of her or his worldview, followed by rational discourse being as a catalyst for transformation, is seen in the experiences of some of the teachers as they try to articulate some of the conceptual shifts they experienced. As presented in the previous chapter, many of the teachers revealed this type of critical self-reflection, particularly questioning the validity of their worldview. Many of the teachers described a feeling that occurred, where they began to question whether something they thought to be true, in fact, was not. One teacher described a back-and-forth inner dialogue of “yes, no, yes, no” as he flipped between whether his worldview has been valid or not. It is this initial questioning that allowed him to take an idea he held “dearly” and “let it go,” illustrating the first step of the critical self-reflection process described by Mezirow.

The back-and-forth inner dialogue also speaks to the literature on unlearning that puts forth the idea that the destruction of preconceptions and previous ideas gives rise to the anxiety and nervousness in the learner. As Britzman (2009) explains, “new ideas mean the loss of old ones and so change feels catastrophic,” (p. 39) a point reflected in the difficulty the teacher above describes in parting with an idea he felt very attached to.

Other teachers showed the same type of questioning the validity of their worldviews, as well as the following step of rational discourse described by Mezirow, which led to a catalyst for transformation. The teachers describe feeling very sure, only to have that disrupted through time spent with their fellow teachers and hearing their experiences and thoughts. As these teachers explain, the rational discourse with other teachers was imperative to their critical self-reflection and expansion of their worldviews, and thus key to them being able to transform.

In terms of what this discourse led to, the teachers illustrate the description Trilokekar and Kukar (2011) give of the benefits of critical reflection, stating that it “leads to one opening his/her frames of reference, discarding old ideas/habits, and adapting new ways of thinking/believing, eventually changing one’s assumptions and ways of seeing the world” (p. 1142). Many of the teachers came to question why they had been doing the same things in their teaching practice for many years and then decided to try out some new ideas and see how they unfolded. They also revealed an increased level of understanding and acceptance of other cultures that they previously held stereotypes about, eventually coming to see they had more in common than difference. Coming to accept differences and become more open demonstrates Bennett’s (1993) research that shows that an increase in cultural awareness is accompanied by the development

of empathy and improved cognitive sophistication, as well as Cushner and Mahon's (2002) point that, "Specifically, as people's ability to understand difference increases, so does their ability to negotiate a variety of worldviews" (p. 50). Rizvi (2009) also speaks to the same point involving reflexivity, which "requires people to become self-conscious and knowledgeable about their own perspectives and how it is subject to transformation as a result of its engagement with other cultural trajectories" (p.267). Berlin also recognizes that learning more about others means learning more about ourselves: "individuals can only have large worlds by understanding other cultures and taking into themselves what others make of the world; only by going beyond their own cultures can they form a more objective understanding of them, and thus of themselves" (Waks, p.588).

Many of the teachers also described the critical self-reflection they experienced as becoming able to see themselves through another's lens, especially those they considered themselves different from or were raised to view as the "other." These accounts demonstrate Merryfield's (2000) point that international experiences lead educators to recognize that the multiple realities that exist in a community or country also exist globally. It also demonstrates an aspect of cross cultural encounters, which is that the new insights the teachers gain into what it might mean to be the 'other' tend to be an unexpected turn of events for them, but they nonetheless value the experiences upon reflection (Tarc, Mishra-Tarc, Ng-A-Fook, & Trilokekar, 2010). The teachers reveal that they recognized that they may have thought an idea is correct or should be accepted, but that same idea could be viewed in a completely different light by another on the other side of the planet. Being able to adopt the skill of seeing themselves

through the lens of another is also what allowed them an avenue to go through the process described by Mezirow of being aware of limited views and through a reorganization of meaning, transforming them. Thus, these findings confirm that engaging in critical discourse and reflection are integral to transformative learning, yet add that the internationalized professional development provided the avenue for these teachers to do so.

Expanded understandings

Closely related to the above topic of critical reflection, the literature also discusses how, as Avalos (2011) writes, teacher professional development requires cognitive and emotional involvement of teachers and the capacity and willingness to examine where one stands in terms of convictions and beliefs. The literature shows how, as K. F. Wheatley (2002) suggests, dissonance between personal expectations and sense of efficacy may open up the possibility for teacher learning to occur – self-doubt may cause reflection and may motivate teachers to learn. As discussed in the literature review, Opfer and Pedder (2011) concur, explaining how Ball (1988) “too has argued that dissonance in teacher thinking is often required for teachers to unlearn much of what they believe, know, and know how to do in order to learn and adopt new practices” (p. 388). This points to the idea that while teachers tend to teach the way they themselves have been taught and much of what teachers bring to the classroom is myths about what ‘good’ teaching looks like and how students learn best, professional development efforts should set up the conditions for the teacher participants to examine themselves and confront the myths about teaching and learning they hold.

The findings of the study confirm these ideas, showing that internationalized teacher professional development can be instrumental in teachers' professional transformation of conceptualizing an expanded definition and understanding of their role as a teacher through dissonance in teacher thinking. K. F. Wheatley's (2002) idea of self-doubt causing reflection and motivating teachers to learn is one that is evident with a number of the study's participants. As presented in the previous chapter, the teachers revealed self-doubt of their very role in the classroom, which led to an expanded understanding of what it means to be a teacher. The accounts of these teachers illustrate Cobb, Wood & Yackel's (1990) idea of the importance of "cognitive conflict" – described as challenges to teachers' approaches and thinking – and how this could be a motivator for change. In re-thinking what it means to be a "teacher," the teachers brought up the notion they held prior to the internationalized teacher professional development that a teacher is someone who is exclusively a deliverer of content and confined mostly to the walls of the classroom. Other teachers shared originally seeing the role of a teacher to deliver content and only focus on the students' grades.

The dissonance the teachers experienced as a result of the internationalized teacher professional development allowed the teachers to learn and adopt new practices of seeing their roles as teachers. Many of them came to see themselves as in an expanded role as educators, who are delivering more than just curriculum and instead playing a role in the larger community, including providing leadership and inspiration. This also speaks to the literature on unlearning involving reconstruction - the continual encountering and constructing of new realities and identities for oneself. In this way, they broadened their professional scope after their internationalized

professional development experience. The experiences of these teachers show that dissonance in teacher thinking can indeed be a very strong motivator for learning and change. The findings of the study add that when it comes to internationalized teacher professional development, this dissonance has the potential to lead the teacher to expanded definitions and understandings of their role as teachers.

Relevant content and application

When it comes to how teachers learn, the findings in the previous chapter show that internationalized teacher professional development is most effective when it is relevant and applicable to teachers' teaching contexts, meaning the teachers feel they can connect to it and it can be of use to them when they return to their teaching contexts. It also means the professional development takes into account the problems and challenges the teachers are facing in their home teaching contexts. This finding adds another piece to the puzzle that exists within the literature on teacher professional development, specifically that which Guskey (1986) addresses – that the majority of programs fail because they do not take into account the process by which change in teachers typically occurs. It serves to also address one of the limitations of the research on professional development, which are simplistic understandings and conceptualizations that account for teacher professional development. Opfer and Pedder (2011) highlight this problem with the literature that continues to “focus on specific activities, processes, or programs in isolation from the complex teaching and learning environments in which teachers live” (p. 377).

The findings show that when studies take into account these complex teaching and learning environments in which teachers live by making the content relevant and

applicable, the teachers are more likely to implement learning and changes in their classroom practice. The teachers explained how they might be deterred from implementing new ideas gathered from the internationalized teacher professional development if they felt it would not work in the teaching and learning environment in their home contexts. The teachers believed that professional development that does not take into account the local teaching context is bound to fail, and therefore beyond the teacher him or herself, the complex teaching environments in which they live must be taken into account in the professional development.

As such, these teachers show just how important it is to them that their professional development take into account their teaching and learning environments by offering content that is relevant and applicable. Otherwise, there exists a risk that they will disengage from their learning during the professional development, or alternately, abandon their transformative learning once they return to their teaching contexts. In either case, the findings show that it is of high importance that internationalized teacher professional development take into account the process by which change in teachers typically occurs, specifically by addressing the complex teaching and learning environments in which teachers live. The teachers' accounts reveal that they are particularly concerned that the internationalized professional development be aware of and sensitive to the problems and challenges that exist in their local teaching contexts. If the internationalized professional development does not take their local teaching contexts into account, the teachers may encounter a hurdle that could otherwise have been avoided.

Of course, there needs to be a distinction made between teachers turning away from the internationalized teacher professional development because they feel it is not relevant or applicable to their teaching contexts and turning away from it because they are resistant to change and transformation. The difference is that with the former, the teachers are willing and open to change and transformation while with the latter, even if the content were relevant and applicable, they would still not be willing to change - an area that is explored in the next section.

Halted learning

The literature review also considered impediments to the transformative learning process, such as resistance to change on the part of the learner. The literature showed that resistance is not necessarily part of the transformative learning experience, however, perspective transformation can occur in two dimensions (Mezirow, 1985). As Kitchenham (2008) explains, “on one hand, it can occur painlessly through an accumulation or concatenation of transformations in set meaning schemes... Thus, a teacher may experience a perspective transformation through a series of altered meaning schemes or ‘the constellation of concept, belief, judgment, and feeling which shapes a particular interpretation’ (Mezirow, 1994, p. 223)” (p. 112). In this case, the learner does not experience resistance to the transformation.

On the other hand, as Mezirow (1985) describes, perspective transformation may be also be an “epochal... [and]... painful” (p. 24) transformation of meaning perspectives, or sets of meaning schemes, as this dimension involves a comprehensive and critical re-evaluation of oneself. Mezirow (1991) also identifies some of the difficulties experienced by learners as “stalling, backsliding, self-deception, and failure” (p. 171). The literature

review also considered Cranton's (2002) work, that showed that the process may be painful for some as it is often very difficult to be open to perspectives that are different to our own. She writes that learners may be able to articulate their assumptions and reflect on them, but "shut down" when faced with accepting alternatives (p. 68). Britzman (2003) explains that, "When we are first confronted with new ideas, the earliest flutters of learning are made from fear" (p. 78) and Brookfield (1987) also observes that the process may be a "wrenching experience" and that there is a "tendency to hang on" to previous assumptions or behaviours" (p. 27).

According to Mezirow (1978), the two specific points in the process when difficulties are likely to occur are 1) at the beginning, and 2) "the point at which a commitment to reflective action logically should follow insight but is so threatening or demanding that the learner is immobilized" (Mezirow, 1978, p. 1717), both situations that can halt the transformation process in its tracks. In the findings of this study, the teachers describe the difficult experience of letting go of previous assumptions or behaviours, such as this teacher who describes the "tendency to hang on": *"Even with the simple things, you find it hard to let go of habits that you have, might as well be teaching, like when you do something for a long time, changing this would be hard. Changing habits, changing the way you think, especially if you hold it dearly, if you believe in it with all your heart."* As this teacher explains, his assumptions and beliefs were held "dearly" and close to his heart, such that letting go of them to accept alternatives was very difficult for him. The teacher's assertion of the difficulty in changing the way you think can also be viewed as an example of what Anna Freud deems a "mechanism of defense" - the ego's anticipation (which causes anxiety) and protection against what it perceives as danger

and what closes the door on unlearning. As Guskey (2010) also explains, “change brings a certain amount of anxiety and can be very threatening” (p. 386). This shows that professional development efforts must recognize that change is a gradual and difficult process for teachers.

Other teachers showed that although they initially did experience halted learning, there is also the potential for a perspective transformation through a series of altered meaning schemes to follow, as one teacher described her reaction to certain new perspectives and meaning schemes as “shocking at the beginning,” revealing part of a difficult or painful process of being open to perspectives that are different to her own. However, she also describes subsequently experiencing a perspective transformation through a series of altered meaning schemes, by “*re-evaluat[ing] it...It opens lots of doors inside my mind,*” showing that although she did experience a type of painful resistance initially, she was able to move past this and experience transformation.

Other teachers similarly shared initially experiencing a painful reaction to alternative perspectives, but then were also able to avoid becoming immobilized as learners. The teachers experienced resistance when others in the group presented alternate perspectives, views that were not initially accepted or favoured by the other teachers. Here we see the risk of a teacher becoming immobilized as a learner and clinging to her or his own perspectives. However, these teachers also showed moving past this initial resistance and experiencing a perspective transformation through a series of altered meaning schemes where the alternate perspective is subsequently thought through again. The experiences of such teachers also supports Mezirow’s (1978) idea that one of the two specific points in the process when difficulties are likely

to occur is at the beginning, but adds to the literature by showing how the teachers can move past the initial difficulty and experience perspective transformation *if* they are able to revisit the ideas they felt challenged by and, in the words of the teachers, “afterwards re-evaluate it” and “really review the idea.” The ability to go back to these points of halted learning and continue the thinking process can be seen as part of the reason why some teachers are able to reach a perspective transformation while others are not.

The findings of the study also add to the literature by introducing the impact of teachers making comparisons with other teachers and the new learning environment. The study finds that making comparisons had differing effects depending on the teacher. For some teachers, making comparisons allowed them to experience a perspective transformation without much resistance to the transformation. However, for other teachers, the act of making comparisons did not lead to perspective transformation, and instead led to feelings of frustration. In one case, the feelings of frustration that arose during and following the internationalized teacher professional development as a result of the teacher making constant and repeated comparisons appears to have halted transformational learning or perspective transformation. The teacher appears to have gotten stuck in the comparisons, which led to a painful experience. This can also be related to the literature that shows that international and intercultural experiences can create the opportunity to have a more critical attitude toward countries of origin (Opper, Teichler, & Carlson, 1990; Segalowitz & Freed, 2004).

The commentary of this teacher also indicates that what the teachers were comparing, as well as how they were comparing, had an impact on the impact of the

comparisons. In the case of one teacher, he began making comparisons as soon as he arrived at the airport. This is different from the other teachers who noted themselves as making comparisons when they spoke to other teachers and during the program. From this it can be assumed when comparisons are made without much critical reflection, as is the case with this teacher, they are not necessarily useful to learning and change. It also seems that because this teacher seems to have been preemptively determined to make comparisons (again, right off the plane), as opposed to the other teachers, for whom the comparisons seem to have come up more organically, the comparison mindset became overwhelming and created a rigid mental structure that prevented learning and change. Additionally, it meant the scope of comparisons this teacher made was quite extensive, comparing everything from buildings to facilities - aspects of his environment that are out of his control. The comparisons of the other teachers were relegated more to themselves, their own thoughts, and the teachers they work with and know. From this it can be assumed that what is being compared makes a big difference, specifically if the comparisons are external nature and especially things the teacher has no control over (e.g. buildings), compared to comparisons that are of a more internal nature, that teachers do have control over (e.g. their thoughts). The former leads to feelings of frustration, while the latter can lead to hope for change. One results in feelings of disempowerment, while the other leads to feelings of empowerment.

While these teachers show the different ways comparisons can come up and what they can result in, another teacher's experience illustrated that the practice of making comparisons is not inevitable; rather, one teacher felt that falling into the practice of making comparisons on a micro level (such as those the previous teacher

became consumed by) was not a useful practice and would be limiting. This teacher was able to zoom out of her national context, instead of getting bogged down in such comparisons. As reported in the findings, she remarked, “you think of something which is much beyond that,” indicating that spending time thinking about larger, possibly more conceptual ideas was more useful to her learning and change.

The findings of the study, therefore, show that firstly, halted learning is a serious reality for many teachers during their transformative learning process. The findings also show a range of experiences of halted learning (including a lack thereof), and on the one hand, it remains difficult to predict which teachers will experience resistance in their learning and which will not, as well as what paths may lead to such resistance and what paths may lead away from it. However, the findings have also started to further point in directions of the context and environment that that are conducive to the transformative learning process, which will be explored in the next section.

Conditions that promote learning and change

As aforementioned, the other side of the coin to delving deeper into how teachers learn and change is investigating what are the conditions that promote learning and transformation? As explained in the literature review, many scholars feel there is a need for a better understanding of teacher professional development and what makes it effective (Avalos, 2011; Borko, 2004; Desimone, 2009; Gatt, 2009; Guskey, 2010; Opfer & Pedder, 2011; Wayne et al., 2008). The literature states that when learners actually revise their assumptions or larger frames of reference, they need support: “this challenge must be combined with safety, support, and a sense of learner empowerment” (Cranton, 2002, p. 66). Mezirow (2000) concurs, stressing that “critical

to teachers helping effect transformative learning in adults, is the understanding of the importance of supportive relationships in the adult students' lives, who may be experiencing transformative learning. Having a safe and supportive system of teachers and other significant people may greatly facilitate the student's willingness to move forward with transformative learning." Merriam, Mott, and Lee's (2006) also emphasize that the learner must feel safe and secure in order to grow. The authors quote Daloz (1986), who remarks, "Under stress and threat, we tend to hold to those earlier parts of ourselves with which we feel safest; conversely, when we feel safe, we can trust our growing edge more fully" (p. 131). The findings of the study confirm that internationalized teacher professional development is most effective when it creates a safe and supportive atmosphere. Many of the teachers shared that this type of atmosphere played an important role in their learning and change by helping them feel relaxed and open to learning new things. Even teachers who normally did not feel they needed or could benefit from this type of supportive atmosphere, for example, those who did not consider themselves very social, shared that it did have a positive impact for them.

The experiences of the teachers also showed how support came in the form of validation of their professional concerns, for example, one of the teachers described the nature of discussions she had with other teachers in the group that united them under the shared struggles of teaching, such as marking and working long hours. Having the support of other teachers to hear one's concerns and feeling safe enough to share them had a positive impact on the teachers and their transformative experience. In this way, the study confirms Mezirow (2000) and the abovementioned scholars who believe, in

Mezirow's words: "Having a safe and supportive system of teachers and other significant people may greatly facilitate the student's willingness to move forward with transformative learning."

When it comes to delving into conditions that promote learning and change, the findings of the study also add to the literature by revealing that if a supportive, safe environment follows the internationalized teacher professional development once the teacher returns to her/his local teaching context, it also helps in aiding teachers in their continued transformative learning. The findings show that major school actors, such as administrators and colleagues, can create this supportive, safe environment. A number of the teachers cited support from principals and other administrators as helping them to continue adopting new ideas. As these teachers show, a supportive environment upon returning to teaching plays a positive role in helping teachers in continuing to "trust [their] growing edge more fully" (p. 131) as described by Daloz (1986). It becomes clear that having a safe and supportive system of people can very much facilitate the teacher's willingness and ability to continue moving forward in their transformative learning, a point that also speaks to the importance of sustained professional development explored earlier in the chapter.

Conversely, an environment that is not safe or supportive has a negative impact on the teacher's transformative learning and implementing of change. Many of the teachers described their efforts towards continuing their transformational learning once they returned to teaching fall short because of a lack of support from their administration, particularly their principals. From these teachers, it becomes clear that if a teacher finds her or himself without a support system in their home teaching

environment, they may not be able to move forward with transformative learning, even if they wish to do so. This confirms Guskey's (2010) observation that for a teacher to change or try something new involves risk, as explained in the literature review. The risk of backlash exists from administrators, fellow teachers, and even students. As previously explained, it can be supposed that the higher the teacher believes the risks to be, the less likely she/he is to put their professional development into practice through changes in their teaching - the nature and level of risk stemming from fears that are specific to the individual and the context – again, illustrating the importance of a supportive environment. As Guskey's (2010) explains, "Support allows those engaged in the difficult process of implementation to tolerate the anxiety of occasional failures" (p. 388), whether that be failure in the eyes of the administration or the students.

In addition to major school actors, such as administrators, colleagues, and parents playing an important role in creating safe and supportive conditions, the findings of the study also show that larger societal influences also play a key role in the teachers' transformative experiences. Many of the teachers shared experiences of being prevented from implementing changes or acting on their transformative learning because of such roadblocks. Some of the teachers generally referenced the environment as causing them to feel trapped, while others' blame is placed squarely on the governmental bodies, such as their Ministry of Education, for blocking change within the system. In terms of the latter, a number of the teachers criticized their Ministry of Education for placing too much emphasis on national exams and the stringent preparation teachers are responsible for administering for it. On a more micro level hurdle, teachers cited education inspectors as creating hurdles for them, so even if

there is will and intention to make changes to one's teaching practice and continue on with transformative learning, the larger educational forces restrict this through strict rules. For others, it was a combination of larger societal forces and more micro level administrators that were described as having a significant impact on whether a teacher is able to implement changes in their teaching. In the words of one teacher, *"In our region, in the Middle East and North Africa, the word change, simply the word change sometimes can bring you trouble."*

On the flip side, one teacher shared how a shift in the societal influence in her home country actually opened up opportunities for her to have more freedom in her teaching. She described the revolution of 2010 in her country shaking up a previously very autocratic regime and create the societal space for her to implement new ideas and new ways of thinking. In this way, the societal influences played a significant role in how her transformational learning played out once she returned home from her internationalized professional development – both when there were more restrictions and when there were fewer.

Thus, it is apparent that while the literature on teaching learning and change does usefully promote a safe and supportive learning environment as a crucial element in teachers moving forward in their transformational learning during their professional development, a point confirmed in this study, the study shows that it is also extremely important once the teacher has returned to their local teaching context, because even if their internationalized professional development was effective and they experienced transformational learning, without the support once they return, their transformational learning journey may be halted or abandoned.

However, the findings of the study also add to the literature by also showing that in spite of lack of support preventing teachers from implementing changes, many teachers felt that personal will and strength also play an important role in whether a teacher is able to move past such impediments to change. While acknowledging many of the restrictions described above, such as parents, administration etc., a strong belief remained amongst a number of the teachers that there is potential for change if the teacher is willing to push through those restrictions. In placing more agency on the teacher, the teachers shared sentiments such as the notion that there are many things that will get in your way, so it takes a lot of work and determination, but the onus is on the teacher to work past these hurdles. Other teachers felt the internationalized teacher professional development, in fact, prepared them to face these hurdles that might prevent one from implementing change. This also speaks to the literature on international education experiences that show how overseas student teachers develop increased confidence and a stronger sense of self, as well as increased adaptability, resourcefulness, and persistence (Cushner & Mahon, 2002). As the teacher explains, the experience built up in him a level of confidence that allowed him to defend himself against others who do not want him to apply his new learning and transformation.

The beliefs and experiences of these teachers show that there is a split in thinking when it comes to teachers implementing changes or not as a result of their internationalized teacher professional development. The findings show that on the one hand, many teachers feel that major school actors, such as administrators, colleagues, and parents, as well as larger societal influences, such as the local culture, ministry of education etc., or a combination of the two, can have a severely negative impact on

teachers hoping or attempting to implement changes in their classroom practice once they return from their internationalized teacher professional development.

On the other hand, the findings also show that many other teachers, while recognizing many of the same forces of restriction, feel that the ability to implement changes and put their transformational learning into practice rests more in the hands of the teacher, who can push to create the space to make the changes they want. Thus, there is no denying that there are many forces working against teachers' intentions to implement change, however, to some extent, whether or not change is ultimately implemented may depend on the will of the teacher. However, it is in this space that the findings show that internationalized teacher professional development can play a significant role in making this difference through creating a safe and supportive environment for the teachers to learn and change, as well as contributing to this type of environment after the teachers have returned to their home teaching contexts, and also building up the teachers' confidence and sense of self so they can confront hurdles that come their way and be the teachers they want to be.

What motivates teachers

Another gap in the literature pointed out by Guskey (1986) is that the majority of teacher professional development programs fail because they do not take into account a crucial factor: what motivates teachers to engage in professional development? When this pivotal question is tackled, there is a focus on enhanced student outcomes, which is regularly cited as a chief goal of teacher professional development. As mentioned in the literature review, the idea is that most teachers engage in professional development because they want to become better teachers, and for the vast majority of teachers,

becoming a better teacher means enhancing student learning outcomes (Guskey, 2010, p. 382). Avalos (2011) also includes in her definition of teacher professional development that the purpose of it for teachers is about transforming their knowledge into practice for the benefit of their students' growth (p. 10).

The findings of the study show that similar to the motivation for teachers to engage in professional development, students also act as a motivator for teachers to engage in internationalized teacher professional development. The teachers described a sincere commitment to their students when explaining why they were open to new ideas and strategies during the internationalized teacher professional development program. For some teachers, they described wanting to help their students adapt and thrive in the face of the ongoing changes in their society, while other wanted their students to feel proud of themselves, their cultures, and communities. For other teachers, they explained that the motivation came from approaching teaching as more than merely a job, but rather when they felt they had an important role to play in having their students stay interested in school and the teaching matter.

In this way, the findings of the study show that students do act as an important source of motivation for teachers to pursue internationalized teacher professional development. However, it is interesting to note that while the teachers do describe a deep commitment to their students as a motivation for pursuing internationalized teacher professional development, none of the teachers cited exam/test scores or other types of technical goals as the student outcomes they sought to improve. Rather, the teachers all described larger goals and outcomes for their students, such as helping them adjust and succeed in changing societies, feel proud of themselves, their cultures

and communities, have the students be interested in what is being taught in the classroom, and overall helping them achieve their dreams. This subtle, yet nonetheless important point adds to the literature by differentiating between a motivation teachers have in pursuing teacher professional development (to a large extent for the micro goal of helping students succeed externally - through tests, exams etc.) and a motivation teachers have in pursuing internationalized teacher professional development (for the more macro goal of helping students succeed internally - by being well-adjusted, have inner pride, and achieve their dreams).

Where transformation can lead: changes to relationships in the classroom

The findings of the study shows that transformation that leads to an increased level of acceptance and openness towards others has a positive trickle down effect on the students of these teachers who have gone through internationalized teacher professional development. The teachers described their transformations of becoming more open-minded and accepting as helping them to more effectively teach their students, particularly the ones who were previously more difficult to reach, such as different types of learners. Other teachers shared how becoming more open-minded led them to becoming better listeners with their students.

As such, these teachers demonstrate that the transformed perspectives they experienced as a result of their internationalized teacher professional development revolving around being more accepting, open-minded, and understanding of cultural differences, extended to how they were with their students in the classroom. The reflections of these teachers also illustrate a point made in international education literature, that “the interaction of one’s identity and contexts of power with the

experiences leads to consciousness of multiple perspectives and a process of meaning making that be generalized to other circumstances” (Merryfield, 2000, p. 440). These teachers show that following the internationalized teacher professional development they were able to gain acceptance for the diversity of their students and become more understanding of the many differences among them.

The findings of the study also show that the transformations that occur as a result of internationalized teacher professional development can also lead to teachers developing a strengthened bond with their students. The teachers described a deeper bond with their students developing as both the teachers and students began to enjoy the class more, as the students began to feel more inspired, and the teachers felt more love, understanding, and patience towards their students. In this way, the findings of the study show that the transformations the teachers experienced as a result of their internationalized teacher professional development can lead to an increased bond between the teachers and their students.

In addition to deepening their bonds with their students, this study finds that the transformation the teachers experience can also lead to an increased level of bravery in their professional conduct. The teachers describe their transformations as leading to the courage and confidence to believe in their own teaching abilities and have a reignited hope in their teaching and for their students. The internationalized teacher professional development was also described as giving teachers the courage to teach in the way they wanted to, after years of following a more contained path, even if it meant going up against the administration and the status quo.

As such, bravery comes across as an additional quality transformation can lead to, with positive benefits to the teachers themselves and the students they teach. This also speaks to an outcome of international education experiences, Bandura's (1987) theory of self-efficacy, which Cushner and Mahon (2002) describe as "the belief that one has the abilities to complete a task and to accomplish what one sets out to do" (p. 51). As they explain, Bandura believes that an individual with heightened self-efficacy is optimistic about his or her abilities even in the face of adversity. As these teachers explain, they were willing to make changes, in spite of the fear that previously held them back.

Where transformation can lead: changes to classroom practice

When it comes to what transformation can lead to, the findings of the study, as presented in the previous chapter, also add to the literature by showing that internationalized teacher professional development can result in teachers becoming more creative, relaxed, open, and inclusive in their teaching practice and engagement with students. The teachers described how the transformations they experienced during the program added a degree of flexibility to their teaching practices, for example, one teacher began to choose classes in which she had more flexibility in her teaching, while other teachers described becoming "less structured" in the way they conduct their lessons, and creating more space for their students to interact and participate in the lessons. The teachers' commentary show increased flexibility in terms of the technical aspects of teaching, such as the structure of the class and lessons, but also reveals increased flexibility in terms of pedagogy. In this way, the teaching has become more participatory, showing that not just what is being taught has changed, but also how it is

being taught. The findings of the study show that these types of changes to their classroom practice resulted in an increased level of enjoyment for both teacher and students.

Thus, the findings of the study firstly support the literature that shows that transformative learning can lead to teachers developing a more open, inclusive, and compassionate perspective. The transformations the teachers experienced as a result of their internationalized teacher professional development led them to evolve a shifted perspective that encapsulated these qualities, especially when directed towards those of different cultures. The findings show that this evolved perspective also surfaced in changed relationships in the classroom, with the teachers becoming more accepting towards different types of learners, particularly those students that were more difficult to reach in the past. The shifted perspective also resulted in an ignited bravery in terms of how they taught and what they taught, choosing to make decisions more of their own accord rather than what was previously done. Additionally, the teachers showed that their evolved perspective also resulted in strengthened bonds with their students, something teachers and students enjoyed alike. Finally, the transformations the teachers experienced also led to changes to their classroom practice in terms of them becoming more relaxed, open, and inclusive both in their daily instructions and how they related to their students. In this way, the findings of the study relating to where transformation can lead ended up both supporting the established literature, as well as added new dimensions to it.

Importance of internationalized teacher professional development

The literature review for this study began with a highlighting of the consensus from scholars (such as Borko, 2004; Desimone, 2009; Guskey, 2002; and Opfer & Pedder, 2011) that in spite of the issues associated with professional development both in research and in practice, it is still regularly cited as one of the keys to reforms in teaching and learning. Professional development endeavors are continually on the rise, with precious time and funds being allocated towards these projects (Birman et al., 2007; Desimone, 2009). Further, in spite of a shortage of specialized research on the topic, internationalized teacher professional development also continues to grow in scope and popularity. The findings of this study add to both these fields of literature, by emphatically showing that internationalized teacher professional development is indeed very important to teachers' learning and change.

For some teachers in the study, the impact of their internationalized teacher professional development was felt, in large part, due to the exposure it provided to other cultures, and how this person-to-person contact acted as a trigger that led to cognitive dissonance, followed by self reflection. This trajectory led to shifted perspectives on diversity and culture, as well as pedagogical ideas of teaching and learning. Similarly, the exposure to other cultures the internationalized teacher professional development provided made a significant impact not only on a personal teacher-level, but in a larger context as well, with teachers describing such programs as not only important in the realm of education, but for world peace and mutual understanding between cultures and religions. In this way, there is a larger benefit to internationalized teacher professional

development that surpasses the classroom or school level and leads to a broader development of intercultural competencies.

This exposure, in fact, was described by the teachers as a changing point in their careers. Being able to experience internationalized teacher professional development even just once in a teaching career was described as carrying the potential for significant learning and change. The teachers' accounts of learning how teaching occurs in other countries and cultures also speaks to the importance of comparative education, an outcome of the intercultural interaction and bonding that transpired in the culturally diverse group.

Other teachers also explained that while at least one such experience is crucial, continual internationalized teacher professional development is preferable. Advocating for an ongoing stream of internationalized teacher professional development programs reveals a belief in and commitment to the learning and change that will likely result from each experience, bringing to mind Greene's (1995) idea of the necessity of new beginnings, of the necessity of trying "over and over again to begin" (p. 16). It also shows the importance of sustained and continuous support that was discussed earlier in the chapter.

The findings also add to the literature by revealing certain groups of teachers that see the benefits of internationalized teacher professional development from a particular vantage point. The first is teachers who come from countries where teacher professional development is not available or very effective. These teachers explain that not only is internationalized teacher professional development important for all teachers, but it is especially beneficial for those who struggle to receive effective professional

development in their home contexts. A second group the findings identify as also absorbing the benefits of internationalized teacher professional development from a particular vantage point is seasoned teachers who have been teaching for a long time. These teachers feel that even though older teachers may have more difficulty taking on new ideas and it may be more of a challenge for them to undergo learning and change, experiencing internationalized teacher professional development is still especially important for them. This is because they are often in higher positions of authority, and as such, have influence over departments, other teachers, etc. and can affect change through these positions. Thus, while the study finds that internationalized teacher professional development is important for all teachers, there is additional benefit for teachers who are otherwise devoid of effective professional development, as well as teachers who have been working in the system for many years.

Lastly, the findings show that internationalized teacher professional development is important because its impact can be carried on beyond the program by the teacher participants by passing on the learning to teachers in their home countries. In addition to how teachers who are in a position of teaching other teachers will be able to spread ideas from the internationalized teacher professional development, the teachers also saw a potential benefit in the same passing on of knowledge on an individual basis as well, for example, ideas that are not applicable in one subject area can be passed on to a teacher in a different subject area. As such, even if a teacher chooses not to apply an idea from the internationalized teacher professional development in her/his classroom, or is unable to because of other hurdles, such as closed curriculum, there is still potential for the idea to take growth in the classroom of colleagues. This finding

demonstrates the importance of capturing change at a local level, or as Marginson and Rhoades (2002) put it, “consider the local in exploring the global” (p. 305). In this way, the teachers illustrate the different ways in which the benefits of internationalized teacher professional development are more far-reaching than only the participants of the programs, adding to the overall importance of internationalized teacher professional development for teachers’ learning and change.

A note about context

Finally, zooming out from the findings and analysis presented in this chapter, it is essential to highlight that these findings represent a case study; that is, Program Z took place within a very specific context. As Yin (2003) explains, case studies allow the researcher to explore individuals or organizations (in this case, through Program Z), and supports the deconstruction and subsequent reconstruction of various phenomena (in this case, internationalized teacher professional development). Yin (2003) also explains a case study should be used when the boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and the context.

In this study, how teachers learn and change is examined, but the case cannot be considered without the context, Program Z, and more specifically the uniqueness of the program. While teacher professional development dominantly occurs at a local level, Program Z is unique in the fact that the teachers came from a wide range of countries (nine in total). While all the countries are part of the Middle East and North African region, they are each incredibly diverse nations, contributing a variety of languages, ethnicities, and religions. This meant that the makeup of the participants was incredible

diverse and varied, making the investigation, particularly of the impact of the culturally diverse group on the teachers' learning and change, all the more interesting and fruitful.

The program was also unique in the way that it did not require the teachers to self-fund to participate. Normally, a program that requires teacher participants to travel and stay in another country for such a long duration would be out of reach of many teachers. However, since the program was funded largely through the U.S. Department of State's Bureau for Education and Cultural Affairs, the organizers of the program could select teachers from a range of backgrounds and socio-economic levels, adding more depth to the diversity of the participants.

The location of the program also adds to its uniqueness. Taking place in a major city in the United States meant that the participants were halfway around the world from home, and in a – for all intents and purposes – “neutral” location. While some of the countries in the region have, at times, contentious histories with one another, as well as the United States, the findings show that the location played a significant role in the learning and change experiences of the teachers. The location was far enough removed and different from their home environments that it created conditions in which they felt free and open to learning and change.

In this way, the multifaceted diversity of the teacher participants, as well as the location, highlights the uniqueness of the program. This uniqueness offered an extremely interesting and fruitful context in which to examine the impact of internationalized teacher professional development, and this uniqueness must be acknowledged when qualifying the findings from the study. However, while the unique context of the program allowed for the opportunity to investigate what can be

considered an advanced form of internationalized teacher professional development, it also means there are potential challenges to extending the findings to the range of internationalized teacher professional development. The reality is that most programs are not able to be quite so diverse and varied in their makeup of participants, nor are they able to take place in a “neutral” location that is so far from home, for logistical and funding reasons (among others). These elements made Program Z quite unique; the extent to which the findings will apply other programs remains to be seen. Therefore, further research into the impact of internationalized teacher professional development on teachers’ learning and change through a range of types of programs is absolutely necessary.

CHAPTER EIGHT: Conclusion

Introduction

This academic journey was set out to explore how teachers learn and change as a result of internationalized teacher professional development. It grew out of a deep interest in teacher learning, as well as recognition of the growing impact of internationalization.

The literature showed that while there has been ample research into the experiences of pre-service teachers who have undergone internationalized teacher education, particularly the outcomes and benefits of these experiences, there has conversely been far less research done on the experiences of teachers who undergo internationalized teacher professional development. This was addressed as problematic, given that internationalized professional development is just as important as the internationalization of teacher education. This major gap in the field of teacher learning was also all the more pertinent considering the increasing number of internationalized teacher professional development programs that are cropping up across the educational landscape.

This led first to the necessity of creating a clear definition of internationalized teacher professional development, which this study provided: *the process of integrating an international/intercultural dimension into teachers' learning and learning how to learn in a professional development context*. This definition created the parameters for both exploring the process of internationalized teacher professional development and selecting a suitable group of participants who have undergone internationalized teacher professional development.

It also led to the intersection of teacher learning/professional development, adult learning, and intercultural learning theories. Each theory offered a starting point for the study and a foundation for analysis.

The study sought to answer the following three questions:

1. What personal and professional transformations do teachers report as a result of internationalized teacher professional development?
2. How do teachers learn and change as a result of internationalized teacher professional development? What conditions support and promote this learning and change?
3. What can be said about the importance of internationalized teacher professional development for teacher learning and change? What makes for effective internationalized teacher professional development?

In investigating these questions, the key objectives of the study were to contribute to this underdeveloped area in the field of teacher learning/professional development, capture the learning experiences of teachers who have undergone internationalized teacher professional development and the full range of possible ways of experiencing internationalized teacher professional development, and further develop theories of internationalized professional development, adult learning and intercultural learning.

Empirical findings

The main empirical findings are found in chapter seven and can be synthesized to address the three research questions.

- What personal and professional transformations do teachers report as a result of internationalized teacher professional development?

The dominant personal transformation experienced by the teachers was an increase in the overlapping qualities of acceptance, tolerance, and understanding towards difference in others, especially with respect to cultural, ethnic, and national differences. The teachers also demonstrated newfound openness and sensitivity to differing worldviews, as well as a heightened awareness to the dangers of stereotyping and generalizing. The progression in understanding and acceptance led the teachers to find commonalities taking precedence over initially perceived differences.

For many teachers, the personal transformations of becoming more accepting, understanding, and tolerant also relayed to their professional settings. They reported professional transformations of increased levels of acceptance, understanding, and tolerance towards the various groups in their school settings, particularly their students and as well as their colleagues.

Another professional transformation that occurred was an intellectual pedagogical revisiting of their very definition of what a teacher is; their views of the role of the teacher expanded and reached beyond what is traditionally considered teaching-related and came to incorporate a more emotional aspect. This served to strengthen their bond with their students in the classroom, which was another reported professional transformation.

Related to the increased bond with their students, another professional transformation that many of the teachers experienced was that after completing the program they became more creative in their teaching, developing a more relaxed, less rigid approach to teaching. Closely tied to this, many of the teachers became more committed to engaging all students in the classroom and becoming more open to and

accepting of differing opinions in the classroom. For many of the teachers, the impact of these professional developments has been an increased level of enjoyment for the students in the class, as well as the teachers themselves.

- How do teachers learn and change as a result of internationalized teacher professional development? What conditions support and promote this learning and change?

The teachers experienced significant learning and change that occurred as a result of being part of the group, as well as from members of the group on an individual basis. At the heart of this person-to-person and group learning was the diversity among them, which ranged from ethnic, cultural, national, religious pedagogical, subject areas, and worldview differences. The teachers often reported the learning they experienced from fellow teachers meant the program became a continuous learning experience and that the learning that occurred as a result of the other teachers was equally, or even more important than the official professional development being conducted. Most often it was the combination of the cultural diversity of the group and the commonality of being teachers that led to the most significant learning the teachers experienced.

One of the ways the teachers significantly changed was through the development of an increased sense of self-awareness largely centered around their teaching practice, as well as the pedagogical ideas about teaching and learning they held. Being with the group led to an increased sense of self-awareness in terms of seeing aspects of their self-identity through the lens of another, which again, led to many of the personal and professional transformations previously outlined.

In addition learning from the diverse group, the teachers experienced significant learning and change that occurred as a result of being in a new cultural environment. The cultural and national diversity of the group, as well as the new cultural environment created the place and space for many of the teachers to counter the nationalistic framework they operated under back home. Being in a new cultural environment resulted in many of the teachers feeling more motivated to learn and change, as well as having less fear of making changes - both to their perspective and ideas, and to their teaching practices.

For many of the teachers, these sentiments were contrasted with negative descriptions of receiving professional development at home, in a local context. They expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of engagement during their local professional development and feelings of frustration learning with teachers locally who were described as mostly being resistant to change.

In commenting on how they learned and changed as a result of the internationalized teacher professional development program, many of the teachers reported that most of the change was noticed after they returned home and began teaching again and that the change they experienced was gradual rather than immediate.

In terms of the conditions that supported and promoted this learning and change, for many of the teachers, a positive, supportive atmosphere made a positive impact on their learning and change process. For some, this type of environment was supportive because all viewpoints were accepted and discussed, and for others the supportive environment helped them to open up to others and to change.

For many of the teachers, another condition that supported and promoted learning and change was the relationship to and role of school administrators in their teaching contexts. Those teachers that cited a good relationship with their administrator found it easier to implement changes in their teaching and classrooms, while those with difficult relationships with their school administrators meant they did not feel supported to implement their new learning and make changes to their teaching.

However, at the same time, some teachers felt it was more of a matter of personal will and determination to implement changes in the classroom, in spite of resistance from administrators and colleagues. Further, for some of the teachers, one of the factors that supported and promoted learning and change, both what drove them to pursue internationalized teacher professional development, as well as what pushed them to implement changes in their subsequent teaching, was their students who were a source of motivation for them.

- What can be said about the importance of internationalized teacher professional development for teacher learning and change? What makes for effective internationalized teacher professional development?

The importance of internationalized teacher professional development for teacher learning and change was illustrated by the many teachers who shared their eagerness to spread ideas beyond the program. A few teachers also brought up the importance of internationalized teacher professional development for teachers who have many years of experience. The teachers explained that while it may be more of a challenge for these teachers to change, it is necessary that they do so, as well as the point that many of them are often looking for change after doing the same thing for many years.

Other teachers explained the importance of internationalized teacher professional development lies in its ability to expand one's thinking and perspective to become more accepting of difference. It was expressed how internationalized teacher professional development produces the significant benefits of cultural understanding to teachers who otherwise hold on to prejudice.

When it comes to what makes for effective internationalized teacher professional development, it was stressed that physically being in a culturally diverse group, along with learning in a culturally new environment, were the most important factors in the teachers experiencing significant learning and change. It was in such an environment that cultural understanding and mutual respect could be forged. These two factors were also what led to the teachers experiencing cognitive dissonance – another element that is essential for effective internationalized teacher professional development. It was through experiences of cognitive dissonance that the teachers were able to experience sustainable transformation.

It was also found that follow-up is crucial - conversely, a lack of follow-up was considered quite detrimental to the learning and change process. The teachers expressed a desire to maintain a network after the program had ended, especially since some considered change was difficult to sustain.

The study also shows that for internationalized teacher professional development to be effective, it needs to be intensive and have a somewhat lengthy duration. The fact that the teachers were living and learning together led to repeated opportunities for them to engage with one another, both in and outside of class. This allowed them to build close connections with one another and ultimately experience transformation. The

month-long program also contributed to these close connections, showing that effective internationalized teacher professional development cannot be comprised of isolated, sporadic events or activities.

The relevancy and applicability of the professional development was another key element that some of the teachers reported for the internationalized teacher professional development to be considered effective. The teachers reported that the instructors should be aware and mindful of the barriers the teachers may be experiencing, in order to ensure the material is applicable, otherwise the teachers may experience frustration of learning.

Theoretical implications

As previously mentioned, this study took place at the intersection of teacher learning/professional development, adult learning, and intercultural learning theories. Each theory contributed in both unique and overlapping ways to the overarching question of how teachers learn and change within an internationalized teacher professional development context. The study evolved to offer both contributions, criticisms, and further questions to each of these learning theories.

Teacher learning/professional development

One of the chief disruptions to the intricately tied fields of teacher learning and professional development concerns the belief that professional development seldom changes attitudes significantly and elicits strong commitment from teachers; if teachers' attitudes and beliefs are to change, it is only after they have experienced successful implementation of the strategies through clear evidence of improvement in the learning outcomes of their students (Guskey, 2010).

The study demonstrates that internationalized teacher professional development is a form of professional development that *is* likely to change attitudes significantly and elicit strong commitment from teachers, even before they return to their local teaching contexts and try out changes to their classroom practice. These shifts in attitudes and beliefs can be significant and powerful, leading to positive ripples in classrooms, schools, and communities.

This conclusion of the study leads to a criticism of the aspects of teacher learning and professional development theory that focus too heavily on the learning outcomes of students, somewhat bypassing the learning experiences of teachers. By focusing more closely on these learning experiences and subsequently providing professional development that is more effective, improved student outcomes will likely follow, as the study disrupts the notion within the fields of teacher learning and professional development that teachers are not likely to implement changes to their classroom practice. The experiences of the teachers in the study demonstrate that as a result of their internationalized teacher professional development, teachers make both gradual and sudden, planned and unplanned changes to their classroom practice. This shows that they do change, albeit in different ways. However, just like the shifts in attitudes and beliefs, the changes to classroom practice are also shown to be significant and powerful. The changes to classroom practice are also wide-ranging and long-lasting. A question for further research is what influences how a teacher ends up implementing changes to their classroom practice?

Further, the study also pushes the theories of teacher learning/professional development by showing that when the teachers do start to implement changes to their

teaching, they are dedicated to different learning outcomes of their students than they had prior to undergoing internationalized professional development. These different learning outcomes closely align with the learning experiences they themselves had during the internationalized professional development.

The study also contributes to teacher learner/professional development theories further by showing that the implementation and changes to classroom practice is more likely to be sustained if the teachers not only experience the internationalized teacher professional development in a supportive, safe environment, but if they also have this type of support system once they return to their local teaching context. This is closely related to another finding in the study, that teachers find it important that the professional development take into account their teaching and learning environments by offering content that is relevant and applicable. However, questions for further research are: to what extent does a teacher's personal will come into play in terms of challenging any barriers to implementing change in the classroom? And how can it be more clearly distinguished whether teachers are not amenable to new ideas because they find them irrelevant and inapplicable to their local teaching contexts, or because they are experiencing resistance to learning and change?

Adult learning/transformational learning

The idea of cognitive dissonance or conflict, also described as a disorienting dilemma or a trigger/activating event starting the transformational learning process is one of the cornerstones of adult learning. This study supported this notion, demonstrating how cognitive conflict can lead to widened perspectives of other cultures and ethnicities. It also adds to the theory by showing how the cognitive conflict does not only take place

at the start of the transformative process; rather, the teachers in the study revealed how it can move alongside the learning process and even continued to be experienced after the program has ended. This also signals a criticism of adult learning/transformative learning that often leans on a more linear process of transformation. This study depicts a process of transformation that moves both backwards and forward, and is largely individual to the learner. Questions for further research are: if a learner's cognitive dissonance does continue to resurface, what influence does this have on their learning and change? And how can learners be supported throughout their cognitive dissonance process?

Another one of the hallmarks of adult learning theory, including the subtheory of transformative learning, is critical reflection and its importance in leading adults to question and reconsider perspectives and worldviews. At the same time, another important facet of adult learning/transformative learning is resistance on the part of the learner and how it can derail the transformation process. This study furthers this learning theory by showing a connection between critical reflection and halted learning. The findings of the study show that participants who experience resistance or halted learning are able to move past the initial difficulty and experience perspective transformation *if* they are able to mentally go back and apply critical reflection to the ideas/learning they rejected. Also that comparisons that are made without much critical reflection can lead to halted learning. Questions for further research are: what determines whether a learner goes back and applies critical reflection after she/he has experienced halted learning and/or applies critical reflection to the comparisons she/he is making? And what strategies can be used to encourage learners to do so? How far

can cognitive dissonance go before it immobilizes the learner, as well as shuts down future critical reflection?

Intercultural learning

This study demonstrates that an important way cognitive dissonance that leads to important learning and change can be brought about is through close connections and interactions within a culturally diverse group, in a culturally new environment. The benefits of this scenario were many, including becoming more accepting and open towards others, particularly those from different cultures, shifting and expanding worldviews, and becoming more open-minded and accepting of difference. Questions for further research are: while the cultural diversity of the group proved to be of significant benefit to the learning and change of the participants, how might its impact have been different (or not) had the cultural diversity of the group not been contained to the Middle East and North African region? Does the fact that the participants came from distinctly different cultures and nationalities, but yet were united under a shared region play a role in the transformative learning and change they experienced? A criticism of intercultural learning theory is that it does not really consider whether there is such thing as too much cultural diversity within a group. Further, the culturally new environment for the learners was a neutral place (the United States), in the sense that none of the participants were from this country, it is physically far away from their region, and has a very different culture from that which any of the participants came from. How far and different does the new cultural environment have to be in order for it to have a positive effect, as it did in the case of this study?

Limitations/strengths

In chapter five, some limitations of the chosen methodology of phenomenography were discussed, including the criticism that people's accounts of their experiences with a particular phenomenon are not equivalent to the ways in which they experience the phenomenon. It was put forth that while phenomenographical results may not be truth, in that they may never accurately describe the ways of experiencing, they may be useful, a point that has proved to be true. The results of the study have produced very useful information that can be used in the planning and administering of internationalized teacher professional development, as well as advanced three key learning theories relevant to teacher professional development.

Another potential limitation that turned out to be a strength was the point that researchers have had certain experiences and hold certain theoretical beliefs that will influence their data analysis and categorization i.e. they cannot be neutral foils. It was for this reason that I made my background and experience with internationalized teacher professional development very clear, including my direct experience with the program the participants of this study underwent. It is my feeling that my connection to the program and to the participants ended up being very useful to this study; I believe the participants I interviewed were more forthcoming, honest, and enthusiastic about talking about their experiences because they knew me and trusted me. This led to very rich data and allowed fruitful analysis.

Finally, a last potential limitation that also turned out to be a strength was that the interviews were carried out exactly three years after the program took place. It was supposed that the three-year passage of time could mean the participants' recollection

of their experiences may not have been as sharp as if they had been interviewed more immediately following the program. However, I was surprised to find that the participants' recollections were detailed, sharp, and precise. There were almost no instances in which any of the participants responded to a question by saying that they did not remember. Thus, while it was assumed that the three year passage of time would be beneficial because it meant the teachers would have had three years of classroom practice following the professional development to comment and reflect upon, it also ended up providing an added impactfulness to their statements regarding the positive impact the internationalized teacher professional development had on their beliefs and attitudes, both personally and professionally.

Recommendations

The current scenario is that internationalized teacher professional development programs are continuing to grow in number, however, little research is being done on the experiences of the teachers who undergo these programs and their effectiveness. The following are a set of recommendations humbly put forth to offer direction and further research:

- There is a need for more research to be done on the experiences of teachers who undergo internationalized teacher professional development
- Internationalized teacher professional development programs need to be more accessible to all teachers from a variety of school settings, socio-economic levels, and subject areas
- Those who administer internationalized teacher professional development programs should take into account multiple strands of learning theories in

order to create the opportunity for effective and sustained learning and change

- Ample time should be built into the internationalized teacher professional development programs for teachers to build meaningful connections with one another through discussion both during class and down time.
- Internationalized teacher professional development programs should be intensive, with an appropriate duration for learning and change to take place
- Internationalized teacher professional development programs should provide the necessary follow up, including the creation of teacher networks, required for teachers to feel supported after the program has ended and they have returned to their teaching practice

Conclusions/reflections

This study concludes that internationalized teacher professional development is a highly effective, transformational form of teacher professional development and there are significant positive ripples that reverberate from the experience for the teachers themselves, their colleagues, administrators, students, and communities. Significant learning and change takes place when teachers are taken out of their comfort zone and experience cognitive dissonance through the diversity of the teachers they learn with and the new cultural environment they learn in. It is high time that internationalized teacher professional development takes a deserving role in understanding the important field of teacher learning and change.

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APPENDIX A: SURVEY QUESTIONS

Your name:

- 1. What is your home country?**
- 2. What is your educational background? (Please record any/all degrees from institutions of higher education)**
- 3. What subjects have you taught?**
- 4. What grades/levels/age group have you taught?**
- 5. How many years have you been teaching (any/all grade levels)?**
- 6. What position(s) have you held in your teaching career? (e.g. teacher, teacher mentor, department head etc.)**
- 7. What types of teacher professional development have you taken in the last five years of your teaching career? (e.g. workshops, courses, conferences, programs)**
- 8. Besides TEI 2011, was any of this professional development internationalized in nature? i.e. in a culturally different setting than your home environment or consisting of a culturally diverse group of teachers? Please describe briefly.**

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Schedule of Interview Questions

Research questions	Interview questions: “Reflecting on your internationalized teacher professional development experience...”
<p>What personal changes (attitude/values) can take place for the teacher as a result of internationalized teacher professional development?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were any of your ideas or beliefs about teaching and/or learning challenged? Which ones? In what ways? • How did you respond emotionally if and when your ideas or beliefs were challenged? Can you describe your experience? • What did it feel like when you were challenged to think differently? • Did you experience uncertainty or self-doubt? If so, when? About what? Can you describe this experience? • Did you have any experience with resistance during your learning experience? If so, can you describe your experience? • How do you think your interactions with the other teachers affected/influenced your learning? Did you feel challenged to think differently? If so, what caused this? How did you respond? • What do you suggest would be helpful to a teacher who is experiencing frustration of learning during their professional development? Why do you think they are experiencing this frustration of learning?
<p>In what ways can internationalized teacher professional development influence teachers’ professional practice (e.g. change in classroom practice)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you develop any new ideas through your experience? What were they? What changed your thinking? • How did your experience influence your subsequent classroom practice (if it did)? • Did anything stop you from making changes to your subsequent classroom practice? • Did you make any changes to your classroom practice that were more short-lived than you originally planned? If so, can you describe your experience? • If you did make changes to your classroom practice, what surprised you about experience of changing your practice? • What might help a teacher who has undergone internationalized teacher professional development

	and chooses not to make any subsequent changes to her/his classroom practice?
<p>In what ways does the design of an internationalized teacher professional development program influence its effectiveness?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did the experience of receiving professional development in a culturally different setting differ from your experience of receiving professional development in your home environment? • How do you think your interactions with the other teachers affected/influenced your learning? Did you feel challenged to think differently? If so, what caused this? How did you respond? • In what ways did you feel supported or not throughout your internationalized teacher professional experience? • In what ways did you feel supported or not following your internationalized teacher professional experience? (e.g. as you made decisions to change your classroom practice – if you did). • What do you think could have made your experience more impactful to your attitudes/values about teaching and learning? • What do you think could have made your experience more impactful to your professional practice? • In what ways do you think you benefited from your internationalized teacher professional development experience? • In what ways do you think you could have benefited further from your internationalized teacher professional development experience? • Was there anything detrimental to your attitudes/values about teaching and learning and/or your classroom practice?
<p>Any answer may be followed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could you explain further? • What do you mean by that? • Is there anything you would like to say about this problem? 	