PREPARING PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS FOR TEACHING POST-PANDEMIC: REFLECTIONS ON HOW TO ADAPT MICROTEACHING

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this reflective practice was to explore the unexpected revelation that my future teaching approach would need to change following the completion of my doctoral journey during the pandemic. The identified problem was that I did not know how I would adapt microteaching to prepare my pre-service teachers for teaching post-pandemic with the subsequent push to teach online. The following are the proposed reasons for the problem: (a) education changed instantaneously, and (b) I was unprepared. In evaluating the reasons, the issue of adapting microteaching to an online modality such as Zoom was one necessary outcome from the reflective practice. Future research is recommended to explore how educators who instruct in teacher preparation programs can continue to use microteaching both in traditional university classrooms and online modalities such as Zoom.

Keywords: microteaching, online modalities, teacher preparation, pre-service teachers

STATEMENT OF THE PURPOSE

The purpose of this reflective practice was to explore how I would adapt microteaching to prepare my pre-service teachers for teaching post-pandemic. Following the completion of my doctoral journey during the pandemic, I experienced an unexperienced revelation, realizing that my future teaching approach would need to change. According to Greenberger's (2020) Guide for Reflective Practice, reflecting on unexpected outcomes helps a practitioner move toward describing an activity, identifying the reasons for the problem, evaluating those reasons, and then reflecting critically on how future decision making might transform similar activities. The following outlines the background of my thought processes and the reflective theory, which aligned with my reflections and future outcomes.

Background Thought Processes

My current role as an educator is that of a teacher trainer. My specialty is teacher preparation courses designed to train future teachers. One technique that I regularly use in my classroom with my pre-service teachers is a method known as microteaching. Microteaching is a time-tested teacher training strategy that has been used across the world since the 1960s. Allen (1967) conceived microteaching as a way to develop and equip pre-service teachers. Microteaching has three stages: planning, teaching, and feedback. Pre-service teachers start by planning and teaching lessons to their peers in the university classroom. Following the teaching stage, the pre-service teachers receive immediate feedback from both their peers and professor. The term micro defines the amount of time spent teaching the lesson; typically 10-15 minutes in length, hence microteaching (Allen, 1967).

Due to my passion for teacher preparation, I decided to focus my dissertation research on pre-service teachers and microteaching. Amid my doctoral study, COVID-19 struck and changed education across the country (Zimmerman, 2020). During this reflective practice, the scope of the exact changes in education was still new to the field and continues to be ongoing (Code et al., 2020;

Onyema et al., 2020; Reimers et al., 2020). Some of the changes included social distancing, wearing masks, virtual learning, and hybrid teaching/learning (Morgan, 2020; Murphy, 2020; Spitzer, 2020; Unger & Meiran, 2020). These changes affected education globally, however for this manuscript, this reflective practice was focused locally, inwardly, and personally.

While I was able to complete my dissertation study, it occurred to me that microteaching would need to change due to how teachers were now being required to teach. I realized that microteaching practices would need to adapt to include the in-person construct and a remote teaching/learning component. Gone were the days of simply teaching in-person. As I reflected, it became evident that my pre-service teachers needed to know how to teach in-person and simultaneously teach students on Zoom, Google Meet, Google Classroom, and Webex. What that meant for me as a teacher trainer was that I, too, would need to adapt and change my teaching approach. To do this, I backtracked and started reflecting on what I knew about microteaching. I had to think about the reasons for the problem I was facing, how I would evaluate the problem, and the decisions I would make with my pre-service teachers regarding microteaching. I was faced with a problem, however. I did not know how to adapt microteaching to prepare pre-service teachers for teaching post-pandemic with the subsequent push to teach online. Furthermore, I had two identifiable reasons for this problem: education changed instantaneously, and I was unprepared.

Reflective Theory

My reflective approach was theoretically based on Dewey's (1938) principle of continuity. According to Dewey (1938), all our past and present experiences move in a continuum that influences our future experiences. We can use our past experiences and transform the value of them into future experiences. Moreover, if our experiences are to have educational value, they are evidenced by current and future growth (Dewey, 1938).

The beauty of Dewey's (1938) principle of continuity is the understanding that we learn through our experiences. Learning occurs in an interrelated manner as we interact with our environment. For example, as a practitioner, I engage with curriculum; however, the setting, such as the classroom, and my students, also factor into my experience. My experience, therefore, is founded on the continuity and interaction between me as an educator and what I am teaching. Thus, my experiences, both past, and present are brought forward and will influence my future experiences and decision-making.

Dewey's (1938) principle of continuity also includes an awareness of surroundings and how they contribute to an experience. Our surroundings are essential and conducive to having experiences that lead to growth. When viewed through this theoretical lens, the purpose of this reflective practice was to explore the unexpected revelation that post-pandemic, my future teaching approach would need to change.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It was not known how I would adapt microteaching to prepare pre-service teachers for teaching post-pandemic. Initially, I did not know why I had an unexpected revelation following the completion of my dissertation. Dewey (1938) describes this as a sense of disequilibrium. As a seasoned teacher of 30 years and a university methods instructor who had previously taught and retaught the same courses to pre-service teachers, I knew I was experiencing a feeling of disequilibrium, although I did not have the words to label it as such at that time. I simply began to identify that what I was feeling was an awareness of my own uncertainty. I began to realize and then grew to know that there was a need to review my future teaching approach, and more specifically, how I would conduct microteaching with my pre-service teachers.

Looking back, when I was working on my dissertation, I did not expect that how I was teaching would change all that much. However, my thoughts began to intersect. Some of the results from my study indicated that methods instructors, such as myself, could make minor adaptations to how we assisted our pre-service teachers in the planning and feedback stages of microteaching (Maguire, 2020). However, the unexpected revelation of doing a research study on microteaching as a teaching method during a pandemic when all of education abruptly shifted and changed (Zimmerman, 2020), was that microteaching would also need to change. As I reflected on this, I understood that I would also

need to change my teaching approach to prepare my pre-service teachers for teaching in the 21st century, both during and post-pandemic.

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

Through this reflective practice, the activity that came about was an adaptation of how I conducted microteaching with my pre-service teachers. Microteaching is a scaled-down teaching technique. Allen (1967) designed this teaching method at Stanford University, and it has been used in teacher training courses worldwide for over 50 years. Microteaching uses three main stages: planning, teaching, and feedback. The microteaching sessions are short, micro, teaching sessions which provide pre-service teachers with an opportunity to practice their craft with peers and an instructor.

In my methods courses, my pre-service teachers typically self-select a microteaching topic within the content of English Language Arts (ELA), because they are all training to become secondary ELA teachers. However, for my activity during the fall of 2020, I prescribed four conditions (Figure 1). First, I assigned the same short story to all the pre-service teachers. Second, I assigned a different literary device to each pre-service teacher. Third, each pre-service teacher planned a microteaching lesson using the same short story and a different literary device. Fourth, each pre-service teacher had to teach their microteaching lesson via Zoom rather than in-person as they were accustomed.

Figure 1. Four Conditions for the Activity

Condition 1:
Same short story assigned to all pre-service teachers

Condition 2:
Different literary device assigned to each pre-service teacher

Condition 3:
Each pre-service teacher plans a microteaching lesson using the short story and literary device

Condition 4:
Each pre-service teacher teaches their microteaching lesson via Zoom

Condition 1

The first condition was that I provided the same short story to all my pre-service teachers. The story I selected was Gwendolyn Brooks' "Home" I introduced "Home" in a similar manner that I had been doing all semester with my pre-service teachers, using it as a short story to coincide with a reading strategy. The reading strategy that I chose was "close reading." This reading strategy could be carried with the pre-service teachers into a future classroom when they started their careers as teachers.

Next, I began my lesson by displaying a Renoir painting entitled Collette's House in Cagnes (Figure 2). I invited my pre-service teachers to imagine that they were in a museum looking at the painting. I asked them to answer the following questions: What do you see? What questions do you have? What do you wonder? What do you want to know?

This part of a lesson is typically known as an anticipatory set. The purpose is to stimulate thinking and encourage conversation. Generally, there are no right or wrong answers as the pedagogical aim of an anticipatory set is to create a sense of expectation (Hunter, 1989). Like Dewey (1938), Hunter (1989) sought to connect past and current experiences to inform future learning. Her methods continue to be used in pre-service teacher training as an effective teaching method to engage participatory and active readiness for lesson interest.

Figure 2. Collette's House in Cagnes by Renoir
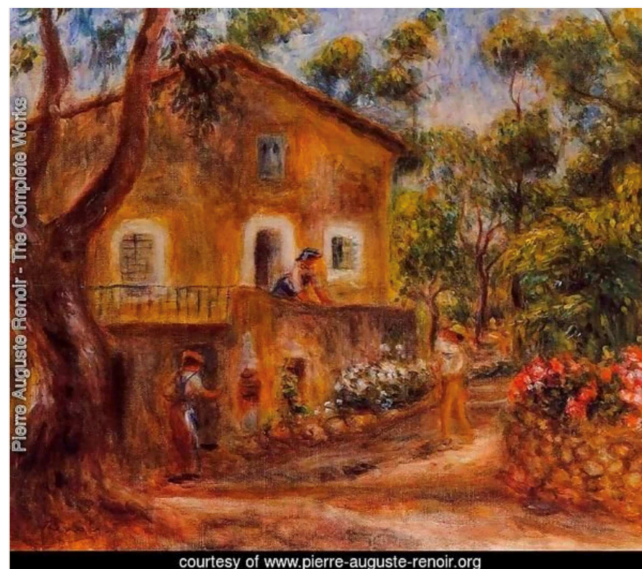
Next, I went over three phases of close reading and how to read for purpose. Phase 1 of close reading encourages the reader to determine what the text says and gain a general understanding, looking for themes, central ideas, and key details. Phase 2 of close reading determines how the text says it. This helps the reader zoom in and think about vocabulary, genre, text structure, point of view, the author's purpose, and perspective. Phase 3 of close reading

helps the reader determine why the text matters. This is where the reader zooms out and considers visual features of the text, such as text quality, author credibility, and text-to-text credibility.

After going through the phases of close reading, I gave a brief overview of Gwendolyn Brooks, the author of "Home." I have found that when my pre-service teachers have a context of the author, it provides a framework and context to understand where and why the text is situated and helps them to connect with the text more richly. For example, Gwendolyn Brooks is a highly regarded, influential, and widely read American poet of the 20th century. She was the first Black author to win the Pulitzer Prize. She is from Chicago, Illinois, where her father was a janitor, and her mother was a schoolteacher and a classically trained pianist. In 1953, she published her first and only novel, Maud Martha, which details the life of Maud Martha in short vignettes. Maud suffers prejudice from white people and lighter-skinned African Americans, something that mirrored Brooks' experiences. "Home" comes from Gwendolyn Brooks' Maud Martha. My rationale, therefore, for selecting and teaching "Home" was rooted in providing familiarity with the story and garnering strength in the pre-service teachers' microteaching lessons that I would later require them to plan and teach.

Condition 2

My second condition consisted of assigning a different literary device to each pre-service teacher to coincide with the short story. The literary devices that I selected for "Home" were allusion, characters, characterization, dialect, dialogue, foreshadowing, and local color. My justification for assigning the microteaching topic, such as literary devices, came from one of my dissertation results' limitations (Maguire, 2020). The results of my study indicated that pre-service teachers consistently chose a topic they are familiar with in planning and teaching for microteaching lessons (Maguire, 2020). Furthermore, the results of my study suggested that pre-service teachers need to teach unfamiliar content in their microteaching lessons to enhance their content knowledge, thus preparing them to become better teachers (Maguire, 2020).

Teacher competency rests on teachers knowing the subject they teach (Ball et al., 2008). However, it is not possible for pre-service teachers to know everything about the subject they will teach. Therefore, it is imperative that teacher training coursework include techniques that help pre-service teachers identify content knowledge weaknesses (Maguire, 2020). Microteaching is one teaching technique that I use in my methods courses to prepare my pre-service teachers for their future careers as educators. This led to the third condition for the activity description.

Condition 3

Continuing with my activity for this reflective practice, the third condition was that my pre-service teachers were then required to plan a microteaching lesson. Planning a microteaching lesson was not out of the ordinary for my pre-service teachers. My pre-service teachers plan and teach microteaching lessons for most of their professors during their 300- and 400- level coursework. We do this before student teaching to prepare our pre-service teachers for teaching in the field. At our university, the pre-service teachers and professors call microteaching, teach-outs, as it usually is the culmination of the end of a topic or section of information; thus, the pre-service teachers are "teaching out" of the material they just learned and moving on to the next topic.

However, during the fall semester of 2020, I explored how I would adapt microteaching from in-person to Zoom. By combining the findings of my dissertation study and the unexpected need to adapt microteaching due to the pandemic, I implemented a variation in the typical microteaching planning sessions. Instead of having my pre-service teachers choose their own topic, I had them plan by using the assigned literary device with the assigned Gwendolyn Brooks short story, "Home." Then, I prescribed the fourth condition.

Condition 4

Due to the pandemic, the university had mandated that classes be completed online, via Zoom. As such, I required my pre-service teachers conduct their microteaching lesson via Zoom as the fourth condition. Like most educators, I was uncertain about the future of education. Hence, as I reflected, I thought it was wise as a teacher trainer to prepare my pre-service teachers for an unfamiliar modality such as Zoom. They had prior experience with me and other professors teaching their microteaching lessons in-person

but very little to no experience teaching through a virtual platform.

This was the first time that any of my pre-service teachers had conducted a lesson as a mock-teacher from the other side of the computer screen. Previously, they had taught their microteaching lessons from the front of a classroom with their peers in attendance, acting as students (Allen, 1967). Additionally, because of the pandemic and the thrust into emergency remote learning, my pre-service teachers had a superficial understanding of online learning from the student perspective; however, they had never conducted the class from the teacher perspective.

I instructed my pre-service teachers to have their lessons ready on a PowerPoint and that I would provide the Zoom link in LoudCloud, our Learning Management System (LMS). We would then take turns sharing screens and participating as students and teachers, going through the slides they had created, asking questions, answering questions, and conducting class virtually. Since we were all familiar with Gwendolyn Brooks and the short story "Home," the focus of the lessons could be on the literary device and allowing each pre-service teacher the freedom to be vulnerable and explore the Zoom platform from the other side of the screen as the teacher. Our feedback was less focused on pedagogy as we were accustomed to doing in the past. I wanted my pre-service teachers to concentrate their attention on providing encouraging and helpful feedback as they navigated the online glitches and hiccups of using technology that might feel unfamiliar.

In assessing the activity project, my pre-service teachers more than met my expectations, although there were some mishaps. In my observations of the microteaching lessons, the pre-service teachers seemed nervous about using Zoom because they were accustomed to teaching in-person, much like myself. They were not used to having their lessons interrupted by me, giving them advice on how to teach (e.g., finding the share screen button), but they looked relieved to have the help. Much to my surprise, I observed that some of my pre-service teachers were willing to add in other technology components with their lessons, such as PearDeck.

There were glitches in our grasp of the technology, as we collectively discovered that the person who creates the Zoom invite is the only one who controls the breakout rooms. Therefore, my pre-service teachers did not have the opportunity to practice putting students into breakout rooms or enter/exit the rooms as the teacher. As the teacher-trainer, I made a mental note of this and knew that I would need to further adapt the online version of microteaching in future semesters. However, overall, as a first-time experience conducting microteaching lessons in a Zoom format, while uncomfortable for my pre-service teachers, I think my activity was a success as an initial attempt at online teaching.

REASONS FOR THE PROBLEM

As stated previously, the problem I encountered was that I did not know how I would adapt microteaching to prepare my pre-service teachers for teaching post-pandemic. As I spent time reflecting on how I would need to adapt microteaching to prepare my pre-service teachers for future employment, I determined two main reasons for my problem. First, education changed instantaneously. Second, I was unprepared. I had no prior experiences to draw upon, which could translate into practical application for my pre-service teachers. Teaching in a pandemic altered how teachers teach. During the first few months of the pandemic, educators across the country scrambled to find ways to teach in person, to teach remotely, and to teach both simultaneously (Code et al., 2020; Reimers et al., 2020).

As I reflect on these reasons, I acknowledge that they are not especially unique to me as a teacher. I think most educators would use similar terminology for the uncertainty or unexpected revelations we were experiencing during the pandemic (Abiky, 2021; Trust & Whalen, 2020). Veteran educators such as myself have spent a great deal of our time and experience honing our skills, perfecting them, and solving problems in our classrooms as they arise. When the pandemic came upon us, we had no frame of reference to filter this, and thus we were left scurrying and clambering. On a personal level, my problem was that it was not known how I would prepare pre-service teachers for teaching post-pandemic. Hence, the reasons for my problem were two-fold: first, education changed instantaneously, and second, I was unprepared.

Instantaneous Educational Changes

What every teacher like myself understood

was that the pandemic and lockdowns required an urgent and drastic shift in teaching techniques with quickly changing modalities. I realized that I was lucky, though, because the shift in my educational changes didn't need to take place immediately. I had a little bit of extra time because my teaching semester was nearly complete when the pandemic hit in the spring of 2020. My university already had utilized a robust technology-based LMS platform with its on-ground students and professors, so the transition was more of a loss of in-person relationships than a scramble to figure out how to convert to a fully online platform. This gave me time during the summer of 2020 to truly observe, read, and listen to the teachers who were in the throes of shifting from in-person teaching to online/remote teaching.

When I reflect on how quickly my semester ended due to the pandemic in the spring of 2020, I would have done things differently, however. All of the microteaching sessions I had scheduled for my students were dropped. I spoke with a couple other professors who did the same thing. We were all accustomed to conducting our microteaching sessions one way: in-person, in the university classroom. Sadly, we did not adapt.

I did, however, speak to a couple of other professors at a neighboring university who decided to quickly change the manner in which their pre-service teachers would conduct their microteaching sessions. These professors instantly adjusted and had their pre-service teachers teach from home, to an empty room, recording their microteaching lessons. They then uploaded the recorded lesson to a shared technology platform. Their classmates would watch the recording and then provide written feedback. I, nevertheless, did not opt to try anything new. Instead, I remained unprepared.

Unprepared

I had no prior experiences to draw upon which could translate into practical application for my pre-service teachers. However, what dawned on me when I thought about this were the practical implications of how I was going to try to train my future pre-service teachers to teach. I began to think about the next semester's pre-service teachers. I started thinking about the fall of 2020 and beyond. My pre-service teachers are on the cusp of completing their coursework, taking teacher exams, qualifying

for their teaching credentials, and interviewing for teaching positions, so I was faced with the problem of how to train my future pre-service teachers to teach in a manner that I had never taught before either. In short, I was unprepared.

I kept reminding myself that microteaching is a method that had been used to train teachers for decades (Allen, 1967). I kept thinking about my research study. Microteaching works. I used microteaching when I was a pre-service teacher in the mid-1980s, preparing lessons, teaching lessons, and getting feedback on lessons from my peers and professors. In reflecting, I thought of Dewey (1938) and the principle of continuity. I wondered if I could use anything from my past experiences, bring it forward to the present day, apply it to my current situation as a teacher trainer, and prepare my pre-service teachers for teaching in these unique times.

When pre-service teachers plan and teach a micro-lesson to their peers and then receive immediate feedback from their classmates and professors, they grow as future teachers. The experience of planning and teaching prepares them for future classroom teaching. However, most microteaching sessions are conducted in a university classroom, in-person. The problem I was faced with was how to convert the traditional microteaching sessions into remote microteaching.

EVALUATION OF REASONS FOR THE PROBLEM

The next step in this reflective practice was to evaluate the reasons for the problem. The unexpected outcome of my dissertation study and the subsequent realization that I did not know how I would adapt microteaching to prepare my pre-service teachers for teaching post-pandemic, led to two identifiable causes. First, because of the pandemic and shift to online teaching, education changed instantaneously, and second, I was unprepared for it. By using the Guide for Reflective Practices (Greenberger, 2020), I approached the evaluation of reasons by using Dewey's (1933) suggestion of testing the inference, particularly in the form of overt action.

Overt Action

The instantaneous shift to online teaching manifested itself in my personal teaching approach but also in the realization that I was also responsible for teaching my pre-service teachers how to teach in this unplanned modality. Thus,

I had to reflect on how I would move from being unprepared to prepared. I needed to adapt and teach my pre-service teachers to adapt. Adaptive teaching includes finding instructional strategies and techniques which will meet the needs of the students (Schipper et al., 2019), or in my case, my pre-service teachers.

Based on the suggestions from the Guide for Reflective Practice (GRP) (Greenberger, 2020), I set out to conduct an "informal experiment" (p. 468). This test, as outlined in the GRP (Greenberger, 2020) was set as a "natural experiment, conducted in a real-life setting" (p. 467). In short, the following semester (fall of 2020), I decided to change the in-person microteaching sessions that my pre-service teachers were accustomed to presenting, to an online microteaching session via Zoom. This activity was described in detail above in the Activity Description section. The goal for me was to participate by observing the pre-service teachers as they taught their lesson and to listen to the feedback as they self-critiqued and received feedback from their classmates. This is not unlike a typical microteaching session; however, for the first time, I would be observing through the online, Zoom modality.

Evaluating Each Reason

As mentioned previously, the reasons for my problem were that education changed instantaneously, and I was unprepared. At the onset of the pandemic, educators like me went into emergency remote teaching (Moorhouse & Kohnke, 2021). This instantaneous change in education caused a variety of responses. Some teachers described feeling as if they were thriving, while others felt as if they were surviving (Abiky, 2021; Moorhouse & Kohnke, 2021). I would describe myself as surviving.

As I continued to reflect and evaluate the reasons for my problem, in thinking about the instantaneous change in education, like other educators, I struggled with how to maintain a sense of continuity (Baker, 2020). Interestingly, Dewey's (1938) principle of continuity refers to how past and present experiences influence future experiences, yet all I encountered was a sense of desperation, a desire for sameness, not change. I sought to cling to familiar, on-ground pedagogy, all the while being forced to go online in emergency remote teaching

mode. While I was quite familiar with the LMS used by my university, for me it was simply a tool to use in conjunction with my in-person teaching. The LMS was where we uploaded lesson plans, used the calendar, and posted questions, but the bulk of instruction and learning happened in-person, in the classroom setting, not online.

Admittedly, I prefer the relational aspect of teaching. I needed the in-person connections with my pre-service teachers. Moorhouse and Kohnke (2021) described "thriving" university teachers as those who adapted to the COVID-19 emergency remote teaching and felt reinvigorated by the new challenges, whereas the "surviving" university teachers wondered how they would build rapport with their students. When I contemplated my teacher temperament, I determined that I survived simply because the rapport I had built with my pre-service students was already in place when we shifted to online teaching. Nevertheless, I still did not know how to teach online. Consequently, this led to the second reason for my problem. I was unprepared.

As I continued to reflect and evaluate the reasons for the problem of how I would adapt microteaching to prepare my pre-service teachers for teaching post-pandemic with the subsequent push to teach online, I knew I was unprepared. This was a difficult concept for me to admit. In all honesty, I have always felt that one of my strengths as an educator was that I am prepared. Be that as it may, undoubtedly, I was not prepared to adjust to teaching online, let alone adjust my pedagogy to train my pre-service teachers and adapt their microteaching lessons.

Of the shift to the COVID-19 emergency remote teaching, Trust and Whalen (2020) described teachers as feeling unprepared and overwhelmed in a fluctuating situation. This unprepared feeling was exactly how I felt with the instantaneous move to Zoom teaching and learning. While I did feel comfortable with the LMS platform, I felt insecure and apprehensive about using Zoom. After 30 years in front of a classroom full of students and pre-service teachers, the confidence I had always held as a professor, waned quickly behind the computer screen. My unprepared feelings manifested themselves in the form of anxiety and indecisiveness (Brereton, 2020). This type of anxiety was explained as an embarrassment that arises due to a deficiency in

computer skills (Brereton, 2020). Many educators, like me, reported feeling overwhelmed, possessing a lack of knowledge about online teaching strategies and teaching tools (Trust & Whalen, 2020). I recall ending class feeling relieved if I could perform basic computer skills, such as sharing my screen or getting my pre-service teachers into breakout rooms.

The informal experiment (overt action) that I conducted to test my ideas came in the form of my activity by conducting microteaching via Zoom in the fall of 2020. Moreover, I reflected on what I felt was a poor ending of my spring 2020 semester. I continued to reflect throughout the summer of 2020, asking questions, reading, observing, and joining a reflective practice research group.

Furthermore, I took a short-term 8th grade teaching assignment in the fall of 2020 to glean a better understanding of how to juggle the simultaneous demands of in-person and remote and hybrid teaching that were being place on teachers across the country. In doing so, I hoped to be able to connect better and provide a more relevant teaching experience for my pre-service teachers. And finally, I decided to put my plan into action by making some small adaptations to microteaching as the problem I was faced with was how I would adapt microteaching to prepare pre-service teachers for teaching post-pandemic. In doing so, I hoped to address my two reasons for the problem: education changed instantaneously, and I was unprepared.

DECISION

The activity that I implemented in my methods classroom was an adaptation of microteaching.
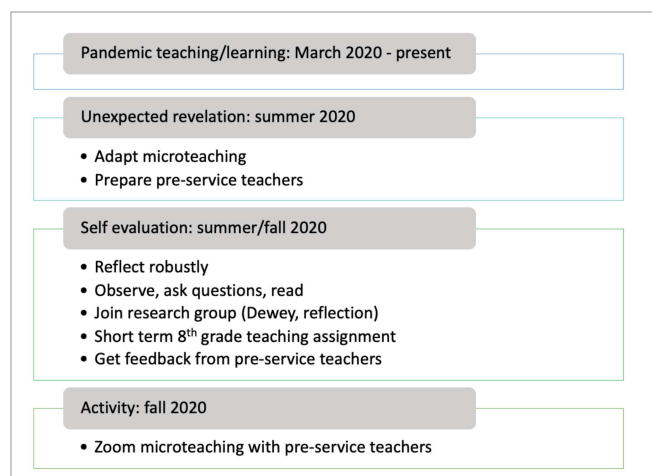

Figure 3. Decision Tree

This was based on the identified problem of my unexpected revelation that I did not know how I would adapt microteaching to prepare my pre-service teachers for teaching post-pandemic with the subsequent push to teach online. One important aspect of the Guide for Reflective Practice (Greenberger, 2020) is to reflect robustly on what the practitioner actually did with the activity; to explain the rationale for the decision (Figure 3).

As a part of my self-reflection, it was crucial that I spent a good amount of time thinking about and detailing what I observed in myself and why I felt there was an unexpected outcome from my dissertation study. As a practitioner, "including situational thinking and decisions" (Greenberger, 2020, p. 466) in the reflective process helped me to ascertain clues into the uncertainty of the problem I was experiencing. By self-observing, I was able to express feelings and reasons, which should help me in my future practice but may also assist fellow practitioners.

A few months before I completed and defended my dissertation, I joined a research group which specifically focused on reflective practices. The weekly meetings, discussions, research, and writing were the catalyst for my own personal reflection on the results of my dissertation. I learned more about Dewey, self-reflection, and the importance of allowing myself to become vulnerable in order to improve as a practitioner.

That sense of disequilibrium that Dewey (1938) wrote of, and the uncertainty I felt, actually became worse and more upsetting to me as a practitioner. As an educator, I wanted to quickly find a solution and immediately execute a plan. It was uncomfortable to slow my reflections down and allow a rumination process to slowly play itself out. I wanted to hurry up and identify the root of my vulnerability and uncertainty so that I could fix it. Instead, I forced myself to lean into and become comfortable and content with the unstable feelings I was experiencing and allow the rumination process to go on inside my head. I knew that to prepare pre-service teachers to teach, I would need to first identify the problem I was experiencing as a practitioner. Like Dewey (1938) suggested, I would need to look at and use my past experiences to shape and grow my future experiences.

Teacher preparation is a vital aspect of our education system, its longevity, and its success.

Pre-service teachers rely on learning about and practicing teaching strategies while still in the university classroom (Regan et al., 2016). As I reflected on my own role as a teacher trainer, it became evident to me that university professors must be willing to adapt their own teaching style to best accommodate the realities of the current, but changing, education structure.

My desire to adapt and readjust my teaching style is not new. At the end of every semester, I ask my pre-service teachers to be brutally honest with me regarding how I structured the class, the activities I implemented, and the methods I used. Based on their feedback, I adjust my lessons the following semester. It is crucial to me, as a teacher trainer, to be willing to address the current climate of the education system and educate my pre-service teachers in a way that will prepare them for success as classroom teachers. As such, several times a year, I reflect and contemplate on my past teaching experiences, the feedback I receive from my students, and in 2020, I was able to include my dissertation research experiences into my thought process.

I spent the summer of 2020 as most teachers do, prepping for the upcoming semester. As usual, I pulled up my PowerPoint lesson plans, prepared to make changes based on the feedback I received at the end of the semester. However, because the pandemic and stay-at-home orders (Williamson et al., 2020) came so suddenly in March of 2020, I did not have the benefit of receiving feedback from my pre-service teachers on how to change the lessons. I became a student of educational current events. I read, listened, watched, and asked questions concerning how classrooms, teaching, and learning were going to be conducted in the fall. What I discovered was a bit of chaos as no one had ever done this before.

In the fall of 2020, I even took a short-term teaching assignment in a local 8th grade classroom. In doing so, I was able to keep myself relevant as a methods instructor because I experienced first-hand the challenges faced by teachers adapting to teaching during a pandemic. I understood what it was like to teach a group of students in-person and simultaneously instruct a group of students at home who were also connected to the classroom via technology. I experienced the frustration of not having my computer screen synchronize with my PowerPoint for my at-home students. I felt disconnected from my at-home students who did not turn on their videos or contribute auditorily to the class discussions. When my pre-service teachers talked about their practicum experiences in the fall of 2020, I was able to share my first-hand experiences and swap similar stories of understanding, bringing us closer together. The decision to teach in a classroom like my pre-service teachers helped to bring credibility to my Activity Project for this reflective practice manuscript, as we shared our teaching experiences.

I also observed and asked questions of other methods instructors about teaching during the pandemic. In doing so, I gleaned the obvious: teaching in 2020, and in the future, was and will be challenging and fraught with glitches and uncertainty. That said, I also heard of incredible and creative teachers who were somehow making education work without any prior training or practice as it just did not exist at the time. The question for myself remains on how I can best prepare my pre-service teachers for their future employment as classroom educators.

When I review and reflect on my activity from the fall of 2020, and the decisions I made, some of it went well with my adaptations of microteaching, and some of it could still use more improvements. As teachers, we take our lesson plans, try them out, make adjustments, and try again. At this writing, another semester has passed by, spring 2021, and more adaptations to online microteaching lessons have been tried based on the glitches and setbacks that my pre-service teachers and I learned from the previous semester. The weight of preparing my pre-service teachers was, and still remains, heavy.

REFLECTIVE CRITIQUE

The final step in my personal faculty scholarly engagement with my own reflections on my teaching practices was to provide a reflective critique on the reflective practice itself (Greenberger, 2020). In doing so, the goal is to grow as a practitioner. My reflections during and after the realization that I was undergoing an unexpected problem, were quite varied, and they ebbed and flowed. At times I experienced extreme clarity, and at other times, I felt confused and lost. However, engaging in a reflective critique has allowed me to see opportunities and form new judgments I

likely would have avoided if not thrust into them by teaching during the pandemic. Adapting my teaching has made me a stronger practitioner as well as given me new insight into how to better prepare my pre-service teachers for teaching in the 21st century.

One of the most obvious conclusions that I can draw regarding using the Guide for Reflective Practice (Greenberger, 2020), is that I feel more confident in how I will train my pre-service teachers in the future. Indeed, I had no intention of changing my teaching methods pre-pandemic. I had been diligently going about my dissertation research on microteaching when the pandemic hit the world. As I was interpreting data, I was simultaneously being forced to change and adapt my teaching practices, in the moment, which in turn made my pre-service teachers better prepared for teaching in the future.

Another outcome in using the GRP (Greenberger, 2020) was that I am more open to trying new teaching techniques with traditional microteaching. When I reflected on my teaching style, prior to the pandemic, I worked hard on perfecting my teaching methods, honing them to align with as much practicality as possible. Unbeknownst to me, the pandemic and subsequent online teaching modality showed me that I was left unprepared. Nonetheless, like other teacher trainers across the world, new microteaching sessions were adapted and formed into relevant and practical experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic (Sarimanah et al., 2021).

Finally, by using the GRP (Greenberger, 2020), my beliefs concerning the nature of the problem have been transformed. While I was being faced with an unexpected outcome during my dissertation research, my research could continue; however, my teaching practice needed a transformation. My decision-making about the current state of my Activity Project remains as one that is continually evolving. While it was not a perfect first round of teaching via Zoom for my pre-service teachers (or for me, to be completely honest), we discovered as a group, the importance of being gracious with one another as we fumbled through it together. We were all preparing for 21st-century teaching on the same footing. The future state of the Activity is also continually evolving. As a reflective-practitioner, I want to change with the times, as

needed, while I prepare my pre-service teachers for their first jobs as fully employed teachers. To do this, I must approach teacher preparation and microteaching, as a transformative process. I cannot allow myself to become set in my ways. As such, each semester since the initial shutdown and instantaneous changes in education, I have been adapting my microteaching requirements to better prepare my pre-service teachers for teaching during and post pandemic. Last semester (spring 2021), my pre-service teachers conducted one microteaching session in the university classroom and one via Zoom. Teaching in a pandemic has taught me that educators and teacher-trainers must adapt as needed.

Recommendations for Future Research

This reflection demonstrated how this university instructor, who specifically trains pre-service teachers in methods coursework, had to adapt microteaching at the sudden onset of online instruction. Instantaneous changes in education can cause a feeling of unpreparedness. Future research is recommended to explore how educators who instruct in teacher preparation programs can continue to use microteaching both in traditional university classrooms and in online modalities, such as but not limited to, Zoom, Google Meet, Google Classroom, or Webex.

This reflective practice also delved into how this teacher trainer attempted to prepare her pre-service teachers by conducting an informal and "natural experiment, conducted in a real-life setting" as suggested by the Guide for Reflective Practice (Greenberger, 2020, p. 467). Future research is recommended to explore how educators who instruct in teacher preparation programs robustly implement the GRP, specifically highlighting the activity/project as an informal experiment and reflecting on the reasons for the problem and the evaluation of the reasons for the problem as these were limitations which were pertinent to my growth as a reflective practitioner.

Finally, this reflective practice underscored the value in assigning unfamiliar subject matter to pre-service teachers for their microteaching lessons as recommended by the findings in the research study by the author (Maguire, 2020). Future research is recommended for practitioners who are interested in using the GRP in its entirety to reflect on an

unknown or unexpected detail of an activity/project, such as assigning degree specific, but unfamiliar, subject matter to pre-service teachers for their microteaching lessons.

Recommendations for Future Practice

This reflective practice revealed that the instantaneous educational changes and unpreparedness that I felt as a teacher were not unique to me (Abiky, 2021; Trust & Whalen, 2020). Moreover, the findings of this reflective practice could be beneficial to other practitioners and teacher trainers who prepare pre-service teachers. Three recommendations for future practice have been identified from this reflective practice.

First, using the GRP (Greenberger, 2020) was a rewarding experience. While I am still a novice researcher, I am a veteran educator, and the value in reflecting on my practice at a depth I did not know was possible was both intimidating and stimulating. I would recommend that educators from K-12 through higher education, consider using the Guide for Reflective Practice (Greenberger, 2020) to enhance their practice. Then, write up their experience and get it published! Another educator can then benefit from these experiences.

Second, I found that in using the GRP, I feel more confident in myself as a teacher trainer. I am more open to trying new techniques with microteaching as evidenced by my Activity Project. Some of it worked well, and some of it still needs more adaptations in the future; and that is just fine. My recommendation for future practice is to take risks in the classroom and try new things. Keep adapting your strategies and techniques. It shouldn't take a pandemic and emergency remote teaching/learning to get us out of our ruts as educators!

Third, as I engaged in writing this reflective manuscript, I was confronted with admitting that at the onset of the pandemic, I was a teacher who was merely surviving, not thriving (Moorhouse & Kohnke, 2021). As I reflect on this, there is no shame in divulging this detail about myself. As a professor who prepares future teachers, I spend a vast amount of time having honest discussions with my pre-service teachers about my own personal experiences and how I handled things as a teacher. As a teacher trainer, I would recommend that other professors who prepare pre-service

teachers, take time in the future to talk about "surviving and thriving" (Moorhouse & Kohnke, 2021) in the classroom. We can all certainly learn from one another!

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