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I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Lorna B. Williams entitled "Mapping a Journey to Change: Teachers and facilitator learning together." I have examined the final electronic copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education, with a major in Educational Psychology and Counseling.

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**MAPPING A JOURNEY TO CHANGE:
TEACHERS AND FACILITATOR LEARNING TOGETHER**

A Dissertation

Presented for the

Doctor of Education Degree

The University of Tennessee

Knoxville

Lorna B. Williams
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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to

Nsnuk'wnuk'w7a
(All my relations)

Each is my teacher

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Abstract

This study describes the perceptions of workshop participants' experience and their perceptions of their facilitator in four workshops held in three separate settings where we worked together to collaboratively construct knowledge. The purpose of the study was to learn about my practice through critically reflecting on how my personal history, experiences, practical theory and assumptions influenced my role as facilitator and to learn about my practice through the reflected gaze of workshop participants. Data were derived from three sets of daily journals from three workshops and from one focus group interview. I separated the quotes from each workshop into two sets, the participants' description of their own learning experience and their perceptions of me, the facilitator. I proceeded through the transcripts sequentially according to the date of the workshop. The transcripts were analyzed using a phenomenological approach. I built the themes as I progressed and gained a better sense of what the workshop participants were saying. I used all their quotations. I checked my analysis with research groups three times, and each time it helped me refine the themes.

Two sets of themes emerged from the data describing participants' perceptions of their experience and their perceptions of the facilitator. The theme, learning in a safe environment forms the ground for both sets of themes. It describes the importance of safety and the critical role of the facilitator in creating

a safe environment. A safe environment is vital for teachers to take risks in learning and to critically examine their learning and teaching. Facilitators have many roles; the participants described four roles. Creator of a safe learning environment, with four themes characterizes the facilitating role to create an environment where workshop participants can feel accepted, voice their thoughts easily, become a community of learners and realize that it is diversity that contributes to their learning. The role of expert is about the knowledge, skill and experience of the facilitator, which contributes to learning. The role of storyteller helps workshop participants make connections between practice and theory and how stories aid in bringing clarity to understanding. The role of role model is about learning from the actions and behavior of the facilitator.

This study shows the significant and multidimensional role of the facilitator in building a learning environment that is non-threatening: where learning can be shared; learning is a collaborative endeavor; is highly interactive and promotes critical self reflection even in settings where there is diversity amongst participants.

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Chapter One

Introduction

In Canada, as in the United States of America, the battle for the mind and soul of the First Nations (Native American) learner has been fought in the classroom. Throughout both countries' brief histories, millions of dollars have been spent studying the "*Indian problem*." Much has been written about their at-riskness, lack of achievement in schools, low literacy levels, lack of motivation, and lack of verbal skills, silence, passivity and reluctance to engage in classroom interaction. According to Deyhle and Swisher (Deyhle, 1997) they are the most studied, evaluated and researched population in the school system (Williams, 1997). To address the problem, strategies have focused on attempts to change the First Nations child, family, and community to fit the school system. Few studies have focused on the teacher or the school culture as a possible focus of intervention (Hewitt, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1999).

In my capacity as First Nations Education Consultant for a large urban school district, I had many opportunities to observe children in classrooms and to observe children on the school playground. I spent time talking with teachers, administrators, and support staff about their perceptions of First Nations children as learners. I also spoke with First Nations students of all ages and their parents about their school experiences. I noticed that in classrooms, First Nations

students sat in the back rows or in seats near the door. They rarely engaged with their peers or with the teacher during the lesson, even in classrooms where instruction was designed for active interaction, such as cooperative learning. Teachers were frustrated because they could not make contact with the First Nations children, no matter what methods or strategies they tried.

I came into the district at an opportune time. Efforts to end the era of the “*make and take*” workshop were underway; however, a common statement I heard was, “*If I can’t use it [what is offered in the workshop] on Monday morning, or if my teachers can’t use it on Monday morning then you’re wasting my time.*” At the time the focus of professional development was on instructional practice, behavior management, subject content information to support the ministry-mandated curriculum, sharing new resources, and the introduction of computer technology. There were people in the district, in schools, area offices, and the central office who sincerely wanted to explore new ways of addressing the needs of First Nations students and other learners who were marginalized in the school system.

First Nations children are a major challenge to teachers for many reasons, several of which are:

1. The average Canadian did not grow up knowing about First Nations people; even if she went to school with them, she was not aware of them.

A common statement I heard from teachers during professional

development activities was “*I grew up near a reserve. I remember there were some in the school, but this is the first time I have actually spoken with a native person.*” Or “*Why don’t I know the history of First Nations in Canada?*” In the school curriculum, First Nations people exist only in the prehistory of Canada covered in grade 4; helping the fur traders in grade 5; killing the Jesuits in grade 9; in selected law cases on land rights in grade 11.

2. In pre-service training at universities, teachers do not have courses on teaching diverse populations (Ladson-Billings, 2000). Until the past 10 years, children who were different, ethnically or linguistically, and children with learning disabilities, for example, were separated from other children in special classes. Pre-service training mirrored that tradition by preparing teachers for homogeneous classes.
3. Courses on multicultural issues or First Nations issues are optional in some programs. Teachers enter classrooms ill equipped to teach children who are racially, culturally, and linguistically different from them. Teachers then are reluctant to teach First Nations or multicultural content, believing that they are giving up valuable time for academic instruction, or teachers are not comfortable teaching content that they have not been prepared to teach (Taylor, 1995).

4. Urban First Nations education studies are virtually nonexistent. In fact there is a policy vacuum for First Nations living in urban centers although nearly half the total First Nations population resides in the large southern cities of Canada (Dussault, 1993).
5. Until recently there were no courses on racism or antiracism education in universities or schools. Students in schools where I worked always named racism, prejudice, and discrimination from teachers, administrators and peers as reasons for making school completion challenging. As Bannerji puts it:

I don't think it is sufficiently understood, even by us who suffer from various kinds of negative otherings, how intensively/extensively violent the experience of racism is. This violence is everywhere in a society based on "race": in the basic social organization, in the economy, in the organization of presences and absences in spaces, in the production of silences and denials, in erasing and representing. The extent of the deformations or distortions this violence produces is profound for both white and non-white people. (1995, p.11)

6. The First Nations population in urban areas is multicultural, multinational, and multilingual. There are First Nations students who have a sound grasp

of their identity, history, values, and life worlds; yet others have very little knowledge of their heritage. Most are not aware of what they do know of their way of life. Thus, offering a short workshop on First Nations life worlds can serve to confuse teachers more than help them understand the students in their classes. First Nations learners are not the only ones who face these challenges; other marginalized, colonized, and dispossessed populations have similar experiences.

The challenge, then, is to create a classroom situation in which teachers and students collaboratively construct knowledge. The best teachers about First Nations worldview are the students themselves. Teachers need to witness children whom they see as “at risk” perform at demanding abstract levels of learning. Teachers can learn how to create conversational space in the classroom for children who have different participation structures and to recognize and respond to situational cues from diverse student populations in the classroom. Teachers need ways of bringing students’ knowledge from their life experiences into the classroom, and to validate, value, and honor that knowledge. It is important to encourage teachers to examine their beliefs about students who are different from them, and to learn alternative strategies to engage students who are reluctant and resistant to interact in the classroom. Students need to see how their knowledge is relevant to school learning.

Teachers must learn to transform passive learners into active independent and interdependent learners. Teachers must go beyond their comfort zone to enter the diverse worlds of their students. Finally, teachers need to create a safe and respectful environment for all students.

Learners who are different – physically, biologically, racially, and linguistically – or are from low socioeconomic populations are forced to change or behave according to the values and beliefs of the established order. These learners' values, beliefs, and knowledge are not valued or affirmed and are often unwittingly devalued. The establishment does not believe they can learn from lower power groups. Children from these groups protect themselves by becoming passive or disruptive in these types of classroom conditions.

If we hold that (a) we learn by interacting in our social worlds (Feuerstein, 1988; Gergen, 2000; Vygotsky, 1962), (b) classrooms are structured by the existing social order and we act and behave on the basis of our biases, values, and worldview (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Myles, 1988) (c) classrooms reflect the power relationships that exist in society (Cummins, 1986), and (d) curriculum, instructional practices, and institutional structures are based on well-established structures that favor the establishment (Winter, 1989), then we agree that classrooms must be structured to promote dialogue and an interactive relationship that values everyone's knowledge: an atmosphere where there is a will to take risks to explore other worlds and to create shared meanings. In other

words, one must create an environment in which collaborative learning takes place. Collaborative learning requires the will to be changed by learning together; otherwise, it cannot occur. It requires equitable relationships, which mean that power relationships must be examined and questioned. Embedded in both Feuerstein's Instrumental Enrichment (FIE) and Greenberg's Cognitive Enrichment Advantage (CEA) are the goals to create a highly interactive, collaboratively learning classroom environment in which teachers and students will actively co-construct knowledge.

Power of teachers

I have come to a frightening conclusion: I am the decisive element in the classroom. It is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher I possess tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations it is my response that decides whether crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a child humanized or de-humanized (Ginott, 1972, p. 15).

A teacher creates an ambiance on the stage of learning (Sarason, 1999, p.3). In my work I often found that teachers' in-service did not feel they had much power to change anything, to make a difference in the lives of students,

especially those by whom they felt challenged. Bahktin (1984) teaches that it is conflict, not harmony that fuels response: the struggle of multiple competing voices as the irreducible social fact of discourse. The process of composing a teaching life is one of revising and reshaping (Vinz, 1996). Teaching is often fraught with frustrations, dead ends, and dreams fulfilled or deflected.

Interaction in the classroom

An important key to engaging First Nations learners in the classroom is to develop a relationship with them. It is important for the teacher to make a personal connection by showing an interest in each student. This is achieved through talking and sharing thoughts and silences. According to Bahktin (1981) it involves constructing a narrative of unfolding understanding involving thoughtful interaction between and among teacher and student. At the heart of social logic is reciprocity of roles. The student is both teacher and student, and the same is true for the teacher. The teacher must be open to the knowledge and world of the student.

I noticed this relationship in teaching the first class of students after I was trained to teach Instrumental Enrichment. I asked the students to write personal information on cards telling me about their interests such as reading, music, movies, TV programs, sports, hobbies, etc. I did the same for them, telling them about my interests. I read their cards and was surprised I knew so little of their worlds. I went home and asked my teenage daughter and nephews about the

music, music videos and TV programs. I learned a great deal and I began to take more of an interest in the youth culture. The more interest I showed, the more the students were willing to teach me, thus changing our relationship in the classroom. We profited from our own talking (Britton, 1970). The more we talked the more we built trust in the classroom and the more I could demand of them academically. I could ask them to use their own stores of knowledge (Smith, Dockrell, & Tomlinson, 1997) or funds of knowledge (Moll, 1990) from their traditional First Nations cultural experience and from their experiences as urban youth to make sense of the material they were studying in their school subjects. (Friere, 1979) claims that “*substantive engagement occurs when teachers pose problems that students can through critical thinking relate to their own experience, in dialogic terms weave their learning into a chain of utterances emanating from their lives*” (Friere, 1979).

When teachers ask authentic questions, encouraging individual interpretation, they open the floor to student ideas for examination, elaboration, and revision. Students know when the teacher is asking a question and looking for a particular response. Comprehension is enhanced when the teacher encourages students to work from a personal store of knowledge. In response to a question – more than “good” or repeating the answer -- the teacher can push the student’s contribution further, validating in a way that affects subsequent answers (Smith et al, 1997). Both teacher and students work together to

understand what was not yet understood (Bahktin, 1981). Although challenging, increasing interaction and dialogue in the classroom with First Nations students can promote their school success.

Interactive discourse promotes learning in the following ways:

1. Validates students as important primary sources of information dealing with their own frames of reference, relating what they must know to what they already know.
2. Stimulates modes of cognition.
3. Seriously treats students as “thinkers,” effects expectations for learning.
4. Establishes a climate for learning.
5. Communicates teachers’ expectations for student’s thinking and learning.
6. Promotes students’ engagement in their studies and learning
7. Increases the degree to which information is thematized and thereby promotes chunking of information.
8. Promotes understanding and retention by opportunities for self-generated elaboration, in-depth processing – cognitive manipulation.
9. Promotes learning because it elicits sustained responses from students by helping students weave various bits and pieces of

information into coherent webs of meaning (Nystrand, 1997, p.28).

In order to have an impact on the relationship between teacher and student, I (as a teacher in the professional and staff development setting) must be able to guide and facilitate teachers' ability to engage students who are resistant to interaction. As a facilitator I want to foster the enhancement of reflective judgment and to stimulate teachers' *"proclivity toward supporting learners' autonomy, by providing the ingenious blend of support and challenge"* (Hill, 2000, p.51). The goal is to mediate the modifiability of the student; to achieve this the teacher/workshop participants and facilitator must also be open to their own modifiability. By *"modifiability"* I mean the openness to change one's own practice, beliefs, abilities and capacities (Feuerstein et al. 1988) if desired.

To see how the foregoing ideas play out in practice, I plan to study my role as facilitator of collaborative learning. I want to improve my practice by learning from the experience of the participants in my workshops. Ultimately I want to be able to make my experience as a professional developer explicit, and to identify those ideas, beliefs, and theories that guide my practice. As Schön (1983) points out, in a skillful knowledge-in-action, much of the skillful action reveals a knowing more than we can say a tacit knowledge. I hope to learn from the experiences of participants in the workshops by having them share their experiences through describing what was significant for them each day.

Chapter Two

My inquiry

To study this area of inquiry certain questions emerged. This chapter will discuss the questions that emerge and the methods I used to study these questions with the assistance of participants in four workshops and on four research teams.

Questions

I am interested in looking at my practice as a facilitator by learning from the experience of workshop participants as they progress through the duration of a 5-day workshop. Through this research, I want to find out all the following:

1. What are in-service teachers' perceptions of their experiences when they are engaged in a mediated learning workshop? What is the experience of teachers when they are learning a teaching approach designed to increase their engagement with students who are culturally, ethnically, linguistically, socially, or economically different from them?
2. What are teachers' perceptions about the facilitator of mediated learning workshops of this type?

Research paradigm

This is an action-research study. Action research is the study of a social situation with a view toward improving the quality of the actions within it (Elliott, 1987; Elliott, 1991). Action research improves practice by developing the practitioner's capacity for discrimination and judgment in particular, complex, human situations. It unifies inquiry, the improvement of performance, and the development of professional judgment and thereby develops what is termed "practical wisdom", i.e., the capacity to discern the right course of action when confronted with particular, complex and problematic states of affairs (Elliott, 1991, p. 52).

I focus on my role as a workshop facilitator by reflecting on my experience as a facilitator, and by viewing my role as facilitator through the perceptions of workshop participants. I learn about my practice through finding out what stands out in the experience of workshop participants. Action research is a process of systematically collecting research data about an ongoing system (Cunningham, 1993). Thus, I use data collected from four workshops held between 1998 and 2000.

In this research I used qualitative research methods that are more descriptive than interpretive. Using a phenomenological research method, I will learn from the experience of workshop participants through their first-person descriptions of their experience. Phenomenological philosophy holds that

experience involves perception, memory, imagination, feeling (Polkinghorne, 1989) and, I would add, thinking and spirituality. I want to gain an understanding of the participants' experience of the workshop from their perspective and from their choosing the parts of their experience most meaningful to them.

Phenomenology differs from other descriptive methods in that its focus is on the participants' experienced meaning rather than on their action or behavior (Polkinghorne, 1989).

According to Paulo Freire, dialogue and reflection are necessary for the basic right of education for freedom. Teachers and students must dialogue and think critically together (Freire, 1976; Freire, 1983). Reflective practice can be described as a mode that integrates or links thought and action with reflection. It is a tool for revealing discrepancies between espoused theories and theories in use (Imel, 1992).

I chose to use qualitative methods for this study because I wanted to generate rich data from different contexts. I also wanted to learn from workshop participants' first-person accounts of their workshop experience. I wanted them to be free to recount their experience without any restrictions from me as workshop facilitator or researcher. This should enable me to explore my theories in use, biases, assumptions, as well as my actual process. I also want to develop an understanding of participant experience in different contexts to learn whether the context changes my practice and relationship with participants. The method

of collecting participants' descriptions of their experienced meaning of the workshops lends itself to gaining an understanding of that experience without beginning with a predetermined set of hypotheses on my part as researcher.

Workshops in the study

For this study I am using data from four workshops: two workshops on Feuerstein's Instrumental Enrichment, one held in the spring of 1999 and the other in the summer of 2000; one workshop on Greenberg's Cognitive Enrichment Advantage held in the fall of 1998; and a session on First Nations storytelling, which took place in the summer of 2000.

Feuerstein's Instrumental Enrichment

Feuerstein's Instrumental Enrichment (FIE) curriculum is designed to enhance the cognitive functions, cognitive operations, strategy use, and learning habits necessary for academic learning and achievement. The curriculum is one of the applications designed by Reuven Feuerstein, an Israeli psychologist, and his colleagues to be used with learners 10 years old and older. It is based on his theory of structural cognitive modifiability. The theory posits that humans develop the cognitive, emotional, and social tools necessary to constantly adapt to a changing environment through the mediated learning experiences provided by their socio-cultural communities. (Feuerstein et al. 1979; 1991; ben Hur, 1994)

The curriculum comprises 14 instruments in three levels, taught over either a two or three-year period. Each is developed to focus on specific cognitive functions, operations, and strategies. Although the focus is on cognition, Feuerstein recognizes the powerful role that the emotions play in learning. Each lesson is also designed to provide the teacher with many classroom opportunities to mediate learning. Mediated learning requires the teacher to establish an interactive teaching environment, (Haywood, 1987) where assessment and intervention occur during the active engagement of the learner in a lesson. In addition, as insight is developed to a generalized principle (Butera, 1988) throughout each lesson it is bridged to school subjects; to peer, family, community relationships; to careers and employment; and to cultural traditions. Students can see that what they learn in one context can be transferred to another context.

To implement this curriculum, the teacher must participate in a week-long workshop for each level. Due to the complexity and the changes necessary to adopt a mediational teaching style, training should include a year-long-guided mentorship with a trainer or expert practitioner.

Cognitive Enrichment Advantage (CEA)

Katherine H. Greenberg developed Cognitive Enrichment Advantage, formerly known as COGNET in the late 80's, with funds from the US Department of Education Follow Through Program. CEA is based on the theories; philosophy

and instructional practices developed by Reuven Feuerstein, but is designed for use with primary classes. The approach has since been shown to be useful with learners of all ages. There is also a comprehensive accompanying resource program for parents to assist their children.

Greenberg condensed Feuerstein's cognitive functions and operations from more than 28 to 10 and called them Building Blocks of Thinking, and she also condensed his 12 criteria of mediated learning to 8 Tools for Independent Learning. Unlike Instrumental Enrichment, that is a separate curriculum, CEA is used as a framework and organizer for any curriculum the teacher may be using. The Building Blocks of Thinking and Tools for Independent Learning are taught to the student so that he can apply them to whatever they are learning to help them to be more efficient learners. Learners are provided the tools to assess and manage their own learning. According to Fisher (2001), "*the CEA method empowers students to make their own decisions and to build their own meta-strategic knowledge*" (p.59).

Implementing, CEA requires 30 hours of training, usually in a week-long workshop model similar to FIE. On-site trainers and expert guides to support the newly trained teachers, especially in the first year of implementation, are also recommended.

Discourse on First Nations stories

The sharing and discussion of stories is an important step toward achieving an understanding of the histories, culture, worldview, customs and traditions of Aboriginal people. This knowledge is not only useful today for Aboriginal people but to all people because First Nations still have within their knowledge base the ingredients for community building. These are housed in stories. Storytelling is still an active, rich and important tool for sharing information as we construct and reconstruct our histories. In this course we worked on the *spetakwelh* – which are called the teaching stories, or stories that contain the morals, ethics, and values of the Lil'wat who are the First Nations western Canada. In many of these stories the main figure is coyote, the trickster/teacher. The *sququqwel'* are the stories people share of their lived experiences. These stories are important because they share with the community the changes that have occurred to the teller, the land, or the community. These stories add to the body of knowledge belonging to the people and invite others to share in the joy, confusion, pain, anger, frustration, accomplishment, awe, and humor that accompany change. Through sharing the experiences this way the family and community learn from one another and the bond between them remains strong. These stories form the basis of the mediated learning experience. This session took place over 6 days in the summer. The participants were all from the same community.

Research sites and data collection

Site A

The first site was located in central South Africa, where teachers gathered to attend a conference on cognitive education. A workshop in Cognitive Enrichment Advantage was offered as a pre-conference course to conference participants. The desegregation of schools and colleges was a relatively new occurrence in South Africa. The government in South Africa was implementing a new curriculum based on Outcomes Based Education, which changed the teacher's role from a lecturer and a curriculum follower to a content decision-maker and a more interactive instructional-process facilitator.

There were 19 participants, four men and 15 women. All participants were involved in education as grade school teachers and counselors in public and private schools; or as teachers in technical colleges or in teacher-education programs at universities. The participants at this site were made up of Black South African, White South African (Afrikaans and English), and Colored (Indian, Asian, mixed heritage) adults.

The workshop was held in a secondary school from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm Thursday to Saturday with a day off on Sunday followed by two more days. The participants felt that the day off from the workshop contributed to their overall experience in a positive way because they used it to reflect on their experience and to continue to discuss topics from the workshop with their peers. It was the

first time that I conducted a workshop in CEA on my own; I had co-presented twice before with Dr. Greenberg in Canada and supervised the implementation of CEA in a large school district. I modified the workshop to suit my style, the setting and the participants.

The data at this site were collected by focus-group method. The participants were invited to a focus group at the end of the conference. Some workshop participants left as soon as the workshop was over and did not stay for the duration of the conference. As a result, only twelve of nineteen participated and all were white South Africans. One focus group member's contribution was discarded because he was not a workshop member and did not stay for the entire focus group session.

The focus group began with a welcome by Dr. Greenberg, the principal investigator of a research project on people's experience of change. Three co-investigators including myself, all graduate students at the University of Tennessee, participated in the focus group. Dr. Greenberg began by saying: "*the purpose of this session is to open it up for a dialogue with people to share their experiences with change and their ideas about change.*" Although focus group participants began by responding to the question, by basing their responses on their workshop experience they quickly turned the session into a dialogue about their workshop experience and about my facilitation. The session was taped, and

I transcribed the tapes after returning to Tennessee. Each participant in the focus group signed a consent form for research purposes.

Site B

The second site was in a large urban school district in western Canada, where there was a high (more than 50%) multiethnic population and a high percentage of Aboriginal population (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit). In this school district, the majority of the teaching staff was of white Euro-Canadian heritage. Two workshops on Feuerstein's Instrumental Enrichment were held at this site. One was part of the school district's summer institute calendar offering in the summer of 1999 where a third of the participants were from various parts of the province and two thirds of them from the school district. All participants worked in the school system as teachers, support staff, or administrators. There were 20 participants; 17 kept journals and none were discarded from this group.

The second workshop was held in the spring of 2000 with the workshop participants all employed as teachers or support staff in the district. The workshop was part of a professional development offering by the First Nations Education department. There were 17 participants, 11 kept journals and none were discarded from this group.

I organized these workshops in the district two or three times a year since 1986 with an out-of-district workshop facilitator and led the workshops from 1989 to 2000. Although I modified the workshops to suit participants, they followed

much the same format. The workshops were held from Monday to Friday, 8:30 am – 4:00 pm, with about an hour to two hours of homework each evening.

Site C

The third site was a large First Nations reserve in Canada. All participants in the workshop were First Nations members of my own home community. The course was on the use of First Nations storytelling for learning, and provided a setting to explore the rich histories of First Nations through traditional stories. The course structure used Feuerstein's philosophy and instructional methodology as a foundation. The session ran from Monday to Sunday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, in August 1999. There were eight participants, one man and seven women. All were teachers. Six kept journals; one of these was discarded because the participant used the journal to keep notes for the course rather than write of her experience.

I followed a similar process for collecting the data in each of the three workshop sessions at these two sites. Before the workshop began I told participants that I was doing a phenomenological study for my doctoral dissertation. I invited workshop attendees who would like to participate in the study to keep a daily journal over the course of the workshop. At the end of each day, they were to list three things that were significant or stood out in their memory during the day and to write a description of one of the three, recounting in as much detail as they wished (Pollio, 1994).

I explained that their participation was voluntary. I asked them all to sign a consent form, even if they were not sure about participating that day. I explained that they would not be required to sign the notebook, and that there would be no identifiers connecting them to the notebook, thereby ensuring confidentiality. I distributed notebooks and pens that all looked the same. At the end of each day I stopped the workshop 15 minutes early to give them time to write. During this time I left the room.

At the end of the workshop, I made provisions for them to copy their unidentifiable journals and to leave either the copied set or the original set at a designated location. Forty-five of 64 participants kept a journal in the 2 Instrumental Enrichment workshops and the Storytelling workshop. However, not all participants followed the directions: they either did not list three experiences but wrote in detail about one, or they wrote something about all three experiences.

Facilitator interviews

After each of the workshops an interview was conducted by members of the Collaborative Learning cohort, a research team and two faculty members in the collaborative learning program, one of whom is my major advisor. These interviews were about my experiences as a facilitator of the workshops and were conducted in order to gain an understanding about my assumptions and practical

theories in use. These transcripts were used to guide me in writing about my experience as a facilitator.

Methods of analysis

I used a phenomenological approach to gain a description of the essential features of participant experiences in the workshops and to obtain a structural description of their experience. The entire transcript was read for themes emergent from the data, for phrases that describe the experience of self-modification and for theme clusters or general themes common to all protocols. Three different research analysis groups read the transcripts and assisted in thematizing the transcripts including the collaborative learning research group, the South African research group, and my major advisor and me.

The research groups read quotations supporting each of the themes, and my description of the theme. The groups strived to question and confirm that the themes existed in the transcripts and across a majority of participants. Any potential themes that represented a minority of participants were discarded. Doing individual transcript analysis and workshop group analysis produced both a “we” experience and an “I” experience (Polkinghorne, 1989). We read aloud each cluster of workshop participant quotes, and then the research group talked about their perceptions of what they heard. This added richness to the text; it stretched my imagination and gave me more appreciation for the workshop

participants' experience. I used these notes and discussions as a guide to refine the themes.

Reviewing the notes after the research group meetings, the participant quotes fell into four areas, quotes about themselves as learners or teachers; quotes about their experience of other workshop participants and their own classroom of students; the facilitator and the learning environment. I divided each of the four workshop transcripts into two sets, Set one, participants' perceptions of the workshop facilitator and set two, participant experience of the workshop itself. I worked with another person or a small group of people to read through each set. As we read each set there were quotes that shared a common idea and these were clustered together. We selected and grouped the representative quotes. This procedure was used for each succeeding transcript, in the order that I conducted the workshops. In this way themes began to emerge. We continued reading and rereading the quotes selected for each cluster, moving some quotes to other clusters when they seemed to fit better there. We also combined some clusters when there was agreement that the quotes were describing an aspect of a theme. We continued to cluster and regroup the quotes until there was agreement that the quotes described a common theme. A direct quote from the transcripts was used to name each theme. The themes and quotes were read aloud by two separate research groups to see if they could understand my

analysis. Again each group helped me deepen my understanding of what workshop participants were saying about their experience.

This research project was seeking to learn from the experience of teachers in the workshops. To attain a comprehensive description of the structure of their combined experience the transcripts from all four workshops were combined and not compared to one another. Any opposing views were included and discussed in the theme that described that experience.

Validity issues

This is a descriptive, qualitative study. There are three sources of threats to a qualitative study. The main threat to valid description is inaccuracy and incompleteness of the initial data. Researcher bias in interpretation is a second threat because of the possibility that the researcher may impose his or her beliefs on the meaning of participant descriptions of their experiences. In addition there are theoretical threats if the researcher does not consider alternative explanations or understandings of the phenomena being studied (Maxwell, 1996).

These possible threats will be addressed in the following ways:

1. Description – I used information from a diverse range of settings, and the participants are similar to those attending any other workshop I might conduct. I used two methods of data collection, a focus group and written transcripts. For the focus group I

transcribed the tapes, and then listened to them as I followed along on the written transcript. The analysis teams questioned the transcripts. When they felt there were inaccuracies I made a note and checked again with the original documents. A person I hired transcribed the notebooks, and I then compared the transcripts with the original notebook text, making corrections as I worked along in the transcript. I initially entered all the data into a qualitative research management program called NVIVO, but after a trial analysis, decided to work directly from the written transcripts to maintain closer contact with the data.

2. Interpretation – This is an action research study about my practice as a workshop facilitator in which I want to improve my practice by learning from examining my practice from different perspectives. I used collaborative analysis and interpreted my data with the assistance of a group of peers – some of whom are familiar with my research topic and population and others who are strangers to the research topic and settings – to access a range of possibilities for interpretation. I also presented the themes and supporting quotations to an independent research team to secure their corroborating analysis.

3. Alternative interpretations – I dealt with these by having several groups assist with the analysis and checking the findings. Having people from many backgrounds and life experiences read and provide their views on the transcripts provided a broad and rich perspective from which to work. They helped me to stretch my thinking, even in those times I was working on my own.

Ethical issues

I gave the South African focus group numbers and later changed them to pseudonyms to make it easier for discussion by the analysis groups. I was the only one who had access to both the tape and written transcript during analysis. The identities of the participants were not recorded in the journal entries. I looked at the data after the workshop certificates were sent to the participants because that is the chronology I indicated: so that workshop participants would not feel their workshop participation would be affected by their participation in the research. Any participant concerned about risk could easily avoid or withdraw from participating in the study at any time. It was necessary to present participant quotes in this dissertation without identifying the workshop in which the person participated. Due to circumstances, this was the only way to ensure confidentiality.

Significance of the study

I gained the most from this study because the purpose was to improve my practice as a professional and staff–development facilitator. Without doing this study I probably would continue to facilitate workshops without systematically reflecting on what I do and why I do it. I realized during the course of doing the study that writing in daily journals about their experiences also benefited participants because they had an opportunity to reflect on what was significant to their learning each day. In the future I will continue to ask students and participants to keep a journal. This study will be helpful to professional and staff–development facilitators and planners because it will add to the literature on teaching for diversity and cross–cultural learning environments, including those with First Nations/Native American learners. Over the years of facilitating workshops, I have accumulated professional knowledge of teaching cognitive education and mediated learning, which will be helpful to other workshop facilitators.

Chapter Three

Story of my practice

I am an educator in the public school system in British Columbia, Canada. Whether working as a consultant for a large urban school district with a high Aboriginal population or as the Director of Aboriginal Education for the province, my task is to increase the school success of Aboriginal students. Aboriginal students comprise First Nations, Métis, and Inuit, the indigenous peoples of Canada. In 1999 the graduation levels of Aboriginal students at 36% was well below that of the rest of the student population at 78%. Aboriginal students leave school earlier than the rest of the school population and are over-represented in special education. In 2004 graduation rates have increased to 46%; however, only 8% participate and succeed in Principles of Mathematics 12, which is a prerequisite to most post secondary options (Ministry of Education, 2003).

To improve this complex situation strategies must be multifaceted and broad. One area of focus is the professional and staff development of teachers. In my observation of classrooms I noticed that Aboriginal students tended to sit at the edges of the classroom, rarely engaging in interactions between teacher and students. I knew that teaching about cross-cultural differences was not doing much to change classroom instructional practice. I thought that if I could raise the teachers' awareness of their practice and their beliefs about the learning ability of

Aboriginal students, they could use their own creativity to find opportunities to engage Aboriginal students in the classroom.

In 1979 when I was teaching in my home community where we were designing a school to meet the needs of our community, I was exploring why children from my community failed in the public school system. I know that it was not lack of ability. In the community and in cultural activities at the fish camp I witnessed children performing complex problem solving tasks; I saw them interacting with everyone around them, and engaging in complicated humorous repartee with peers and adults. Something happened as they made their way into classrooms.

We researched literacy and numeracy development strategies and programs. Most of the literature at the time focused on compensatory programs, but we could see that they did not benefit our children. We knew that negative schooling experiences had a major role to play, but we did not understand how they affected our learning.

That year I began to study the work of Reuven Feuerstein, an Israeli psychologist, who had some interesting ideas regarding the role a person's culture plays in her cognitive, emotional and social development. Feuerstein's view holds that every society develops adequate and efficient teaching and learning systems to prepare the next generation for the continuation of the society. I could see from my own community that this was the case. Many of the

older people in my village did not attend school, yet they were well able to care for themselves and the community. I could see they had their own way of teaching and passing on knowledge. It seemed it was the younger generations that were having trouble. Feuerstein claims that when a society's natural processes of cultural transmission are disrupted, the processes of teaching and learning are adversely affected, as is the interaction between generations. Although at the time I was intrigued, and I could see that his ideas held promise, I did not fully understand his theory of Structural Cognitive Modifiability. As a matter of fact I was afraid of it.

There were three ideas that made me question his theory and practice. First, concerning cognition, his focus on thinking as the point of intervention, he describes an extensive list of cognitive deficits that are an effect of cultural deprivation. For generations, governments and researchers had tried to place all individual and sociocultural deficits in our "nativeness" and they cited this as the major reason for our poor performance and resistance to acculturating into mainstream Canadian society. I was not willing to look at another theory and educational intervention that focused on deficiencies in the learners. First Nations people felt that the education system focused too heavily on the head and not enough on the heart. Second, in the research literature at the time and in the government policies that guided education for First Nations learners, cited low language ability, low scores on standardized intelligence tests; lack of work ethic,

lack of value for education, poor parenting, lack of motivation and lack of discipline as reasons for poor school performance. Education was seen as the institution that would change us. Feuerstein talks about permanently modifying a person's cognitive abilities through mediated learning. I was concerned that by implementing these theories and applications I could continue to promote assimilation into a western-oriented world in which change was imposed from the outside. Third, Feuerstein focuses on analysis, strategy development, problem solving and the Socratic teaching method in his curriculum intervention. I felt these were directly opposite to the First Nations ways of learning that depend on contextual, holistic, experiential, indirect, and relational means.

In 1979 my decision not to pursue this idea for possible implementation was based more on intuition than on clearly articulated reasons. It took many years of study for me to clearly articulate my concerns listed above, including the writing of this dissertation. According to Horvath, most people know much more than they can communicate because their personal knowledge is so thoroughly grounded in experience that it cannot be expressed in its fullness (Nestor-Baker, 2001). It was only through studying, reflecting, and talking with others that I was able to identify and articulate my concerns.

In 1985, a few months after becoming the Native Indian Education consultant for a large school district I met a psychologist who had studied with Feuerstein in Israel to learn the theory and practice of dynamic assessment. She

helped give me a better understanding of his work and its possible applicability to improving the learning and instruction of children. I was encouraged to learn more by the deputy superintendent. He informed me that the school district had hosted Feuerstein when he visited in 1979, and they had some of his books.

Reading his book, Instrumental Enrichment, an Intervention for Cognitive Modifiability (Feuerstein et al, 1980), I slowly began to understand that he was describing what happens to people who become deprived of their own culture. I still did not like the term *deprivation* but I felt he understood what had happened to First Nations when children were removed from their families and communities and the old could no longer teach the young children according to their traditions and cultural ways.

To understand Feuerstein took me years of study on my own and hours and hours of discussion about his ideas and its relevance to First Nations with as many people as I could find. At times it felt like an obsession: the more I studied, the more questions emerged. For example, I was concerned that the primary teaching practice in the Instrumental Enrichment curriculum was the teacher asking well crafted questions to elicit responses from the students in order to enrich their thinking. Initially this questioning was completely alien to me.

In my Lil'wat culture, continually asking someone questions is considered invasive and is an intrusion into her privacy. Expecting an immediate response to be articulated on the spot is considered disrespectful. At puberty asking

questions and expecting a response from someone older ends, especially questions for which one can find one's own answer given time, effort and opportunity. If it looks like a person is blocked or becoming lost in her quest to solving a problem, an elder tells a story, makes a comment, or engages the person in an activity that helps her think more clearly about a solution to her question or problem. It means listening very closely to what is being said, even when it seems to be irrelevant or not in context.

To illustrate this I sometimes tell this story. When I was around 10 years old, my mother woke me up early one morning, saying, "*We are all going out to work; tonight you cook supper; we'll be back around 6 o'clock,*" and she was gone before I could ask, "*What shall I cook?*" Later that morning I started looking in the refrigerator, in the cupboards, the pantry, the cellar, the garden, the freezers, and back to the fridge. I did not know what I would cook that night, for fifteen people. I looked out the window and saw my old aunt sitting on her front porch; I walked across the road and sat next to her. I was going to cook rice but I did not know how much water to put in the pot. Up until that day I had washed the rice or counted the cups of rice into a pot for my mother, but she always added the water. We sat there in silence as I tried to figure out how to ask her how much water to put in the pot. Finally I just blurted out, "*Ma, I have to cook. How much water do I put in the rice?*" She sat there for a while and started telling me a story. I knew the story was a long one, and I did not have time. I got

up and walked across the street. I looked at the rice and the pot, still not knowing what to do.

I walked back and sat down with her again. Again I asked, and she started the same story. Just as I was going to get up she rose from her seat and walked into her kitchen. I followed her; she took her rice pot from the shelf to the crock where she stored her rice. I stood next to the crock as she scooped rice into the pot. She washed the rice at the tap. She picked up a cup and started adding water. I was focused and intent as I watched the whole process. When she finished adding the water, she stuck her thumb into the pot; I could see the distance from the rice to the top of the water was about half way up her thumb. She was making the noonday meal; I watched her every move as I helped her. When the rice pot started sputtering, she noisily pushed it to the side of the stove farthest from the fire. I knew she was making sure I noticed. Later that evening my family came home to a rather simple meal, but they all ate and I felt a sense of accomplishment. My mother and aunt had mediated challenge, focusing, intentionality, and reciprocity.

Studying his theory of Structural Cognitive Modifiability and Mediated Learning guided me by giving me a starting point from which to explore ideas across fields such as psychology, education, sociology, and neurology. I began thinking about each of the criteria of mediated learning and finding examples from my cultural traditions.

In the summer of 1986 I organized the first workshop for teachers in Feuerstein's curriculum application called Instrumental Enrichment. I recall that we all struggled with the terminology in the theory, the many parts of the curriculum, the theory, the philosophy, the cognitive functions, the cognitive map, the role of teacher as mediator, and the four level one instruments. That summer I learned much about my own learning process. I learned that I was unsystematic in my approach to tasks, that I avoided taking risks in front of my peers and that I missed large chunks of information. There is a difference between vision and perception. I learned that I tuned out too much talk and explanation, and I learned that when faced with a challenge I knew how to persist. I also experienced the connection between my emotional response and its effect on my thinking. Much of my understanding of teachers' experience as learners came from that summer. By the end of the course I benefited as a learner, but there was no way that I felt prepared to teach this curriculum to students. The participants in the course were excited and willing to give the curriculum a try in their classrooms.

In the fall there were enough teachers interested to offer the course again. I took the course again as the organizer, and I participated again as a learner. This time I was much more methodical about keeping notes. I recorded every question that the trainer asked, along with all the responses. The teacher's guide

provided samples of questions and student responses, but I was skeptical that I would get the responses from my students that were in the sample lessons.

Having alternative questions readily available was important because so much of classroom engagement in this curriculum is organized around questions; I had very little experience with questioning even though in my university teacher-training courses we learned about asking questions as a teaching strategy. In traditional First Nations homes there is very little use of questions in teaching and learning situations. Knowing this I worried that teaching children to cope in a teaching-learning situation that focused on questions and responses would contribute to their further alienation from their cultural identities.

After discussing this cultural incongruence with the Native American trainer during and after the workshop days, and over the phone for the next year, I decided that as long as the Aboriginal children were living in two worlds they had to learn both and that it was possible to learn both worlds without losing a sense of self or losing their cultural identity. It also occurred to me that when children were removed from their families and communities the process of preparing learners to find their own solutions to questions and their ability to ask questions were interfered with. So the thinking aloud and the exploration of a problem by many minds were a helpful way to reactivate the questioning learner.

Many of my teacher-as-learner stories about how to be comfortable with being both a learner and teacher and to help workshop participants cope with all

the information and the jargon came from this workshop. For example, one story is about our group's resistance to the jargon and complicated academic language that is used in the reading material and in the curriculum rationale. I could share the discussion we had and use that as an entrance into the workshop participants' own discussion about their feelings and thoughts concerning the language used by Feuerstein and his colleagues. Another story was about my own preservation, how I locked onto an idea and could not see any other option. There were stories about how I changed between the first workshop I attended and the second. I was always a good organizer and planner but I became much more efficient; I was more conscious of developing strategies in approaching tasks. I asked better questions to uncover ideas.

After this second workshop I was amazed at what I had missed in the first session. I was now putting the pieces together. I felt that in order to learn I needed to practice, so I found a class of students to work with for the rest of the year. I learned even more from this experience. I learned to appreciate the complexity and the beauty of the curriculum that Feuerstein and his colleagues developed. I learned much about the unique style and character of each of the students. I also learned about myself as a teacher. I learned to trust the students to respond when I tried the questions in the teacher's guide. Slowly I learned to trust myself to ask questions that were not in the teacher's guide, and to struggle with asking the questions in a way that students could respond. It took some time

to gain their trust and respect, but once these were established we had fun, and the conversation in the class flowed. I enjoyed and appreciated and at times was awestruck at their creativity and originality.

I learned that at first the students fatigued quickly with the engagement, so I adjusted the rhythm of the class. I would begin with explanations and pointing out features of the exercise; then slowly I would begin asking questions and waiting for responses, asking for elaboration on responses, encouraging them to pay attention to each other. Then I would let go and we would talk quietly about something of interest to one of the students. Finally I would return to the lesson and class conversation. Gradually over the months the class could stay focused on the lesson for most of the hour. Before this class I had not taken fatigue from class conversation into consideration.

Many of my classroom stories to illustrate aspects of the theory, practice, philosophy, and class activities in the workshops came from this experience. Feuerstein talks about how the belief system affects learning. Two of my stories to illustrate this idea came from this group of students; one was the belief the students had of themselves as learners. In the report files of the students I learned that the students had low reading levels on test scores, and in discussion with students they all said that they wanted to read. I also began to learn from them that they felt that they lacked intelligence because they could not read.

Later while working with other First Nations students I found that this belief was widespread.

Another story I tell is about a student who was transferred to many schools and suspended from schools many times because of tardiness. I noticed he was often late coming to school, so I talked to the class about the importance of attendance. I noticed he would get to class as if he had been running and he would be tired through the day, so I talked to the class about the importance of getting enough rest to be ready for learning. I started looking for patterns because from past experience I knew that many First Nations children were tardy, tired, or absent during certain times of the month like social- assistance issue days. For this student there was a pattern, but they were not the days I was expecting. In the class discussions I learned he lived at home with his parents and eight siblings.

One day I decided to show the student the pattern of his absences. He told me that his dad was a longshoreman and that when he got paid, his parents bought groceries, paid the rent, and they left the family alone for several days. The student took over the care of his siblings and took over his father's job on the docks. He worked all night, and when he got home in the morning he got his brothers and sisters up and prepared for school before going to school himself. The assumptions other teachers and I made about this student's tardiness were far from reality. I had to ask myself how many other students I had misjudged in

the past. I had to admit that my assumption was based on my belief that students could get themselves to school if they got to bed earlier, they had the desire and motivation, and they were more responsible. That incident gave me lots to think about concerning the beliefs I held about students. I tried to become much more open about my thoughts and ideas and tried to listen and inquire more into the world of the students.

I described to the students Feuerstein's ideas and the theory around mediated learning as a means to cognitive, emotional, and social development. I related the description to the situation of First Nations people. This was a good exercise because it meant translating the theory into plain language and realistically illustrating the meanings of the mediated learning experiences. I asked the students to give examples of mediated learning that they experienced in their families and communities. We were surprised at how many examples we could share; it occurred to me then that this was a good way for First Nations students to appreciate what they knew and learn from each other. I was prompted to share a theory with the students from another trainer from the American Midwest. I watched him describe mediated learning to a group of African American students. It had not occurred to me before to share with students why we teach and do what we do in the classroom.

Next I attended a workshop on the second level of the course, providing six more instruments. I could not believe how much of my own learning was

enhanced by this experience. Again I repeated the class and taught another class of students. I also attended the teacher coaching sessions by the trainer and listened to his conversation with the practicing teachers. More stories were gathered, although at the time I did not know I would be using examples from these experiences. I visited the teacher of a grade-4 class of First Nations students later that fall. They were working on the first instrument in the second level, categorization. The class was divided into sections; teach, independent work, discussion, summary and bridging. While the students were doing their independent work, I was going from student to student along with the class teacher. I noticed an interesting pattern on their worksheets. The top of the page had pictures of items, and the task was to label each item and then put it into a category, animate, inanimate, or vegetation. There were just enough blanks under each heading to put the pictures above. I noticed that 'rock' was at the bottom line of the inanimate category and some students had erased something from the animate category. The class teacher began the discussion of the page. I asked the students what was the level of difficulty of the page – easy, medium, or hard. They answered "easy," and I asked what made it easy. They had several reasons. Then I asked was there any item they had difficulty categorizing. There was a long pause. Some responded "no." I waited just a little longer; finally a student answered he had difficulty with 'rock' because in his traditional ways

'rock' is animate. A rich dialogue followed on the differences in worldview we are confronted with in school.

A story to illustrate that young children do think at abstract levels and that First Nations children can speak in front of groups came from a class visit. This was a grade 1, 2 and 3 class; the teacher was implementing Instrumental Enrichment to her grade-3 class even though it is recommended for grade 4 and older. The trainer/coach was model teaching a lesson to the grade-3 class. He asked a question about how the students arrived at an approach to a particular task. He waited for a response for more than a minute; finally students began to offer suggestions. Then a grade-1 student, from across the other side of the room, put up her hand. He called on her. First she tried to describe her idea, and then she got up, walked to the chalkboard, drew the problem, and turned to the class and described and showed her solution along with how she arrived at it. It was as though she released the voice of the class. At first they were quiet, and I thought they were offended that a grade 1 student was showing them something, but no, they were considering her ideas. Many of them started talking and offering their own ideas. This began an hour-long conversation that involved everyone in the room. This is what I had been looking for, the tools to generate this kind of deep and learning-focused conversation.

In 1988 I attended a trainer-for-trainers workshop. Immediately afterwards, I conducted my first workshop in Feuerstein's Instrumental Enrichment. In that

first workshop session I did all the talking, and I explained everything. I knew that I was not integrating the theory and the practice. Both were discrete and isolated from each other. Fortunately the teachers were interested enough in the content of the course to persist. In this session I learned very much from the questions they asked me. If I did not know how to respond I looked to the trainer who was coaching me, and I also told the class when I did not know and asked if anyone had an idea. The conversation that flowed from this invitation was enlightening. I think it was my first insight into collaborative learning even though at the time I was not familiar with the term.

Over the next 10 years, I conducted training sessions for teachers in Canada and the USA. Most were for teachers working with at-risk students – Native American, First Nations, African American, deaf, special education, and inner city. Each class was different. In the early years I tried to adhere to the professional-development format in the staff-development literature. Gradually I internalized the components of Instrumental Enrichment and I continued to study the literature in cognitive education, emotional development, multicultural education, language development, and the effects of colonization and oppression on families and communities I incorporated and integrated this study into the training plans. This understanding enriched my ability to respond to teachers' questions during workshops. It gave me more flexibility to be led by the learners, to go where they needed to go in their own learning.

I spent time talking with elders and recalling experiences and stories about the mediated learning experience criteria. I incorporated these into the workshops. Over the years I built in story illustrations for each of the mediated learning criteria. The illustrations came from my cultural roots, some from everyday life, and some from classroom experiences. What I was trying to do was to illustrate that mediated learning occurs in every life situation. Although it may look different in different contexts and in different cultures, mediated learning is taking place.

In some cultures some of the criteria are emphasized more than others. For example, regarding the mediation of sharing behavior, in First Nations cultures it is said that humans are the only beings that come into the world not automatically knowing how to share, and that we need to learn how to share. In all of our ceremonies, daily practices, puberty training, sharing is built in. I tell the story of how in Lil'wat puberty training for young women, one of the activities is to make small handiwork items, which are then hung on tree branches near pathways where people are walking so that whoever wants them can take them. I told stories about my brother, the deer hunter, who would bring home the heart and liver of the deer he caught and distribute these to the elders and how our father and other men would distribute the meat to all the families in our community who needed it. After the meat was distributed, people gathered in our house, and my brother would tell the stories about the hunt: he developed a

relationship with each of the deer; each one had a personality; some of them outsmarted him and got away. In this way we shared his experience on the land and could be thankful to both him and the deer for giving us our food.

I also internalized the instruments we were studying: organization of dots, orientation in space, comparisons and analytic perception. I learned which cognitive functions were highlighted in each instrument. I also learned that each instrument created its own rhythm and tone. Two instruments were taught in tandem. In the first, organization of dots, once people got over the frustration from the tasks, reluctance to listen to their classmates and resistance to be systematic, they gradually got quieter when doing the paper task and their conversation after the individual task also got quieter in pitch. They listened to each other more intently and encouraged each other to give ideas. In the other instrument, orientation in space, the class got much louder, tended to disagree more, offered their own point of view, and laughed more. This pattern was the same whether they were a class of adults, teens, or children.

I noticed that I was able to focus on each individual in the class. My role in leading the class changed depending on the make-up of the group and the stage of the workshop, but rather than focus on the content of the workshop my attention could be on the people. Instrumental Enrichment is designed to increase the opportunities for teacher/student and peer/peer interaction as a way to facilitate cognitive development. Although the focus is on cognitive

development, Feuerstein does not disregard the role emotions have in learning. Learning is an interactive affair. I came to love the times when I could set up an experience with the use of the instruments and by asking questions generate a class conversation where I could sit back and let the class take over.

Over the years I organized training in the school district for teachers, parents, school support workers, psychologists, speech language pathologists, counselors, and district and school administrators in three levels of Feuerstein's Instrumental Enrichment. And other workshops in Learning Propensity Assessment Device - group and individual; Dynamic Assessment for Young Children developed by David Tzuriel and Pnina Klein. For early childhood, and grade one we offered Bright Start developed by Carl Haywood and Penny Brooks and Parents as Mediators developed by Tre Jensen. For primary teachers we offered Katherine Greenberg's Cognitive Enrichment Advantage, at the time known as COGNET. All are based on mediated learning and share a common philosophy. Each adds richness to the understanding of the learning process. It was exciting to see the collaboration occurring among teachers, counselors, psychologists, and speech language pathologists.

It was time to focus on increasing my capacity as workshop facilitator to create a workshop environment where participants could quickly achieve a comfort zone for sharing their thoughts about their experiences in learning and teaching. Sharing their approach to problem-solving and describing the task

process makes some people feel vulnerable. Most of the people who attended my workshops were either mixed populations, white Canadians or Americans, or First Nations/Native Americans. Mary Louise Pratt uses the term 'contact zone' to describe the construction of a 'safe house' that encourages knowledge construction and risk-taking. Particularly

“where there are legacies of subordination, groups need places for healing and mutual recognition, safe houses in which to construct shared understandings, knowledges, claims on the world that they can then bring into the contact zone” (Pratt Arts 40).

I chose to join a doctoral program in collaborative learning at the University of Tennessee. I thought this program would bring me into the literature where I could learn from those who study and write about learning together. It would also give me the time to reflect on my practice and to learn more about Cognitive Enrichment Advantage.

In the first term I had the opportunity to travel to South Africa with K. Greenberg and two graduate students to train teachers in the use of CEA and to conduct research in the change process. South Africa was changing its instructional approach from a “stand up and deliver” model to one that featured much more teacher/student interaction. The country adopted outcomes-based education, with an emphasis on cognitive education. CEA had the elements to meet their need. I was anxious about facilitating the workshop since I was not

sure how they would accept me because I was not from South Africa and I am a First Nations person. Also it was the first time that I would be teaching CEA on my own.

It was a mixed class, Black, White, and Colored South Africans. I soon learned from their introductions that the Black South Africans were from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds from those of the Whites, who were of Afrikaans and of British heritage. I began to have a better understanding of the colored population. It was very similar to our First Nations population in Canada. I began the first day with introductions, each telling a story about their teaching and the reason they chose to participate in the workshop. The introductions gave me information about students' interests, school and teaching experience, and what they wanted to gain. As I lectured and led them through some activities that day, they were getting to know me as a facilitator and as a person. I noticed that the group seemed to be split into four groups. The next day I had them work in small groups, which they self-selected. I began modeling the instructional process. Some immediately felt comfortable, but others did not like the group work and they did not like taking responsibility for leading the activity or monitoring group work and presenting their work. I encouraged and assisted each group and worked to make sure that everyone had opportunities to participate in the discussion. I learned from this group that they shared much in common with other workshop groups in Canada and the United States. Some

members held back and others took over the conversation. I began encouraging them to orient themselves toward one another and not only to me the facilitator, and to be aware of the cues of other people in the room. The more we shared our ideas and thoughts the more the atmosphere in the workshop became trusting and each took more risks in engaging in the activities and dialogue.

Resuming doctoral classes after South Africa I began to read and study the literature on collaborative learning, mediated learning, reflective practice, and dialogue along with the cohort members in the collaborative learning doctoral program. In the classes we did not learn “about” these topics; we learned by experiencing them in action in the classroom. It was interesting to try to make sense of what collaborative learning is and is not in this way. In those early months, cohort members came together to socially construct knowledge, and to reflect on the assumptions we held according to knowledge we thought we had on a given subject. I struggled to bring my past knowledge to the discussions, to question and compare the knowledge I had about collaboration, consensus building, and mediated learning with other people’s knowledge about these topics.

Bruffee defines collaborative learning as a *“reacculturative process that helps students become members of knowledge communities whose common property is different from the common property of the knowledge communities they already belong to”* (1999, p3). Underlying his definition is the suggestion that

when people engage in collaborative learning they ought to be prepared to be changed by the experience and that when people are engaged in collaborative learning they are forging another cultural community made up of the sum of the group's experiences and knowledge. The definition implies sharing knowledge, sharing diverse points of view, and sharing authority. Collaborative learning demands a willingness to work together and to engage in intense conversation. In any given learning situation people bring a wealth of knowledge from their experiences and interests. In a collaborative learning classroom the group takes advantage of these funds of knowledge to learn together by including everyone in the conversation or group effort. Inclusivity means being conscious of the dynamic in the classroom: for example, being conscious of who is sharing in the conversation and who is not, or making openings in the dialogue so everyone has an opportunity to participate. In a collaborative learning classroom there is awareness that people hold different roles, power, and authority. Teachers often have power and authority due to their position, knowledge, and role. A member may have authority because of his superior knowledge of a subject, or if he has greater facility with the language of the conversation.

Chapter Four

Participants' stories of our journey

Each workshop I conduct is unique even though I may be working with the same content; each is unique because the participants in the workshops are unique individuals who bring with them their own experiences and understandings of learning and teaching. Each is unique because I come to the experience differently; I learn uniquely from each workshop experience, which modifies my approach or causes me to focus on different aspects of the workshop. To learn from the participants in the workshops I conduct, I am going to look more systematically at what they say about their experience.

Each of the four transcripts was read with this question in mind: what is significant to this participant in this workshop? Initially I broke the transcript into four categories:

1. Self – participants talked about their experience as learners and teachers;
2. Other – participants were conscious of the facilitator, other workshop participants, and other theorists and educators who influenced them as teachers;
3. Workshop content and instructional process;
4. The learning climate created in the workshop.

Reading what participants said about each of these topics helped me to get a better understanding of their experience. The vague understandings I had when facilitating workshops became much clearer. For example, I knew that teachers in past workshops switched roles between themselves as learners and as classroom teachers, but I was not aware of the extent to which they did this. In addition, I knew that teachers brought with them learning and school experiences they had as children and gained insight into how these affected their approach to the current situation as workshop participants.

Connelly and Clandinin (1999) use the metaphor of landscape to explore the moral, emotional, and aesthetic dimensions of teacher knowledge. The metaphor frequently used for learning, and the one used here, is a journey. A journey means movement, a change in place and time. Learning means being in a constant state of becoming: people know themselves to be unfinished, they are aware of their incompleteness; this incompleteness and awareness lie at the very roots of education (Friere, 1993). A metaphor according to Lakoff and Johnson, (1980) is a means of conceptualizing our experience; we pick out the important aspects of that experience. By picking out what is “important” in the experience, we categorize the experience, understand it, and remember it. Metaphors can help us see something in a whole new way, or help us understand a concept or experience an idea more deeply. It is important that the participants name their

own experience; hence the names for the themes come from the participant descriptions of their experience.

Figure 1 represents the structure of participant experiences of the workshop. The themes reflect participant experiences of learning in the workshops in terms of movement, place and space.

Theme 1: Building a safe space for learning, shown here encircling the themes, is the ground on which the other themes appear. Participants were concerned about the safety of the setting, especially in the early days of the workshop. The meaning of safe environment to participants became the foundation upon which other themes emerged. The sub-theme 1.a: We bonded beautifully is about how feeling safe helped them to bond emotionally with one another; and the more they felt connected with one another the safer they felt. They connected spiritually, emotionally and cognitively. The three themes form the three points of the triangle, flowing in a clockwise orientation that is the traditional Lil'wat orientation in ceremonies.

Theme 2: Finding a route through the maze and the sub themes 2.a: I have hit my wall already and 2.b: I began to see in a whole new light have to do with the participants' experience with the content and learning process. It describes their struggles with the content and teaching approach and their journey to feeling competent with the material. Figure 1 shows these themes as flowing along a continuum. It is as though the workshop participants began early

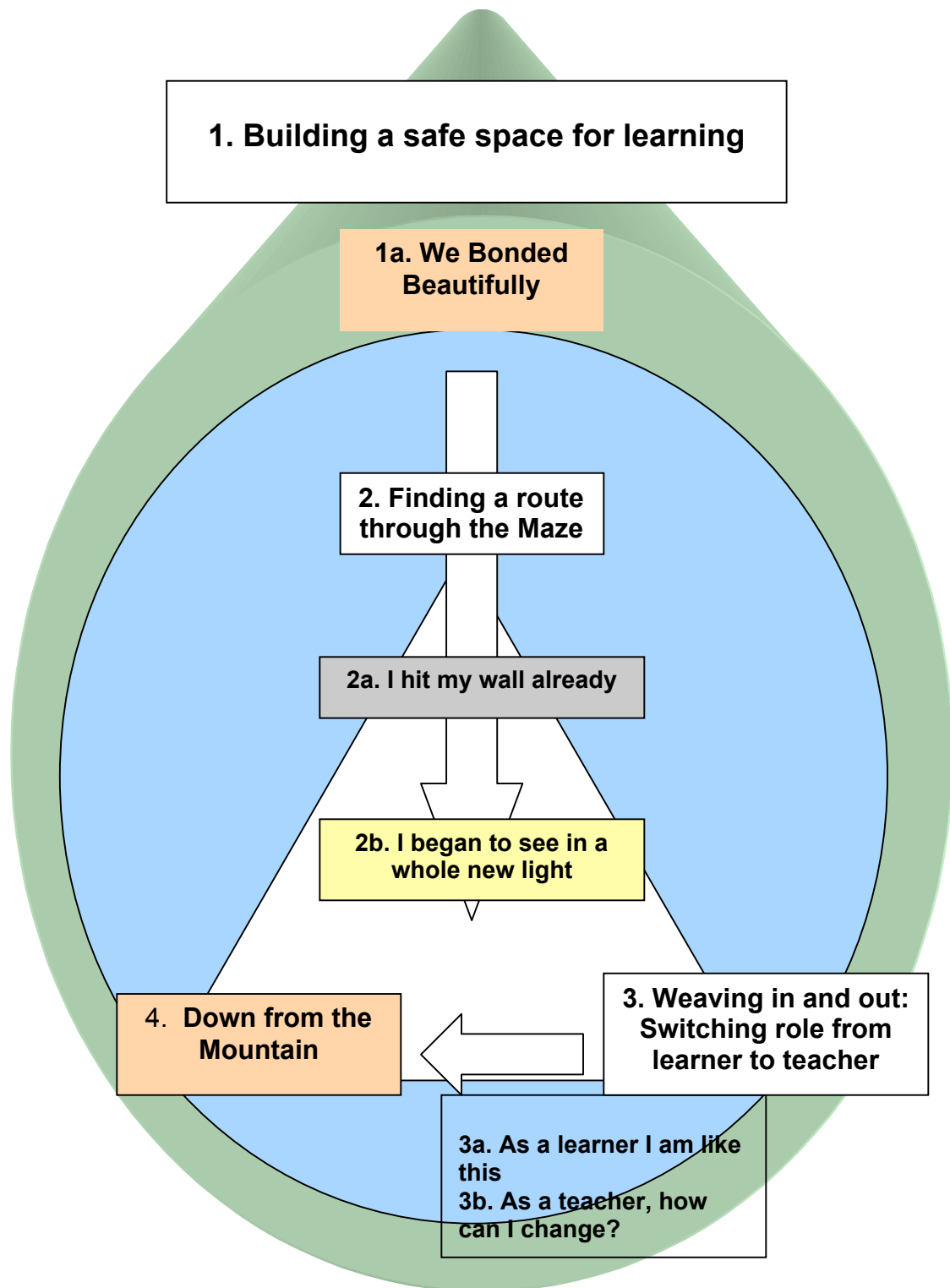


Figure 1. Participants' experience in the workshops

in the workshop to struggle with the complexity of the content and activities. They hit some barriers, and then when they recognized their response and moved around these barriers they saw their learning in a new way. This coincides with what other workshop facilitators call the “mid session slump”. The workshop participants could take risks with the material and expose their vulnerabilities as learners because they were in a safe space for learning. Safety did not mean to them a need to avoid challenge and complexity.

Theme 3: Weaving in and out and its sub themes, 3.a: As a Learner, I am like this, and 3.b: As a Teacher, how can I change? speak to each participant’s dual role as both teacher and learner. It is as though the teachers used themselves and their experiences with the material as the first model of how their students might respond. This often led to their reflection on themselves as learners during childhood. This theme surprised me the most and it is one that I will continue to explore. I was not aware before this study the amount of time teacher-participants spend revisiting their own childhood learning experiences. This finding is an important area to explore when planning professional development activities for refining instructional practices. It seems that our identities as teachers are closely aligned with our identities as learners. Changing practice comes from the self-examination of both identities.

Theme 4: Down from the Mountain is about the participants’ awareness of the ending of the workshop experience and leaving to go back into the “real

world”. They speak of their concerns, about what they will be able to retain of their experience once they leave. Bruffee (1999) speaks of the enculturative properties of being in collaborative learning communities. The participants were very much aware that they would be leaving the safe cultural community they created in these workshops and they were returning to a culture that has not had their experience. The workshop participants were concerned about fitting back into and possibly changing an established system and culture.

Theme 1: Building a safe space for learning

In his book, Dialogue and the art of thinking together, Isaacs (1999) points out that the most important dimension of dialogue concerns the atmosphere or “*field*” in which it occurs. He goes on to say that we cannot manufacture a field, but we can set the conditions under which intense interaction between people can occur in a container. Isaacs defines a field as “*the quality of shared meaning and energy that can emerge among a group of people,*” and a container for dialogue as “*a setting in which the intensities of human activity can safely emerge*” (p. 242). Four aspects of a container for dialogue include: (1.) Groups of people actively listening, (2.) Respecting one another, (3.) Suspending their judgment, and (4.) Speaking their own voice.

This is what participants had to say about the container we built for interaction in the four workshops:

Lorna helped us build a safe space.

She created a safe space that was stress free in which we felt accepted, supported, comfortable, relaxed, secure, respected, acknowledged, and challenged.

In that safe space we could become active thinker; we were always learning; we had thinking time; she set a positive tone; and we felt purposeful.

We had the courage to take risks and control of new learning, the courage to overcome inhibitions and blocking. We knew that wondering and confusion were acceptable.

We had time to play with concepts and to explore new ideas. We could share thoughts and feelings. The right context was created and was validating.

As a group we came up with many observations and rules. It became very clear today just how valuable teamwork and collaborative learning can be. The thoughts and ideas of one person awaken new thoughts and ideas for another. An accepting and supportive environment is created. This is an environment conducive to learning. People's ideas flowed.

Whew! Some points of the day like group therapy – teachers reflecting on their experiences, fears, success and such.

In the workshops as a facilitator, I feel it is my responsibility to lead the process of creating the space for interaction, especially in workshops that are of short duration, intense, and cover a great deal of content. I set the tone with the introductory activity. I set up the room so that everyone can look at one another. I ask them to introduce themselves to the group by telling a story about how they came to be at the workshop. The group can immediately appreciate the diversity and uniqueness of the backgrounds of each other. Each individual decides how much to tell, what to tell, how long to tell, and how much to be influenced by the

other people's stories. In telling our stories we establish our place in the learning community.

There is a certain feeling I get when listening to or telling a story, lots of positive feelings, a feeling of belonging, a mystical feeling, a fulfilling feeling.

I attempt to create a container where people are not concerned about their emotional safety, a place where they feel comfortable to take risks as they share their thoughts and feelings, and attempt activities they might be unsure that they can do. Vygotsky's (1962) idea of the zone of proximal development, supporting people to strive for a goal, which is just beyond their reach, is as true for adults as for young learners. I am guided by Feuerstein's (1988; 1991) mediated learning experience criteria: the mediation of intentionality and reciprocity, the mediation of meaning and transcendence – in which as a facilitator, I mediate through words and actions what we are doing and why; in the workshops I stress the importance of being attentive to one another, of listening carefully and respectfully to what everyone is saying. Through the mediation of challenge, we learn when we push ourselves beyond what we know at the moment. We learn that others can help us achieve our learning goals (Feuerstein et al 1979; 1988; Greenberg, 2000).

A workshop setting that orients workshop participants towards working as a community of learners needs to be established because so much of the teaching profession is built on isolation, separation, and fragmentation

(Tinzmann, et al 2000). The participants in these workshops felt very positively about being members of a collaborative learning community.

Theme 1.a: We bonded beautifully

The strength and beauty of collaborative learning is the realization that learning in a community is rich and rewarding because it is in engagement with others and a feeling that one can go beyond where one can go alone. At the beginning of the workshops participants are often reluctant to engage in-group work; they would prefer to work alone on tasks or that I lecture. There are three mediated learning criteria that resonate strongly in community making: the mediation of sharing behavior, the mediation of individuation and psychological differentiation, and the mediation of a sense of belonging. In a community, it is the sharing of work, laughter, playfulness, sadness, thoughts, ideas, and feelings that seem to bring people closer together. At the same time it is through making public our thoughts and ideas that we come to own those ideas and thoughts.

“The ‘me’ becomes ‘we’ in order to give ‘me’ identity” (Friedman, 1986, p.86).

The participants’ experience of bonding can be described this way: Bonding occurred because we were able to share our knowledge and experiences, we could be playful in our learning, and there was a feeling of spirituality in our learning community.

Working with others was enlightening: we were looking at things through new eyes. We bonded beautifully.

Everyone brought a wealth of experiences; the ideas and learning from each other were powerful. I felt supercharged, more creative and transformed by the group. The thoughts of one awakened new thoughts in another. People's stories made me think more of my own experiences.

It was freer and easier to do big chores; everything became clearer. I comprehended faster and I enjoyed it more. To hear another participant touch on a partially formed idea of my own helped me clarify my thinking.

The situation calls out of us responses that may not be knowable before that moment (Friedman, 1960. p. 75). As a teacher I was always excited to watch workshop participants' faces light up when they would think of something in a new way because of another person's comments. Or as they were speaking, hearing themselves, they thought of a new idea, or an old thought in a new way.

The more the groups worked together, helped each other, and listened to each other, the closer they became as a group. Buber's sense of community does not result from following "*organismic impulses but from the complex workings of person communicating with others and inviting human community*" (Friedman, 1992, p.78). It is the common center, having a sense that the community of learners shares a common goal that empowers the group into community life.

Talking provides a way for persons to present their personal inner symbolic life to each other and sharing their inner life establishes the relationships necessary for committing to striving to hear another's view from the other's perspective. "*Conversation creates, maintains, sustains, and manifests*

relationships" (Hinde, 1997, p.94)). Here is what participants had to say about the importance of talk during the class discussions and outside the sessions.

It was a gradual process: the first day I loved every minute; the second, I started reflecting; and the third, I realized I was in a once in a lifetime situation. Bit by bit the purposes made sense along with the transfer to everyday life. Learning to get others to share with you how they see the world, what their needs are, took time; we needed that continual feedback process and reflection. And it takes time, that's what we learned; it can't be accomplished in a morning, in a workshop. We need that time, the day off in the middle of the workshop, cause we were constantly reflecting and taking ownership.

The choice of questions and words was open-ended. Open-ended questions were effective as people give ideas freely. The discussions are valuable because they help to consolidate the information make connections and learn from each other. It reinforced how it is so powerful to play off one another. We respect and value difference in our thinking, attitude, and communication. Every one brings with them a wealth of personal experiences as well as different cultural backgrounds. This in itself brings strength to the group.

We played with concepts: I was getting "high" on the play of word images... symbols, letting me experience whatever unfolds. Broadening pathways of the brain, broadening how much further our eyes can see, our ears can hear, our sense of touch reach out and draw life into us. Hearing people's stories, they seem to come spilling out, people making connections with their personal lives, their teaching practices, the power of words, and the power of words that evoke memories.

According to participants, First Nations people believe learning is holistic and experiential. It is also meaningful that their experiences touch on cognitive, emotional, physical and spiritual elements. The course of any close relationship is influenced by the nature of the emotions expressed by the participants. The more workshop participants struggled with solving problems together, the greater the insights they shared, the more open they became, the more they cared for

and helped each other. In my L'ilwat tradition there is a term, "kamucwkalha," which describes the point in time when people feel an energy that connects them all as a community. There is a sense that the people feel, think, and breathe in unison. When groups of people come together to share in a common task and kamucwkalha occurs, someone always points it out. As a teacher and facilitator I am aware when kamucwkalha occurs but I do not say anything to the class. As one participant put it, there was "a feeling of belonging, a mystical feeling, a fulfilling feeling." The workshop participants talk about this kamucwkalha as the workshop having a spiritual feeling.

I like how there is a strong spiritual component to this work. It is implicit, but it is there at every level. I feel hope for mankind when I see how the human spirit can triumph when given the "appropriate" attention it needs.

My greatest change was spiritual. What I liked about the course, I don't know if it was spiritual, it was more like an inner realization. That spiritual change, I'm going to work on so that I can be more effective in the presentation of my cognitive skills. Never before have I been introduced to this system that I am going to spiritually; I'm going to equip myself to give my level best and be able to do the things I've been wanting to do for a long time and put them on the back burner and carried on.

I've been exposed to many other cognitive models and programs. I've been bombarded with a lot of theory, information, we know about information, and all those things tend to make me weary and despondent. I wasn't seeing progress, so are we making a difference? This whole thing I've been studying for 8 years, all these little techniques – nothing happened – I was using all these things and I'd get irritated with it. I've been merely teaching these wise and wonderful techniques, skills, methods, strategies; I haven't internalized them. I think that practical application of cognitive education is what I was looking for and I got it 100%. I don't want to use internalization but spirituality wasn't present in the other programs, being able to walk in someone else's shoes. This one covers the

affective side, the emotions, inner peace, and serenity that are required to be empathetic.

There is a dark side to teamwork and collaborative learning; Buber (1969) lamented the strength of the crowd mentality in which a person may submit without asking probing questions. Individuals need constantly to critique whatever is being taught on its own merits rather than base acceptance in order to maintain a place in the group.

I noticed a shift from general skepticism to a general diehard belief in the system. I was not susceptible to this experience.

Ah it's becoming clearer to me: I thought it was some kind of a creativity test but we are obediently tracing squares and triangles say NO to creativity. I could have used another day. It's mind-boggling, like a cross between a MENSA membership application quiz and a new improved New Age teaching model. I wasn't susceptible. I am not yet a believer]

The group can also lead individuals to a general feeling of negativism and self-doubt, if that is the pervasive mood in the group. It can affect the climate of the classroom.

Well, the teamwork nearly did me in. It is easy to get yourself into a negative mindset and say "I'm wrong."

Climate in the classroom was somewhat subdued compared to the first two days.

In a workshop setting that lasts a short amount of time participants must quickly feel that they are not sitting with strangers, but with people with whom they want to engage.

It is always instructive for me as a teacher to be in a classroom setting and to feel once again what it's like to be in a class full of strangers.

Theme 2: Finding a route through the maze

Theme 2 is about the participants' experiences with the content of the workshop. For the most part participants find the theory, the components of the program, the depth of understanding of the learning process, and the instructional practice complex and confusing in the first part of a workshop. They also find it challenging to find connections among all the pieces. In this theme they also speak of their lack of feeling of confidence as well as of their sense of hope that they will learn the material and incorporate what they are learning into their teaching.

Finding a route through the maze seems almost impossible because establishing one route seems contradictory; I was amazed at how difficult it was to develop a plan. I was constrained by what I saw. Maybe I'm becoming more aware of the enormity of the task. I'm worried that I may not remember and may move too fast. But practice makes perfect.

However, it is the teacher's responsibility to educate oneself to better understand the student's culture in order to understand student behavior.

The complexity of reasoning, logic and decision-making, I learned I was jumping ahead of the process, so sharing what I did gave me a strong sense of respect. I learned it takes great difficulty to get to the point or cut to the chase in a way to give clarity and instruction, or maybe it is getting a handle on the skill of questioning and eliciting responses and know where to go with it and when to stop.

Feuerstein's fourth criterion of the mediated learning experience is mediating the feeling of competence. Here he focuses on the feeling and not on

being competent. He says that we can be competent learners but we can feel incompetent. The teacher as mediator mediates the feeling of competence by helping learners succeed in a task in which they previously were not successful, offering just enough assistance for success, by limiting the assistance so that the learner does not become dependent on the mediator. Therefore finding the optimal level of complexity, novelty, and challenge is necessary for each individual learner. It is also important to give meaning to the achievement, by giving explicit feedback on actions taken by the learner such as planning, or strategy development and implementation. (Feuerstein, 1980; Greenberg 2000, Haywood, 1987).

You just assigned our lesson to be presented. With that came a whole bag of feelings about my competence as a teacher and my level of understanding. I have a fear of teaching my lesson. Everyone is so calm and relaxed, but I feel as if I am losing my mind. Don't they feel as I do? When we broke up into groups each set of three members of the group had a different perspective about what we were supposed to do. I never realized about myself how reticent I can be to engage in a group activity. I wasn't a good contributing team member. I fell way behind my group as they worked and talked about strategies. I have a tendency to be rigid in the right and wrong of some answers and become impatient at what seems like quibbling.

Teachers need to build their confidence when they first begin. This involves emotional risk.

Learning in this workshop is like learning to ride a bicycle; I fall off and get back up.

I have been overwhelmed by the complexity of some of the theory. As a learner I am struggling to understand the theoretical building blocks of the program as well as the cognition necessary to do the activity and then participate intellectually in the discussion. Your stories helped us understand the principles and consolidate our ideas and make connections.

Theme 2.a: I have hit my wall already

A participant describes beautifully what most workshop participants experience in the early days of the workshop: the feeling of being overwhelmed, overloaded, a lack of clarity and coherence. These are all experiences their students will have as well, just as I did when learning this curriculum for the first time. Their awareness of these feelings will help them in their implementation when their students too have these experiences. Instructors have called this the mid-term slump, when students experience low energy.

Feuerstein's (1988) ninth criterion of mediated learning is the mediation of challenge and the search for novelty and complexity. Here the mediator, in this case the workshop facilitator or another workshop participant or the individuals themselves, mediates how we orient ourselves toward a readiness to deal with complex tasks, particularly tasks or situations that are unfamiliar. In order to learn new things and to listen to other points of view as learners we must be willing to change, to confront change and not give up. Workshop participants feel overwhelmed, stressed, and challenged by putting all of the components together, but nonetheless they remain optimistic that they will learn and look toward implementation.

I've hit my wall already; I'm tired and feel overloaded. The process is foggy and very little seems clear; fitting it all together is a challenge. How do I take all these pieces of information and knowledge and connect them to make a meaningful and coherent picture? I can now rope them in on lines that are still threadlike. I am bound to get frustrated and lose faith in myself, but I believe in Feuerstein, IE, my students, and I believe in me.

Working with our projects to be ready was stressful. I enjoyed so much from the course, but putting it all together in a short time was difficult. I was so stressed, but relief came with the decision to be centered for tomorrow.

At first I thought it would be only an elementary exercise. Soon I saw it wasn't. The Lesson Plans – was a good experience. I think most people thought it would be a simple process, but soon found out how complicated this really is. I am a bit overwhelmed by the amount of prep each lesson will entail and hope that issue won't stop me from doing it. The difficulty in using this program – I am exhausted.

The participants are aware of their feelings and how past learning experiences influence their behavior in their approach to the tasks, their attitudes, their reactions to working with others, and the challenge of listening to others in dialogue. “Dialogue is about evoking insight, which is a way of reordering our knowledge – particularly the taken for granted assumptions that people bring” (Isaacs, 1999, p. 45). It is not easy to shift to listening to others’ point of view, especially in a large group where everyone is encouraged to share his/her thoughts and ideas. Until the group learns to listen together to each individual, we listen only from our own perspective. We listen through the interference of our own ideas about the topic of conversation; we listen while looking for an opening to interject or add our views, or we drift off into our own internal world. Listening this way is exhausting and draining.

I am not used to so much dialogue, and I must admit that at the end of the day I am feeling quite tired of listening. I followed along, but was feeling tired. I have taken a nap twice after 2 days this week.... Exhausted from intensive listening. I came to class tired because of the enormous amount of information my mind is consuming, Today was a breakthrough day. Frustrating conversation, I wanted to know WHY we were taking so much time, frustrating regarding homework – I need practice.

I've said too much already; it has been interesting but I find a problem with the notion that competition is bad, evil, and not good and so forth. Competition is essential for human survival.

"I've hit the wall" is what long distance runners say when they reach the point of utter exhaustion and feel they cannot go on. The runners feel that they have given everything that their bodies have to give and there is nothing left. Although workshop participants have hit their wall they remain committed to continuing and to implementing the curriculum with their students just as runners continue to run when they have hit their wall and often feel a new spurt of energy and enter a state of euphoria. The workshop participants become quieter and more self-reflective. They become more aware of their feelings, thoughts, and behaviors.

Finally I recall the conversation on the "fatigue factor" and how the deep concentration can leave one with a sense of fatigue. A GOOD thing to keep in mind for the kids. Anyway that's it. My brains are full and the rest of the evening (homework) will bring new revelations.

Feel overwhelmed and fatigued. It's Friday and my brain is very tired.

I am having difficulties with analyzing and categorizing. I didn't even want to persist in consciously having a thinking plan or strategy I would be using like the rest of the group, I just wanted to get on with the activity intuitively and expect my eyes to naturally find the answers.

I was stumped. I had old feelings of not being able to do logical mathematical question. I was blocked; I just wait til someone shows me. I find learning so difficult – it stirs up things inside me, but I don't give up. I keep trying to learn and grow, although it is traumatic. It evoked long forgotten memories of negative learning situations from my past. I developed a "so what" attitude to checking my work for precision and accuracy.

I found this week to be intense and required a lot of energy. It forced me to really think about my practice. I will be more precise and reflective in my practice. I realize how much time consists of “teacher reflection” it will take to become an effective mediator.

Having opportunities to reflect on and to discuss their thoughts and feelings about the complexity of the program led the participants to an awareness of themselves as learners and teachers.

Theme 2.b: I began to see in a whole new light

This sub theme has three elements: (1) becoming aware of how the self is in the world and how our thinking and feelings influence our opinions and actions; (2) acquiring insight: when we learn something new we often experience it as a burst of light or a striking moment; and (3) gaining new insights and self-awareness from other people's point of view. The participants, at different times throughout the workshops, became aware of their thoughts, feelings, and assumptions about decisions they made as teachers, assumptions they held about learning, teaching and certain students. The awareness of these assumptions came to light during the lectures or stories presented by the facilitator, in experiential activities in these lessons, class conversations before and after the activities, and in group work assignments.

As ideas were generated I began to see in a whole new light.

For certain students we are basically attempting to teach beyond their cognitive ability. I realized rather sheepishly that I have some very closed ideas toward certain individuals I have already taught. I had prided myself in my ability to

recognize learning as a continuous process, and to take children along their learning path at their own speed was the ideal learning situation. Also I haven't been able to follow my own wisdom quite so easily. (Reflective practice?)

I like knowing that there is always theory and philosophy to hang onto when you can't figure something out: go back to the basics, build on the foundation, and use your prior knowledge. This is a good building of the abstract ideal. I feel "weird"; I never thought about this before.

The discussion on how children aren't allowed to have an opinion and how people come to believe their opinions are facts was interesting. I believe that I must always maintain my belief in the potential of people despite whatever negative messages arise from a variety of sources. And even if I have negative doubts I promise that I will never give up on anyone.

The one significant activity that became evident in my life is the need to reflect on life, the choices I make on actions or paths. Another is that in order to correct oneself of error or mistakes, I first understand what it is that caused my problem; then I can adjust.

The week is over. I learned so much about the instruments and myself. I became conscious of my thinking. I found I was questioning my own ideas. I learned to understand deeper how going over errors is very helpful and even more beneficial than getting it right.

Dewey, Lewin, Piaget, and Schön each advocated that learning is dependent upon the integration of experience with reflection and of theory with practice. They maintained that learning cannot take place without reflection (Imel, 1992). *"Adults have acquired a coherent body of experience – associations, concepts, values, feelings, conditional responses – frames of reference that define their world"* (Mezirow, 1997, p.5). Frames of mind have two aspects, habits of mind and points of view. Habits of mind are made up of habitual ways of thinking and feelings constructed by the rules and codes of cultural experience. These codes become articulated in a point of view, which is the *"constellation of*

belief, value, judgment, attitude, and feelings that shape a particular interpretation" (Mezirow, 1997, p.6). We transform our frames of reference through critical reflection. We must become aware of our habits of mind and points of view through reading, experiential activity, and interacting with others where we can compare new knowledge with past knowledge.

It's neat that this is a feelings program. It makes me think of many children who just want to be acknowledged and valued. Being an educator includes empowering children in many, many ways, not just academically.

Who defines success? What preconceived ideas do we have about success? Is success different or the same for every student, and what does the teacher do to help each and every child feel success? Also, does a person need to constantly succeed at something in order to feel self-worth?

I find it so interesting that such a small idea, 'belief in oneself,' is so huge in a student's life; I like the idea that the kids have to believe that they can learn from you. The theory of belief system is the core of any teaching experience. Having faith or belief in oneself, a student, parents, and society is the beginning, particularly when there is resistance. All kids can learn. It is up to me, the teacher, to find the tools and to have faith/belief in myself, to persist when the child is building up resistance.

The workshop participants are encouraged to become aware of their approach to problem-solving tasks and to be aware of their behavior during group work. As a facilitator I ask them to be aware of other workshop participants' body cues for participation in the conversations. Both Instrumental Enrichment and CEA use a technique called "bridging" where a lesson is interrupted at a point where the learning can be stated in a generalized principle and the class must find examples of that principle in different contexts such as in academic subjects, interpersonal relationships, careers, and employment, or

other contexts agreed upon by the group. I usually add examples from cultural contexts. This technique encourages participants to connect immediate class experiences to other areas of their lives. Bridging sets up an opportunity for participants to think about their experiences and to hear other participants' ideas. This further promotes gaining a window into other people's frames of reference, habits of mind, and points of view. I find the more skillful they become at bridging, the more they appreciate each other's points of view.

Communication leads to better understanding, which, in turn, leads to enhanced productivity. It struck me, as being far more important to make sure that a good understanding or communication system is essential to develop good learning.

What you think you hear is not actually what you do hear, and I learned that what you think you see is not always what you think you see. It has been my experience that the words think and feel are used interchangeably. I seem to be on the track of finding the fine line between them. We can learn and expand knowledge and perception by following, seeing another point of view.

My views about a lot of things changed today. I felt positive growth inside mentally and socially. Feelings that I experienced were excitement more than frustration because it was the learning of new and different points of view.

I realized I sometimes don't practice what I think I practice; I think sometimes I listen but I don't really listen. That was nice for me to see: no matter where you come from you can still be proud of what is your tradition; you don't have to throw it out the back door; you can broaden it; you can use it and nobody is without. Nobody is perfect; that is also nice.

Today I found that breaking down a story is so meaningful; the activities require a lot of critical thinking. The information I heard today was very helpful, just by listening. The main thing was the amount of information brought to my attention and how the time flew by. I learned that a good technique of storytelling and being able to put concepts into everyday plain language is so necessary to give clear understanding to concepts we are learning.

I really liked the mention of the differentiation of using your head and using your heart. I think we need to use our hearts more. It was a powerful demonstration of a positive approach to education.

Theme 3: Weaving in and out: switching roles from learner to teacher

Buber (in Friedman, 1992) and Arnett, (1986) did not see participation in hierarchical roles as inappropriate; he encouraged recognition of role differences and sensitivity to the demands of the situation.

As a workshop facilitator I also weave back and forth between teaching the theory and explaining the didactics, and engaging the workshop participants in the activities that they will set up for their students. In this way I model their role and they become learners like their students. Teachers are considering each activity from the perspective of teacher and learner. This brought the workshop participants to reflect on their practice as teachers and to visualize how their students would respond to the tasks.

I found myself switching roles, being an 11-year-old and then back to being a teacher, reflecting back on my practices as well as imagining myself as one of my students. We have to juggle back and forth, weaving in and out of these two separate but integral parts of the whole.

This workshop continues to teach me new things about myself as both a teacher and as a learner. Examining our own practice as teachers, breaking down our teaching tasks, and gives great insight into what our students go through everyday.

Going through the task in sections helps students to put what seems to be an overwhelming task into order and to make sense of it. Good to be able to see how this would help my students. I certainly saw it in myself. I had to concentrate and use practice and visualization. It is important to talk through the experience to use language to help visualize the task. By using questions you are encouraging students to generate thought, and to accept all responses was

important to the task The importance of finding the right level of challenge to meet a particular group or a particular student is also important.

The teacher must have courage to allow students control in their learning and in discussion to take its own direction. The students need courage to overcome inhibition and blocking.

Theme 3.a: As a learner I am like this

Everyone is a learner and everyone is a teacher. When we share our knowledge and experience, and our hopes and fears, we teach. When we ask questions of others we teach. When we listen and then try to hear, we teach (Apps, 1996). It is possible that teachers experiencing learning the material will regard their own students to be their teachers too. In order to be empathetic teachers need to remember how frustrating and painful learning can be as well as how enjoyable and enriching it can be.

There are many reasons why we become rigid in our beliefs about our ability to learn or to teach. I remember in a past workshop (I often tell this story in the workshop) a woman who spent over two days telling me and the class that all her life she did not have any spatial ability. She easily became disoriented when traveling anywhere. A teacher told her in her childhood she was not good at spatial orientation and she had learned to compensate for this disability. That is just the way she was, and nobody could change it. The activities in those first two days focused on spatial orientation and organizational planning and developing strategies. She found them very challenging and she was frustrated because others in the workshop seemed to find the tasks so easy. She kept saying, “I’m

not good at this and I won't put my students through this frustration and pain if they are like me. It isn't right or ethical; people should be accepted for what they have, not tortured for what they don't have." I listened to her and encouraged others to share their thinking process as they worked through the problems. I sat with her, and we worked through the problems together by slowing down the process, talking, and becoming more aware of our approach to the task, and developing different ways of working. I told her I too had difficulty with the activities, and I showed her what strategies I learned to employ. At coffee break on the third day she was talking to a group of her colleagues and burst into tears because that morning she was able to do the spatial tasks without any problem. She said, *"All my life I've accepted my deficiency and learned to compensate for my disability. I learned to live with it. Now I realize I could learn to do spatial tasks."* This individual teacher became a trainer in mediated learning programs.

We can learn much about our practice by revisiting our childhood experiences of teaching and learning:

Many children and adults feel they don't deserve success, so they are not open to it. They self sabotage, and block success: "I am like this." We experience the level of frustration that many of our students do.

The mistakes that I made were painful, in front of my peers. It reminds me of how kids feel. It is ok to make mistakes and learn from them.

I'll be teaching, all the while remembering what it was like to learn it. The workshop has provided me as a learner and a teacher with a strong sense of enrichment. It has made me truly reflect on my practices as a teacher, a learner, a wife, a friend, and a daughter.

Totally engaged had felt techniques of the program actually being experienced as I was both learning and teaching myself at times. It came as my turn came as a presenter when I realized I was also a “learner” and it was ok for ideas to begin the gelling process. I relaxed and with that was more able to concentrate. Being able to learn at my own pace was fantastic.

I know that I can expand my thoughts forever; I guess you just let the kids go with it and bring them back to the center. I hope students will participate next year. I know some of them will always answer ‘I don’t know’.

Theme 3.b: As a Teacher, how can I change?

I chose to provide professional development in programs based on mediated learning because I believed that the most powerful agent for change, the one who is at the most strategic place to effect change, for students, for the school, and for the educational community, is the teacher. As a workshop facilitator and an administrator interested in helping teachers improve their teaching practice to increase school achievement for First Nations learners, I can learn from what the teachers themselves had to say about their experience with change in the workshop.

The workshop participants talk about changes they will make in their classroom practices; they are looking critically at their teaching practices, their relationship with students, the beliefs they have about their teaching and student learning. Richardson, (1990), in her article on what is involved in bringing about worthwhile change in teacher practices, maintains that the question is not whether teachers change or not change, but rather the discussion should center on the dialogue teachers engage in concerning their practice and on taking

control of their own classroom activities and theoretical justifications. Teachers changing their practice need opportunities in which they take control of their justifications for their practice by reflecting on their practice: on their understandings and beliefs regarding the curriculum and theoretical frameworks that guide their practice. Teachers must have opportunities to articulate these beliefs and understandings to others and to themselves.

Critically thinking about our practice as teachers is necessary for sustained change to take place. *“Being critical thinkers entails a continual questioning of assumptions”* (Brookfield, 1992). The participants in the workshop are asking many questions about their practice. A necessary component to thinking critically about our practice is to identify and become aware of the assumptions we hold about our practice – in this case about the practice of teaching – about beliefs we hold about the students we teach and our ability to teach. From the quotes below these workshop participants are connecting what they became aware of in the workshops to their own teaching contexts.

Has my thinking changed? How can I change teaching strategies? What ways can I change my questioning and answering techniques to enable critical thinking? Am I really doing all I can to help children become independent, critical learners?

Changing teaching styles, moving from telling to asking, moving from “Let’s get it done” to “Let’s make sure we understand.” The workshop showed me how well prepared the teacher must be to make those complex bridges.

I think all teachers and learners need to look at their belief systems and have the ability to change, and change is about life itself.

I forget to connect learning to their lives.

It was great to think about how to deliver this material to our students. I believe I have really absorbed the elicited information, pointing out relevant and not relevant information. The teacher must have a set purpose in mind for the topic – be prepared. Before I do group work I would make sure that children are comfortable and strong in collaborative learning techniques.

All ideas or almost all ideas that are elicited from students are significant. We as teachers are used to feeding students with information. Positive self-image is instrumental in allowing students to achieve. I try to help my students make connections. The students are encouraged to have faith in themselves and their strengths. There is so much power in it for them; the belief or knowledge in their own abilities will carry them through their entire lives. To allow them to see the abilities they have is to give them the power to conquer everything. Thinking for themselves is the key idea. Listening to and reflecting on what their peers are saying is not done very often

I love stories, and I have learned that it is actually the chicken scratch that our mind makes around an issue which helps to fix the learning in our mind. Everything can be rotated, examined, and overlapped. I'm learning to be flexible and to see when something isn't working that I can change; change my mind and that is all right. It became clear one has to change strategy in response to new conditions.

In the past I tended to ask a question and then answer it before they've really thought about it. Sometimes they'd say no, no, no that isn't what I was going to say but I didn't read the message right, so I think there is another change in my head.

Becoming aware and identifying what I want to change is the first step in changing a practice; the next is naming what needs to change. These workshop participants identify what they resolve to change in their practice. They identify what will be difficult to change in their teaching behaviors and beliefs about students. The workshop participants also identify the steps they will take to modify their practice.

Students often shock me; I hope I can get over the shocked mode when the student throws me a curved ball. I know I am a control freak; the most difficult part will be to let the kids do the work.

It's difficult to teach kids to go further and extend ourselves past the minimum required. I will strive for higher goals and try things I might not have before. It has become very clear about the impact teachers can have on their student both negative and positive. I found myself thinking of different children in the discussion about belief systems: belief about belonging. How will they understand concepts? How am I going to facilitate their understanding? How my eyes have been opened to a whole new perspective and their potentials. I'll be seeing all my students in a new way. And all of them have great potential for success, and I intend to do everything I can to be a good mediator for them. I will get kids to explain why, justify their responses, ideas, and opinions. This gives you amazing insight into their experiences and who they are.

I learned that teachers' beliefs about his/her effectiveness about the students' ability to learn affect students' success. I guess I would try to teach some of the things I am not great at ... so as not to pass that bias onto my students... It is important that students know that there are different intelligences and they are not all visual learners.

For too long I have been concerned about coming up with the right answer and not allowed myself to play with other possible solutions. Letting go of that would be invaluable. I will have to let go of some of it if I am to encourage students to do so.

Trust is the basis for making change with discussion and the use of supportive language. Some teachers claim that they can't have the power to help children.

Finally the course comes to a head: the process has given me a new goal in my life. From now on I will be listening and looking at stories in a broader sense.

Theme 4: Down from the mountain

As the workshop comes to a close the participants prepare to return to their homes and work places. A great concern for professional development is the transfer of what is learned in the workshop to their workplace when the

professional development is mandated from policymakers. An external consultant who is unconnected to the participants' workplace conducts these mandated professional activities; or workshops are conducted far away from participants' teaching context. (Brookfield, 1990, 1998).

The workshop has, in a sense, set up a new culture: a new set of norms, a common language for communication, new relationships, and a new way of viewing teaching. The participants in the following quotes explore how they will cope with bringing what they have learned into their workplaces. It is interesting that some of them point out that they were unaware of the way they changed until they were back in the "world" or when thinking about their students.

I don't know when this happened, but it was as if it became a part of me. I don't know how to explain this: it sounds strange but it ties in with my religion – you know, the way we are supposed to live and the way we are supposed to treat people. It's about the mountain: you get an elevated feeling of the mountain and you just want to stay there. You feel so wonderful and perfect and that is actually an insight; you have to breathe the air in; you have to go down from the mountain into the valley and you have to go share whatever is up there and eventually there will be cleaner air down there, and that's how I want to be: I'm breathing and going into the valley. What I thought of doing is not to try to change the world, or the technikon where I work, or whatever, I want to make this a part of myself and start living this so others can see and you know ACT ON THAT.

We all know we've changed in some way. I remember when I was in high school we used to go to camps. We'd always start off not knowing what the end product would be. We always had this ideal that by the end we'd be changed teenagers. At the beginning we'd be wary, very similar to this workshop; then as the week progressed you'd start forming relationships; you'd start learning a lot more; you'd start realizing that things weren't necessarily the way you thought they always were. You know there were definite perspectives all the time, and by listening to people you know those perspectives could change. We'd always go back to where we came from and the youth would be the church service, and we would always stand up and go crazy and it would be the most fantastic church

service. It was so wonderful and we were so fired up and this is what we are going to do and it was just fantastic. That's how I felt in this workshop: I just said, Yes please! I can go out and make a difference. I also remember very, very clearly that two weeks down the line when we went back to church it wasn't there. We start thinking where is that feeling gone? It's not here anymore, and you start thinking to yourself well maybe it was just the atmosphere and maybe it was just something that fired us up and that's dead. You'll lose excitement, and I don't want that to happen. I just think it is so important that we don't let what is happening outside doom what we've learned here, because it is really something we've got to implement in some way. We've all got to make a concerted effort to get together. In the end it is up to us to train the others or have to instill in the others what we have learned.

Participants speak of possible barriers to implementation. Teachers often do not feel in control of their classroom practice and the changes they would like to make for their students. The mandated curriculum goals, school organization requirements, and the outside experiences of students often interfere with teachers' desire to implement an innovation.

I often feel so disconnected from students because I get so bogged down and get caught up in curriculum goals, record-keeping and paper work. Students become incidental rather than the focus. Wow, what a lot of information! I am excited to try this in my class, but I will get resistance from administrators and parents.

It is starting to come together, but it is scary too because the greatness of role seems to be getting more and more difficult than what I feel comfortable with as a teacher. I am concerned that the structure of our school system would make it difficult to find enough time in a supported environment to become an effective mediator. I am concerned that the time for all these considerations may be difficult to orchestrate when the demands from the other areas of school and personal life are high.

This course has been very interesting. I need time to review, ponder and then integrate into my teaching day. I am looking forward to this. This has been a stimulating and exciting learning experience. It has been challenging for every

moment and it has totally held my attention. I only hope I can now return and put what I learned into practice.

The workshop participants feel hopeful about implementing what they have learned. One of the main ideas from the workshop is with practice we can transfer what we learn in one context to another. Sharing what they learned with their colleagues will promote the transfer of learning.

I am learning to feel hopeful that this might work. So it makes me feel somewhat hopeful about returning to work. I came here in a fairly hopeless mood as my job is not going very well, but I had a faint hope that this workshop would help.

What we learn from one experience can easily be transferred to another experience. The workshop made us reflect on our practice and personal philosophies; it is valuable in developing a different way of thinking.

We are agents of change. I enjoy changes, challenges, and learning new things and teaching in new ways.

Sharing what we learned helps us to know that we've changed.

Change can be frightening and confrontational, but it does not keep participants from feeling hopeful about implementation.

It is frightening, but the change will modify my current belief system. We are being transformed slowly, step by step, and one day I will feel I have acquired the wisdom needed to be an instrument of change.

I love learning like this, having all my insides shaken up, but I know that this is growth. I always find that learning and growth is so confrontational for me; it is never a gentle experience. Change is confrontational. I have been taught to think outside the box, not accept limitations.

Maybe we could all go back to what we remember from the workshop, what did Lorna show us, and maybe we can all come to some type of solution, because in the end, it is us who have to train the others or have to instill in the others what we have learned.

I didn't ever become aware of the fact I was changing. Gee it must be wonderful to know you've changed, but I see I've changed already. Today when someone asked a question I reacted so well: I just asked questions instead of imposing my ideas on them. I actually thought about what I was going to do: I thought about the process that I was going through, so I have changed and I think I'll be doing a lot more changing.

In the themes that emerged from the workshop there is lots of movement and directionality. We learned that they need a safe space for learning. A safe space helps them to take risks and respond to challenges. As they are learning new material they constantly verify this new experience with their students and work situations. Although workshop participants experienced frustration, fatigues, confusion, and feelings of incompetence they persevered and continued to be active members of the learning community. In the next chapter we will hear what they have to say about their experience of the facilitator.

Chapter Five

Participants' view of the facilitator

In this chapter I looked at learning about my role as workshop facilitator from the views of workshop participants in their journal writing and in focus-group discussion. By considering what stands out for them in their workshop experience I hope to gain a reflected gaze at my practice. This chapter focuses on their experience of my roles as the facilitator. I identified four roles and 10 themes that stood out for workshop participants as presented in Figure 2.

Role 1: Facilitator as creator of a safe learning environment. As with the participant's view of their own learning experience, a safe learning environment forms the ground in the structure of their view of the facilitator. They identified four aspects of how the facilitator plays an active role in developing a safe learning environment. Theme 1.a: Encouraging a community of learners focuses on how workshop participants learn from the experiences and learning styles of their peers. Theme 1.b: Variety makes a positive environment, reveals how diversity in the group brings richness to the community. There is a relationship between themes Theme 1.c: Voicing our thoughts easily and Theme 1.d: Fostering an atmosphere of acceptance. In order to voice their thoughts easily, participants believe they need a safe environment where they feel accepted by

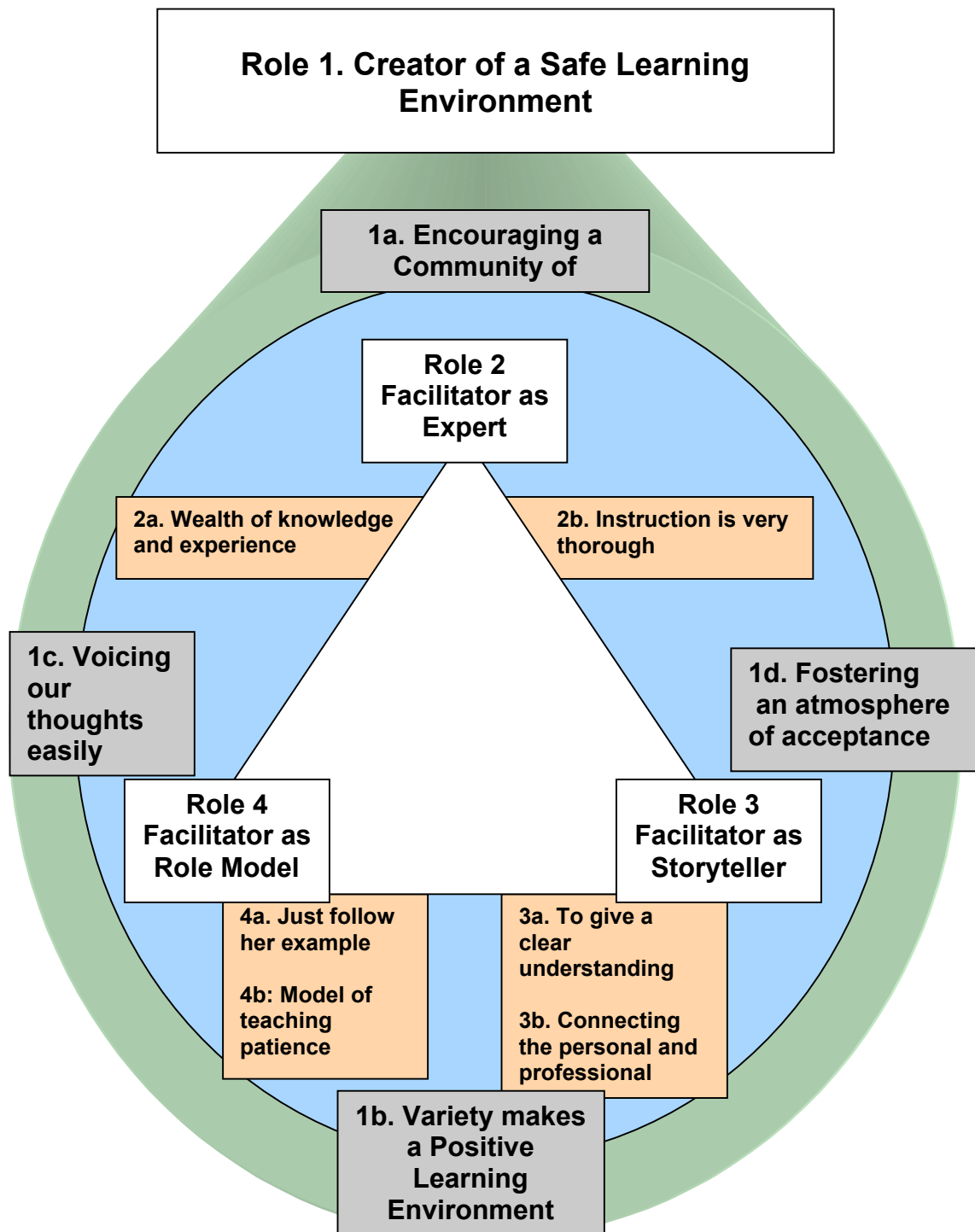


Figure 2. Participants' view of the facilitator

the facilitator and other workshop participants. The more they feel accepted, the safer they feel and the more they can share their thoughts and feelings.

Role 2: Facilitator as expert contains the themes that describe participants' thoughts about the importance of the facilitator's knowledge of the content and instructional skills. In Theme 2.a: Wealth of experience and knowledge, participants are aware of the amount of experience the facilitator has of the content material, which contributes to their feeling of confidence and safety. In Theme 2.b: The instruction is very thorough, participants comment on the level of preparation and organization that is in the instruction.

Role 3: Facilitator as storyteller reveals the importance of storytelling for participants. They find stories useful in making connections between what is being taught in the workshop and classroom experiences. In Theme 3.a: To give a clear understanding and Theme 3.b: Connecting personal and professional, I see that participants' imagination, senses, perceptions and memory are connected; where the story brings together the storyteller and the listeners and a closer relationship forms than otherwise, regardless of who is telling the story.

Role 4: Facilitator as role model – The participants are very closely observing and learning from the facilitator. In Theme 4.a: Just follow her example and Theme 4.b: Model of teaching patience, I see the importance of modeling what I am teaching.

I arrived at these roles and themes by first grouping quotes into clusters that describe the role of the facilitator using my own labels to describe each role. Then, by rereading each role I arranged quotes into groups until I felt there was a unifying theme or themes to create a picture of a role. After this, I found a title for the role and themes either from the words of the workshop participants or from my own that described, as closely as possible, the ideas of the participants.

In reading participant quotes I saw immediately that as the facilitator of the workshop I had many roles, as Pullias and Young describe:

Teaching is many things. The teacher is many persons. Teaching is sometimes instructing, explaining, or telling, yet very little can be “taught” in this sense. Teaching is waiting, but there is a time for action. Teaching involves demands that externally imposed standards be met; yet the best standards are self-made. The teacher is “learned” – [s]he should (note: [s] is added) know more than his/her students – but [s]he is aware of deep ignorance and is in essence a learner. The teacher is, in the nature of the teaching-learning process, an example, yet [s]he is stumblingly faulty; [s]he has feet of clay. A teacher should be objective and detached, but probably the best of teaching is very like a love affair. (1968, p. 6).

The emergence of a role was elicited by the immediate goal for instruction, or the goal for the day as it related to the intent for the workshop and my perception of the needs of the group. Over the years, as I have gained

confidence in my role as facilitator I have become much more flexible in making instructional decisions “on the spot”.

Over the years that I have been conducting professional development and staff development activities, I have used “facilitator” to describe my role rather than teacher because teachers come to the professional development experience with their own knowledge and experience and my task is to facilitate the sharing of this knowledge and experience so that we can all learn from each other. I do acknowledge that teachers participate in workshops conducted by me because they are interested in learning from knowledge I have gained through study and experience. First I gained expertise in the subject of mediational teaching (Haywood, 1987) and the applications from then on; I use this knowledge to help teachers implement what they learn in their classrooms. As I teach and facilitate these workshops I continue to learn from the participants.

The label “facilitator” comes from the verb “to facilitate”, which means to assist, to make easier or less difficult. However, I often complicate matters intentionally in order to illuminate the understanding of an idea. I try to set the conditions that will enable all of us to reach beyond what we each bring to the learning context. A facilitator is a process guide, someone who makes a process easier or more convenient. Facilitation is about movement, moving something from A to B. And it means that the group is cooperative and in agreement with the destination. As a facilitator I believe it is my responsibility to help generate

valid and useful information to create conditions in which people can make informed choices and to help people develop a commitment to those choices (Argyris, 1970; Neiderman and Volkema, 1999).

The teachers who participated in these workshops engaged in professional development rather than staff development because they came from diverse settings and voluntarily chose to engage in the workshops to extend their own knowledge and skills as teachers (Stevenson, 1987; Richardson and Hamilton, 1994). Professional development includes training, practice, and feedback, with opportunities for individual reflection and group inquiry into practice and coaching. Effective professional development is collaborative and provides opportunities for teachers to interact with peers, focuses on student learning and is rooted in the knowledge base for teaching. It recognizes teachers as professionals and adult learners and incorporates constructivist approaches to teaching and learning (Abdal-Haqq, 1995; Wilson and Berne, 1999).

One role of the facilitator is to create a safe environment in which to motivate participants to engage in learning together. In the case of short courses or professional-development workshops creating a safe environment must be achieved in a short space of time, especially when one of the instructional objectives is for participants to engage in dialogue and collaborative learning. According to Isaacs (1999), a necessary dimension of conversation is the atmosphere or field in which it takes place. *“A field is the quality of shared*

meaning and energy that can emerge among a group of people" (p. 242). A field cannot be created but the conditions necessary for a field in which rich interaction takes place can be; what Isaacs calls a "*container*". Three conditions he identifies for a container where people will learn together and grow are energy, possibility, and safety.

On the first morning of each of the workshops I began setting our container for dialogue by asking the group to arrange the seating so that every person in the room could see everyone else and each person be seen by the group. When we engaged in conversation, and told stories, I encouraged the group to look to the person speaking rather than at me. I called people by their name. I utilized the energy of those in the group that were ready to engage from the very beginning and then gradually and respectfully asked them to wait for others to have an opportunity to voice their contributions to the conversations. I modeled my expectation that every person would participate in the class conversations, implicitly and explicitly.

Feuerstein's criteria twelve is mediation of belonging. When we have a sense of belonging in our learning environments we gain security, stability, and continuity. The presence of a strong sense of belonging makes people more receptive to guidance and support from community members. According to Brokenleg, in *Reclaiming youth at risk*, (Brendtro et al.1990), in Native American communities, everyone is related and must feel included in the community.

“Treating others as related was a powerful social value that transformed human relationships. Drawing them into one’s circle motivated one to show respect and concern, and live with a minimum of friction and a maximum of good will” (p. 37).

Role 1: Facilitator as creator of a safe learning environment

Creating a safe space for the students (participants) to interact within.

So often we pay lip service to creating the safe learning environment but to have “lived it” will stay with me longer and hopefully become more a part of my own teaching practice. As part of the safeness must be the marvelous manner you have demonstrated “thinking time” and to sit back and let discussions evolve. In essence we become powerful and active learners without your pushing us to a particular time frame. Within this environment it also became more apparent how much respect is given to each individual as a learner

It is essential for the facilitator to assume the leadership in setting the tone of the workshop environment from the very beginning. I set this tone by using the introductory exercise of workshop participants’ telling a story about themselves and connecting it to their expectations for learning in the workshop. I also spend time introducing myself so that they have a sense of who I am professionally as well as personally. I model openness. In this way I begin to lay the foundation for establishing a relationship with each of the participants and for them to begin to relate to one another. Embedded within my story and the description of the workshop I provide a window into what they can expect and where we are going.

From the transcripts, four themes emerged that characterize the creation of a safe learning environment. Two themes focus on the group or community and two others on the needs of the individual within the group.

Theme 1a: Encouraging a community of learners

The facilitator focuses attention on and nurtures both the group and each individual in that group. The characteristics of the facilitator that stood out to the participants are: the facilitator introduced her culture and herself to the group and invited those who do not usually share to share stories of their cultures – joining her culture to theirs thereby *establishing a common basis for relationships; everyone's ideas are accepted and valid* to the community and an atmosphere of acceptance is established; the facilitator makes contact with each individual and reassures the small group that working together to solve problems is okay, accepted, and expected; conveying intentionality and purposefulness of the activities is important as well as finding the right amount of challenge to meet the needs of the group and each individual.

When I facilitate workshops I pay very close attention to the cultural and linguistic differences in the group. As I listen to their introductions I note the cadence of their speech and the amount of time they take to tell their story; what they choose to talk about; the similarities and differences in their selections. I listen for their intentions and expectations. One of the challenges of teaching in diverse class settings is to plan and implement the principles that will facilitate learning for the broadest range of abilities, needs and interests. At the very heart of learning is social interaction (Faltis, 2001). The learning for me as the facilitator begins before the group arrives. I try to learn as much as I can about

the group before the workshop, but their stories tell me far more than I can know before our meeting.

It is important for workshop participants to feel respected as individuals and as a group. It takes skill to encourage participants to contribute verbally and then ask them to wait for one another. I constantly encourage them to look to one another, to encourage each other. I usually model this rather than direct them to do it. Accepting and valuing everyone's contributions leads to the entire group feeling included and respected.

Different cultures have different participation structures, meaning that people have differing ways in which they cue each other to speak when in conversation, i.e., the length of time they require between speech segments in an interaction. Faltis's (2001) idea of joinfostering highlights the need to capitalize on the knowledge, experience, and linguistic and cultural resources brought by each individual to the learning process. It is important for the workshop participants to learn to turn to each other for knowledge. This I believe establishes a community of learners.

Joinfostering stems from the credo that public school and their English-speaking teachers and students need to invite students for whom English is an additional language to become active members of the socio-academic community. Joinfostering evolved from an idea in children's stories where

problems are solved cooperatively rather than competitively. Principles of joinfostering include:

- Active participation of all students through invitation and coercion.
- Social integration to build on prior knowledge, i.e., social integration of students of diverse linguistic, cultural, and social backgrounds to build on the funds of knowledge and interests students bring with them.
- Integration of language-learning into content activities.
- Promotion of the critical consciousness to confront racism, social stratification, and exclusionary practices (Faltis, 2001, p. 3).

These principles of joinfostering can be found in the workshop participants' description of their experience. Often teachers are cautious about calling on students who are quieter and who hold back from participating. Although I share this caution, I know their participation and engagement is important to the community's learning. I have noticed that in both K – 7 classrooms and in adult classes many of those members from different cultural, linguistic, and social class groups have developed a habit of not stepping forward first to respond to questions. They wait.

In workshops from the beginning, on the first afternoon, I invite and gently coerce those who are not coming forward to share their thoughts and ideas. I have learned to watch body language and facial expressions that indicate to me that people have something to share. In working with students of First Nations

background I have observed that many need a longer waiting time in which to respond. Being rather impulsive myself waiting is a challenge, and can be uncomfortable for other members of the learning community. They want to jump in to fill the silence. In the end the group benefits and learns from every member of the group. In the workshop where there is a comment about Jackie changing the most, that she was powerful on the last day, it is possible that Jackie did not change at all. She was powerful to begin with because in the social rules of the usual classroom environment she was not accustomed to sharing openly and spontaneously. As a result the learning community did not know of her power and knowledge. The following are what the workshop participants' said about their perceptions of the learning environment and the role of the facilitator.

encouraging a community of learners and respect among students.

- *How this happens over the progression of the instruments [Instrumental Enrichment activities]*
- *Pairing students fast/slow to build elements of learning in each student.*

I like the feel of this group and put that down to your skills of being so inclusive so respectful and so lacking criticism.

they are very shy at the beginning, and Lorna picked it up, didn't say anything, but would say, "A, Sally, I can see you wanting to say something". We didn't, we should actually have done something about it, when I saw Sandy wanting to say, I should have said, but I didn't.

but I think it is really Important what we did, I think, I think they changed more, (Betty: The insight that we got from) I believe I saw a really big change in Jackie, on the last day she was powerful what she said. Um, Yes we changed, but it was so nice to see how they had changed when we saw that we were going, oh actually we want you to speak (referring to the black and colored South Africans), they were surprised, but Lorna kept, Lorna kept saying, "Ramona?" And it

became a joke after(laughter) Sally? and, by, by doing it all the time and them seeing we actually wanted them to speak, we weren't getting angry with that, they became freer.

I don't know, because I don't know what is going through their minds but I should imagine that they are feeling in some way that we don't really want to hear what they have got to say, which couldn't be further from the truth, because I can't hear enough about Lorna's um nation, I want more, much more.

You demonstrated how important it is and how it encourages people to take risks and to be more comfortable in their learning environment.

Theme 1b: Variety makes a positive environment

Participants talk about gaining insight from one another, and appreciating the enrichment resulting from diversity. Trust is needed for sharing especially when the group is diverse in life experiences, language, and culture. The facilitator must take the lead in creating a language base and a common culture for the group. The essence of an effective collaborative learning team is diversity. Using language positively in such a way that builds trust, respect, and understanding builds a supportive learning community. This community is achieved through sharing and encouraging risk-taking. According to Gergen,

"We hold relationally responsible action to be those that sustain and enhance forms of interchange out of which meaningful action itself is made possible. If human meaning is generated through relationship then to be responsible to relational process is to favor the possibility of intelligibility itself – of possessing selves, values, and the sense of worth" (2000 p. 18).

He goes on to say, “*All beliefs about the world and self are culturally and historically contingent*” (p. 19).

As these workshop participants pointed out, building a positive environment requires time and care. It means that the facilitator must model openness and flexibility. Participants needed to know what to expect, and the way instruction was presented set the tone for the community.

There not being any absolutes in terms of openings and thoughts but rather an enrichment resulting from variety make such a positive environment.

Today was the first day of FIE training. The group is made up of both new teachers as well as teachers who’ve been in the system for many years. Everyone brings with them a wealth of personal experiences, as well as different cultural backgrounds. This in itself brings strength into the group.

basically what Lorna did is introduced her culture to us from the start, And she did it, in just such a way that she made us aware of the fact that there were other cultures in the room as well and somehow because of the fact that Lorna was the first to share her culture they almost felt it was easier for them and another thing that happened is, as well, is that Lorna almost, not directly, but almost directly asked them to share, what came from their culture, and I don’t think, well I know myself that I very, very seldom actually ask someone from another culture what their culture actually involves, and that is why I don’t know enough.

Her precise and positive explanation of what the course is going to be about. It created a positive relaxed feeling, which then set the mood for the activities. But now that I think about it she began to create this mood from the very beginning.

Theme 1c: Voicing our thoughts easily

In order to create a context for collaborative learning individuals in the group must be able to voice their ideas, thoughts and feelings and feel heard by the facilitator and other workshop participants. A safe environment is required to

voice one's thoughts, and it is the voicing and sharing of one's ideas and thoughts that contributes to the creation of a safe environment. Language that builds understanding includes words that reveal values and beliefs – reveals the person (Faltis, 2001). A major focus of a mediated learning approach to community learning is developing the awareness that although we use language to convey our ideas and make ourselves understood by the other, language is messy. Even though the group might all speak the same language, how we understand and use that language is influenced by our past experiences. Time and commitment to the relationship are needed to clarify ideas and ensure we are understood. The facilitator must walk a delicate path, encouraging participants to share their ideas and thoughts while at the same time challenging them to elaborate unclear ideas without feeling criticized.

Teachers in these workshops do not all come from the same school setting, so having an opportunity for teacher talk is helpful to their growth and development. Each has a wealth of knowledge and experience we can all benefit from hearing. And the best sharing takes place when it is spontaneous and called forth by the energy of the group talk. In a safe, respectful environment the workshop participants have

“Equal opportunity to assume various roles of discourse, (to advance beliefs, challenge, defend, explain, assess evidence, and judge arguments), become critically reflective of assumptions, are empathic and

open to other perspectives; are willing to listen and search for common ground” (Escrow, 1997. p.9).

According to Mezirow, these are ideal conditions for adult learning.

Each person must feel (s)he is a significant member of the group but that each is a separate member in what Arnett calls a community of “Otherness.” A community of otherness begins with

“The recognition that there are as many points of view as there are persons in the community. When people have a common concern that they approach and respond to in different ways it avoids the blinders and hysteria that arise from polarization of communication and the closing of mind and heart to the other for fear of conflict with it” (Arnett, 1986, p. xi. Forward by Friedman, M.).

Self-realization is a product of relation. To breach the boundaries of the self and to come out from ourselves to meet with essential otherness requires communication between independent, whole individuals who are open to the wholeness of the other (Friedman, 1992).

We have worked at clarifying our thinking and verbalizing our intent throughout the week. It is becoming clear to me that we have been able to voice our thoughts so easily because of the safe learning environment which you have so carefully set up.

Everyone’s idea is valid to the community and it is practice that will even out the mediator’s frustration and dis ease in-group discussion.

*no answers were belittled or were wrong (all answers were accepted)
salient points were brought out of group responses.*

The importance of validating what each person says, thereby creating a nurturing environment.

Creating a language base with the students is creating a common culture or common basis for relationship.

By using questions you are encouraging students to generate thought and to accept all responses was important to the task [one of the exercises in the FIE curriculum].

Theme 1d: Fostering an atmosphere of acceptance

Feeling accepted first by the facilitator and then by the learning community helps participants take risks and pursue learning challenges. Trust is the primary element to feeling acceptance and a sense of belonging. Giving recognition and validating group members' ideas is the "*cheapest, least time-consuming, most powerful act we can take part in for individuals and for teams*" (Schulte, 1999, p. 4). The feeling of acceptance comes from the facilitator's accepting all answers, drawing out salient points and giving feedback and encouragement.

According to Buber and Friedman,

"understanding and accepting are the two sided dance of dialogue; dialogue is learning; and what matters in genuine dialogue is my acceptance of the 'other' of the other person, to be open to others"

Friedman, 1992p. 23).

We gain our sense of self through our confirmation by others and through others' accepting our limitations.

By fostering an atmosphere of acceptance allows the higher level of cognitive functioning to take place. – SUCCESS for each person in the group including the mediator.

trust is the basis of making change. First component is to develop a trust with significant teacher, facilitator, or mediator or peer group to take a risk to do the exercises.

The facilitator must note that participants can feel judged by the facilitator even when there is no intention to be judgmental. The quote below represents a workshop participant who felt that I did not give her the time she required to tell her story in the way she wanted and that there was no time to discuss the story fully in the group.

I sort of felt my story wasn't fully accepted by you nor talked over, communicated the way I wanted because I was a little scared to tell it, rushed.

Role 2: Facilitator as expert

This role speaks to the appreciation of workshop participants for the knowledge, skill and experience with the material that the facilitator brings to the workshop. The label “expert” is problematic when it implies that there is a hierarchical relationship being promoted between the facilitator and the workshop participants, and when it implies that the opinion of the facilitator is to be taken as truth. In any learning environment there are members who have more knowledge and experience of any given topic. In a nurturing community the expertise of any member including the facilitator can be of benefit to the group as long as it is not used to control, dominate, or silence members of the learning community.

The techniques I use to transmit information and knowledge to participants are:

- providing historical background and perspective
- describing theories which underlie the curriculum
- providing personal experiences and anecdotes
- talking about goals and purposes of the workshop
- discussing and drawing out salient and relevant points
- providing illustrative examples
- give supporting research
- providing positive and precise explanations
- providing new information

The facilitator's ability to manage the complexity of the material and the ability and skills to manage the group can cause participants to question their own ability to manage their own classrooms. But that questioning is alleviated as the workshop progresses and participants gain their own sense of expertise with the material. The workshop participants "*transform their identity from newcomer to old timer, whose changing knowledge, skill, and discourse are part of a developing identity – in short, a member of a community of practitioners*" (Lave and Wenger, 1991. p. 122).

Theme 2a: Wealth of experience and knowledge

To share my knowledge and experience with the material in these workshops I draw on my own learning experiences in my community. When I wanted to learn to use medicinal plants I sought the expertise of the older knowledge-holders in my community. Over the course of a few years they guided and supported me in acquiring the knowledge through working with them and learning through practice. They always had a clear idea of what I needed to learn at each time. They also knew what I could cope with. They knew when to give me the benefit of insights they gained through their own experience. I learned that it was fulfilling for them to share their wealth of knowledge and experience with me. As Feuerstein would say, *it was a reciprocal relationship*. “Mediated learning is present when there is a clear-loop between sender and receiver”(1988, p.64).

As I reflect on your mediation I recognize that you have a clear idea of the purpose of each student page. Because of that knowledge your apparent ease at directing our learning is both inspiring and frightening.

the most powerful feeling and experience I am left with today is the importance of the mediator. The depth of knowledge and ability as a trainer awes me. In just a few days you have tried to guide, support us as we learn so many facets of Instrumental Enrichment.

And our teacher brings with her a tremendous wealth of experiences and knowledge.

The vocabulary that was included in each of the lessons is interesting. It showed me how well prepared the teacher must be in order to make these complex bridges.

The careful insight contained in the material presented.

Salient points were brought out of group responses.

she went through new information on how to analyze stories. I was most impressed with the knowledge that Lorna had about reasons why stories were told and how she experienced them.

Theme 2b: The Instruction is very thorough

This theme is about participants benefiting from the facilitator's past experience with the material and helps them visualize how to teach it in a class. The following quotes describe the facilitator as skilled practitioner. A significant point here is the awareness of the workshop participants of my actions and the teaching processes I employed. They commented on the small details of teaching this material and on the importance of pointing out details that may be missed, and the giving of feedback on the practice pages. The danger here is when the facilitator to seem overly familiar with the tasks. By the facilitator's being too much of an expert, the participants might think, "*I can't do that*"[my quote] (Faltis, 2001).

From studying and practicing Instrumental Enrichment, I learned to give feedback and to produce insightful thinking by asking "eliciting" questions that lead to dialogue. Some of the tasks in Instrumental Enrichment can be a source of ambiguity, disequilibrium, conflict and tension. Asking questions that encourage participants to think about their decision-making processes, their approaches to the task, and their motivations to select a certain response causes

them to reflect and to produce insight not just for themselves but also for those listening to the interchange (Feuerstein et al. 1979,1980,1986). A safe learning environment, however, is necessary to use this way of facilitating. Another area for sensitive and caring probing is to discuss sources of errors on task exercises. Before learning Instrumental Enrichment and Cognitive Enrichment Advantage I avoided discussing errors on tasks openly with students during class. I reserved those discussions for one-on-one engagement or gave messages on their written work. By learning to deal with error-making in public, immediately, and up front, I now can promote the notion that we all make errors. In addition, by exploring such errors, we take advantage of a rich source of learning.

Another source for me in learning how to instruct was from experiencing and observing the apprenticeship model of our traditional Lil'wat teaching and learning system. From watching my mother and other elders I learned that one characteristic of their teaching was being a supportive encourager. They gave just enough information for me to go on with my learning; they stepped in just as I was being overcome with frustration, giving me enough support and guidance to go on. They made it all seem effortless, and I did not ever feel as if I could not learn.

The instruction is very thorough and a lot of thought has gone into it.

I learned the importance of finding the right level of challenge to meet a particular group of students or a particular student.

I am thankful that we were able to go through some lessons, getting feedback from Lorna.

I learned it takes great difficulty to get to the point or cut to the chase in a way to give clarity and instruction or maybe it's getting a handle on the skill of questioning and eliciting responses and know where to go with it, and when to stop.

Her precise and positive explanation of what the course is going to be about, but the main thing was the amount of information and knowledge that was brought to my attention.

not allow the student behaviors to sway the presentation or make the mediator angry (lose their center).

I really appreciated that all aspects of teaching were discussed (from the task to the praise).

Going through the task in sections helps the student to put, what seems to be, an overwhelming task into order to make sense of it. " Regenerate the feeling that a child can do this on their own by teaching the 6 steps of the elements of the plan."

You talk about rules and precision and accuracy, when it is important and when to be general. Elicit, generate, and justify....learning to follow a sequence. What strategies? Strategies are a wonderful way for students to transfer from one situation to another It is a challenge Yes!

I like the idea of talking through the first part of a paper. I am glad that you pointed out p46. the error page. Fostering the idea that error is ok and that we can correct it.

Pointing out relevant information and not relevant information is important. Making it visual is beneficial...the student is learning strategies that can be transferred to other situations.

Role 3: Facilitator as storyteller

I did not know I was a storyteller until I began to teach and facilitate workshops. I grew up with stories. I learned about our land and the history of my

ancestors from the stories told by my family and my community. I learned the values and proper behavior of community from stories. But I thought I could not tell a story. As I gained experience with the material that I was teaching, I began telling stories to illustrate different points in the theory. In this way I connected the formal theory and practice in the world of classroom teaching. I discovered that stories help to make ideas real for workshop participants. Stories make connections for learners by making complex ideas accessible. I find that I use stories to illustrate a point but I do not draw attention to the point. The listeners draw what they need from the story. Over years of facilitating groups I added to my pool of stories, and each group called forth a story that best fit its need.

Theme 3a: To give clear understanding

This sub theme reveals that stories help people gain a better understanding of concepts and ideas. It makes ideas more accessible.

When I recently heard stories described as being much like maps (Winterson, 2000) I was suddenly able to understand in a fuller way the nature of the narratives that have become part of my teaching practice. Maps allow one to see the layout of the terrain from above so that mountains can be seen as bounded rather than as insurmountable obstacles, valleys can be seen as finite rather than inescapable chasms, and oceans can be understood to be navigable rather than experienced as a vastness within which to be engulfed (Akin, 2002, p.63).

Facilitator as storyteller makes facilitation much more personal. It helps to make connections between the facilitator and the workshop participants and to the workshop material. Stories drawn from teaching experiences, help to break down barriers that often exist in workshops, when the facilitator seems to be more knowledgeable and skillful, materials are complex and inaccessible, and workshop participants who are strangers to each other.

I learned that a good technique of storytelling and being able to put concepts in everyday plain language is so necessary to give clear understanding to the concepts we are learning.

Through sharing thoughts, ideas, and stories, it became very clear about the impact teachers can have on their students, both negative and positive.

*Hearing people's stories. They seem to come spilling out
people making connections with: their personal lives
-their teaching practices
- the power of story
the power of words that evoke memories.*

I really enjoyed this course and learnt so much from hearing the other stories is really educational, it made me feel that a small story could have a lot of meaning in your own life and not feel you are alone.

Lorna brought up the section regarding the parent's belief system in his/her child, ability to be a successful learner. This belief in a child from a parent is at the core of a child belonging in her or his self to learn, think through any problem. My reaction was based on a real childhood experience – my mother was unable to decide for herself if I had the ability to do well at school or not. I can remember a painful experience during a conversation with a teacher. She asked the question, "Can my child learn?" I remember thinking why doesn't she know herself? And from that day until many years later I felt inferior to the other children. It's amazing that after all the work I have done to date on my self enhancing and self esteem building, personal growth in counseling and formal academic studies that

I had a gut reaction to this aspect of obstacles to be aware of, although jolting it is a piece of information I will use when teaching kids – all kids can learn. It is up to me to find the tools and to have faith/belief in myself to persist when the child is building up resistance.

*My favourite time, sitting back and letting Lorna's words take me to place I have never been to
to people I have never met
the power of the mind's eye
however not all
can "see" in their minds.*

The story of FIE enlivened through Lorna's personal experience with it. Leading to the relevance of FIE in various settings.

My views about a lot of things changed today, I felt a positive growth inside mentally and socially with everyone especially with Lorna after her own presentation on MLE criteria; I appreciated what I heard, it opened up a whole new view.

Discussion of disability and how you drew something very important out of it, even using an example of a woman with a spatial disability. I too have a disability that confounds me but for some reason I never give up and keep exposing myself to activities that challenge me.

Today discussion around the mediation of challenge was interesting. The part that sticks with me is that of cultural and technological discontinuity. Why do certain people or cultural groups adapt to change more readily? Why do people not give up? These are important question in all people's lives. It had not struck me that these are factors of cognition.

In watching the film, various students of mine have come to mind - how I wish I'd learned all this earlier so I could've given each one of them better 'instruments' to take with them for their futures.

I was struck by the powerful statements presented in the video. It was amazing to see how individual's perceptions of their abilities changes with the learning of FIE. It is a powerful tool to be able to teach children the belief in what they can do. A positive self-image is instrumental in allowing people to achieve.

Theme 3b: Connecting personal and professional

Workshop participants have many roles in life. They are teachers, family members, learners, professionals, and colleagues, to name a few. When they engage in professional development they are doing so to improve their practice as teachers. Every time we learn something new we adjust our identity, which affects both our personal and professional identities. As a facilitator I want workshop participants to go on wondering about new insights long after the workshop, and to use those new insights to propel them into learning more. The experience of being part of this learning experience will last longer than the time we have together.

Sharing stories with one another helps us make connections with one another. We can visualize and feel the experiences of the tellers through the stories. Listening to someone's story of an experience can help us revisit our own experiences and sometimes gain a new understanding of that experience. The stories I told in class and through the medium of the video, "The Mind of A Child" helped the workshop participants make a connection with me as a teacher and a person who also struggles with learning.

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I found the introductions by the individuals in the room particularly interesting. The chat about each person's learning experiences made me think of more and more of my own experiences of learning. Of course I chose only 1 experience to share but I was wondering if it was relevant to the whole" teaching", "school" experience.

Finally the course comes to a head and the process has given me a new goal in my life. We must support each other in our sharing of our own personal experiences. Our story is history for the next generation.

The contrasting cultures of the inner city Afro Americans, the Ethiopian Jews, the Holocaust survivors and the First Nations population in Vancouver was an interesting and meaningful way to demonstrate how FIE is not limited by specific cultural experience and has benefited all groups.

After listening to Lorna's discussion on being "open" to change I have realized rather sheepishly that I have some very closed ideas towards a few individuals I have already taught.

Thank you for your stories. They really help us to understand the principles and put a very practical human element into this. Thank you also for letting us share our stories as well as this was a good way to consolidate our ideas and make connections.

I loved the video. All the stories you shared with us, you never shared that one, never once did you say that you had been wrenched from you family to endure the horrors of the residential schools.

The process of analysis distracts the audience to the enjoyment of the story but it is a skill important for insight into others' cultural background. The analysis of the stories gives interest and knowledge to the researchers [workshop readings] and they each perceive the stories from the various purposes of hearing the stories

Role 4: Facilitator as role-model

Modeling is another teaching tool used in my traditional cultural world and it seems it is one I employ as a facilitator. *"I now know what to do but am not sure*

*if I can do it” and “Do what I do not what I say” are two sayings that describe what participants feel about modeling. Role-modeling provides a way for workshop participants to visualize what is possible in implementation. It is necessary for the role model to be ‘personal’ and authentic, for the role model is a motivator and guide. This role has two themes, following the facilitator’s example – *I know how to do it because I have seen an example*, and the second sub theme, model of teaching patience -- *The modeling will help me when I am on my own; I will remember what my model did.**

Theme 4a: Just follow her example

In the workshops I modeled the lessons as if the workshop participants were classroom students. This can be tricky because the workshop participants are adults, but I think that as long as I treat them with respect and let them know that I am modeling they can learn a lot from the experience.

the tremendous influence she’s had on my life, and I will do my level best to work on myself, and to try to take a class, no not a class, just follow her example.

And I think by Lorna’s way of mediating, uch, Lorna’s way of mediating, I think at last I found the answer, how to do it now by asking those questions and but I don’t know whether I will be able to try it out because... of Lorna.

maybe we could all go back to what we remember from the workshop, what did Lorna show us and maybe we can all come to some type of solution, because in the end, it is us who have to train the others or have to instill in the others what we have learned.

Lorna helped me with her explanation and role modeling that is important to keep moving with the classroom discussion.

the way Lorna led us through, introduced us to the material the same way as she would actually be applying the material.

When it comes to strategies. I was so happy to hear you say that to talk and work off each other was right. I want success for my students.

By using questions you are encouraging students to generate thought and to accept all responses was important to the task.

Going through the task in sections helps the student to put, what seems to be, an overwhelming task into order to make sense of it. “ Regenerate the feeling that a child can do this on their own by teaching the 6 steps of the elements of the plan.”

Lorna modeled how to elicit information from students while looking at 1st instrument. People’s ideas flowed. The choice of questions and words were ‘open-ended’ - “What do you see?” etc. The open-ended questions were effective as people give ideas freely.

Theme 4b: Model of teaching patience

Learning to be patient has been a long hard lesson for me. To hear the workshop participants refer to me, as a model of teaching patience is a gift and a confirmation of my lifelong efforts. The patience they refer to here is the amount of time I will wait for a person to respond to a question or to think through an idea before verbally sharing it with the group. I wait and I ask the group to wait. As a facilitator I often want to interact with those that are quick to respond to questions and are always ready to offer ideas. In collaborative learning classroom time and space must be available to every person in the learning community. As a facilitator I need to walk this talk.

Lorna is a model of teaching patience.

The modeling of patience and waiting which you exhibited.

You demonstrated how important it is and how it encourages people to take risks and to be more comfortable in their learning environment. Hope I can remember this when I feel pressured by the time constraints of the school environment.

What stood out for workshop participants were the many roles that a facilitator has in conducting a workshop. There are many other roles but these are the ones that they pointed out. I learned that in my role as facilitator workshop participants noted that I took responsibility for creating a safe learning environment with them where they could share and take risks in their learning. I also learned that I was able to help them learn through the use of storytelling. The stories made formal theory more accessible, and they were able to make connections between the workshop and their lives beyond the workshop.

Chapter Six

Conclusions

I began this project to learn from the workshop participants' experience in workshops that I conducted and from my own reflections on my development as a workshop facilitator in order to improve my practice. Although I began reflecting on my practice before enrolling in the doctoral program, I did not have the benefit of knowing the literature on reflective practice until joining the collaborative learning cohort. I have been committed to increasing interactions among the members of a learning community whether children, youths or adults and that I wanted to know if I was actually doing what I thought I wanted to do. I knew that I like the control of my classroom and I can easily monopolize the learning experience for everyone.

For this study, I conducted four workshops for in-service teachers in three different settings over the course of three years. Data were gathered from one focus group session and from the daily journal transcripts of three workshops. I separated all the data into two sets. One set described participants' experience of the workshop that generated one "ground" with one sub theme, and three themes with two sub themes, each that described their experience. The second set, the workshop participants' view of the facilitator produced one ground theme with four sub themes and three themes each with two sub themes, which describe participants' experiences of my facilitation.

The workshop participants' view of their experience

The theme that grounded all other themes in the participants' view of their experience was the importance of learning in a safe learning environment where they could build relationships. In Theme 1. Building a safe space for learning: workshop participants described the need for a safe space for learning where they felt accepted, respected, acknowledged, secure, relaxed, challenged, purposeful, comfortable, and supported. They also needed an environment in which they had thinking time, were challenged, and could overcome inhibitions and blocking. They needed a place where they could take risks to share thoughts and feelings. In the safe environment they could work collaboratively with others and learn from each other. This finding is supported by Wlodkowski (1990), who lists the characteristics of an effective learning group:

- A people-centered learning environment, one that is caring, warm, informal, and respectful of each individual.
- A high level of trust, where people are open to sharing information, ideas, thoughts, feelings, and reactions to the issues being addressed.
- An ease of communication, with people listening to one another and being accessible for dialogue.
- A collaborative atmosphere in which cooperation overrides competitiveness as a group value.

- An acceptance of personal responsibility, with people holding themselves accountable for their choices and behavior.
- Clear and accepted learning goals, where members of the group understand and value the goals of the meetings (pp. 202-203).

Participants spoke of attending other cognitive workshops where the spiritual dimension was not present. They found that this workshop on Cognitive Enrichment Advantage did have a spiritual component. This component led them to feel hopeful for humankind and that they could make a commitment to implement what they learned and not put it on the back burner. *This one [workshop] covers the affective side, the emotions, inner peace, and serenity that are required to be empathic.* Relationships of inter-dependence are based on authenticity and care (Fullen, 2001). As the workshop progressed the participants felt a deep bond with one another, including the facilitator.

In Theme 2: A route through the maze: workshop participants described their experience of the content and task activities. They described their feelings of incompetence, and surprise at the challenge of the tasks that they at first thought were simple. These two quotes sum up their experience here:

Learning in this workshop is like learning to ride a bicycle: I fall off and get back up.

I have been overwhelmed by the complexity of some of the theory. As a learner I am struggling to understand the theoretical building blocks of the program as well as the cognition necessary to do the activity and then participate in the discussion.

This theme has two subthemes. Sub theme 2a: I have hit my wall already: is about the stress, fatigue and frustration that workshop participants felt as the week progressed. They spoke of feeling overwhelmed by the amount of work in the activities and by the dialogue and conversation required when working in small and large groups on the lessons and exercises. This experience caused them to reflect on their practice as teachers and learners. Sub theme 2b: I began to see in a whole new light describes the participants' experience of getting past the wall of frustration and fatigue. They began to see the strengths they have as teachers and the strengths of the new program they were learning. The insights they share are a confirmation of the ideas I tried to convey in the workshops.

Theme 3. Weaving in and out has to do with teachers' movement back and forth between their experience as learners in the workshop and their role as a teacher. They remembered what learning was like when they were children and reflected on what learning might be like for their students. These insights and reflections lead the workshop participants to understand and appreciate their own styles, and habits as teachers, as well as to think about how they changed as a result of their experiences in the workshop. Teachers themselves determined what they would take with them to modify their practice as a result of their participation in the workshop.

The last theme, Down from the mountain, reveals that teachers want to share what they learned with their peers and students. By the end of the

workshop they were fully committed to trying out their new achievement. They pointed out that they needed organizational support, understanding from colleagues and administrators, and time with their workshop participant community after the conclusion of the workshop to continue to put into practice what they had learned.

Participants' perception of the facilitator

In this second set of transcripts, the participants' view of the facilitator reveals the multidimensional role of the facilitator. The first role, which forms the overall ground, was the facilitator's role in creating a safe learning environment. The participants were clear that it is the facilitator who must take a leadership role in building the safe environment. In his book, *Leading in a culture of change* (2001), Fullen cites the work of Kouzes and Posner (1998) who discuss "*encouraging the heart*" and observe that "*leaders create relationships*" (p. xv.). The authors identify seven essentials to developing relationships present in effective leadership (p.18):

1. Setting clear standards – in the workshops I model and explain explicitly my expectations for listening to one another, looking to one another for varying points of view, inclusivity, participating, and building on each other's ideas.

2. Expecting the best – I expect each individual's "best" at the time of engagement. My expectation is that we are all learning continuously and that with each learning encounter our "best" will change.
3. Paying attention – as a facilitator I pay attention to each individual and to the group as a whole. In teaching Instrumental Enrichment I experience changes in the tone and temper in a group of learners; these changes depend on the tasks they are doing. And in my culture we learn to sense the climate of a group, its state of readiness and willingness to do a task. I bring both sensibilities to my facilitation.
4. Personalizing and recognition – in my workshops I personalize and recognize each individual's unique ways of being. As a group we learn about each other through sharing our stories, and our thought processes as we debrief the tasks, sharing our feelings, frustrations, fears, joys and excitement in meeting challenges.
5. Telling the story – stories help us to learn lessons from one context and to transfer that learning to another context. Stories help us to build relationships, to find the points of commonality and difference. By sharing stories we become real.
6. Celebrating together – Often at the beginning of the workshops, participants feel tense due to lack of familiarity: with one another; with the material at hand; with the instructional process; and with the

facilitator. As the workshop progresses we celebrate getting to know one another. We acknowledge and appreciate each individual's unique way of perceiving the world; and we celebrate each accomplishment.

Celebrating is important in my culture, so I make sure that I bring it to my facilitation.

7. Setting the example – this too comes from my culture as one of the characteristics of an effective leader; a leader always leads by example.

The participants identified this quality in my facilitation.

There are four subthemes that characterize this theme on the part of the facilitator. In sub theme 1.a: Encouraging a community of learners: the facilitator must invite participants to engage, in respectful and inclusive ways. The facilitator must create spaces for every member of the learning community without excluding anyone. This inclusion must be done in such a way that encourages people to make spaces for one another. Sub theme 1.b: Variety makes a positive environment: is the participants' growing awareness that each member of the community is different and unique; adding to the richness and strength of the group's learning experience. Sub theme 1.c: Voicing our thoughts easily: in a collaborative learning community each member must be able to voice their thoughts. Because sharing thoughts and feelings can make people feel vulnerable, the facilitator must encourage them to share by demonstrating that everyone's contributions are valid and valuable to the learning community. The

facilitator encourages participants to clarify their thinking and helps to bring out salient point to their contributions. Sub theme 1.d: Fostering an atmosphere of acceptance: trust is the basic component for fostering acceptance. The facilitator must develop the skill of deep and respectful listening.

Role 2 is the expert: this role has to do with the knowledge, expertise, and skill of the facilitator. Participants appreciate the depth of knowledge of the material. They also appreciate the instructional skills that the facilitator demonstrates in Sub theme 2.b: The instruction is very thorough: teachers pay close attention to the details of the lesson – from planning to implementation.

The role of the facilitator is critical during this stage where the participants experience an implementation dip; it occurs generally midway during the course of the workshop. Fullen (2001) describes it as a dip in performance and confidence as one encounters an innovation that requires new skills and new understanding. A new innovation calls on people to question and change their behavior and beliefs. Making people feel anxious, fearful, deskilled, overwhelmed, and cautious. They experience challenge and failure. The facilitator must build commitment by coaching and modeling; by providing support, sharing knowledge, building skills, and developing strategies; by giving insightful feedback and listening to the participants' struggles.

Role 3: The facilitator as storyteller is what stood out to the participants. Whether the facilitator or the other workshop participants told the stories, it didn't

matter. The stories brought clarity to participants' understanding of the concepts and ideas presented and also helped them make connections between their personal lives and their professional lives. These connections are interesting to me because they are exactly what I wanted teachers to construct for First Nations learners – relationships between their personal knowledge and academic experiences.

Role 4: Facilitator as role model has two subthemes. 4.a: Just follow her example reveals that teachers intently observe what the facilitator is doing; and they learn as much from what I am doing while I am facilitating as from what I am saying. They are also paying attention to my attitude and behavior. 4. b: Model of teaching patience. This attention places tremendous responsibility on the facilitator to be aware of what workshop participants are doing and paying attention to the language they are using.

Implications of the findings

The workshop participants' experience of the workshops has shown me that I have internalized the twelve criteria of the mediated learning experience and have built them into my practice. As defined by Rueven Feuerstein, a mediator is a more knowledgeable other who interposes himself or herself between the learner and the learning experience (Feuerstein et al. 1980, 1979). He assumes that mediators have been initiated into their own culture and they have acquired the necessary knowledge and skills to assist another member of

the community to gain facility with new skills and knowledge. The mediator is an affectionate, caring, intentional teacher. The mediator mediates the meaning and purpose of what is being learned and helps to draw connections between the immediate experience and other contexts. The mediational teaching style is very personal and focused on the relationship between learner and teacher. All the workshops conducted in this study utilized mediated learning to guide the facilitator. The following are the twelve criteria of mediated learning that I modeled and taught in the workshops.

1. Mediation of intentionality and reciprocity – Workshop participants spoke of my intentionality in selecting the task that they would do in order to learn concepts and ideas. They also spoke of reciprocity, the attention that I gave to each individual, that I motivated them to respond to and engage with the others in the learning community.
2. Mediation of meaning – Meaning is the energizing factor in mediated learning. It provides the reason for engaging in the activity as well as its meaningfulness to both the facilitator and the group members.
3. Mediation of transcendence – Workshop participants clearly made connections between their immediate workshop experience and other contexts in space and time. They connected what they were learning to their past experiences, calling those forward to adjust their thoughts on

teaching and learning, as well as projecting their thoughts into their future teaching assignments.

4. Mediation of the feeling of competence – Throughout the workshop, participants spoke of their feelings of incompetence and lack of confidence and then their growing sense of accomplishment and belief that they could learn.
5. Mediation of goal-setting, goal-planning and goal-achieving behavior – Many of the workshop participants spoke of developing new goals for their teaching, and that they were committed to making a difference in the lives of their students.
6. Mediation of sharing – This criterion shows up the most in the transcripts. It is one that I concentrate on in the workshops. I do this by telling stories about sharing behavior and encouraging the workshop participants to share their thoughts and feelings. I feel it is the criterion necessary for community-building and collaborative learning.
7. Mediation of individuation and psychological differentiation – This mediation is one that affirms the uniqueness of each individual. The differences amongst the individuals that creates the richness in communities. In my workshops, I encourage participants to appreciate and learn from each other's varied life experiences and distinctive points of view.

8. Mediation of challenge – Participants spoke of the challenges they faced in learning the many components of the program and the challenges they met in the activities. They learned from reflecting on those challenges and learned that they gained self-knowledge from those experiences.
9. Mediation of regulation and control of behavior – the workshop participants noticed their behavior in small group activities; they noticed when they were not helpful members. They noticed their impulsivity, blocking, and inhibitions. With this new self-knowledge, often they choose to be active members of their learning community.
10. Mediation of the self as a changing entity – Whenever we learn we change, and there are many quotes from the participants in which they are recognized that they changed during the course of the workshop. Some of them did not realize they had changed until they left the workshop and interacted with others who had not had their experience.
11. Mediation of an optimistic alternative and an optimistic future – Workshop participants looked to the future with optimism. All felt that they would implement what they learned. They thought it would be possible to affect their workplaces with their new learning. They spoke of being able to affect positively the learning of their students.
12. Mediation of the sense of belonging – To some of the workshop participants the sense of belonging felt spiritual. In the workshops they

felt validated and valued, and they accepted all of which contributed to their sense of belonging. Having experienced a safe learning environment where they felt accepted and a sense of belonging they thought that they could take these experiences back to their work places and share their experiences with their colleagues and students.

Learning to use the criteria of mediated learning helped me gain the confidence and direction in my facilitation to focus attention on each individual in the workshops, to know how to respond in the way each needed, without losing sight of the goals of the workshop, is one of the greatest challenges for a facilitator or teacher. I learned mediated learning first, from hearing it described by others. Overlaying that image over my experience to see how it lined up, reflecting on it, questioning it, and testing it in practice. And again, I was revisiting the theory as described by others, while continually modifying my practice in a cyclic fashion. In this way I incorporated mediated learning into my practice. It became tacit, integrated personal knowledge from which I could act. I can see from the workshop participants' experience that they followed a similar path. "We can learn from others about practice, but ultimately we must learn how to practice by doing it" (Jarvis, 1999. p. 44). Jarvis further states "In practice, I build up my own body of knowledge about my practice by learning, doing, thinking, and reflecting on what I do. It is my body of knowledge about my practice" (p. 45).

Concluding remarks

I began this journey with concerns about the cultural mismatch between teachers and First Nations learners. Diversity in all classrooms is a reality; is the norm rather than the exception. Learners are diverse in culture, language, ability, gender, place, learning preference, and prior experience. Diversity is what makes our learning community rich and dynamic. I brought to these workshops the sum of all that I am. I brought my Lil'wat cultural and linguistic heritage, my understandings derived from being a member of a socially underprivileged class in my country. Also, I brought professional knowledge and experience gained over many years of study and practice as a teacher. The workshop participants benefited from my experiences. I was able to mediate my cultural differences across various cultural groups. There was as much challenge – if not more – with the group that was closer to me culturally and linguistically, possibly due to the close relationship that existed between us before the session began. In the workshops where I was unfamiliar with the makeup of the workshop participants I spent more time before workshop anticipating who the workshop participants might be and how they might perceive me than I did when the group was familiar to me. I made assumptions about what I knew and the group did not benefit from the same degree of focused attention.

In these workshops I was deliberate in sharing my cultural knowledge with these participants. I wanted them to be aware that we all bring our cultural and

linguistic histories with us to the learning community. Knowing where our assumptions came from, and understanding the consequences of holding those assumptions, is a critical component of self-awareness (Cranton, 1996). For participants who rarely have their cultural difference acknowledged and recognized, by sharing mine openly I modeled that there is space and time in the workshop for people to share their cultural knowledge, too. Even so, in one of the groups during the first two days I invited workshop participants to share examples from their cultural experience similar to the ones that I was presenting.

The stories they shared were not spontaneous. I had to draw the stories from them. It took time and patience but the invitation made the culturally different participants stronger by giving them space to voice and share their knowledge. It made those who were from the dominant culture aware that they could learn from those often silenced. This awareness also helped them to think of times in their classrooms when they could have invited people to share but did not. What was also interesting is that the participants from the dominant group were not aware of cultural differences. This lack of awareness is usually the case because the dominant group in a society determines the social rules, values, and ways of being. Only those who are different culturally, linguistically or socially become aware of their difference. (Shotter, 1993).

In classrooms that are represented by diverse populations, facilitators and teachers must be aware of the social differences that exist among the

participants, otherwise the level of interaction required for active learning and collaborative learning will not be achieved. There will be members of the learning community who will hold back and not contribute to the shared learning, or they may select what they contribute to fit the accepted social norms according to the dominant cultural group. It is the facilitator's responsibility to be aware of these tendencies and to create a cultural environment of acceptance. As the workshop participants also point out, however, when this is achieved and an accepting, trusting, and safe learning environment is established, there is a dilemma when they must leave it to return to their workplaces. Some are concerned whether they will be able to sustain the sense of openness with their students even with their resolve and commitment to a new spirit of inclusion?

Many workshop participants spoke about the safe learning environment, that they like the "feel" of the environment; I was surprised that adult learners would be so concerned about their sense of safety in the workshop. They attribute much of the creation of the safe learning environment to the facilitator. They spoke of the trust and sense of respect present, the accepting and inclusive nature of our relationship. The perception that they had time to voice their thoughts and opinions, contributed to feeling acceptance. The more the workshop participants felt safe to share their thoughts, feelings, and opinions, the more they felt they bonded with one another and the group became an active learning community. They turned to one another to extend their learning; the

facilitator was not seen as the only person with expertise. Exploring ideas together in the small groups helped them form relational bonds. I tended, at first, to give them the choice of whom they would work with and then gradually changed the groups so that they worked with different sets of people. The conversations the groups had during the refreshment and lunch breaks were also important for establishing working relationships.

In Taylor's Learning Cycle, (in (MacKeracher, 1996) Taylor describes a four-phase model of the learning process, which begins with The Disorientation Phase. In this phase learners experience discomfort and disorientation because they are encountering change and experiencing disequilibrium due to the change. In the workshops teachers experience this disequilibrium as they became overwhelmed with the various components of the workshop, the theory, teaching practice, curriculum content, philosophy, my story illustrations, and their own reflections. This phase seems to be a deeply personal one for teachers: even though they are working together, and being guided and supported by me, the facilitator, their sense of finding their own way is a personal journey.

Throughout the course of the workshop participants, moved between their experience as learners in the workshop, their memories of themselves as learners when they were in school, and the learning experience of students and their role as teachers. I think that teachers move in order to regain a sense of orientation, a way of integrating their new learning with past experiences. Taylor

calls this the “Reorientation Phase”, a time of reflection, making connections, gaining new insights, and an opportunity to gain a sense of resolution to the inquiry. Teachers constantly play out scenarios of what they are learning as it might play out with their students.

As the end of the workshop neared, the participants think about and prepare themselves emotionally for leaving. They are concerned about whether they will be able to sustain their commitment to implementation. They are concerned about leaving the safe and relaxed learning environment. They compare this learning environment to the one they have in their workplace. They worry about how the external communities they will be rejoining may negate their new resolve to change their teaching practice. They seem to be saying, “How do I make my new dream of my practice a reality in a world that did not have my experience?”

The promise of collaborative learning communities can be realized in a short time, if there is mindfulness of the creativity of each individual in the learning community. The participants, including the facilitator can all extend themselves to go beyond the knowledge they began with at the beginning of this journey together. It comes with the nurturing of the mind, heart, spirit and sense that the learning experience is purposeful and for the common good.

One of the most powerful tools for learning in these workshops was the use of journals by the participants. Journals served to integrate what they learned

from the activities of the workshop and from each other. They put participants in the frame of mind to reflect on past experiences, to gain new insights into past experiences through the lens of the current experience. The workshop participants' journals helped me to retain the sense of the individuality of each participant. We became communities of learners in which each community is made up of individuals who have their own unique point of view. From this experience I intend to use journals and other reflective practice strategies to encourage reflection in workshops I facilitate and classes I teach.

My emphasis in these workshops was cultural difference although there are many more differences in each group, such as, gender, learning preferences, experience, history, and interests, that all impact relationships and learning. Focusing on one area of difference opened up the way for participants to feel that their difference was acknowledged and recognized. That is an important lesson for me, to be open, flexible and aware of the diversity of the group.

In the future I would like to learn more about the influence of teachers' early learning experiences on their teaching practice. How do those experiences limit and support their teaching practice? In this study, stories, workshop activities, and class discussion provoked teachers to recall childhood learning experiences that colored their beliefs about their own and children's ability to learn. It seemed that connecting their own past learning experiences to the

present experience helped them to examine what they needed to change relative to students in their classes.

Another question that would be helpful to professional development is to explore the role of stories or narrative in building active learning environments in which people can be more open with one another's knowledge. Connelly and Clandinin (1999) promote the use of stories to understand teacher knowledge, but learning more about how Indigenous people use stories to teach and learn can extend our knowledge and repertoire of storytelling. In these workshops I learned that telling stories could trigger critical reflection and generate insight into concepts much more effectively than the facilitator is trying to cover all the bases.

Professional development for in-service teachers takes many forms. Although the five-day intensive workshops that I conducted for this study are not the most effective, they are still the model most school districts use. From comments made by the workshop participants I would like to explore more fully how as a workshop facilitator, I can design better ways to prepare teachers to leave the learning community we have built to carry the changes they have committed to make as teachers and learners back to their workplaces. If I were to begin this study again I would build in opportunities to revisit all the workshop participants at intervals to hear how and what they implemented in their practice as a result of the workshops.

What this study demonstrates for me is that we can learn across the borders of cultural and linguistic difference with time, patience and thoughtful consideration. Prior to doing this study, I was often concerned about how teachers who are different from me culturally, linguistically, and socially would accept me as a facilitator. Now I realize that people share in common their need for learning in a safe environment where they are respected and valued members in a learning community, and I was able to provide guidance in creating that kind of environment with them. I learned that teachers and facilitators are faced with two levels of the feeling of competence: one, their ability to master the content and tasks in the workshop and two, their feelings of efficacy in teaching children. Both make them feel vulnerable in a workshop made up of their peers. Prior to this study, in workshops, I spoke only of the feeling incompetence in children not adults. This new awareness will make me more empathetic and sensitive to workshop participants' feelings, for uncovering these feelings to build a positive feeling of competence and confidence is critical to change and to the implementation of new learning.

Over the years as a class participant, facilitator, and workshop participant, I intervened to open conversational spaces for people who were silent, but I was never sure that I was doing the right thing. People often asked me why I felt the need to intervene, that people were adults and could speak for themselves if they wanted to participate. By intervening I was taking away their independence and

autonomy. From the comments of participants in this study, I am affirmed that sometimes in learning communities, even in those that promote collaborative learning and dialogue there is a need to change the culture to one that is more inclusive. I also have learned that I am able to do facilitate groups with respect and care and that is a change in me. There was a time when I was inept and so forceful that I silenced the entire community rather than opened the way for conversation.

After listening to the teachers in the workshops and hearing their comments in the transcripts I am now more resolved to continue learning how to build learning environments where we can take risks, expose our vulnerabilities, challenge our assumptions, and learn from one another.

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Appendices

Appendix I

Mapping a Journey of Change

I understand that this research project involves studying the relationship between myself as a learner and the instructor during the process of learning. My participation will involve writing in a journal daily for the duration of the workshop (five to seven days). This data will assist the researcher/instructor in improving her instructional practice.

The procedure will be as follows:

A notebook will be provided to use as a journal. At the end of each day, time will be set aside to make entries into the journal. The journal entry will be to list 3 experiences that stood out for me today, choose one incident and describe that incident in detail by answering the following questions: “What happened?” “What was I feeling?” “What was I thinking?” At the end of the course or workshop, I will keep a copy of the journal and the researcher will keep the original copy.

Confidentiality – This study poses minimal risk to me, the participant. There will be no identifiers on the journal. The journal will be stored in a locked cabinet in the faculty advisor’s office at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The researcher/instructor will keep a copy for analysis. Anyone, such as members of a research committee assisting in the analysis of the data, will sign a confidentiality statement. These confidentiality statements and consent forms will be kept in a locked cabinet in the College of Education, Claxton Addition, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Participation: I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary and that I may decline participation without penalty and I can withdraw from participation at anytime and/or refuse to answer questions without incurring any penalty or loss of benefits to which I would otherwise be entitled. Return of the completed journals to the researcher/instructor at the end of the workshop constitutes my consent to participate. I know that there are no risks involved in my participation and that there are no direct benefits other than having a detailed guided reflection on my workshop experience.

I understand that I may contact the researcher at anytime if I have further questions about the study or about my participation in it.

Contacts for Further Information

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact the researcher, Lorna Williams at 604 713 5215 at the school district office or after February 29, 2000 at the University of Tennessee, 865 974 8145 If you have questions about your rights as a participant, contact the compliance Section at

Signature: _____ **Name:** _____
(Print)
Date: _____

Appendix 2

South Africa Action Research Project Participant Consent Form

I understand that the purpose of this research project is to learn about educators' experiences with cognitive education approaches in their professional practice, and that my participation involves talking with the researchers about my experiences with cognitive education, and/or COGNET, specifically.

I understand that the information I provide the researchers will be held in confidence, with pseudonyms used instead of real names in the written report. The data collection for the research project will take place September 26th through October 2nd. I understand that I am being asked to engage in two interviews with the researchers. The first conversation will take place with 3 researchers and 7 other workshop participants. The second conversation will take place between myself and one of the other researchers. I further understand that my conversations in both interviews will be audio taped and that, by signing this consent form, I give my approval to the audiotaping. I have been informed that the audiotapes will be kept in the principal investigator's locked briefcase until she returns to the university, and then in a locked file cabinet in her office at the university. Once the tapes are transcribed, they will be erased. The transcripts will also be kept in a locked file cabinet in the same office. Copies of the consent form will be stored for 3 years in a separate locked file cabinet. The tapes and transcripts will be used solely for the purposes of this study.

I understand that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw from participation at any time and/or refuse to answer specific questions without incurring any penalty. I know that there are no risks involved in my participation and that I can benefit from the process of reflecting and responding to the researcher's inquires and from the knowledge gained from the study's findings.

I understand that I may contact the researcher at anytime if I have further questions about the study or about my participation in it.

Signature _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

The principal investigator may be contacted as follows:

In the USA:

Katherine H. Greenberg, Ph. D.
The University of Tennessee
433 Claxton Addition
Knoxville, TN 37996-3400 USA
423-974-4157

In South Africa:

Al Lindstrom
5 Carignan Lane
Orchard Village
Western Cape 7945 SA
021-788-7489

Appendix 3

Research Team Member's Pledge of Confidentiality

As a member of this project's research team, I understand that I will be reading transcriptions of confidential interviews. The information in these transcriptions has been revealed by research participants who participated in this project on good faith that their interviews would remain strictly confidential. I understand that I have a responsibility to honor this confidentiality agreement. I hereby agree not to share any information in these transcriptions with anyone except the primary researcher of this project (Lorna B. Williams), her doctoral chair (Dr. Katherine H. Greenberg) or other members of the research team. Any violation of this agreement would constitute a serious breach of ethical standards, and I pledge not to do so.

Name

Date

Vita

Lorna Williams is a member of the Lil'wat First Nation, Mount Currie, BC. She is Assistant Professor and Programme Director of Aboriginal Teacher Education at the University of Victoria. She worked for the Ministry of Education as Director of the Aboriginal Education Enhancements Branch for three years where she directed research and policy development and implementation in all areas of education for Aboriginal students. Prior to this appointment, she worked as a First Nations Education Specialist with the Vancouver School Board. Lorna is a strong advocate committed to working with Aboriginal communities to increase achievement for Aboriginal learners, teach First Nations culture, heritage, traditions and history to all students. Lorna is a doctoral student at the University of Tennessee; her research is in the area of teacher development and collaborative learning.

Lorna co-directed *First Nations: The Circle Unbroken*, a 23 program educational video series. She has written children's books, teachers' guides and developed Lil'wat Language curriculum to teach people to read and write this language, which was oral until 1973. She has organized and trained teachers within and outside the public school system in applications based on Feuerstein's theory of structural cognitive modifiability and mediated learning.

In recognition of Lorna's achievements she has been presented with *Outstanding Teacher Award*, *Dedicated to Kids Award* and in 1992, was invested into the Order of British Columbia.