Classroom Practice

TEACHER IMAGES IN ACTION

D JEAN CLANDININ

The Falmer Press

Classroom Practice
Teacher Images in Action

D. Jean Clandinin
University of Calgary

The Falmer Press
(A member of the Taylor & Francis Group)
London and Philadelphia

UK The Falmer Press, Falmer House, Barcombe, Lewes, East Sussex, BN8 5DL

USA The Falmer Press, Taylor & Francis Inc., 242 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106-1906

Copyright © D. Jean Clandinin 1986

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without permission in writing from the Publisher.

First published 1986

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Clandinin, D. Jean.
Classroom practice.

Bibliography: p.
Includes index.
1. Teachers—Student relationships—Case studies.
2. Teachers—Attitudes—Case studies. 3. Teachers—Language—Case studies. 4. Teaching—Case studies.
I. Title.
LB1033.C525 1986 371.1′02 86-4556
ISBN 1-85000-037-9
ISBN 1-85000-038-7 (pbk.)

Typeset in 11/13 Garamond by
Imago Publishing Ltd, Thame, Oxon.

Printed in Great Britain by Taylor & Francis (Printers) Ltd, Basingstoke

Classroom Practice

Teacher Images in Action

Acknowledgements

It gives me pleasure to acknowledge the support I have received in the preparation of the book. This book would not have been possible without the contribution of two teachers, Stephanie and Aileen, who shared with me their classrooms, their time and themselves. I am deeply indebted to them both. It is to them this work is dedicated.

Michael Connelly's freely given time and intellectual energy was especially important to the development of this work. He encouraged me to have confidence in my ideas and to reach in new directions to develop those ideas. His input was a constant source of encouragement and inspiration. I also acknowledge the assistance of David Hunt who encouraged me to explore the ideas of mutual adaptation, Roger Simon whose critical edge sharpened my own views and John McInnes whose ideas on the teaching of reading and language have always been important to my work.

I also wish to acknowledge the assistance of Dr Mark Johnson, University of Southern Illinois; Dr J.J. Schwab, Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions; Dr Elliot Eisner, Stanford University; and Dr Maxine Greene, Teachers' College, Columbia, who read and commented in detail on the work. They have given confidence and insight to me and to the other members of the teachers' personal practical knowledge group.

I am also indebted to the many friends and colleagues who supported me in my work. Their confidence in me was especially helpful. For their wonderful assistance in the difficult tasks of typing and editing the manuscript, I express my appreciation to Margaret Heather, Mark Belaiche and Rita O'Brien, also to Dr Lyn Gorman of Falmer Press. I also acknowledge the financial support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Finally, I wish to acknowledge the support of my husband and son through the particularly difficult journey the preparation of this work has been.

此为试读，需要完整PDF请访问：www.ertongbook.com

Contents

Acknowledgements vi

Part 1: Studying Personal Practical Knowledge 1

1 Introduction 3

2 Methodology 22

Part 2: Personal Practical Knowledge: The Teachers 35

3 Aileen 39
  Interpretive Account Number 1 39
  Interpretive Account Number 2 49
  A Characterization of Aileen 64

4 Stephanie 73
  Interpretive Account Number 1 73
  Interpretive Account Number 2 93
  A Characterization of Stephanie 120

PART 3: How Personal Practical Knowledge is Held and Used 127

5 The Nature of Image as a Component of Teacher Personal Practical Knowledge 129

6 The Teachers' Language Arts Practices 150

7 Reflections: A Look Back and a Look Ahead 164

Bibliography 183

Index 188

Part 1

Studying Personal Practical Knowledge

1 Introduction

It is a commonplace that teachers use their experience when called upon to act spontaneously in instructional settings. It is impossible to imagine that it could be otherwise. To assume that a teacher could somehow be cut free of her* history and approach each situation without benefit of past experience would be absurd. Much research in teacher thinking acknowledges a teacher's past experience but this past experience has not become a research focus. At least in part, this lack can be attributed to a stance which views teachers as mere conduits of theoretical and cultural knowledge embodied in various curricula, teaching approaches and policies. The teacher is viewed as merely an agent fulfilling someone else's intentions, a transmitter of external knowledge. A teacher's experience is seen as influencing only how successful she will be in fulfilling someone else's purposes. Her experience becomes important only in understanding how she fulfils external demands. But this lack of research focus can also be attributed to a view of what constitutes valid knowledge. Knowledge is seen as theoretical and as the possession of experts. The experiential knowledge of teachers is not acknowledged. Teachers are viewed as possessing experience but not knowledge. By denying the experiential knowledge of teachers, one can reduce a teacher's experience to a series of factors in decision-making or as an influence on teacher judgment.

However, if a teacher is acknowledged as having an active, autonomous role in the classroom, and if we acknowledge the existence of experiential knowledge, the importance we attribute to understanding the influence of her past experience is enhanced. The present research adopts the view that teachers are autonomous, active agents in their classrooms. Further, the existence of teacher knowledge which is practical, experiential and shaped by a teacher's purposes and values is acknowledged (Elbaz, 1983). The general problem for this research is to develop a conceptualization of this practical knowledge teachers hold and use in their teaching. The specific task of the present study is to offer a conceptualization of a teacher's experiences as they can be seen to crystallize in the form of images. The conceptualization of image as one component of teacher's practical knowledge emerges from the analysis and interpretation of participant observation and interview data from a study with two primary school teachers. The focus of the conceptualization will be on images as they function in the practices of teachers in classroom and school situations and in interview situations.

---

* Concerning pronouns in this study, exclusive use of either masculine or feminine pronouns in referring to the teacher would seem to generate either inaccuracies (the majority of elementary school teachers are women) or unintended political messages. Both forms will be used.

Reflections on My Experience: the Research Process Begins

My interest in the area grows out of my work with elementary school teachers over a six-year period. After spending a short time teaching, I completed a Master's program in Educational Psychology, with major emphasis on elementary school counselling. My intent was to return to the elementary schools as a school counsellor. The position of elementary school counsellor had been established some years earlier and was unique to the local school system. My clinical training focused on therapy with individual children and their families. I had, in addition, an internship of four months in an elementary/junior high school. My host counsellor functioned in the customary school counselling manner of meeting with individual students and making recommendations to the classroom teacher. I had a sense of unease about the appropriateness of his work for an elementary school and wondered if teachers found his help useful. As well, I sensed a negative attitude on his part towards teachers. I found this attitude difficult to deal with as I still thought of myself as a teacher and the counselling role as one of support to both teachers and students.

An incident in a counselling seminar further sharpened my concerns about what I saw counsellors doing in schools. Shortly after my return from the internship, my seminar instructor held a demonstration session with a client from his private practice. The six students in the class observed the session from behind a one-way mirror. The client, who was aware of our presence, appeared visibly upset and spoke more and more softly to our professor, her therapist. The client joined the post-mortem in the class and the students analyzed her behavior in the session using the theoretical training they had received. My observation was that she had been anxious and upset about our presence as observers as well as about the class interpretation of her behavior, which failed to take account of her perspective. Memories of the seminar incident and my sense of uncertainty about my internship experience were with me as I began my job as a counsellor in September.

The two elementary schools to which I was assigned had uniformly bad experiences with counsellors who, from the teachers' viewpoints, imposed unworkable psychological solutions. It was not a friendly climate for a new graduate armed with the same theories. However, full of enthusiasm and sure I could make a difference, I began to apply my textbook theories to teachers and to their classrooms. My success was minimal. I learned instead to spend considerable time in classrooms observing children and their instruction and talking with teachers about their purposes and intentions. Upon reflection, I found that teachers had fairly well worked out, although not articulated, ideas regarding their purposes and intentions in the classroom. They had, for the most part, notions about themselves as teachers; notions about what worked for them instructionally; notions about children, including specific children and children in general; ideas about their school milieu and themselves in relation to that milieu as well as notions about the intructional content that would allow them to fulfil their purposes.

When teachers referred a child to me, they wanted me to make a difference but they were indifferent as to what theory or test I used. It made little sense to suggest what I saw as a solution to a particular child's problem without taking into account the notions that each teacher held and used in relation to that child. Applying a solution based on theory or test results that did not take into account the larger context in which the child functioned did not seem appropriate. I spent time talking with the teacher and observing the child in class in order to gain a more complete understanding of the child's school situation. Based on those understandings and possibly some individual sessions with the child, I formulated some tentative notions about how the teacher could work with the child to make a difference. The teacher and I, often with input and suggestions from the child's parents, worked out at that point what seemed to be the best approach to take in working with a particular child.

此为试读，需要完整PDF请访问：www.ertongbook.com

Reflecting now, I can see that I was developing a new and more adaptive role for myself as a counsellor working with teachers. Certainly, at the time, I was unable to articulate what I was doing. Not only was I conscious of a discrepancy between my training and what I was doing, but I was aware of a discrepancy between what other counsellors in the system were doing and what I was doing. For example, at a regular elementary school counsellors' meeting when another counsellor described how The Magic Circle program was being instituted in the primary classrooms of his schools, I was able to recognize my work as different but was unable to explain the differences. The Director of Counselling recognized a difference in my work from that of the other counsellors and, in my third year in the schools, invited me to sit on a policy formulation committee when he proposed a shift from 'crisis' counselling to work with teachers. At the meetings, however, I was unable to articulate clearly my work in the schools. In the discussions I was, however, able to point out where I saw his proposed shift as different from my work.

Notwithstanding the difficulty of explaining myself, I was satisfied with the quality of my work in schools. Even though I was conscious of running in opposition to my training and to the overall notion of what elementary school counsellors did, I was receiving positive reactions and reinforcement from the situation for what I was doing and for the direction I was taking. While there were several indicators that I was making a difference, the most meaningful to me at the time was that teachers who had originally been reluctant to have my involvement had begun to express actively their enthusiasm toward my involvement in their programs.

At one point I was described as a change agent by a teacher in one of my schools. My notion of a change agent was that of someone who implemented theories and as far as I could see, I was implementing no theories. At the time I rejected the notion. And yet, in reflecting, I can see how I might be described as a change agent. Through my work with teachers, both individually and in groups, changes were being made. But it was not through the application of theories to teachers, but rather through working out policy changes, programs and ideas with teachers, always with an awareness of the notions teachers already had and used in their planning and teaching.

Although I had strong feelings about the importance of working with teachers in this way, I lacked any way of articulating my experience. Elbaz's work (1983), a case study of one teacher, provided a way to think about my previous experiences as a problem in teacher knowledge. Her conception of practical knowledge seemed consistent with my own intuitive and, at that point, unreflected upon notions of teacher knowledge. Her notion of image as a component of teacher knowledge gave me a starting point from which to think about my work with teachers. My work had focused on teachers as they worked with individual students. The students' teachers, parents or the principal had asked for my involvement with them. Usually the incidents with these students were fairly vivid for myself and for their teachers. Because my work with many of the teachers spanned several years, their actions with these students often guided their actions with students they perceived as similar in subsequent years. For example, after a Grade 4 teacher had worked with me for a year with a particular student, Julia, she asked me for help with a new child the next year by saying, 'I think she's a lot like Julia and I've been trying some of the things we did with Julia. Would you come in and see what I've done and meet her?' 'Julia' served not only as a way for her to talk to me about the student but as guide to her in her work with the new student. The notion of image gave me an exciting entry point into rethinking how those past experiences could have guided the teacher.

Again using the notion of image as a component of teacher knowledge, I had a way of talking about the importance of understanding how a teacher thought about her colleagues and children, both generally and in particular. I now had an insight into describing many situations like the following one, that I had not been able to understand previously. A kindergarten teacher, Elaine, with whom I worked for a number of years, made specific recommendations each year for the Grade 1 classroom placement of each of her students. I observed her in this process for two years. She made the choices quickly and without benefit of outside information. At the time, when I questioned her on the reasons for her decisions, her comments were of the sort 'she seems right for him' or 'they'll be good for each other'. The notion of image gave me a way to think about what she was doing, something I had not been able to do, other than in an uncertain way. I now had a concept for understanding the possible bases for her intuitive decisions.

The concept of image seemed relevant to another situation that has always seemed much different from the one above involving Elaine, but equally puzzling to me. When a primary consultant's position in our board became available, I recommended to a primary teacher, Marianne, that she apply for the position. She was a successful, dynamic teacher who had worked with me on several professional development ventures. Her response to my suggestion was, 'I can't do that. I'm only a Grade 1 teacher.' I was puzzled as to why she didn't see herself as fitting the job description. Once again the notion of image gave me a way of thinking about a previously uncertain situation. With a concept of image I could now view her as having an image of herself as a Grade 1 teacher, not as someone who worked with teachers. It made it possible for me to understand why she had difficulty seeing herself in the job description.

This work with teachers provides an entry point into my research on teacher knowledge. The terms and concepts of practical knowledge have allowed me to reflect on my experience in such a way that the preliminary dimensions of the research problem have become clear. Furthermore, the more informal, reflective analysis of my own experience has allowed the development of a 'natural' or more spontaneous concept of image as a way of understanding how teachers use their past experience in instructional situations.

The Significance of the Study

In my work with teachers I experienced a personal dissatisfaction with the way teachers are viewed. The prevailing view and organization of the educational enterprise give little credit to their knowledge. My role as a school counsellor was illustrative of the prevailing stance. I was placed in a highly prescriptive role *vis-à-vis* teachers. Because I had advanced training in Educational Psychology, I was assumed to have theories that could be applied to classroom situations. There was, perhaps, some understanding within the educational hierarchy that the teachers might, on the basis of past experience, adapt or modify a theoretical prescription. If they did change the prescription, it was usually taken to indicate a lack of expertise in applying it. But the position I filled in the educational system is only one of many which are in a prescriptive relationship to teachers. Experts in the disciplines and in subject matter areas prescribe solutions drawn from theory to classroom situations. Teachers are, at best, viewed as adjusters or adapters of externally imposed knowledge (Connelly and Ben-Peretz, 1980; Sarason, 1982). The stance adopted in my earlier work with teachers and in the present research is of teachers as thinking, deliberative agents, oriented toward action. Teachers are seen as assuming a position of autonomy over instructional acts.

Teachers are commonly acknowledged as having had experience but they are credited with little knowledge gained from that experience. The omission is due in part to the fact that we have not had ways of thinking about this practical knowledge and in part because we fail to recognize more practically oriented knowledge. The importance of conceptualizing practical knowledge derives from two avenues of thought. One relates to the widely acknowledged disillusion with much curriculum implementation work (Fullan and Pomfret, 1977). In part, the lack of success of curriculum implementation efforts derives from the use of a perspective which minimizes the teacher as an active, autonomous agent *and* a holder and user of practical knowledge. It is not the case that researchers and implementors deny the reality of teacher independence and initative. Rather, these teacher characteristics tend to be either overlooked or, when recognized treated as an impediment in the implementation process. When a more adequate view of the teacher is adopted, i.e. a view that acknowledges the teacher as an active knowing agent, the importance of coming to understand teachers' practical knowledge is heightened. By a more adequate understanding of teachers' practical knowledge we may be able to provide more adequately for ways of thinking about school change.

The second avenue of thought relates to the fact that teachers as professionals are not seen as possessing a body of knowledge (Lortie, 1975). Consequently, teaching is not recognized as having the status and prestige of other professions, even within the teaching profession. The general stance is that teachers do not possess a body of knowledge unique to their profession. What knowledge they are supposed to have is thought to be in a discipline or subject matter area such as science or reading and not in the profession of teaching. In the research community, this view is slowly shifting as a growing number of researchers (Elbaz, 1983; Connelly, 1980; Schön, 1983) begin to conceptualize this practical knowledge of teachers.

The impetus for this study is a dissatisfaction with the way teachers are viewed and their role conceived in the educational enterprise. This dissatisfaction and my personal struggles to work with teachers in a way that allowed me to value their experiential knowledge lie behind this study.

Key Terms in Research on Teacher Thinking

Because much work has been done in the area of teacher thinking, it is important to consider it as a backdrop to the present study. The intent in this section is to place the present research in the context of ongoing research in the area of teacher thinking, not to offer a comprehensive review of research in the area. Excellent reviews examining teacher thinking have been completed (Burns, 1982; Clark and Yinger, 1977; Larocque and Oberg, 1980).

The key terms of the present research are research perspective, role of the agent, view of the teacher, teacher's experience and teacher's personal practical knowledge. These five terms will be used to structure an account of research on teacher thinking and to place the present research within this context.

1 The Research Perspective

Research on teacher thinking can be distinguished roughly into two classes: research adopting a theoretical researcher's perspective and research adopting a teacher's practitioner perspective. In the former class, the teacher tends to be seen as playing out more or less well a particular theory, policy, planned curriculum or researcher's view of how teachers think about their classroom work. Consequently teacher thought is divided into such practical categories as planning, interaction, reflection and evaluation. These categories tend to be predetermined and embodied in surveys, questionnaires, observation instruments and coding schemes. Because the theoretical perspective is set prior to data collection, teachers are seen to fit more or less well within the framework.

Morine's (1976) work is illustrative. She collected written plans for two experimenter-prescribed lessons taught by teachers to groups of their own students. She then analyzed these plans according to the following seven predetermined characteristics: 1) specificity of written plans, 2) general format of plans, 3) statement of goals, 4) source of goal statements, 5) attention to pupil background and preparation, 6) identification of evaluation procedures, and 7) indication of possible alternative procedures. Her conclusions were that teachers tended to be fairly specific (characteristic 1) and use an outline form in their plans (characteristic 2), but paid little attention to behavioral goals (characteristics 3 and 4), diagnosis of student needs (characteristic 5), evaluation procedures (characteristic 6), and alternative courses of action (characteristic 7). This account of teacher planning is given in Morine's research terms for it was to Morine's perspective that the teachers responded. In their planning, teachers may well have been doing much that was not captured by the imposed research framework.

Other research on teacher thinking adopts a teacher practitioner perspective. In research of this kind an attempt is made to understand teachers from their own perspective. The work of Bussis, Chittenden and Amarel (1976) is illustrative. They examined what they term 'teachers' understandings' using in-depth open-ended interviews to probe the constructs which teachers bring to their work and the relationships among these constructs. The teachers gave their accounts in their own terms, not in terms imposed by the researchers. The research intent was to understand how particular individual practitioners understood their work. Others (Clark and Yinger, 1980; Finch, 1981; Hayes, 1980; Janesick, 1982) have also adopted a teacher practitioner perspective in their research.

But studies which *claim* to adopt a teacher's perspective may, in their methodology, still be conducted from the researcher's theoretical perspective. Mireau's (1980) case study of one teacher is, at first glance, a study which adopts a teacher practitioner perspective. Mireau, using a variety of methodological techniques, did an intensive study of one teacher working in his classroom. While the study purported to give an account from the teacher's perspective, what it does is give an account of the teacher from a wide variety of theoretical terms imposed by the methodologies. This study highlights the point that when the literature in the area of teacher thinking is reviewed, there are studies which claim to have a teacher practitioner perspective, but which, when the methodology and knowledge claims are examined more closely, are conducted in theoretical terms prescribed by the researcher. In Mireau's case the superficial appearance of a teacher perspective study results from the adoption of a case study methodology and from the eclectic use of a variety of theories to classify and explain the teacher's work.

The research perspective adopted in teacher thinking studies has significance for the resulting knowledge claims. Knowledge derived from research adopting a theoretical researcher perspective is knowledge of the universal: of what things are and how they work in general. Hence Morine, noted above, can claim that teachers' written plans, in general, exhibit the characteristics noted. In studies adopting a teacher practitioner perspective, the knowledge claimed is knowledge of the individual case: of what things are and how they work in particular instances. Consequently, Bussis *et al.* (1976) can claim knowledge of individual teachers in their work. The adoption of the latter perspective does not, of course, rule out the possibility of generating universal constructs, such as image or ritual, which are differentially expressed in individual cases.

此为试读，需要完整PDF请访问：www.ertongbook.com