Preservice Teachers' Thinking about Agency and Assessment in the Context of Personal Competencies and Structural Constraints

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Abstract: This case study provides a glimpse into two preservice social studies teachers' thinking about their own agency as curriculum developers. Albert Bandura's framework for personal agency was used as a theoretical lens to better understand the preservice teachers' thinking about their own intentionality (their purpose for teaching social studies) and forethought (their perceived capabilities and constrains in future school community). The analysis of twenty data items found that both preservice teachers' developed curriculum that supported their purpose for teaching social studies; however, when they considered the assessments that they had developed a divergence in their thinking emerged. The findings also suggest that the preservice teachers' differing expectations about acceptance in their future school communities contributed to their divergent thinking about assessment. The preservice teachers' understood the outcomes of their assessment decisions in two distinct ways, and this shaped how they perceived their own agency in the current educational climate.
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1. Introduction

Preservice teachers will more than likely enter school communities that are influenced by accountability and testing mandates, either in their student teaching or in their first teaching position. Many preservice teachers understand that they will be responsible for preparing their students to meet the expectations of these mandates through curricular and assessment decisions; however, many preservice teachers leave teacher education without sufficient knowledge about assessment development and its connection to these mandates in schools [1]. While most preservice teachers are aware of the influence that accountability and testing mandates have in schools, their understanding of these mandates differ significantly and could have implications for how they think about their personal agency in their future classroom. We do not know much about preservice social studies teachers' thinking about accountability and testing mandates [2], and furthermore we do not know how preservice teachers' understanding of these mandates influences their thinking about their curriculum and assessment development decisions. This article will offer a glimpse into preservice teachers' thinking about curricular and assessment decisions as they consider their capabilities and constraints as curriculum developers in their future school communities.

The relationship between assessment and accountability in the social studies has become especially tentative in the last twenty years, as "social studies testing at national and state levels is a relatively recent phenomenon" [2]. Tests and policies change regularly state-to-state, which makes it difficult to maintain a coherent understanding of the current practices. Kurfman noted this and called for social studies educators to find agreement on assessment practice and wrote, "social studies educators need to reach consensus on acceptable and unacceptable professional behavior in the 'vast gray area' of teaching to the test" [3, p. 319].

The "vast gray area" has only changed in terminology, as Grant and Salinas echoed this sentiment in their chapter of the *Handbook on Research in Social Studies Education*. They referred to it as the "murky position in which social studies educators find themselves vis-à-vis the recent call for increased assessment and accountability" [2, p. 219]. Grant and Salinas even pointed out that we do not know much about assessment and accountability in the social studies because "the research literature offers an ambiguous picture of the relationships between testing and student and teacher

accountability…and the theoretical literature on assessment and accountability is no clearer" [2, p. 219]. The ambiguity and "vast gray area" of assessment in social studies education creates a conflicted middle ground in preservice teachers' thinking, where competing discourses could vie for influence in their curriculum decisions.

A conflict in preservice teachers' thinking, about their curriculum decisions, could be attributed to how they consider their future roles. In a study that examined how preservice teachers thought about their future school community, Ng identified a conflict in her preservice teachers' thinking. She noted that it was remarkable "the way preservice teachers defined their future roles" and the way their "understanding of the role was often a source of internal conflict for preservice teachers given contemporary federal and state mandates for public accountability…preservice teachers recognized that being a teacher meant they were inherently accountable to the public" [4, pp. 368-69] and immediately accountable to their school community. This conflict was rooted in the preservice teachers' recognition that their ability to make decisions in-line with their purpose for teaching would be limited in schools that were influenced heavily by state testing and accountability.

Preservice teachers recognize the educational climate in schools and as Ng noted, "Although preservice and practicing teachers may hold strong views about their occupational purpose" it is vital to consider "the way a teacher's role and purpose are shaped by the social organization of schools" [4, pp. 355-356], even while in teacher education. Rosenholtz argued that "the social organization of schools renders meaning to the nature of teaching.... The question of what teaching is, how it is performed, and how it is changed cannot be divorced from the social organization in which it occurs" [5, p.205]. This is important to consider given the coexistence of discourses with which many preservice teachers construct their identity and purposes for teaching. If they also consider the state mandates for testing and accountability, this may promote tension among competing notions of a teacher's role. In this study, the preservice teachers' understanding of schools and accountability affected how they thought about their personal agency, and more precisely how they thought about their ability to make curriculum decisions that supported their purpose for teaching social studies. This article will focus on two preservice teachers whose thinking represents a tension between assessment and personal agency among the participants of this study.

2. Theoretical Framework and Related Literature

The concept of agency is vital in making sense of human actions and holds significance in several fields. Theories of agency often take into account the interrelation of the intentions of the agent, the constraints of the context in which the agent acted, and even the subsequent consequences of the agent's action. This study used the work of Albert Bandura as a framework to examine preservice teachers' thinking about their own agency as curriculum developers. Bandura outlined a framework of human agency that was characterized by four features that operated through phenomenal and functional consciousness to represent an individual's capacity to exercise control over their own life. Bandura's definition of human agency characterizes the cognitive process of taking action:

To be an agent is to intentionally make things happen by one's actions. Agency embodies the endowments, belief systems, self-regulatory capabilities and distributed structures and functions through which personal influence is exercised…. The core features of agency enable people to play a part in their self-development, adaptation, and self-renewal with changing times. [6, p. 2]

The core features of Bandura's conception of agency were relevant to this study because they characterized the process by which participants' crafted plans of action in relation to their goals and purposes as developing teachers.

The four core features of Bandura's conception of human agency included: *intentionality*, *forethought*, *self-reactiveness*, and *self-reflectiveness*. Intentionality, simply put is the idea that individuals form intentions that include action plans and strategies for realizing those plans. Forethought on the other hand, is the temporal extension of agency and includes individuals establishing goals for themselves and anticipating the likely outcomes of those prospective actions, which guide and motivate their efforts. Self-reactiveness, then, is the ability of individuals to construct appropriate courses of action and then motivate and regulate their execution. Lastly, self-reflectiveness is an individuals' self-awareness as they reflect on their own effectiveness, the accuracy of their thoughts and actions, and possibly the meaning of their pursuits. This provides the opportunity to make necessary adjustments to their actions [7]. For this study, it was only possible to examine the participants' intentionality and forethought as components of their personal agency as preservice teachers. This was due to the lack of a setting for participants to execute their plans for action, and then reflect upon them.

3. Intentionality and Forethought

Bandura distinguished intentionality from acts that are the result of happenstance and defined it as: A representation of a future course of action to be performed. It is not simply an expectation or prediction of future actions but a proactive commitment to bringing them about. Intentions and actions are different aspects of a functional relation separated in time. It is, therefore, meaningful to speak of intentions grounded in self-motivators affecting the likelihood of actions at a future point in time. [6, p.6]

Human agents often act for a certain purpose to achieve an intended outcome. However, Bandura noted that "Outcomes are not the characteristics of agentive acts; they are the consequences of them" [6, p. 6]. At the foundation of agency, then, is the power to initiate action for a given purpose, regardless of the effects of that action. However, intention is not enough to enact a plan of action, as an individual needs other self-regulatory aspects to execute an agentive act.

Bandura distinguished forethought from intentionality, and noted that it is temporal and extends an agent's thinking beyond forward-directed planning. Forethought activates upon people setting goals for themselves, as individuals "anticipate the likely consequences of prospective actions, and select and create courses of action likely to produce desired outcomes and avoid detrimental ones. Through the exercise of forethought, people motivate themselves and guide their actions in anticipation of future events" [6, p. 7]. Bandura noted that a forethoughtful perspective "provides direction, coherence, and meaning to one's life. As people progress in their life course they continue to plan ahead, reorder their priorities, and structure their lives accordingly" [6, p.7]. Future events cannot be motivation for action in the present because those future actions do not exist. The present cognitive representation of future events provides a form of "anticipatory self-guidance" that is motivated and directed by projected goals and anticipated outcomes [6].

As part of their forethought, individuals construct "outcome expectations" based on their observations of their environment and the "outcomes the given actions produce" [6, p. 7]. It is an individuals' ability to consider anticipated outcomes in current activities that signifies forethought. Forethought allows individuals to "transcend the dictates of their immediate environment to shape and regulate the present to fit a desired future" [6, p. 7]. As individuals regulate their actions based on their outcome expectations, individuals choose courses of action that are likely to lead to positive outcomes, and avoid those courses of action that will likely result in negative outcomes. In regulating their actions, individuals demonstrate self-direction in consideration of competing influences.

4. Literature Related to Intentionality and Forethought

A major theme in the course of this study was the personal goals or purpose of the preservice teachers. The purpose of the preservice teachers provides the source for much of their intentionality regarding curriculum decisions. Recently scholars have argued for preservice teachers' purpose to be of primary concern in teacher education programs [8, 9, 10]. Darling-Hammond et al. describe the importance of "educational purposes" for preservice teachers and wrote "beginning teachers should have a conception about what is important to study in the content areas they teach based on social needs and expectations, learning standards, and research about the kinds of understandings that are necessary for further learning" [11, p. 185]. Furthermore, they wrote that teachers "should be able to define and defend the goals they select to their students, parents, colleagues, administrators, and themselves" as well as "translate their broad goals into more discrete objectives that can guide particular lessons and units of study" [11, p. 185]. Darling-Hammond and her colleagues have seemingly argued for the cultivation of teachers' intentionality and forethought to be the central theme in teacher education.

There has been a renewed focus on teachers' purposes and the role of purposes, goals, or rationales in social studies teaching and learning [12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17]. Many of these recent works cite Barton and Levstik's perspective that without "a sense of purpose that is clearly thought out and articulated, teachers may fall prey to each new fad or harebrained instructional program or they may find themselves adopting the practices of their peers by default" [12, p. 255]. This commonly happens as novice teachers become consumed in the time constraints of the profession and seek acceptance from their colleagues. Additionally, Barton and Levstik stated that without "a clear sense of purpose, teachers' primary actions continue to be coverage of the curriculum and control of students, no matter how much they know about history, teaching, or the intersection of the two" [12, p. 258]. Thornton (2006) built upon Barton and Levstik's work and related teachers' purposes to the idea of curricular-instructional gatekeeping. Thornton proposed that teachers' purposes are significant in development of their daily curricular plans, and that "teachers' purposes, then, guide how far they open the curricular-instructional gate; for whom, when, and which gates to what they open" [16, p. 418]. As Barton and Levstik and Thornton compellingly

argued, a focus on the role of purpose in teacher education could be beneficial for cultivating teachers' agency as curriculum developers and decision makers.

Research on teachers' purposes also has implications for their forethought about curricular-instructional and assessment decisions. There are two recent studies that consider how preservice and novice teacher's purposes influence their curricular-instructional decisionmaking, which aptly portrays the relationship between intentionality and forethought. Castro and Salinas found that two Latino social studies preservice teachers made curriculum decisions based on strongly developed and clearly articulated purposes. These teachers took an oppositional stance toward the state-mandated curriculum while student teaching and made curricular-instructional decisions that were in-line with their purposes for teaching social studies.

In another study, Hawley examined preservice teachers' construction of rationales for teaching social studies and their struggles to make them a reality in their initial teaching position.

Hawley identified three themes that demonstrated the different ways that each participant struggled to put their rationales into practice. Despite the novice teachers' struggles to implement the rationales they developed in teacher education, "the enduring ideas from their rationales emerged, and to varying degrees, reemerged, as the year progressed" [15, p. 155]. This demonstrated that the rationales that the students created held relevance to their teaching, and demonstrated a healthy connection between their intentionality and forethought.

Teachers' decisions about assessment based on their purpose for teaching are also related to forethought. While there is not research that talks specifically about a preservice teacher's purpose and its influence on their assessment decisions, there is research the examines ambitious in-service teachers and the influence of assessment and accountability mandates on their curriculum decisions [18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23]. In general, most of the ambitious teachers examined in each case had a strong purpose for teaching that allowed them to negotiate many of the constraints brought about by the increased accountability mandates. This can be seen in the description of teachers in Yeager and van Hover's study in which they noted, "the *personal* and *contextual* nature of their instructional decision-making with regard to the test.

Both teachers possessed an intense personal drive to find ways to make the test work for them and to not allow the test to completely dictate the nature of their work" [23, p. 354]. These studies indicate that a strong purpose or intentionality can be a powerful determinant in a teacher's forethought regarding curriculum decision-making, even when faced with top-down constraints such as accountability mandates.

5. Research Methods

For this research we used a qualitative case study design [24] to examine preservice social studies teachers in their methods course. Case study methodology was used because we wanted to examine preservice teachers thinking at a certain point in their development.

Specifically, we used case study design because we wanted to better understand how preservice teachers think about their own agency during their methods course and before they enter their student teaching experience. Yin described that a researcher might choose to use the case study method because they "deliberately wanted to cover contextual conditions—believing that they might be highly pertinent to [the] phenomena of study" [24, p. 18]. This was especially true for this study, because the methods course emphasized the preservice teachers evaluation of resources, curriculum, and instructional methodologies and to develop curriculum that fit their purpose for teaching social studies. The context of the social studies methods course was a prime venue for preservice teachers to think about their own agency, because they contemplated their capabilities and constraints as they considered and developed a variety of curricula for their future practice.

Middle States University (MSU), a public research university in the Midwestern United States, was the site for this case study because it held a number of practical and theoretical advantages as a site for study. In this study, we acted as researchers and as the participants' instructors, which had advantages and limitations. Cresswell noted that while the convenience of studying "one's own 'backyard'" [25, p. 122] eliminates many data collection obstacles, it also brings about issues of power in the collection of data that exposes the relationship between researcher and participant. The primary concern during the study was observer bias, due to my relationship to the preservice teachers as someone who assessed their engagement in the course. Bias is arguably present in all research, yet we were especially cognizant of the possible bias in our role as researchers and instructors and we attempted to reduce bias in the process of data collection and analysis.

This study used a typical purposeful sample. We wanted to study secondary social studies methods students' thinking about their own agency. Therefore, we decided to use students who were part of the

anchor teacher education program at MSU, which represented the most common path to secondary social studies teaching. The sample was also convenient because of our role as instructors. Merriam noted that samples chosen purely out of convenience can lead to poor information and lack credibility; however, since we primarily chose the sample due to its representation of the average participant associated with the study's phenomenon, then the limitations brought on by the convenience of the sample were less relevant.

The participants of this study were all preservice secondary social studies teachers. There were twenty possible participants who provided informed consent to take part in the study, and all were undergraduate preservice teachers. Six of the participants were female, and fourteen were male. Also, most of the participants were from the state that MSU is situated and were mostly White, with one Asian student and one Black student. After an initial analysis, eight preservice teachers were chosen to have their data analyzed further, and two of these eight participants were used for the findings of this article. The eight preservice teachers were chosen after the second stage of analysis in which the preservice teachers' purpose for teaching social studies was deeply analyzed and scanned for frequency throughout the data [26].

The eight preservice teachers were chosen essentially on the strength of their purpose for teaching social studies. The strength of a preservice teachers purpose for teaching was based on its frequency and triangulation throughout the data. For this article, the data produced by Cody and Jim was chosen based on their similar intentionality and purpose for teaching.

Our dual role as researchers and instructors was a limitation of this study in regard to the participants. As the participants' instructors we inevitably developed a relationship with each preservice teacher and had expectations for each of them derived from our relationship. This required me to be aware of our own subjectivity while actively engaged in the research process [27], so as not to let those expectations interfere with our interpretation of the data and choice of participants.

There were three main sources of data collected for this study which include researchers prepared documentation, participant-observations, and interviews. Many of the documents were exercises in developing curriculum, elicitation activities, and reflections. There were sixteen document-based data items obtained from the students, eight assignments and eight in-class activities over the semester. All sixteen of these document based data items were regular classroom assignments or activities. As instructors and researchers, we also recorded participant observations and audio-recorded discussions in selected class periods. Lastly, interviews were conducted and audio-recorded at the end of the semester, and ranged from 30-60 minutes in length.

The data analysis for this study was conducted by examining the data of each participant in chronological order of collection to identify the initial codes. We identified codes in each round of analysis which identified the preservice teachers' intentions for teaching and certain areas of professional decisions where they demonstrated these intentions. All of the data was then analyzed a second time to narrow the number of participants based on the frequency and triangulation of codes. Eight preservice teachers' data was analyzed a third time. These participants were grouped based on the similarity of their intentionality. Then the codes pertaining to the forethought of participants in each group was compared for the findings. Due to the large amount of data and an attempt to provide a thick description, the data from two participants, Cody and Jim, was chosen for this article.

6. Findings

Cody and Jim were preservice teachers who both used discourse to describe themselves as facilitators; as advocates of discussion, deliberation, and debate; and as developers of studentcentered curriculum. Cody and Jim intended to develop curriculum that utilized their students' interests and abilities, while also utilizing their ability to facilitate learning. What follows is a glimpse of Cody and Jim's thinking in regard to their intentionality and forethought as future curriculum developers and teachers.

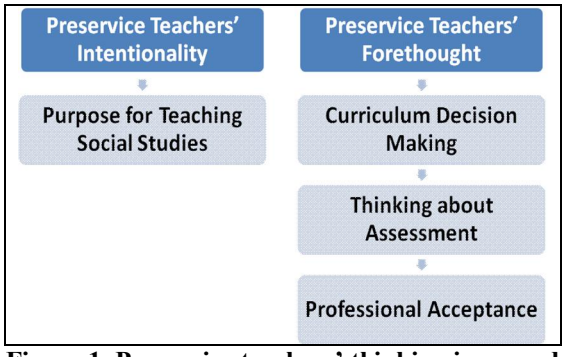

Figure 1. Preservice teachers' thinking in regard to their intentionality and forethought

7. Preservice Teachers' Intentionality: Purpose for Teaching Social Studies

Cody.

Cody thought that much of social studies education did not effectively achieve the educational

goals that he believed were important. He thought that many of his experiences in his own schooling and in his field experiences utilized outdated practices that did not interest students. Cody was asked what he would change about social studies education and Cody responded:

I think just teaching history in general. I mean instead of focusing on fact, focus on like, reasons that it happened, cause and effect. Like, we had a teacher in high school, who yeah, he would … you'd have to know dates and everything, instead of … asking the why… he always wanted the when and where. (Interview)

Cody thought that the best way for students to understand the "why" of history was through inquiry and discussion. Cody thought that discussion was not only one of the best ways to learn, but that he was also an excellent facilitator of discussion. Cody described this in his interview and said:

As far as being able to facilitate, I think it's definitely one of my stronger aspects. So I have a lot of confidence in that ability to just a) maintain peace and order, and b) try to have them see that there are two sides of every issue. Whether they like them or not, there's an opinion and there's a topic, and they have to respect another person's opinion. (Interview)

Cody emphasized his ability to facilitate learning in nearly every lesson he developed during the semester long course. The facilitation of learning through inquiry and discussion was ideal for Cody; however, he understood that it did not fit every lesson or topic. Cody talked about this briefly in his interview and said:

I can't always facilitate learning. I mean yeah, there's times when you're going to have to lecture about certain topics because there's just not really a whole lot of ways to go about them. But I mean if you can facilitate and show them like, if they're going to gather evidence based on your lecture, then that is a good lesson also. (Interview)

Cody understood that facilitating learning was not necessarily a stand-alone strategy for teaching and understood how to use other strategies and methods to make his use of facilitation optimally effective.

Cody's devotion to facilitating his students' learning was also evident in his lesson plans.

Cody created an inquiry lesson on McCarthyism and reflected on the best aspects of the lesson,

"The students would be able to move around and get involved cooperatively. Plus, I think I can utilize my strength as a mediator in the classroom…to facilitate their understanding of a complex concept" (Lesson Plan Reflection). While Cody understood the values of facilitating his students' learning, he also understood the challenges in regularly facilitating active learning in his classroom. He understood that time and resources were limitations in trying to cover the content outlined by district and state standards. He discussed this challenge briefly in his interview:

I mean probably covering the content. I definitely want my class to be a lot of discussion and like active lessons. If they give me a set of guidelines and… say okay you have to complete this topic in this amount of time, cover all these bases. And just the constrictions…it would be a big challenge.

Despite the challenges Cody was optimistic that he could facilitate learning in the manner that he wanted and still address the standards. In discussing his own resilience, Cody said "teachers have to be creative in order to maintain their goals" (Interview); and Cody was confident that he could do just that.

Jim.

Jim consistently identified himself as a facilitator of active learning. He commonly discussed his desire to create and support a student-centered environment. Jim was focused on current issues and wanted to connect those issues to historical events and issues. Jim described this briefly in his interview and said:

As a social studies teacher I think it's more getting them informed about current issues…but also something I've like picked up on over the past two semesters is getting them informed about current issues and also being active…and I found that facilitation is key and will be pretty standard in my classroom. (Interview)

Jim mentioned that he had gradually become an advocate of student-centered learning and decided to develop lessons that involved active learning only after his initial methods course.

Jim's coursework had in a way shaped his identity as a facilitator, so much so, that when he was asked to use one word or metaphor to describe his teaching, he chose *facilitator*. He explained his choice and wrote:

I see myself as a facilitator because a facilitator is someone who supports and manages everyone around them. A facilitator doesn't control everything but is there to make sure that everyone is on task and helps when someone is lost or doesn't understand something.

I want my classroom to be more of a student-centered environment where the students dictate what they want to learn. I see the role of the facilitator as being the best approach for that kind of a classroom setting. (Final)

Jim's intention to create a student-centered classroom could also be seen in his lesson plans. In one lesson plan reflection, on a concept formation

over nationalism, Jim connected the lesson to his purpose of creating a student-centered environment. Jim wrote:

I think that this lesson would utilize my strengths of creating a more student-centered environment. I believe one of my strengths is that I can create an atmosphere where students are welcome to discuss and deliberate the meaning of a complex concept. (Lesson Plan Reflection)

Jim's devotion to creating a student-centered classroom and facilitating discussion and deliberation did not rest solely on the perceived effectiveness of the strategies and methodologies. Jim also believed that the active, student-centered classroom also contributed to the preparation of his students for citizenship in a democratic society. He discussed this in his interview and said:

The purpose of education in a democratic society is for students to develop critical skills such as how to investigate questions, evaluate evidence, interpret text, and draw conclusions. When a student is able to develop and learn these skills they are more prepared to play a more meaningful role in the democratic society. I believe the purpose of education in a democratic society is to prepare students for their future roles as professionals and citizens. (Lesson Plan Reflection)

Jim's purpose for teaching social studies had intentions for his students outside of his classroom.

Jim believed that the active, student-centered classroom could develop many of the skills his students would need to effectively participate in society. Jim felt that his role was to guide his students' development as young citizens.

8. Preservice Teachers' Forethought: Curriculum Decision Making

Cody and Jim both made curriculum decisions that reflected their purpose for teaching social studies. Their curricular decisions reflected their focus on the development of their students' knowledge and skills through the facilitation of active lessons and the utilization of student-centered activities. Cody and Jim's curriculum decisions provided a starting point in understanding how they each thought about their purpose for teaching social studies. Their curriculum decisions also provided the first articulation of their purpose for teaching social studies, and as part of their forethought provided the first instance in which they considered the consequences of their decisions, for both their students and themselves. In considering the consequences of their decisions they also considered the extent to which they would exercise their personal agency as teachers.

Cody.

When Cody was asked in his interview if there were any teaching strategies that represented his teaching best, Cody simply replied, "Debate. Definitely debate" (Interview).

Cody not only valued debate, but any discussion-based activity and he worked these activities into each of his lesson plans. Cody primarily wanted his students to leave his classroom able to discuss an array of historical and current topics. Cody discussed this in his interview and said:

Probably just having them walk away with…just that ability to debate and discuss and do it intelligently and logically. And if they have an opinion to be able to research for that evidence to back up their opinion and not just pick out certain bits and facts that are going to back up their opinion, but actually find like, articles with research or find…like hard core commonly accepted facts….

Cody made it clear that he wanted his students to be able to inquire into problems and issues, find facts, and develop logical arguments in discussions and debates. Similar to Jim, Cody thought that these skills were primary to his students' roles as citizens.

Cody's emphasis on discussion-based activities could be seen in the lesson plans he developed over the course of the semester. He made curriculum decisions that would promote dialogue in his classroom and expose students to different perspectives. Cody thought that one of his strengths was his ability to present multiple perspectives on an issue and challenge his students' thinking. He also thought that the cooperative learning aspects of discussion-based activities would benefit his students. Cody thought that if he created an active learning environment that his students would also engage with multiple perspectives more effectively with their peers. Cody thought that this was one of the best aspects of his lessons. He noted this in a lesson plan reflection and wrote:

The best component of the lesson is the activity. The students will be learning from each other and hearing different arguments that they may not necessarily agree with. The students are really their own masters when it comes to how enjoyable this assignment is, but I believe that they will learn a lot just by arguing their side.

Cody's rationale for his curriculum decisions that utilized discussion-based activities was best represented in another lesson plan reflection. This lesson involved the issue of dropping the atomic bomb in WWII. In his reflection Cody highlighted his decisions and wrote:

It goes back to my idea of discussion and debate among the students while still respecting their opinions. This is a highly controversial topic, even

today, and even though some of the students may not agree with the side that they are on, they will still need to argue passionately about the side that they are a part of. This teaches them to examine all sides of an argument and to gather the information necessary to make an informed decision. (Lesson Plan Reflection)

Cody wanted his students to understand the process of making informed decisions. Cody thought that discussion-based activities were the best way to achieve that outcome in the classroom. For example, in another lesson Cody used the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) for a concept formation activity on *social mobilization*. He discussed this in a lesson plan reflection and wrote:

I purposefully put the KKK in the lesson because they are highly controversial and a radical faction, and their method and message are not received well by others at all.

However, they are important to the facilitation of a lesson on the concept of social mobilization. While it is difficult to say, they do have the right to demonstrate because once you take away one group's right to demonstrate and protest, then where does it end?

Cody demonstrated that he not only used the KKK to spark his students' interest, but also to provide a context to discuss citizens' rights to diverse perspectives in the United States. Cody's curriculum decisions reflected his desire to engage his students in discussion-based and studentcentered activities. His curriculum decisions supported his purpose for teaching social studies and he hoped these decisions would make them more informed citizens.

Jim.

Jim's curriculum decisions focused more broadly on a variety of student-centered activities. Jim, similar to Cody, also valued multiple perspectives. He wanted to expose his students to multiple perspectives and he thought it was an important part of his role as a social studies teacher. Jim thought that student-centered learning activities were the best way to engage students with those perspectives. Jim's value for student-centered learning and cooperative learning could be seen in each of the lesson plans he created for the course. For example, Jim developed a concept formation lesson on *nationalism*. In his reflection, Jim noted the use of cooperative learning activities and their value as a method to expose students to multiple perspectives. Jim wrote:

This lesson contributes to my overall purpose in teaching because it informs students of a concept and lets them investigate individually and in small groups, to find similar examples and lets them draw their own conclusions. I also think that this lesson contributes to my overall purpose in teaching, because students can often generalize certain concepts such as extreme nationalism and put them with one certain group of individuals (for example Nazis). It is our job as Social Studies teachers to make sure that our students view multiple perspectives of history not just one. (Lesson Plan Reflection)

Jim made curriculum decisions that supported his purpose for teaching and intended to engage his students with multiple perspectives through active and cooperative learning.

Jim also made curriculum decisions that supported the use of inquiry. Jim mentioned that one of the most impactful things he learned from teacher education was the value of inquiry for student learning. Jim thought that when students engaged in inquiry the materials were more relevant to the students. In a lesson plan reflection on a Civil War inquiry lesson, Jim discussed his rationale for using inquiry and wrote, "This lesson contributes to my overall purpose in teaching because it makes students responsible for their own educational experience as they are challenged to investigate questions, evaluate evidence, and draw conclusions on material that is relevant to their interests." In the same reflection, Jim connected his rationale to his role as a facilitator and wrote, "I think it's important not only to teach students, but to facilitate opportunities for them to engage in new things individually" (Lesson Plan Reflection). Jim also demonstrated the value of using inquiry with other student-centered activities. Jim created a lesson on the issue of building the Islamic Cultural Center in New York City. Jim utilized both inquiry and discussion-based activities to engage his students and develop their understanding.

Jim reflected on this lesson and wrote, "I think that this lesson utilizes my strengths of creating a student-centered environment. I believe one of my strengths is that I can create an atmosphere where students can investigate and research, then discuss and deliberate any topic" (Lesson Plan Reflection). Jim demonstrated that his thinking about student-centered learning could incorporate several activities that engaged and informed his students on topics relevant to current events in their lives.

Jim used a wide range of activities, but seemed to hold special regard for the Town Hall method of deliberation. This method was particularly valuable to Jim because of the skills it promoted and the perceivable relevance of the activity to his students' lives. Jim talked about this in his interview and in reference to his lesson on the Islamic Cultural Center. Jim thought it was the best part of the lesson and commented, "Probably the most effective is… a Town Hall discussion, so I think it is getting the effect of getting the students in the mindset of if they

had to really…had to actually vote on the thing and justify it" (Interview). Jim's thoughts about his curriculum decisions drew on many student-centered activities; however, discussion-based activities seemed to be most valuable to his purpose for teaching. Jim valued the discussionbased activities, such as the Town Hall Meeting, because they engaged students in cooperative learning activities that developed the students' skills as future citizens and guided their learning about relevant topics.

9. Preservice Teachers' Forethought: Thinking about Assessment

Cody and Jim both thought of themselves as facilitators of learning and made curriculum decisions that represented their purpose for teaching social studies. When Cody and Jim thought about how they would develop assessments that supported their purpose for teaching, their views became more dissimilar and represented distinct ways of thinking about assessment and its role in their future teaching.

Cody.

In terms of assessment, Cody clearly had a few favorite types of assessment, just as he favored a couple of types of activities in his decisions about curriculum. Cody recognized the value of using a variety of assessments, but admittedly only focused on those that he really valued for the lessons he developed. In his interview he noted, "Being able to apply appropriate assessments to lessons is the key, otherwise what's the point." When Cody described an assessment as appropriate he meant "they get the result you want from the students learning" (Interview). On his final, Cody elaborated on his view of assessments and wrote:

For example, using the Town Hall debate to assess students on a topic displays knowledge of the topic and the ability to discuss the topic in a setting run nearly entirely by the students. In my lesson, the students would have a variety of questions asked to them during the teaching of the topic, and then the debate to discuss the issue. This fits in with my purpose because I want students who are able to intelligently argue a point and provide support for the arguments while respecting the other side of the argument. (Final)

Cody demonstrated that he thought discussion-based activities were effective assessments; however, he did not think that assessment should stop there. Cody believed that students should be able to take what they learned from the discussion-based activity and express their own position on the issue they discussed. Cody noted this on his final and wrote:

I think an assessment through a paper detailing the issues at stake would be a good way to assess the students formally after the Town Hall debate. This would allow the students to talk about the paper before actually doing it, and they would gain some valuable perspectives to build on their own values and beliefs. (Final)

For Cody, the combination of the discussion-based activity and the essay provided two ways for his students to develop valuable skills, and two ways for him to assess how well he was facilitating his students' learning.

Cody liked facilitating learning because it allowed for student interest to flourish. He thought that student interest created a seamless-web between the objectives, activities, and assessment of the lessons. Cody emphasized this in his lesson on social mobilization in which students were encouraged to research the historical groups that were of interest to them and become "experts." In his lesson plan reflection Cody wrote:

I really believe the best component of the lesson is the activity because it is also the assessment. Every student would be a part of this and have to present and research their portion. I am a big fan of guiding students to becoming so-called "experts" in one aspect of a lesson and then learning from their peers about the other aspects. They can discuss about their research and ask each other questions. Their presentations and questions they raise will let me know if they met the objectives.

Cody thought of his assessments as a vital part of the lesson and as something that aided him in the facilitation of learning. He also thought assessments helped his students deepen their understanding of their own interests and perspectives. Cody's thinking about assessment was intertwined in his curriculum decisions and supported his purpose for teaching social studies.

Jim.

Jim thought about assessment in a different manner than Cody. Jim thought that social studies education and assessment had a complex and difficult relationship. Jim reflected on the assessment he developed for his controversial issue lesson plan (over the Islamic Cultural Center) and said, "I felt like a lot of times as Social Studies teachers we don't know how to assess, and we'll just have them write a paper, but…like I said I struggle with coming up with an appropriate assessment" (Interview). Jim had the students write letters to their congressman stating their opinion on the Islamic Cultural Center; however, he did not feel that this was an appropriate assessment. He thought he would have to change the assessment if he was to use the lesson in his student teaching experience. In his lesson plan reflection Jim noted this and wrote, "I would have to think of an

appropriate assessment, or maybe just a different activity, if I used this in my student teaching."

It was difficult to determine what Jim believed to be an appropriate assessment because he thought that more traditional forms of assessment were neither appropriate nor valuable. Jim expressed his dislike for more traditional assessments in a lesson plan reflection and wrote:

I think too often in Social Studies, teachers just hand students worksheets that have them find important vocabulary words or fill in the blank of events and dates. I find it challenging to come up with an assessment that is appropriate, but interactive and relevant to student's interest.

Just as Jim doubted social studies teachers' abilities to develop assessments, Jim admitted repeatedly that he struggled to develop assessments. This struggle was rooted in developing assessments that were "appropriate, but interactive and relevant to student interest," which is seemingly impossible in Jim's mind. In a different lesson plan reflection Jim wrote:

I think the most challenging part of developing a lesson plan is how you're going to assess the students on what they have learned. I think it's fairly easy to know what topic or concept that you want to teach or discuss but difficult to come up with an assessment that is appropriate and engages students…and gets them prepared for the big [state] tests.

Jim struggled to identify appropriate assessments for the lessons he developed, despite often developing assessments that supported his purpose for teaching. In Jim's thinking about his curriculum decisions there was a conflict between the activities he developed and the outcomes he thought he should assess. Jim thought that his assessments should engage students, be "appropriate," and prepare his students for the state tests.

Jim's thoughts about discussion-based activities and assessment differed from Cody. Jim had trouble with the connection between discussion-based activities and assessment. He struggled with how to assess each student in the discussion-based activities. Jim mentioned this struggle in a lesson plan reflection in which he used a town hall deliberation as the main activity.

Jim had the students write an essay after the deliberation and thought it was not an "appropriate" assessment. Jim wrote about this in his lesson plan reflection:

Another challenge in developing this lesson was how to assess the students on what they have learned. Town Hall Meetings are great for deliberation and discussion, but it's hard to judge if students comprehended the concepts that I need to cover for the state tests.

Unlike Cody, Jim did not understand the value of a town hall deliberation for assessing students' understanding of the material and was concerned about coverage for the state tests before he even enters the classroom.

In discussing how he would assess in his future classroom, Jim stressed his frustration with the development of assessments again, and demonstrated his thinking toward what he saw as the status quo in schools. In his frustration he thought that he would have to assess like other social studies teachers and would use a mix of other assessments he had seen in classrooms:

I don't … like I said I struggle with coming up with an appropriate assessment. As far as tests, I don't really believe in true/false…I think what teachers should do is have a couple essays, have a couple IDs where they define the term and then maybe a short multiple choice. But, yeah, I struggle with assessment, just a good mixture I guess…. or at least the types of things they'll be tested on by the government. (Interview)

Jim undoubtedly struggled with connecting his curriculum decisions, and the intended outcomes of those decisions, to decisions about developing assessments. Jim struggled not only with the connection between his activities and assessment, but also struggled with what was considered appropriate assessment in the social studies classroom. In his struggle, Jim thought he had little other choice than to use assessments that the status quo perceivably found to be appropriate, or those types of assessments that held value in preparing his students for the state tests.

Jim was asked in his interview, what type of assessment he thought he would use in his future classroom on a regular basis and responded, "I think I'd be open to any kind, you know see what my colleagues use, mix it up a little bit…it depends on what school I'm at….You know like in urban schools…I would probably have to test all the time" (Interview). This last comment by Jim demonstrated his thinking about how assessments were chosen in the classroom and the power of the teacher to choose assessments. Jim indicated that certain schools were subject to certain types of assessments. More importantly in terms of agency, Jim thought that he had very little control over the type of assessment he would use. He thought his choice would be generally subject to his school setting and the state mandated tests.

10. Preservice Teachers' Forethought: Professional Acceptance

Cody and Jim considered the consequences of their curriculum decisions in the context of their student teaching placements and in their possible future teaching positions. These considerations highlighted a difference in how both thought about their purpose for teaching social studies and its realization in schools. Their thinking about the consequences or outcomes of their curriculum and assessment decisions emphasized their varied needs for acceptance in their future school communities.

Cody.

Cody was not too concerned with being accepted by his school community, administrators, or colleagues. In his interview he said, "I mean a lot of people aren't going to agree with what I do. Which you can't make everyone happy all the time so…." Cody's thinking about acceptance in his school community was based on the idea that he could still work within the constraints of the school to achieve his purpose. Later in his interview, Cody discussed how he would handle concerns from members of the school community in regard to his method of facilitating discussion and use of controversial topics. Cody said:

I have a purpose in that if I want to get…them [students] to understand a topic or, like, just the general skill of being able to see all the sides of an argument - hopefully there won't be a lot of opposition. But I mean if there is, then I'll find a way to approach it and still get them to my goals. (Interview)

When Cody mentioned that he would "find a way to approach it," he highlighted what he believed to be a vital attribute of a teacher. Cody thought that teachers needed to be adaptive and creative in developing lessons. Cody continued in his interview and commented, "I think that's one of the other things about being a teacher is you always have to be willing to be creative about how you're going to do things and just being able to adapt, especially with testing these days" (Interview). Cody referred to this attribute repeatedly throughout the semester. In an inclass activity, which asked the preservice teachers to consider constraints on their teaching, Cody wrote, "Suck it up and teach it in your own creative way. Cover what you need to appease the veterans, but do it in your own personally creative way" (In-class Activity). In this sense, Cody viewed acceptance as something that was appeasable and achieved by through creative means of curriculum development. He realized that his purpose for teaching social studies would not be accepted by everyone, but he felt that he still would teach how he wanted. This realization led Cody to rationalize ways to maintain some level of acceptance, while also maintain his purpose for teaching social studies, even when faced with constraints.

Jim.

Unlike Cody, Jim was more concerned with being accepted by his school community, administrators, and colleagues. Jim thought he would need to make curriculum decisions that were accepted by the school community, at least early in his career. In an in-class activity Jim commented that he would "go along with it [a hypothetical curricular constraint imposed by colleagues] and make it the best situation for your teaching. Later when you are a veteran you can make the curriculum the way you want it" (In-class Activity). Jim described his thinking about the constraints on his teaching in his interview and commented, "I would try to work within the constraints of the system to achieve what's expected of me and I would work with my colleagues and administration to be a part of the community…especially early in my career" (Interview). Jim thought that becoming part of the school community was going to prove to be one of the biggest challenges in his first job.

Jim was also concerned about gaining respect as a young teacher. He felt that he would be less constrained once he had the respect of his colleagues and administrators. Jim discussed this briefly in his interview and said:

Probably the first challenge is kind of like establishing a rapport with colleagues and different colleagues or administration. But I think the first job you want to, like, build those relationships would probably the most challenging part, so that you get respect from your colleagues. (Interview)

Jim was even prepared to change his purpose for teaching to get the acceptance of his cooperating teacher. He viewed the student teaching experience as a job interview in which he must play by the rules. Jim discussed this in his interview and said, "It is a job interview, your student teaching. So I mean you want to impress your cooperating teacher at all costs, so some people totally change maybe their approaches and methods to align with their cooperating teacher" and "I imagine it will probably similar your first few years teaching…." (Interview).

While Jim did not appear ready to completely abandon his purpose for teaching social studies, his thinking indicated that he was very concerned with being accepted by his colleagues.

11. Discussion

The data from Cody and Jim highlighted a relationship between their thinking about assessment and their thinking about acceptance in their future school communities. Similar to teachers in other

studies [13, 17, 18, 20], Cody and Jim both developed curriculum that supported their clearly stated purpose for teaching social studies. Cody recognized the ways that assessment could compliment his purpose for teaching social studies, and he developed a variety of assessments and justified their use for student learning. Jim, however, struggled to understand the connection between his purpose for teaching and the assessments he developed. Although Jim developed assessments that reflected his curriculum decisions and purpose for teaching social studies, he thought that they would not be appropriate forms of assessment if they were used in schools. Therefore, Cody and Jim understood the purpose of their assessments very differently. Cody understood assessments simply as a means for students to demonstrate what they had learned from his curriculum decisions; whereas Jim understood assessments as a means for students to demonstrate that he had taught them what his future school community deemed appropriate for them to learn.

The distinction between how Cody and Jim thought about assessment was also apparent in their thinking about acceptance in their future school community. Cody understood the possible pressure to fit-in with his colleagues, yet his purpose for teaching was his primary concern. Cody perceived any constraints brought about by his future school community simply as challenges for him to become a more creative teacher and maintain his purpose within the given constraints. Jim, on the other hand, wanted to be accepted by his future school community. Jim anticipated what schools would deem appropriate and acceptable, and he intended to meet those expectations, whatever they may be. Jim indicated that he would abandon his purpose for teaching and his curriculum decisions in order to meet the expectations of his future school community and gain acceptance.

The data suggested that both Cody and Jim were aware of the educational climate they were entering. Similar to Ng's study, Cody and Jim were both aware of the demands related to accountability that could be imposed by the school community or state and national agencies; however, they viewed these constraints in two very different ways. Cody demonstrated personal agency in his thinking by recognizing the constraints on his capabilities, identifying his intentions, and prioritizing his intended outcomes for students. Jim's thinking about his personal agency differed from Cody only in terms of how he prioritized his outcomes. Instead of prioritizing his own intended outcomes for students, Jim prioritized the outcomes that he perceived would allow him to be accepted in his future school community. Jim demonstrated personal agency in his thinking just like Cody; however, Jim's thinking indicated that his personal agency would operate with a reduced range of choices and cater to the constraints imposed by his future school community.

Jim's views on assessment demonstrated a conflict in his thinking about his "outcome expectations" [6]. He believed that the curriculum decisions he made in accordance with his purpose for teaching would ultimately produce positive outcomes for his students and psychic rewards [28] for himself. Yet when Jim thought about the assessments he produced, which were also in accordance with his purpose for teaching, he believed that they would produce negative outcomes for him as a professional and did not even consider the outcomes for his students. Jim thought that he must conform to the constraints of his future school community, and use accepted forms of assessment if he wanted positive outcomes as a professional. Ultimately, professional acceptance was the positive outcome for Jim, and the source of conflict for his assessment decisions. If we take into account Bandura's framework, Jim's forethought about assessment was not derived from the same intentions that shaped his curriculum decisions. Jim's thinking about assessment as forethought was derived from the intentions of perceived others in schools and state agencies. Jim's need for acceptance provided an alternative set of intentions, narrowly defined the potential positive outcomes of his assessment decisions, and juxtaposed those outcomes against the expected outcomes of his curriculum decisions.

The combination of Jim's need for acceptance and his understanding of assessment shifted the premise of his decision-making. When Jim thought about assessment, he shifted his intentionality and considered the goals or outcomes that would perceivably allow him to be accepted in the teaching profession. Jim demonstrated that he knows how to develop assessments that support his purpose for teaching, but his need for acceptance shifted his thinking about his intentions as a curriculum developer and social studies teacher. This suggests that once in the classroom Jim's curriculum and assessment decisions would be derived from the intentionality of someone he perceived to be an accountable and respected professional, and probably relinquish his intentionality that was rooted in student-centered methodology.

Cody did not view acceptance as an outcome. For Cody, the expected outcomes of his decisions resided solely in his future classroom, which opened and expanded the possibilities for his personal agency by thinking about his outcomes in terms of his students. Cody realized that he could consider competing curricular influences in his

classroom and creatively make choices that were expected to meet the needs of his students and approach his curricular goals. For Jim, the expected outcomes resided outside of his classroom. In his thinking, Jim limited his personal agency by confining his curricular choices to those that would best achieve his personal goal of acceptance in his future school community.

Implications

Cody and Jim both demonstrated strong intentions in their initial thinking about their personal agency; however, Jim's intentions weakened when he considered the role of assessment in his future classroom. This demonstrates how one aspect of a teacher's decision-making process can influence and shift their intentionality, and ultimately shape their personal agency.

Teacher educators should not only help preservice teachers develop assessments that support their purpose for teaching, but also help preservice teachers envision the role of assessment in their future classroom. When considering the preservice teachers' "anticipatory self-guidance" that is motivated and directed by projected goals and anticipated outcomes [6], teacher educators should help preservice teachers distinguish between classroom outcomes and professional outcomes. Preservice teachers need to understand how to distinguish between different sets of possibly conflicting intentions. Jim did not mention acceptance when he was discussing his purpose for teaching social studies, yet when he thought about assessment his intended outcomes for acceptance and his curriculum decisions clashed, because they were derived from two different sets of intentions. Ultimately, Jim would prioritize his intentions for acceptance because of the perceived long-term benefits of job security.

A key distinction in this study was that Cody understood assessment as one of many important curriculum decisions, which would support his purpose for teaching and each other decision in the lesson development process. Whereas Jim understood assessment as one of many ways in which his school community would judge him. In Jim's forethought, he considered the consequences or outcomes of his assessment decisions solely outside of his classroom. Teacher educators should help preservice teachers better understand assessment as a curriculum decision that has consequences or outcomes that are confined to their classroom and students. As Heafner noted, "Preservice teachers have a fractional understanding of the role of assessment in instruction. They, just as their future students, perceive assessment as external evaluation" [29]. While they may be accountable to state mandates in their future school communities, preservice teachers should understand that assessment is a tool for measuring their students learning day-to-day. Preservice teachers need to understand assessment as an instrument that will improve their instruction and help them be accountable, instead of understanding assessment as a source for externally judging their competence as a teacher.

Teacher educators should also consider a deeper discussion of professional acceptance with their preservice teachers. Cody and Jim demonstrated that preservice teachers have very different conceptions of what is acceptable and expected in schools. Barton and Levstik held a pessimistic view in this regard and wrote, "Out of all of the potential teaching practices they [teachers] have encountered—through their own experience, in readings, in teacher education courses, and elsewhere—they will understandably chose those that allow them to achieve the goal of acceptance" [12]. Acceptance is no doubt a socially powerful tool, yet if acceptance is based on day-to-day choices and practices, then, acceptance itself could be a temporary and day-to-day outcome. Therefore, teacher educators should help preservice teachers understand acceptance as an unviable outcome that carries little currency in the longevity of their career, and more importantly in the success of their students.

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