

••• The dream of a common language:
Identifying core practices for teaching

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Defining professional practice

Features of professional practice

- Common professional preparation
- Specialized knowledge for practice
- Common ways of working/solving problems
- **Common professional language for discussing work of profession**



Challenge: Lack of common technical language in teaching

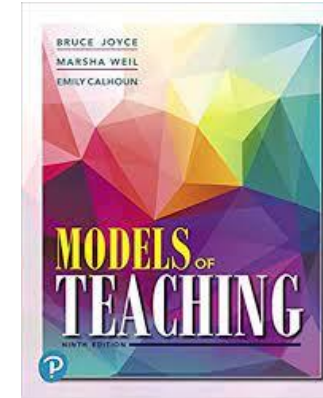
“Teaching is not like crafts and professions, whose members talk in a language specific to them and their work. Thus the absence of a common technical vocabulary limits a beginner’s ability to “tap into” a preexisting body of practice knowledge. Without such a framework, the neophyte is less able to order the flux and color of daily events and can miss crucial transactions which might otherwise be encoded in the categories of a developed discourse.”

Dan Lortie, 1975

Why focus on professional language?

Language is essential for

- Developing and communicating professional vision
- Describing, distinguishing, and specifying components of complex practice
- Coaching



| DISTINCTIONS OF EQUITY | | |
|---|--|---|
| BILINGUAL EDUCATION | SOCIAL JUSTICE EDUCATION | CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE EDUCATION |
| Focuses on celebrating diversity. | Focuses on exposing the social political context for students' experience. | Focuses on improving the learning capacity of diverse students who have been marginalized educationally. |
| Concerns oneself creating positive social interactions across differences. | Concerns oneself using students' consciousness about inequality in everyday social, environmental, economic, and political situations. | Concerns oneself the affective & cognitive aspects of teaching and learning. |
| Diversity and inclusion efforts live here. | Anti-race efforts live here. | Efforts to accelerate learning live here. |
| Concerns itself with exposing privileged students to multiple perspectives, and other cultures. For students of color, the focus is on seeing themselves reflected in the curriculum. | Concerns itself with creating a lens to recognize and challenge inequitable patterns and practices in society. | Concerns itself with building engaged, equitable and student-centered by pushing back on dominant narratives about people of color. |
| Social Harmony | Critical Consciousness | Independent Learning for Agency |

Language as part of developing professional vision

Professional Vision:

“socially organized ways of seeing and understanding events that are answerable to the distinctive interests of a particular social group.”

Charles Goodwin

- Language helps us encode meaning through
 - “**Coding schemes**--one systematic practice used to transform the world into the categories and events that are relevant to the work of the profession”
 - “**highlighting**, making specific phenomena in a complex perceptual field salient by marking them in some fashion.”

Charles Goodwin

Language for Practice: Diagnosis, reasoning treatment

In his book, *The System of Professions*, Andrew Abbott contends that a claim to professional expertise lies in three areas of professional practice:

- the ability to diagnosis or assess the client's situation;
- the ability to reason and infer, using professional knowledge, about a client's problem
- **the ability to treat effectively the problem or to take action on the client's behalf.**

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- Language for diagnosis/assessment
 - Language related to professional knowledge/judgement
 - **Language to describe instruction**

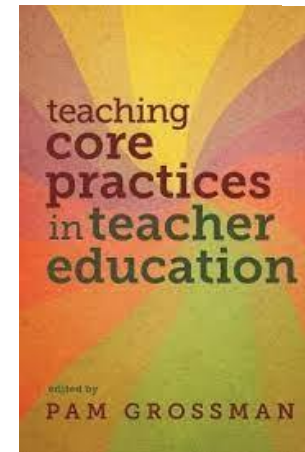
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Defining Core Practices for Teaching

Core Practices: A taxonomy of practice

- Are central to the daily work of teaching
- Are central to supporting student learning
- Are fundamental to developing other, more complex practice
- Underlie different curricula or approaches to teaching or may be tied to particular approaches



Core Practices in other professions

Nursing Intervention Classification

- Electrolyte Management
- Airway Management
- Invoking Humor



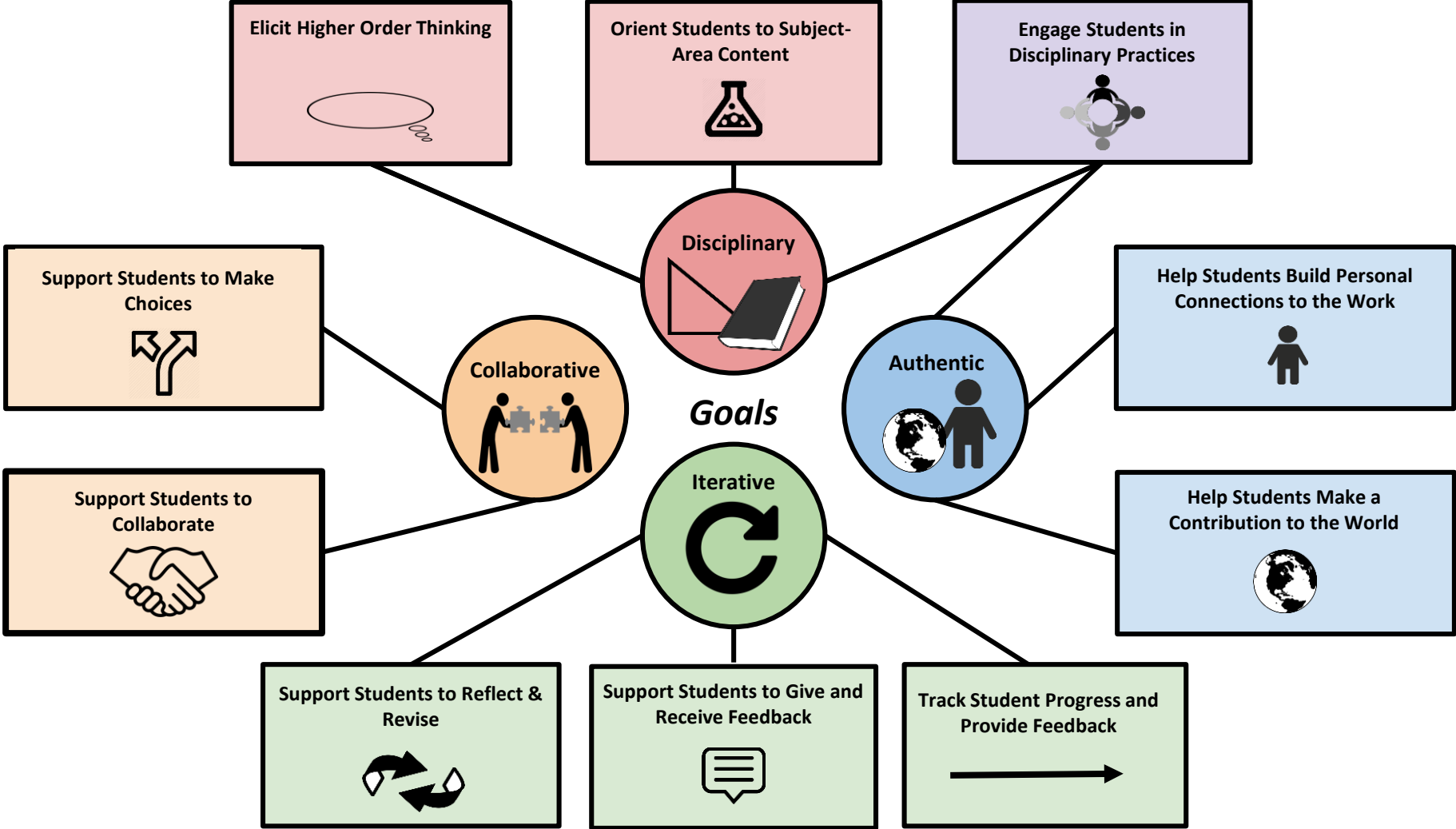
Clinical Psychology

- Developing therapeutic relationships with clients
- Expressing empathy
- Responding to resistance

Examples of core practices of teaching

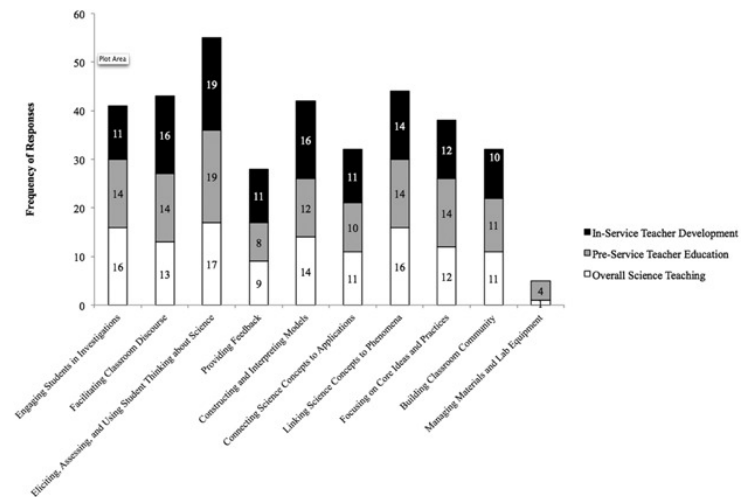
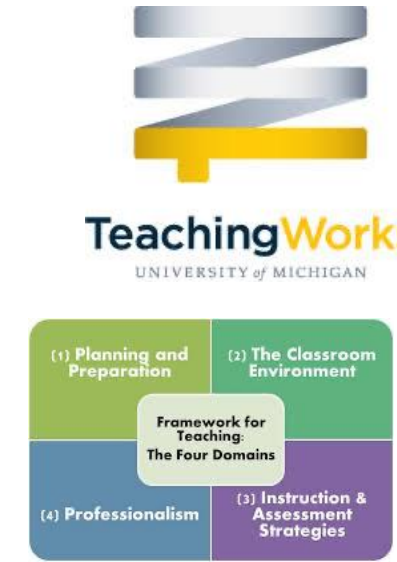
- Eliciting student thinking
- Providing instructional explanations
- Facilitating productive classroom discourse
- Teaching clear routines for managing transitions
- Communicating with parents
- Math: Launching a math problem to provoke mathematical thinking
- History: Selecting and adapting primary source documents
- English: Modeling metacognitive strategies for reading or writing
- Science: Identifying a testable question for inquiry

Core Practices for Project-Based Learning



Where do core practices come from?

- Research
 - Classroom observation studies
- Professional consensus
 - Wisdom of practice
- A combination of both
 - Delphi studies in science (Kloser) & history (Fogo)
 - TeachingWorks HLP's
 - PBL core practices



Why focus on core practices?

- Lortie’s lament over lack of technical language for teaching
- Lack of shared vision for what we mean by high quality teaching
- Problem of variability in quality of teaching and challenges to equity

“We cannot improve what we cannot measure reliably at scale”





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Decompositions of practice for
purposes of teaching and learning

Decompositions of practice

- Break complex practice into its constituent parts for the purposes of teaching and learning
- Relies on a grammar of practice
 - Naming components of complex practice
 - Specifications of practices such as classroom discussion or modeling
- Specifying core practices as an exercise in decomposition

Uses of Decomposition in Professional Education

- Provides “tools for analysis” (Ball & Cohen)
 - Language and categories for discussing & analyzing practice
 - Focus for feedback and improvement
- Develops “professional vision” (Goodwin) or “disciplined perception” (Stevens & Hall) by making components of practice visible to novices
- Helps identify opportunities to practice key components of complex practice

Decomposition of practice in medicine

Conducting a chest examination

- Observe respiratory efforts and note the presence or absence of respiratory distress
- Confirm midline tracheal position with gentle palpation anteriorly
- Percuss the chest on left and right
- Ascultate the chest using the diaphragm of the stethoscope on both right and left sides

Airway Management

- Open the airway, using the chin lift or jaw thrust technique, **as appropriate**
- Position patient to maximize ventilation potential
- Identify patient actual/potential airway insertion
- Insert oral or nasopharyngeal airways, **as appropriate**
- Perform chest physical therapy, **as appropriate**
- Remove secretions by encouraging coughing...

Decomposition of practice in nursing

Nursing Interventions Classification:

The Nursing Interventions Classification (NIC) is a comprehensive, research-based, standardized classification of interventions that nurses perform. It is useful for clinical documentation, communication of care across settings, integration of data across systems and settings, effectiveness research, productivity measurement, competency evaluation, reimbursement, and curricular design.

NIC is one of the standardized languages recognized by the American Nurses' Association.

7 domains of nursing practice:

- Physiological: Basic
- Physiological: Complex
- Behavioral
- Safety
- Family
- Health System
- Community

Linking Observation Protocols to Core Practices

- Tools developed for reliable observation across multiple classrooms
- Designed to measure quality of instruction
- Used for research purposes and in the US for teacher evaluation



Observation Protocols as decompositions of teaching practice

- Provide a “taxonomy of practice” that decomposes teaching practice into distinct domains
- Provide a common language for describing practice
- Enable schools and districts to gather diagnostic data around quality of instruction and to track changes over time

- Framework for Teaching
- CLASS for early childhood
- PLATO for ELA grades 4-8
- Impact from DC schools



FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHING: DANIELSON GROUP

Planning & Preparation

- Knowledge of Content & Pedagogy
- Demonstrating Knowledge of Students
- Setting Instructional Outcomes
- Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources

The Classroom Environment

- Creating Environment of Respect & Rapport
- Establishing a Culture of Learning
- Managing Classroom Procedures
- Managing Student Behavior

Instruction

- Communicating with Students
- Questioning & Discussion Techniques
- Engaging Students in Learning
- Using Assessment in Instruction

Professional Responsibilities

- Reflecting on Teaching
- Maintaining Accurate Records
- Communicating with Families
- Participating in a Professional Community

PLATO: PROTOCOL FOR ELA

Instructional Scaffolding

- Modeling
- Strategy Use and Instruction
- Feedback
- Accommodations for Language Learning

Disciplinary Demand

- Intellectual Challenge
- Classroom Discourse
- Text-Based Instruction

Representations and Use of Content

- Representation of Content
- Connections to Personal/ Cultural Experience
- Connections to Prior Knowledge
- Purpose

Classroom Environment

- Behavior Management
- Time Management

PLATO Classroom Discourse

| CLASSROOM DISCOURSE | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| Classroom Discourse focuses on the opportunities students have for extended conversations related to ELA content with the teacher and among peers and the extent to which the teacher and other students pick up, build on, and clarify each other’s ideas. Student talk unrelated to ELA content does not count as discourse. At the low end, the teacher does the majority of the talking and accepts minimal or unclear student responses. Re-voicing a student comment without academic language or further clarification would be a 2-level for uptake. Re-voicing a student’s comment in academic language or with further clarification is at a 3 level. At the high end, students engage in extended, coherent, and focused discussions, in which the teacher and other students build on each others’ ideas and prompt each other to clarify and specify their understandings. | | | | |
| | 1 Provides almost no evidence | 2 Provides limited evidence | 3 Provides evidence with some weaknesses | 4 Provides consistent strong evidence |
| Uptake of Student Responses | Teacher or students do not respond to student ideas. | Teacher or students respond briefly to student ideas, but response does not elaborate or help develop the ideas (e.g., “Good job,” “Okay”). Teacher accepts answers without asking for clarification or elaboration. | Teacher or students engage in a mixture of brief responses and limited uptake . Teacher or students ask for some clarification or elaboration, but the exchanges do not consistently push students to specify or refine their thinking. | Teacher or students consistently engage in uptake of students’ ideas, responding in ways that expand on student ideas or enable students to further explain, clarify and specify their thinking. |
| Opportunities for Student Discussion | Talk is brief, didactic, and teacher directed . Teacher lecture or extended introduction (including giving directions) to an assignment or activity would fall in this category. | Talk is tightly teacher directed, but there are occasional opportunities for discussion about an ELA topic. “Recitation formats” would fall into this category. | Teacher provides opportunities for extended conversation about an ELA topic. Some students participate in the discussion, but a few students might dominate . There is still a substantial amount of teacher direction. Student-directed discussions that fail to stay on track would also be at this level. | Teacher provides opportunities for elaborated conversations about an ELA topic between teacher and students, and among students. The majority of students participate in the conversation. The conversation may be student directed, and the focus is clear and stays on track. |

Potential of Observation Protocols

- Provide coherent image of high-quality instruction
- Offer exemplars of high-quality practice in different domains
- Enable schools and districts to gather diagnostic data around quality of instruction and to track change
- Provide foundations of a common language for describing instruction

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The Dream of Common Language:
Building the Field of Teacher
Education

Use of Common Language for Supporting Practice-Based Teacher Education

- Development of practice-based teacher education depends upon a language of practice
- Identification and specification of core practices undergirds:
 - Curriculum of teacher education
 - Assessment of novice teachers
 - Coaching
- Common language/focus across different sites of teacher education can build coherence within and across programs

Challenges confronting work on core practices in teacher education

- Clarifying definitions of practice
 - Bundling practices with the goals and knowledge that inform enactment
 - Addressing concerns that specification equals prescription
- Parsing practice in professionally and pedagogically sensible ways
 - The Goldilocks problem
 - Creating a positive classroom environment
 - Doug Lemov's techniques "Do Now"
- Developing the role of core practices in the design and pedagogy of teacher education

Building a research base for teacher education

- Challenges of developing programmatic research in teacher education
 - Modal study= case studies of a few teachers
 - Proliferation of theoretical frameworks for studying learning to teach
 - Activity theory/complexity theory
 - Culturally responsive teaching/Culturally and linguistically sustaining teaching
 - Lack of common measures for studying teaching and teacher education

Building a research base for teacher education:

- The hope:
 - Identifying a common set of teacher education practices to study in common ways
 - Research on rehearsals and approximations of practice
 - Identifying common measures of teaching practice that enable us to measure teaching reliably at scale
 - Building a programmatic set of studies around learning to teach over time

QUINT as a model for programmatic research on teaching

“As a Nordic Centre of Excellence, QUINT unites researchers from all the Nordic countries investigating aspects of teaching quality via classroom video recordings.”

Theme 1: Studying teaching quality across subjects and settings



Other examples

- James S. McDonnell Foundation: Program on Teachers as Learners
 - Identified a common core practice for research
 - Facilitating classroom discussion
- Core Practice Consortium
 - Researchers at multiple universities
 - Identified and specified core practices
 - Collective research on teaching these practices in teacher education



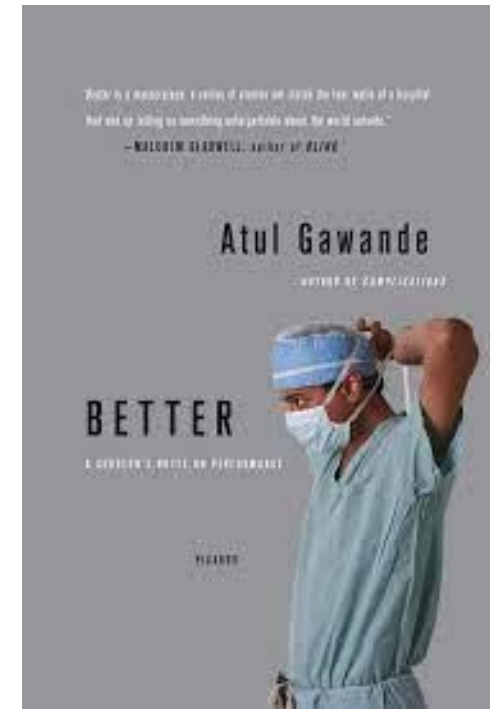
The problem we are trying to solve

The field of teacher education is in the midst of a major shift—from a primary focus on the knowledge needed for teaching to an increased focus on teachers' use of that knowledge in practice.

However, there are too few opportunities for teacher educators who work across institutions, disciplines, and perspectives to grapple with what practice-based teacher education might look like and how best to prepare novice teachers to engage students in equitable and meaningful subject matter learning.

Beyond the fantasy of silver bullets in education

“We always hope for the easy fix: the one simple change that will erase a problem in a stroke. But few things in life work this way. Instead, success requires making a hundred small steps go right - one after the other, no slipups, no goofs, everyone pitching in.”
— Atul Gawande, *Better: A Surgeon's Notes on Performance*



Because improving educational
opportunity for all children requires
improving teaching at scale



Tusen Takk
Thank you



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