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Viewing videos of controversial issues instruction: What influences transformative reflection?

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Abstract

This qualitative study examined how and under what conditions pre-service social studies teachers reported transformations to their controversial issues pedagogy. This study began in 2011 and was situated in a pre-service social studies seminar at a graduate school of education in the United States. Data collection occurred in five different seminars and lasted three years. Afterwards, the authors met intermittently between 2014 and 2016 to establish findings. The study examined pre-service social studies teachers' responses to classes that utilized videotaped instruction of an experienced practitioner's lessons about controversial free speech and terrorism. The following question guided data collection: "How, and under what conditions, do pre-service social studies teachers report transformations to their controversial issues pedagogy when viewing videos of an experienced teacher?" The theoretical framework drew upon enlightened political engagement, and data was derived from the written reflections of pre-service social studies teachers in five different seminars. Findings emphasized that the pre-service social studies teachers were most likely to report pedagogical transformations when reflecting with a peer and when they were free to choose their analytical focus. Also, they were most likely to contextualize these pedagogical transformations within the observed teacher's classroom, a phenomenon we called 'transposing'. Implications of this study identify issues about how to teach for pedagogical transformations in controversial issues instruction.

Key words: controversial issues education, technology and social studies teacher education, social studies curriculum and instruction

Introduction

Many pre-service social studies teachers avoid controversy in their classroom because of its perceived negative consequences (Adler, 2008; Busey & Mooney, 2014; Byford, Lennon, & Russell, 2009; Crouch, 2014; Hess, 2008; Ho, McAvoy, Hess, & Gibbs, 2017; Rothschild, 2003). This reluctance is concerning because a primary objective of teaching controversial issues is for members of society to make informed and well-reasoned decisions on public matters (Gutmann,

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1999; Hess, 2008; National Council for the Social Studies, 2010; Zimmerman & Robertson, 2017a, 2017b;). Thus, preparing pre-service social studies teachers to implement this kind of instruction occupies a critical role in the development of participatory democracy itself (Bickmore & Parker, 2014; Flanagan, 2013; Noddings & Brooks, 2017; Ochoa-Becker, 2007; Parker, 2008; Tolley, 2017; Totten & Peterson, 2007). Owing this imperative, robust research exists on how to prepare pre-service social studies teachers to teach controversies inherent in subjects like heteronormativity (Gibbs, 2018; Tschida & Buchanan, 2018), nativism (Rodriguez, 2018; Ward, 2018), and pluralistic and multicultural societies (Gilbert, 2018; McCoy, 2018). However, pre-service social studies teachers often have narrowly informed preconceptions about what constitutes 'good' teaching, and transforming their pedagogical beliefs remains an ongoing challenge (Barnes & Smagorinsky, 2016; Grossman, 1991; Martin & Dismuke, 2018).

Transformative opportunities for pre-service social studies teachers exist when teacher educators utilize the work of experienced practitioners in teaching methodology courses. Social studies teacher educators have long-encouraged pre-service teachers to observe veteran teachers in hopes of spurring their transformational reflections (Calderhead, 1989; Lortie, 1975; Schon, 1983; Zeichner, 1996). Honing this practice by utilizing videotaped instruction of an experienced practitioner provides added benefits, especially owing its novelty for observing and revisiting complex interactions and discussing those practices with faculty and peers (Brophy, 2004; Gauden & Chaliès, 2015; Gelfuso & Dennis, 2014; Hatch & Grossman, 2009; König, Blömeke, Klein, Suhl, Busse, & Kaiser, 2014; Moore-Russo & Wilsey, 2014). The instructional promise of using videos of experienced teachers to guide pre-service social studies instruction is well documented (e. g., Blomberg, Sherin, Renkl, Glogger, & Seidel, 2014), yet few video-based studies examine what influences pre-service social studies teachers to transform their controversial issues pedagogy (Blomberg, Sturmer, & Seidel, 2011).

Therefore, this study investigates if and in what ways pre-service social studies teachers' analysis of videotaped instruction influenced transformations to their thinking about controversial issues pedagogy. Specifically, it aims to increase understanding of how instructional choices by the teacher educators and analytical approaches of the pre-service social studies teachers influenced the latter's reported transformations, if at all. Beginning in 2011, this study was situated in a United States graduate school of education, specifically within a pre-service social studies seminar. It spanned five different seminars across three years and utilized

the written reflections of the enrolled pre-service students (63 in total). The following research question guided the study: "How, and under what conditions, do pre-service social studies teachers report transformations to their controversial issues pedagogy when viewing videos of an experienced teacher?"

Conceptual Framework

In this study we analyze how supporting enlightened political engagement through multi-media representations of teaching influences pre-service social studies teachers' conceptualization and implementation of teaching controversial issues (Hess, 2009; Hess & McAvoy, 2014; Ho & Seow, 2015; Philpott, Clabough, McConkey, & Turner, 2011; Swalwell & Schweber, 2016). Broadly, enlightened political engagement aims for the realization of democratic ideals by combatting self-centered political action (McAvoy & Hess, 2013; Parker, 2005; Parker & Hess, 2001). Parker (2003) posits that enlightened political engagement is guided by the "moral-cognitive knowledge norms, values and principles" of democracy (p. 34). Hess (2009) moves this framework towards actions by suggesting that a key feature of enlightened political engagement is deliberation over controversial political issues. Thus, the classroom discussion of controversial issues is both a means of teaching for and engaging in democracy.

This study explored how pre-service social studies teachers reported pedagogical transformations in the topic of controversial free speech and terrorism, an issue that generates controversy for both conservative and liberal groups (Camera, 2016; Stoddard & Hess, 2016; Tucker & Aleaziz, 2017). For many social studies researchers, the September 11, 2001 attacks are an "ultimate teaching moment" because so many disagree on what the social studies objective should be (Hess, 2009, p. 131; Hess & Stoddard, 2007, p. 231). The subject presents additional challenges for teachers who must mediate divergent viewpoints (Ho & Seow, 2015; Journell, 2011; Richmond, 2016) and defend their instructional choices to family and community members (Brkich & Newkirk, 2015). Framed by enlightened political engagement and these contexts, we were especially interested in analyzing reflections where pre-service social studies teachers reported transformations about how to teach this controversial topic.

Method

This qualitative, exploratory study investigated how and under what circumstances do pre-service social studies teachers report transformations to their controversial issues pedagogy when viewing videos of an experienced teacher. Data collection relied upon reflective essays written by pre-service social studies teachers who analyzed videos of controversial free speech instruction. Data analysis involved a deductive approach and focused on the pre-service social studies teachers' reported transformative applications to their controversial issues pedagogy.

Research Design and Study Group

Data collection spanned 2011-2013, and analysis occurred intermittently from 2014 to 2016. Data collection occurred for three years within 15-week long social studies student teaching seminars situated in a graduate school of education in the United States of America. Each year, we studied a five-week span of classes that utilized video analysis of an experienced practitioner teaching lessons about controversial free speech and the September 11 terrorist attacks. Different instructors taught each of the five seminars, and a broadening of instructional objectives occurred in year two and three of the study. Data collection and analysis centered on the reflective essays completed by all of the enrolled pre-service social studies teachers' reflective essays (63 in total), which were completed at the end of the five-week span of instruction. Seminar instructors gave pre-service social studies teachers an option to not participate in the study, but all chose to take part. Deductive analysis identified essay passages where pre-service social studies teachers discussed an 'application' to their own teaching practice, and inductive approaches clarified if those applications merely reinforced or transformed their thinking about controversial issues instruction. We acknowledge that this research approach was not an exhaustive analysis of all data stemming from this study, nor were video analysis strategies particularly emphasized.

The study focused on a required seminar for pre-service social studies teachers who were enrolled in a program leading to a Master of Arts degree and teaching credential. This seminar met once a week for 110 minutes and averaged 15 students. Most of the students in the course had come directly from an undergraduate course of study. A few students came from professional experience in private school settings or other sectors entirely. In all three years, the course instructors were advanced doctoral students in the university's social studies program,

and their experience teaching in K-12 settings ranged from three to nine years. The objective of this sequence of lessons (hereafter referred to as the "unit") was to help pre-service social studies students deepen their comprehension of pedagogical strategies and to encourage reflection on how these concepts might contribute to their own instruction of controversial free speech issues. These specific strategies involved topics like direct instruction, questioning, and contextualizing content.

The culminating project of this instructional unit (and a focus of this study's data analysis) featured a 7-10 page multimedia reflective essay. To support the creation of this reflective effort, course instructors and pre-service social studies teachers devoted five of the 15 course meetings to analyzing videos of controversial issues instruction. In the first day, instructors introduced the project and the digital learning environment where the pre-service social studies teachers would be interacting with the videos and each other. In this digital space, pre-service social studies teachers could view videos and share comments with peers and instructors. The videos centered on a series of lessons on controversial free speech in the 12th grade government classroom of an experienced teacher, Frank Sims (all names referred to in this study are pseudonyms). The videos were unedited, and viewers saw two camera angles at the same time: one was trained on Sims, and the other offered a broad view of his students.

Following the introduction to the video analysis project, the pre-service social studies students had a homework assignment with several tasks. First, they watched the approximately 45-minute long video of the first day's instruction. Second, they identified at least three clips that demonstrated how Mr. Sims utilized direct instruction, contextualizing context, and questioning to implement instruction on controversial free speech (students had read an article on each of these topics lessons preceding the unit). In this digital space, they next posed discussion questions to their peers about each of the three teaching strategies. The instructor used these questions to guide a whole-class discussion during the second day of instruction.

For homework before the third day of instruction, the pre-service social studies teachers watched a second video of Sims' instruction (about 45 minutes long) and a shorter video of him reflecting on both days of the lesson. Also, pre-service social studies teachers wrote the first part of a multimedia essay where they reflected by themselves on what they learned from the videos, and they described which pedagogical strategies they focused on in their analysis. In this essay-writing platform, pre-service social studies teachers used embedded clips of Sims' teaching in

their prose as evidence to support their claims. The prompt for this assignment asked, "Explain how this process may or may not have caused you to challenge your understandings of how social studies instruction should occur." In the third class, students shared drafts of their essays with at least one partner, and they collectively reflected upon them.

In preparation for the fourth class, the instructor asked the students to complete their essays by adding a section where they commented on what they had learned (if anything) from the opportunity to collectively reflect with a peer. The prompt for this part asked students to describe how their "…understandings of social studies instruction may or may not have changed because of this interaction with your colleague." Students also addressed an additional prompt, which asked them to reflect upon how the entire experience influenced their development as a teacher (if at all). In the fifth class meeting, the students collectively participated in a whole-group discussion about the content of their reflective essay.

In the first year of the study, the instructors explicitly constructed learning objectives to focus on how direct instruction, questioning, and contextualizing content influenced the delivery of controversial issues (Fisher & Frey, 2007; Larson & Keiper, 2007; Sherin & van Es, 2005). We rationalized that providing analytical lenses for the pre-service social studies teachers to pick from might deter superficial observations and reflections. However, in the second and third year of the study, instructors altered this initial narrow instructional approach in response to requests by pre-service social studies teachers to expand analytical options. New topics included enacting a 'hook,' differentiation, equitable participation, role play, using visuals, closure, classroom management, use of technology, classroom arrangement, movement of teacher, assessment, and/or a topic of their choosing. Especially with the last option, this methodological change sought to provide a platform more considerate of the pre-service social studies teachers' needs and interests. Therefore, the use of the same assignment with a few adjustments over a three-year period allowed for the examination of the pre-service social studies teachers' reported interconnections.

Data Collection and Analysis

We collected reflective essays written by each of the pre-service social studies teachers enrolled in the seminar across three years of instruction (27 papers collected from year one, 23 from year two, and 13 from year three). A member of the research team maintained these essays

in digital format and anonymized them with pseudonyms. These essays were then uploaded to a file-sharing network.

Analysis of these reflection papers utilized deductive coding before opening it up to inductive approaches. The research team relied upon a framework by American education professors Miriam Sherin & Elizabeth van Es (2005), whom others have acknowledged for its differentiation between superficial and transformative reflecting on videotaped instruction (Cherrington & Loveridge, 2014; Husu, Toom, & Patrikainen, 2008). Davis (2006) describes superficial reflecting as unfocused or judgmental, like noticing that the experienced practitioner slouches during instruction. While more difficult to define, others describe transformative reflecting as making applications to one's pedagogy, challenging assumptions, and considering alternative points of view (Cherrington & Loveridge, 2014; Fund, 2010; Moore-Russo & Wilsey 2014).

Sherin and van Es (2005) established four ways to deductively code what pre-service teachers reported in their reflections. They were 1) 'noticing' (I noticed an idea.); 2) 'making connections' (I noticed a connection between what I'm seeing and something else.); 3) 'integrating' (I reflected on the relationship of this connection.); 4) 'application' (I applied this to my practice.). The first two can be described as superficial reflecting, the fourth one can be described as transformational, and the third can be seen as a transitional phase between the two.

Because we were interested in how viewing videos of an experienced practitioner could lead to reported pedagogical transformations, we avoided frameworks that analyzed other phenomenon. For example, we did not use a coding scheme that grouped reflections into most commonly- mentioned categories because those parameters were too broad for our objectives (e. g., Sherin & Han, 2003). While any coding scheme may indicate a degree of evaluation (Thomas, Wineburg, Grossman, Oddmund, & Woolworth, 1998), we were not interested in coding that sorted data based on 'best' teaching practices. For example, we did not utilize a coding scheme set up to analyze hypothetical 'recommendations' given by viewers to the videotaped practitioner (Rowley & Hart, 1993).

For this study, we focused exclusively on passages where pre-service social studies teachers reported an 'application' to their teaching philosophy. Our reasoning was that the first three coding categories ('noticing', 'making connections', and 'integrating') frequently yielded cosmetic-type remarks, while 'applications' offered insights into how pre-service social studies

teachers related the video of the experienced practitioner to their own teaching philosophy (Cherrington & Loveridge, 2014; Davis, 2006; Moore-Russo & Wilsey, 2014). However, after coding yielded 224 reflective essay passages as 'application', we inductively reasoned that new sub-categories were needed to articulate emergent, transformative understandings. Because passages coded as an 'application' could signal a reinforcement of or a transformation to one's teaching philosophy, we created three sub-categories accounting for those differences, as shown below.

Table 1

Subcategories for 'Application' Code

name of code	how code paraphrased passage containing an 'application'
'reinforcing'	It reinforced my belief.
'elaborating'	I've thought about it more deeply, but my beliefs are the same
'transforming'	It changed the way I think about my practice.

Note. An important difference between the three codes is that 'transforming' identifies passages where a pre-service social studies teacher reports a change to one's controversial issues pedagogy, and 'elaborating' and 'transforming' codes identify passages that do not. This inductive coding approach strove to distinguish passages where pre-service social studies teachers reported making a pedagogical transformation, like when they challenged their understanding of how controversial issues instruction should occur versus when they were merely observing something.

To norm procedures and achieve a degree of inter-rater reliability, two of the researchers began the analysis process by randomly selecting ten essays to code. Each researcher coded the essays individually and compared their findings afterwards. When discrepancies arose after comparing their outcomes, they convened the entire research team to discuss ways to reach an agreeable conclusion. After this norming process, the original two research members finished coding the remaining 53 essays. As disagreements arose, the entire team convened to arbitrate a decision. Additionally, when the two researchers identified the need to expand the scope of the 'application' code, the entire research team met to agree on the phrasing of those sub-categories.

The instructional unit utilizing videos of an experienced teacher had numerous learning objectives (Hatch, Shuttleworth, Taylor Jaffee, & Marri, 2016), and we did not attempt an exhaustive analysis of those objectives nor engage the collected data through an array of other possible theoretical perspectives. For example, this study does not focus on pre-service social studies teachers developing critical media literacy, nor does it involve meta-analysis of videos.

Instead, it focuses narrowly on how and under what conditions pre-service social studies teachers were most likely to report a transformative application to their controversial issues pedagogy.

Findings

This section highlights three areas of note where the pre-service social studies teachers reported transforming applications to their controversial issues instruction. Because this research was qualitative and exploratory in nature, these findings are not generalizable, especially since the study describes reflections of pre-service social studies teachers enrolled in a particular graduate seminar. First, they were most likely to report transformations to their controversial issues pedagogy when analyzing and dialoguing with a peer instead of when analyzing individually. Second, when instructors broadened the assignment's analytical options, the pre-service social studies teachers were more likely to report transformations to their pedagogies than when the instructional objectives were comparatively narrow. Third, the pre-service social studies teachers unexpectedly reported more transformations to their pedagogy when they opted not to extend their analyses to their student teaching placements and instead 'transposed' themselves within the classroom of the experienced practitioner.

The aggregated results of the analysis of students' essays reveal the rarity of transformative applications. Figure 1 shows that of 224 coded passages, only 15 demonstrated a transforming application to their own practice. Of note is that many pre-service social studies teachers' essays included multiple examples of 'reinforcing' or 'elaborating' applications, but none referenced more than one transforming application (and thus, a total of 15 individual pre-service social studies teachers reported a pedagogical transformation to their controversial issues pedagogy).

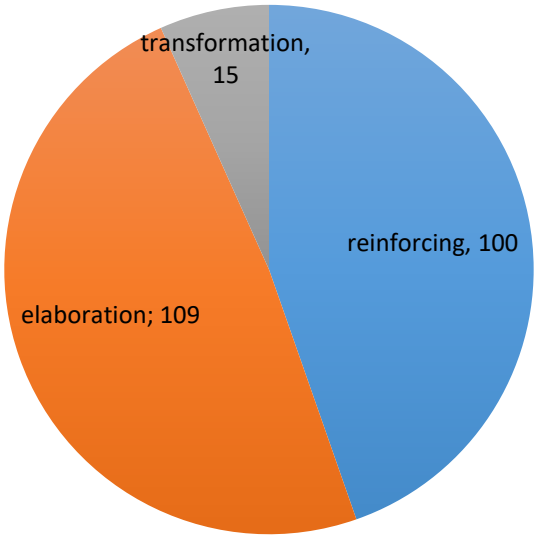

Figure 1. **Comparison of Total Reported Applications to One's Pedagogy.**
Note. Some pre-service social studies students reported multiple examples coded as 'elaborations' and 'reinforcing'. No single pre-service social studies student reported more than one passage coded as 'transformation'.

Although only about 24% of the pre-service social studies students reported transformations to their practice (15 of 63), we explored in-depth what conditions may have been influential in their formation.

The comparatively small number of pre-service social studies teachers reporting transformations reinforces findings of other researchers. Analyzing videotaped instruction does not necessarily result in critical thinking or challenging one's pre-conceptions and may actually reinforce preconceptions (Brophy, 2004; Erickson, 2007). While viewing videos of instruction may provide opportunities for reflection, they may be superficial or unproductive (Cherrington & Loveridge, 2014; Davis, 2006). The rarity of transformative reflecting may derive from viewers' unfamiliarity with the viewed classroom context (Derry & Hmelo-Silver, 2002; Hatch & Grossman, 2009). It may also be derived from Lortie's (1975) "apprenticeship of observation" (p. 61), which Heaton & Mickelson (2002) described as "teachers teach the way they were taught" (p. 51). Overcoming pre-service social studies teachers' preconceptions of what 'good' teaching is a persistent obstacle to transformative reflecting.

Finding 1: Reported transformations more likely when working with peer than by self

Here we highlight that pre-service social studies teachers were four times more likely to report a 'transforming' application when they collaborated with a partner than when they analyzed the videos on their own. This data is shown below in Table 2:

Table 2

Reporting Transforming Applications: Self Versus With a Partner

how analyzing	year 1	year 2	year 3	all years
by self	4%	9%	8%	6%
	(1 of 27 essays)	(2 of 23 essays)	(1 of 13 essays)	(4 of 63 essays)
with a partner	11%	22%	23%	24%
	(3 of 27 essays)	(5 of 23 essays)	(3 of 13 essays)	(11 of 63 essays)

The data in this table illustrates that when analyzing the videos by one's self in each of the study's three years, the pre-service social studies teachers were far less likely to report pedagogical transformations on their own than when they analyzed with a partner. This finding arises from the two distinct tasks the seminar instructors asked of the pre-service social studies teachers: 1) to first analyze the videos individually, on one's own time, and 2) to analyze the videos with a partner in class.

When the pre-service social studies teachers reported transformations to their pedagogy, they were most likely to do so when a partner's observations influenced them to reflect anew on how to teach controversial issues. An illustration of this occurred when Maria, a pre-service social studies teacher from year three of the study, reported a transformation to her pedagogy when she interacted with a peer about the use of a 'hook'. They reflected upon a segment of a lesson where Mr. Sims used a hook in the middle of a lesson by offering an example of controversial free speech. Of the September 11 terrorist attacks, he said, "Osama Bin Laden did a good thing that day." Maria reflected,

> Before speaking with [Kevin], I conceptualized the hook technique as something that an educator utilized at the beginning of their class to give their students a preview of the material for that day as well as getting them excited for that day… However, as [Kevin] explained, a hook does not have to only be used once in the beginning of class. Rather, the hook can be used several times throughout the class to motivate students… [Kevin]'s conceptualization of a hook was not only a new, refreshing, and valuable characterization

> of the pedagogic technique but served to positively challenge preexisting expectations regarding Mr. Sim's practice as well as my own.

Here, Maria offered an enthusiastic endorsement of her partner's influential views on utilizing hooks throughout a controversial issues lesson and not just at its beginning. Maria admitted that she had not thought of this strategy when she said, "I never conceptualized using it multiple times throughout the class instruction." Underlining the value of analyzing with a partner, Maria did not report a transformation when she initially analyzed the videos on her own through the lens of how to provide 'closure' to a lesson.

Gem, a pre-service social studies teacher from year two of the study, similarly recalled a moment when her partner's observation influenced her reported pedagogical transformation. When they jointly discussed the video showing Mr. Sims reflecting on his instruction, Gem recalled, "My partner noticed… that it was important for a teacher to evaluate themselves after their lecture and be willing to make changes in order to enhance the lesson and engage the students." Here, Gem and her partner discussed a moment of the lesson where a student appeared uncomfortable engaging in controversial, albeit hypothetical, free speech. Mr. Sims brought a student to the front of the room and asked her to stand in an imaginary "sound proof box." Emphasizing that in private, citizens have wider speech freedoms than in public, he encouraged her to "say something terrible" about him. As Gem and her partner noted, the selected student was reluctant to say anything "terrible" about Sims because it was *not* a private setting, and everyone in the class, including Mr. Sims, could hear whatever she said in this imaginary box.

Gem argued that asking students to utter hypothetical examples of controversial free speech required ongoing reflection because it risked embarrassment or recourse concerns. For example, Gem wondered if the selected student was comfortable uttering hypothetically controversial words in front of the teacher and her peers. Gem said, "It will be imperative to look back at the results of the lesson and change any portions that were ineffective. This practice is continuous. No matter how much experience a teacher has, he or she is always a student." Spurred by interaction with her partner, her transformative reflection revealed that when she asked students to pose hypothetically controversial free speech, she needed to carefully reflect on students' preparedness and comfort level.

Because the 12th grade government class was located in one of the cities attacked on September 11, 2001, several pre-service social studies teachers reflected upon a) how the

students' families might have been personally affected by the terrorist attacks and b) how to use that knowledge to properly contextualize instruction. For example, when Mr. Sims set forth a hypothetical example of controversial free speech about the event where he said, "…on 9/11, Bin Laden should have gone further," a pre-service social studies teacher from year two of the study reported a transformation to how he might differently contextualize such a lesson. After dialoguing with a peer about the videotaped instruction, the pre-service social studies teacher (Thomas) said:

> I wondered if [Sims] could have used another real life example of terrorism in US history that did not include relations to our country's present day international conflict and wars. If I were the teacher I would keep the KKK reference to freely march in [a nearby park], but I would hesitate and probably not include the 9/11 events as part of my contextualizing. I feel the subject is still too personal and recent in U. S. history, and it may shut students down as opposed to engaging them deeper in the lesson concept. I realize now after viewing his role play that it takes time to prepare to use role play in a lesson.

Here, Thomas reflected on how he updated his pedagogy to include 'testing' controversial issues topics beforehand for their appropriateness and relevance. In so doing, he elevated the importance of considering his *own* students' backgrounds alongside the unanticipated challenges of using controversial political topics in social studies activities. Like Gem, who wondered if encouraging a student to utter controversial speech was an appropriate pedagogical decision, Thomas also did not have access to any prior conversations where Mr. Sims investigated his student's relationship to the September 11 attacks.

Brian (a pre-service social studies teacher from the second year of the study) also reported a transformation to his pedagogy when his partner, Danielle, argued that role-playing ought to have learning objectives that extend beyond providing a 'fun' activity. In his reflective essay, he reported that role-playing offered opportunities for students to experiment and refine their own worldviews. He wrote:

> …[Danielle's] explanation made me think about it in a different way…I had not made this connection when I first watched [Mr. Sims] …I found particularly interesting her opinion that role-play is important because it gives students control over the material they're learning… One of the main purposes of secondary social studies education is to

> encourage students to consider a variety of viewpoints and determine their own opinion and stances on the world. Once I considered [Danielle's] words and began thinking about role play as supporting this process, I realized just how important it is to give students a chance, with no real consequences involved, to try on different opinions and perspectives and see what feels right. There are few opportunities like this that exist outside the classroom, and once I had considered what [Danielle] had said, I realized that perhaps role-play is an even more important tool in the social studies classroom than I had originally thought.

Here, Brian's interaction with a partner produced a reported transformation in how he conceptualized role-playing. He argued that the 'low-stakes' opportunity to interact with peers was likely more supportive than a controversial issues interaction outside of the classroom, and thus, it was a valuable opportunity for developing student agency. He also noted that role-playing within controversial issues instruction had more significant learning objectives than he previously thought. For Brian, it was an opportunity for students to begin forming their opinions of controversial issues in a space moderated for respectful experimentation and dialogue.

For Brian, Gem, Maria, and Thomas, their partner's fresh perspectives of the videotaped instruction sparked applications. Each reported transformation with a partner originated when one of them introduced a new way of thinking. While we were interested to see what a mutually-reported transformation looked like (when both partners reported a 'new' way of thinking about their teaching), the influence of peer interaction on pedagogical transformations was clearly evidenced.

Finding 2: Reported transformations more likely when broadening instructional options

Pre-service social studies teachers were twice as likely to report a 'transforming' application to their pedagogy when they had flexibility to choose their analytical lens than when they could only select from a few options. 15% of pre-service teachers reported pedagogical transformations when they could only use one of three pre-selected analytical lenses in year one of the study. However, in year two and three of the study when they could choose their analytical lens, 30% and 31% of teachers, respectively, reported transformative reflections to their pedagogy. These comparisons are shown in Table 3:

Table 3

Narrow Versus Broader Instructional Options

instructional options	analyzing by self	analyzing with partner	total
narrow[a]			
year 1	4% (1 of 27)	11% (3 of 27)	15% (4 of 27)
broader[b]			
year 2	9% (2 of 23)	22% (5 of 23)	30% (7 of 23)
year 3	8% (1 of 13)	23% (3 of 13)	31% (4 of 13)

Note.
[a]These options were direct instruction, questioning, and contextualizing content.
[b]These expanded options were discussed in the instructional context of the methodology section; notably, students could select an analytical lens of their choosing.

James (a pre-service social studies teacher from year two of the study) chose to examine the videotaped instruction for the role of instructional gatekeeping (Thornton, 2017). In his reflection essay, he acknowledged his transformed thinking about responsibilities to carefully select discussion topics involving controversial free speech. He remarked:

> I see the importance of having strong beliefs about how to educate students and the value in making sure those beliefs, whatever they may be, are present in all aspects of the classroom... [and] I must make the conscious effort to think about how I will use these elements in all of my lessons.

This reflection highlighted the importance of choosing material for an 'open' lesson on controversial issues (Hess, 2008). Although he did not hint at how his personal beliefs might influence such a decision, James' reflection signaled his interest in developing a protocol for selecting a controversial issues topic.

David, a pre-service social studies teacher from the third year of the study, similarly reported transformations to his pedagogy when his partner (Tania) shared how she analyzed the videos for classroom management. Recalling their dialogue, David said, "My peer shared insight with me that I would have never noticed by simply analyzing the videos myself without discussion." He also revealed that he had not thought of using classroom management as an analytical lens, and so the added dynamic of discussing each other's perspectives proved valuable in transforming David's pedagogical views. He said,

> Before doing this project, I was a bit skeptical of methodological approaches that emphasized classroom routines and management… However, this project helped me

> realize the importance of routines in creating a classroom environment that is conducive to learning… As I prepare to teach my own classes, I will think carefully about establishing routines…

Although speaking in a general nature, David's reported pedagogical transformation revealed that he wanted to change his controversial issues pedagogy to include "clearer expectations" around norms and expectations.

Like with David and James, Patricia reported a pedagogical transformation when she opted to analyze the videos through a topic of personal interest, in this case, assessing group work. A pre-service social studies teacher from year two of the study, she said she analyzed the videos this way because Mr. Sims made little effort to check for understanding during the free speech mock trial. She wrote in her reflection that some students used the time instead to "socialize." She said,

> Prior to this assignment, I was unaware of how to combat the free-rider mentality students possess. However, after witnessing the problems associated with Sims's mock trial debate, I realized that un-assessed group work reinforces negative work habits… All students must be held accountable for their contributions, or lack thereof… [Maybe] enabling students to grade their classmates or allowing them to reflect that un-assessed group work reinforces negative work habits.

Patricia reflected that Mr. Sims should check in with students before the mock trial to ensure their arguments were supported and they were not planning to 'wing it' or let their peers do more of the work. Here, Patricia emphasized that formative and summative assessment of individuals' contributions to group work was paramount. Otherwise, unprepared members' contributions could resemble more of a spontaneous argument utilizing superficial evidence – an environment not conducive to thoughtful and respective interchanges, particularly on controversial issues. Patricia applied this reflection specifically to the many 'audience' members of the debate whom Mr. Sims did not audibly or visibly assess before, during, or after the free speech debate. For her, these were the "freeloaders" of the lesson.

When pre-service social studies teachers like Patricia, David, and James utilized an analytical perspective of their choosing, they were twice as likely to report pedagogical transformations than when their peers had to choose from a narrower selection. While these three pre-service social studies teachers viewed the videos through different analytical lenses, they

each reported a change to how they would like to implement controversial issues instruction. For example, James signaled his new-found commitment to selecting a truly 'open' topic for discussion, and David and Patricia revealed that they wanted to refine their protocols for ensuring engagement with and understanding of the opinions shared about the controversial issue.

Finding 3: Reported transformations more likely when 'transposing' self with experienced teacher

Finding three emerged from conditions set unexpectedly by the pre-service social studies teachers. Because the essay instructions did not ask them to contextualize their reflections, they described transformations to their pedagogy however they chose. For example, some pre-service social studies teachers discussed how they might implement transformations in their student teaching placement. Others imagined implementing changes more abstractly, like after they finished their teaching credential and preceded with phrasing like, "In the future…" However, a majority of those who reported pedagogical transformations in their reflective essays (11 of 15) imagined themselves 'in the shoes' of the videotaped teacher, as shown in Figure 2:

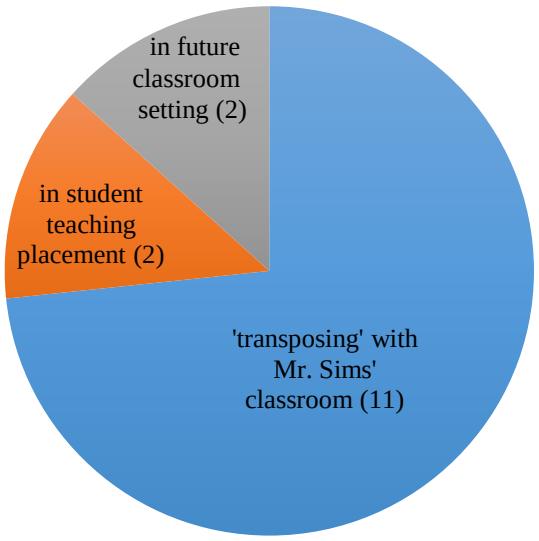

Figure 2. **Classroom Context for Reported Pedagogical Transformations When 'Transposing'**

When the pre-service social studies teachers described their pedagogical transformations by switching places with the experienced practitioner shown on the videotape, we called this phenomenon 'classroom transposing.' Here, classroom transposing is a means of imagining one's self taking over someone else's classroom, using language like, "if I were teaching the lesson" or "if this was my classroom." They described how they would implement their transformed pedagogy if they were able to switch places with the experienced practitioner shown in the video, although none of them explained why this choice was preferable to contextualizing in a classroom of their own.

Amy, a pre-service social studies teacher from the first year of the study, reported a 'transposing' transformation when she reflected upon how to select an appropriate topic for controversial issues discussion. Similar to the reflections made by Thomas (as discussed in finding one), she said that she had not previously thought about using a more culturally-relevant approach to selecting a controversial issues topic. She said that Mr. Sims selected a topic of personal interest instead of a more relatable one for his students. Because few students participated orally in the free speech debate, she inferred that a more relevant topic might encourage more engagement. Imagining herself taking the place of Mr. Sims in his classroom, she wrote, "If I were teaching his class…I must find ways to relate material to students' lives… as opposed to looking for what I find interesting." She did not elaborate on why she was in a position to assume the teaching role of Mr. Sims, but she hinted at limitations of transposing one's self into another person's classroom. She said, "I obviously have no way of knowing how much the classroom dynamic will change once… I am standing at the front of the room." Here she acknowledged possible flaws in imagining herself 'taking over' for another teacher; she had almost no knowledge of the students or the school community. Thus, why she chose to imagine herself in this mostly foreign classroom remained unclear.

Ann, a pre-service social studies teacher from year two, similarly transposed herself into Mr. Sims' classroom when she reported a transformation about selecting appropriate controversial issues for discussion. While Amy said earlier that instruction might be undermined by students' lack of familiarity with the September 11 attacks, Ann was concerned that the topic was too recent and personal. Transposing herself into Mr. Sims' class, she reflected upon her pedagogical transformation:

> Had I been teaching [Sims's] class, I realize now [and] I understand why it may be necessary… to run certain context choices by a colleague or another student in a different class just to make sure that as the instructor I am not crossing the boundaries… and insulting any of my students.

Here, Ann's reported transformation valued colleagues' input when selecting a controversial issue. Also, she underscored the challenge of transposing one's self into another's classroom: she did not have direct knowledge that Mr. Sims did or did not investigate any of his students' potential connection to the event beforehand.

Jill, a seminar classmate of Ann's, also reported transformations to her pedagogy while transposing herself into Mr. Sims' classroom. Analyzing the videos for lesson pacing, she said,

> If I were teaching this class, I would try to ask more questions for students to answer in order to check for understanding… I definitely would have allowed the students to answer the questions instead of making sure my lecture was on track.

Jill said that Mr. Sims may have devoted too much time to contextualizing the mock trial, and she would do some things differently: "I cannot expect my students to feel comfortable… participating fully if I dominate the scene by taking center stage." Her pedagogical transformation elevated the importance of whole-class deliberation on the lesson's key questions and not on merely completing the lesson plan. However, she did not know if Mr. Sims followed up on these passed-over discussion topics in later classes.

For Jill, Amy, and Ann, their reflections represented a broader trend among the other pre-service social studies teachers who described pedagogical transformations 'in the shoes' of the videotaped teacher. These considerations represented a surprising outcome and hinted at the challenge of determining what reflective context was the most appropriate. Why they chose to transpose themselves into Mr. Sims' classroom was mysterious, especially because they did not indicate if doing so was realistic or advisable. Whatever the case may be, most of the pre-service social studies teachers imagined themselves in Mr. Sims' classroom and not in their student teaching placement.

Overall, this section identified three major findings to the research question, "How, and under what conditions, do pre-service teachers report transformations to their controversial issues pedagogy when viewing videos of an experienced teacher?" In finding one, we utilized the reflections of four pre-service social studies teachers to demonstrate the influence a partner had

in increasing the likelihood of reporting a pedagogical transformation. In finding two, we used the reflections of three pre-service social studies teachers to illustrate that they were more likely to report transformative reflections when they had the freedom to choose their analytical lens. In finding three, we explained three pre-services social studies teachers' tendency to contextualize their pedagogical transformations within the videotaped teacher's classroom. These findings raised several issues for preparing pre-service social studies teachers to implement controversial issues instruction, of which we explore more fully in the next section.

Discussion

Although only a small percentage of the 63 pre-service social studies teachers reported pedagogical transformations (24%), their reflections raised implications for how social studies teacher educators and researchers could approach this kind of instruction in the future. We found that the role of dialoguing with a peer and having freedom to choose one's analytical lens to be an important consideration when developing the skills for teaching controversial issues in teacher education programs. While we acknowledged that 'transposing' one's self into another's classroom was fraught with challenges, we also identified this phenomenon as an opportunity for additional whole-class discussions.

In the first finding, the pre-service social studies teachers were four times more likely to report transformations when they dialogued with a peer than when they analyzed the videos on their own. Future iterations of this kind of instruction could benefit from engaging pre-service social studies teachers in whole-class discussion about *why* they were more likely to report transformations in peer settings. Emphasizing how, and under what conditions these transformations occurred might remind them that peer-based methodologies most influential on their reflections could be similarly impactful for their own instruction. Examining this phenomenon may further strengthen their commitment to utilizing peer-to-peer dialogue with their own students when discussing controversial issues.

In the second finding, pre-service social studies teachers who chose their own analytical lens were twice as likely to report pedagogical transformations than those who had to choose from selections provided by the instructor. This outcome strengthened assertions by others (e. g., Cherrington & Loveridge, 2014) who have argued that transformative applications were more likely to be reported when pre-service teachers used their own interests to guide investigations of

videotaped instruction. In the first year of the study, seminar instructors worried that removing the initially- narrow analytical options might cause pre-service social studies teachers to rely upon superficial reflections or descriptions (something Cherrington & Loveridge (2014) called "judgmental framing" (p. 42)). In the second and third year of the study, seminar instructors avoided this outcome by modeling possible analytical lenses in class and informally conferencing with pre-service social studies teachers to discuss their analytical preferences.

In the third finding, the pre-service social studies teachers were most likely to contextualize their pedagogical transformations within the videotaped teacher's classroom, which raised questions about how teacher educators should guide such reflections. For example, we wondered if the seminar instructors should encourage contextualizing in student teaching placements or even in a future-based, hypothetical classroom where they would be the teacher of record. Admittedly, transposing one's self 'into the shoes' of the videotaped teacher was a hypothetical, if not futile exercise owing their limited knowledge of the rapport between Mr. Sims and his students. Situating reflections within one's student teaching classroom represented a more realistic opportunity to implement these transformations, albeit a somewhat limited one given the vagaries of instructional freedom afforded during this apprenticeship experience.

Transposing one's self into the videotaped teacher's classroom was an exercise in hypothesizing but a mostly dead end affair; the pre-service social studies teachers were not going to teach in the videotaped scenes from Mr. Sims' classroom. However, we were unsure if seminar instructors should discourage transposing one's self into another's classroom. Given that the objectives of the study was to investigate how, and under what circumstances the pre-service social studies teachers reported pedagogical transformations, placing limits on how they can contextualize their applications might stifle the frequency and variety of such reflections. Seminar instructors could raise the idea of classroom transposing for whole-class discussion; further dialogue might provide insights about how pre-service social studies teachers envision bridging the gulf between theoretical and practical-based pedagogical transformations.

Limitations and Conclusion

We acknowledge that the qualitative, exploratory nature of this study creates possible limitations. For example, the answers to our research question represent an in-depth analysis of the reflections by participants in our study, but they are not generalizable. Also, the total number

of pre-service social studies teachers who participated in the study is small (63), and a larger number of participants might have produced more opportunities for insight into the nature of and influences on transformative reflections.

In conclusion, our study reveals the influence of certain instructional practices on these pre-service social studies teachers' reported pedagogical transformations. Practically, viewing videos of experienced practitioners provided opportunities for entire seminars to collectively view and reflect upon multiple days of controversial issues instruction, an almost insurmountable logistical challenge without such technological supports. For researchers and teacher educators, it highlighted how collectively reflecting and selecting analytical lenses influenced the frequency of reported pedagogical transformations. It also raised questions about how to best contextualize such reflections, thus signaling future research possibilities.

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