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PEDAGOGIES OF REFLECTION: DIALOGICAL PROFESSIONAL- DEVELOPMENT SCHOOLS IN ISRAEL

Arie Kizel

ABSTRACT

This chapter discusses a form of pedagogy of reflection suggested to be defined as the dialogical-reflective professional-development school (DRPDS) – a framework that develops and empowers students by engaging them in a process of continual improvement, responding to diverse situations, providing stimuli for learning, and giving anchors for mediation. The pedagogy of reflection relates to dialogue not only from a theoretical historical context but also by way of example – that is, it offers empowering dialogues within the traditional teacher-training framework. This chapter outlines the importance of the pedagogy of reflection in the multicultural educational space of the preservice education field in Israel, analyzing the first university PDS model. The pedagogy of reflection in the context of the educational dialogue of educators is outlined as a tool for student empowerment, achieved through a community of learners who dedicate space to the development of their whole personality within

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the profession, taking a moral stance toward the educational discourse, minimizing judgmentalism and prejudice, creating national/gender equality with the goal of examining the fundamental question of educational performance, and reinforcing their sense of organizational belonging within the system. In these contexts, the chapter is based on the elements of dialogical philosophy exemplified in the thought of Burbules, Nelson, Isaacs, Bohm, and Heckmann and the reflective basis of educational and organizational performance exemplified in the writings of van Manen. The chapter also presents two examples from a project in which teaching units based on dialogue and reflection were developed within a dialogic community that represents in its very being collective empowerment, the possibility of coping with problems that are too large for an individual to solve on his/her own, and an alternative to sealed and alienated organizations.

Keywords: Dialogue; reflection; professional-development school; preservice teacher training

One of the reasons behind our increasing inability to break down the inherent barrier between teachers and students is due to a lack of engagement in ongoing dialogical reflection as a means of advancing the teaching-learning process within schools. Teacher–student dialogue plays a central role in facilitating the ongoing growth of those engaged in education, particularly dialogue that invites student reflection on the instruction being given and the teacher herself. Dialogue aids students in articulating self-awareness (conscious or unconscious) regarding their behavior and learning habits and the learning process and it results, at the same time, in their assessing their quality and the ways in which they may be improved. According to Darling-Hammond (1996), teachers must teach teacher-training students to understand how to respond to their various learning needs, take their entry points into the learning processes into consideration, and shape their ways of teaching in order to provide the anchors and mediation necessary for their advancement.

This chapter discusses a form of pedagogy of reflection I call the dialogical-reflective professional-development school (DRPDS), a framework (see Fig. 1) that develops and empowers students by engaging them in a process of continual improvement through responding to diverse situations, providing stimuli for learning, and giving anchors for mediation. For

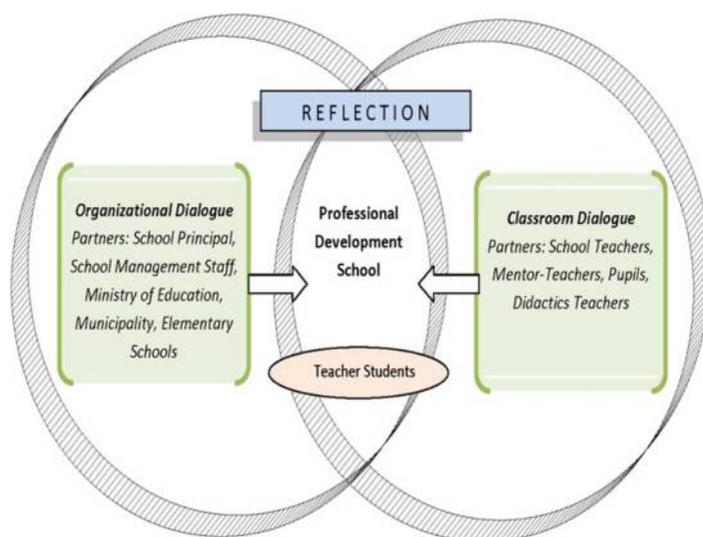


Fig. 1. Dialogical-Reflective Professional Development (DRPDS) Model.

the purposes of this chapter, I adopt Nimrod Aloni's "working definition" of dialogue:

Dialogue is a discourse in which those taking part in it make themselves available to others and show an interest in them both on the basis of their common humanity and their individuality. Promoting mutual trust, respect, openness, and attentiveness, together they work together toward a better and broader understanding of themselves, the other, and the life contexts they share. (Aloni, 2008, p. 26)

I would add to this that the pedagogy of reflection relates to dialogue not only from a theoretical historical context but also by way of example, that is, it offers empowering dialogues within the traditional teacher-training framework.

This pedagogy of reflection is based on the view that reflective dialogue forms one of the best ways in which students' learning needs can be identified and understood, the dialogic partnership between teacher and student, facilitating the latter's ability to assess their "real" level of knowledge and reach and exceed their potential in every stage of the learning process. In Israel, the pedagogy of reflection is employed during the preservice teacher-training period with students preparing to become middle and high school teachers, experiencing their practica in schools in dialogical communities

while simultaneously taking university courses to deepen and broaden their theoretical and disciplinary knowledge. At the same time, they are also introduced to supporting research.

This chapter seeks to contribute to the literature on reflection and dialogue by specifying, analyzing, and justifying the pedagogies of teacher-training education deployed in the context of DRPDS as an example of what Nelson (1949) refers to as cooperative group dialogue. It also draws on the literature, discussing the philosophy of reflection in connection to generic teaching and learning. I will provide evidence and analyze this form of pedagogy on the basis of a four-year research project conducted between 2010 and 2013, which included questionnaires distributed to the hundreds of students in the teacher-training track during those years and interviews with lecturers, academic coordinators, and school principals. In conclusion, I outline the benefits of this model, suggesting that it represents an excellent way to empower teacher education students, to cultivate their sense of belonging, and to reduce their sense of alienation from the educational system and its structure.

THE PDS FRAMEWORK IN THE TEACHER-TRAINING CONTEXT

In the 1990s, increasing calls were made for traditional teacher-training programs based on academic learning to adopt ones that offered the student practical experience in the school (Carnegie Forum on Education and Economy, 1986; Holmes Group, 1990). This view proposed that teacher-training students must learn and gain experience of two types of successful teaching practices – those focusing on subject matter (knowledge) and those focusing on the students (their individual needs as worlds unto themselves) (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). Practical classroom experience under the guidance of experienced teachers and academic experts consequently became an integral part of the teacher-training curriculum (Thompson & Sopko, 2000).

The idea of partnerships between teacher-training institutions and schools was further established in the United States in the wake of a series of longitudinal studies by John Goodlad and his colleagues in the 1990s. Examining American elementary and high schools (Goodlad, 1984) and 1,300 teacher-training programs (Goodlad, 1994), the main conclusion these studies reached was that both the school system and teacher-training

programs required revision. One of the primary suggestions made was that teacher-training students should gain experience in schools with an outstanding academic and educational record to which they would naturally return to teach upon graduation (Goodlad, 1990; Sirotnik, 2001). Although the coining of the term “professional-development schools” (PDS) by the Holmes Group in 1986 formed the conceptual framework for the idea of partnership, its implementation was relatively slow. By the beginning of the 1990s, however, hundreds of PDS schools had been established across the United States, with their number reaching more than 1,000 in 1998 in 47 states. One of the important stages in the development of the PDS concept was the National Council of Accreditation of Teacher Education’s introduction of a set of standards in 1998 (Levine, 2001).

While Israeli universities have clung conservatively to the old model of the teacher as trainer, the Israeli education system also adopted a program of partnership with schools a decade ago with the aim of establishing a teacher-training curriculum integrating a practicum. Generally established between teacher-training colleges (also known as colleges of education) and (middle and elementary) schools, the idea was to promote connections and links between the two institutional cultures (Zilberstein, Ben Perez, & Griensfeld, 2006). It is preeminently exemplified in the creation of learning communities that seek to engender teaching-learning situations in which theory deepens understanding and insights into classroom teaching and pedagogy.

This chapter describes how the pedagogy of reflection was introduced into the teacher-training track at the University of Haifa. Based on the pedagogy of reflection exemplified by a community of students studying in a network of Jewish and Arab schools in mixed groups (Jews, Muslims, Druze, and Christians) in the north of Israel, it is guided by the PDS approach first propounded by the Holmes Group (1986). Cochran-Smith (1991) distinguishes between three central models of the complex relationship between teacher-training institutes and training schools: consensus, critical dissonance, and collaborative resonance. Our model seeks to cultivate the teacher-training student’s ability to integrate various types of knowledge – practical and theoretical – within the framework of a learning community composed of teacher-training faculty and educational teams from field-training schools. At its base lies the view that teaching is a practical-reflective profession, students regarding the school as a place of learning and coming to affirm its value based on their recognition of the contribution assignments make to their own developments and society in general (Marshall, 1990). Enriched by the pedagogy of reflection, the

educational–intellectual atmosphere in such an environment can develop into a vibrant and dynamic space, fostering intellectual tension and the sense of innovation and creativity that are so necessary for the educational task. In contrast to the traditional idea of the teacher as trainer, the latter plays a key role in the partnership model, being responsible for developing future teachers professionally and personally. As Copas (1984) notes, this enhanced role includes guidance, personal support, direction, and mentoring. The pedagogy of reflection in a dialogical community further expands the mentoring teacher's role, making teacher-trainees part of a community of school teachers who are intimately involved in their training and ongoing education with the expressed intent of making them part of their community in particular and the education system in general.

In the PDS model, teacher education students learn from practical observation in the school, gaining experience that allows them to enhance their abilities. An emphasis is placed on practices that focus on both the learning of material and the learner at the same time as taking the individual needs of each student into consideration (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). During their field experience, students are exposed to a discourse that integrates disciplinary studies, pedagogy, and didactics. This helps them prepare and initiate teaching-learning situations based on insights from various fields of knowledge, on the one hand, and gives them an opportunity to study how to teach on the other.

A broad range of studies point to the significance and positive impact attached to practical experience (Hodge, Davis, Woodward, & Sherrill, 2002; Smith & Snoek, 1996). Thus, for example, Wang and Odell (2002) contend that students' problems during the practicum stage can be substantially reduced if the practicum is carried out within a PDS framework. The research fluctuates between the partners' subjective voices and ecologic and contextual examination of the partnership in order to demonstrate to what extent the cultural and organizational distinctiveness of each school and partner forms a key factor in novices' professional development. A variety of research strategies are employed within the framework of the phenomenological-qualitative paradigm – including stories, autobiographical and biographical narratives, ethnographies, case studies, and action and collaborative research (Johnson & Johnson, 2002). The most prevalent research tools within this paradigm are formal and informal interviews, documentation journals, protocols, comments from school observations, the collection of anecdotes and correspondence, narratives and stories, self-reports, etc.

DRPDS: SPECIFICATION AND TEACHER EDUCATORS' PRACTICE

DRPDS is a rich and comprehensive model of reflective teacher-training. Its fundamental premise is that rigorous reflective dialogue between teacher and student rests on three pillars. The first is the legitimization of the personal view of each of the partners in the dialogue combined with sensitivity to difference, empathy, mutual respect, and openness. Thus, for example, a teacher-training student and his teacher openly and non-judgmentally share with one another their views regarding their strengths and weaknesses. This principle plays an important role in the accord between students and teachers regarding the level of the former's knowledge of their behavior as a launching point for future improvement, the real and imagined influence of the factors that interfere with their learning processes, and the ways to discern these and reduce their influence.

The second pillar is joint analysis of the possible ways of coping with a certain situation, choosing options, and focusing on solutions and outcome. This principle reflects both the students' commitment to adopting successful methods and consequent achievements and the teacher's and school system's commitment to provide feedback in a priori defined periods of time in order to help the students improve their work habits and results.

The third pillar is the use of metacognitive thought. At the heart of metacognitive thought lies students' practices of thinking about their thought processes on the basis of the assumption that the more they are aware of the various elements that influence their understanding the more they will be able to identify successful strategies and monitor them, thereby increasing their knowledge and improving their ability to solve problems. The metacognitive element is thus designed to contribute to enhancing students' personal responsibility and autonomy as learners and their awareness of the improvement process.

Implemented in a DRPDS, this model perceives teacher-training students as needing to think about their classes, students, and above all themselves as reflective professionals in a new way. This is an important point in light of the fact that many students from multicultural backgrounds have never experienced dialogical and reflective teachers prior to their teacher education studies. Among the numerous elements of this rich and comprehensive model is, of course, the preparation of novice teachers to teach a specific subject. Responsible for the introduction of the concept of pedagogical content knowledge, Shulman's (1986) work led to the development of

a school of thought that sought to identify teachers' knowledge of their subject matter and the importance of this for successful teaching. Reflective pedagogy adds a further component to this approach, placing at its center the process constructed in the community of learners. From this perspective, the latter "can be regarded as having a worth independent of its benefit [...] Someone who values truth in this may find the constant effort to free his mind from prejudice and error painful" (Peters, 1966, p. 100). The DRPDS model seeks to form a community of learners that engages in reflective dialogue when confronting an educational text presented during class discourse or the teacher-training group. As Gadamer (1999) suggests, a group of peers should listen carefully, without rushing to judgment. Or as Lipman, Sharp, and Oscanyon inform us, "Philosophy is [...] of enormous benefit to persons seeking to form concepts that can effectively represent aspects of their life experience" (1980, p. 90).

Despite the difficulties involved in defining the "dialogic in education," a number of trends related to this concept can be discerned. An expansionary school seeks to rely primarily on post-modernist, anti-authoritarian trends in its opposition to hierarchies and dichotomies in education. Inclusivist, this approach relates dialogue to such domains as interpersonal communication, nonviolent communication, interpersonal respect, encouragement of creativity, and the strengthening of school-community collaborations. The second trend is reductive in nature, concerned solely with defining – rather narrowly – the difference between dialogue and authoritarian approaches. Not questioning school hierarchies, this school of thought seeks to establish criteria that will shift philosophic dialogue from the theoretical to the methodological domain and produce methods that can be applied in educational practice. Attempting to define the desired form of dialogue between teachers and students, lesson planning, and ways of conducting dialogic teaching-learning processes, it encourages and promotes dialogue as a means of promoting good organization within the classroom and educational system by applying clear criteria defined in advance. Proponents of this trend have also defined criteria that can be applied to teacher-training courses – developing novices' empathy and flexibility during teacher training in order enable them to focus on developing dialogically-oriented lessons, for example.

A leading proponent of the reductivist approach, Burbules (1993) proposes a limited view of the use of dialogue as a type of pedagogical communicative relations, arguing that certain types of interactions can be referred to as "dialogical." Different approaches are appropriate to different styles of teaching, student learning, and fields of knowledge, when they are

applied to improve practice. While this approach views that dialogue is more a form of praxis than of techne, successful engagement in dialogue requires learning through practice.

Burbules (1991) also discusses the possibilities of dialogue among different, foreign, and even hostile cultural communities seeking productive dynamics. According to Burbules and Rice (1991), these dynamics are obtained by attaining agreement regarding the consequences of facts, beliefs, and interpretations. This consensus in turn leads to meaningful cooperation, partial understanding, or acceptance of the legitimacy of other views, thereby facilitating the continuation of productive dialogue even in the face of real differences or remaining disagreements. The identity-boundaries of the sides frequently becoming more open and the participants more flexible as they attain broader knowledge about the other and greater insight into their own selves by allowing themselves to see the other's view, they thereby develop social, interpersonal, intercultural, and political-communication skills (Burbules & Rice, 1991).

The principles of DRPDS pedagogy of reflection are based on the ideas propounded by Nelson (1949). Emphasizing the importance and power of dialogue in group learning, Nelson asserted that each group member may serve as a "midwife" during the process of developing ideas, the goal of the dialogic process being to advance an idea from "birth" to educational practice with truth being identified through consensus. Nelson's theory was expanded into the domain of teacher education by one of his students, Heckmann (1981).

Dialogue in the context of group learning – including teacher-training education based on the DRPDS model – and a community of learners adopts four elements from this approach:

1. The importance of producing results: Ultimately, the dialogic process seeks to answer the philosophic question posed by eliciting the truth about the nature of worldviews regarding tolerance, freedom, justice, and responsibility;
2. The importance of participation: Taking part in the collaborative process involves looking for answers to questions and developing a mutual understanding of others. Members share their concrete experiences, some of which the group selects for detailed investigation, all the members participating in the subsequent discussion;
3. The importance of enriching an individual's deep understanding and enabling the participants to grasp the moral complexities of everyday life;

4. The importance of dialogue as a practice in shaping educational life achievements: Dialogue leads to greater clarity regarding which acts are guided by educational thought and which are not, thereby enhancing the participants' confidence and enabling them to draw appropriate conclusions regarding the desired approach to an educational/educative life.

Here, the distinction between the “act-of-talking” and the “act-of-dialogue” is relevant, the latter involving investigation, risk-taking, and the preservation of equality (Alrø & Skovsmose, 2004, p. 15). As these authors remind us, the dialogic process being collective, it facilitates critique and thus serves as a tool for achieving meaningful learning. This form of dialogue calls for participants in interactions to respond to the other participants in a way that takes into account how they think other people are going to respond to them. According to Isaacs (1999), it contains at least five components:

1. Respect: Partners in a dialogue should assume that all the participants are equal, legitimate, and important to the learning process – irrespective of whether or not you agree with their views.
2. Listening: Partners in a dialogue should listen for understanding and learning rather than correctness. They should be aware of their listening to others by paying attention to “mental models” and obstacles that get in the way of what is being said and heard. The goal is not to listen in order to respond or advocate but to listen in order to understand.
3. Suspension of judgment: Partners in a dialogue should be aware of assumptions and certainties and learn to hold them apart or to the side without feeling compelled to act upon them.
4. Freeing oneself: Partners in a dialogue should seek to balance inquiry and advocacy, freeing themselves from rigid mindsets. Inquiry is an opportunity to seek clarification and a deeper level of understanding rather than to expose weakness.
5. Communicating one's reasoning process: Partners in a dialogue should talk about their assumptions and how they arrive at what they believe, endeavoring to identify the data on which they are based and engaging in the same process with respect to others.

As Peter Senge notes,

Dialogue is not merely a set of techniques for improving organizations, enhancing communications, building consensus, or solving problems. It is based on the principle that conception and implementation are intimately linked, with a core of common meaning. During the dialogue process, people learn how to think together not just in the sense of analyzing a shared problem or creating new pieces of shared knowledge, but in the

sense of occupying a collective sensibility, in which the thoughts, emotions, and resulting actions belong not to one individual, but to all of them together. (1994, p. 358 [original italics])

PEDAGOGIES OF REFLECTION IN ISRAELI MULTICULTURAL JEWISH-ARAB SCHOOLS

The teacher education pedagogy proposed here is based on two central practical and philosophical axes – dialogue and reflection. These are exemplified in each of the professional learning circles of teacher-training students and their instructors by means of dialogic and reflective discourse communities that operate in parallel and in tandem with the goal of creating links, correlations, and changes in both these circles at the same time. The pedagogy of reflection seeks to meet the challenges posed by more extensive usage of dialogue in education by regarding the field of teaching-training as constructed of three parallel and interlinked types of learning-research communities: teacher-trainers (PDS coordinators), mentors (within the school, for professional development), and teacher-trainees (during their studies, prior to taking up their first job). All of the activities of these communities are interrelated and affect one another.

As part of the vision of the pedagogy of dialogical reflection, communities of diverse multicultural students have been established. Including Jews, Arab Muslim, Arab Christians, Arab Druze, Arab Armenians, and Circassians – reflective of the various groups in Israeli society – these communities are integrated within public schools that teach Hebrew and Arabic. Such participation in a discourse dialogue seeking to concretize the principle of multicultural dialogue around professional learning in the field of teaching, this method allows students to gain teaching experience in an atmosphere of equality and an ongoing dialogic discourse between the groups, without giving priority to any one national or collective narrative. The groups are also composed of preservice teachers specializing in various fields – history, civics, language, literature, English, communication, etc. Here, too, the groups constitute diverse and pluralistic professional communities that promote generic dialogic discourse between divergent fields of knowledge with respect to their structure, curriculum, and method of instruction.

The communities of students seeking to establish a broad dialogic culture in the teacher-training program in order to encourage creativity and

self-reflective thinking emphasize on two dialogic dimensions – dialogic organization and the dialogic classroom – on the basis of Isaacs' (1999) five principles (respect, listen, suspend judgment, free yourself, and communicate one's reasoning process). The content relates to dialogue and reflection. Throughout the day, these two axes are highlighted from both a practical and a philosophical perspective. The aim is to create teachers who are continually engaged in a classroom dialogue with their students, participating in an organizational dialogue with the school administration and staff, and committed to reflection throughout their work in order to enact necessary changes, accomplish desired goals, and encourage others to act accordingly in order to improve the school as a whole.

The learning day generally begins with a dialogical-reflective group discourse guided by the group leader. The discourse includes all the principles of dialogue and reflection, both formally and substantively. The students share pedagogic and educational cases they have experienced in their practica, reviewing the dialogue they held with their mentors, the class they taught, and their views of the teaching profession. Opinions regarding pedagogy they witnessed and experienced are constructed and issues such organization within the classroom, the order of the meeting, classroom power relations, the school architecture, etc., are discussed. Diverse aspects relating to the teacher's classroom leadership and the ability to become agents of change dedicated to reflection, transcendence, and cognitive and political changes in the school reality are also examined. Some of the schools are challenging because they are located in middle- or low-class neighborhoods, the features of the student population constituting a key element in the teachers' work and the challenges they face.

The group serves as a safe place that seeks to foster an atmosphere of security by enabling the participants to identify the basic views and concepts underlying the teaching-learning process in an open fashion and by linking the ideas to the school reality, dilemmas, social, environmental, and material problems and the personal/emotional challenges that they will face when they become fully fledged teachers. In the words of one of the PDS coordinators:

The student simultaneously engages in a series of parallel and interlinked processes: she shares an educational case with the group, reflects on the mentor's reflective process – the doubts, decisions, and thoughts he had shared with her, testing herself dialogically via the mentor's reflective process, and in parallel receives feedback from the group and PDS coordinator. At the same time, she also links the case that she raised to the school and socio-community reality and to the future school in which she imagines herself teaching. As noted above, this is an integrated and interrelated process, thus the

individual is flooded with both strengths and weaknesses, fears and hopes, personal and interpersonal difficulties and connectedness, as well as learning challenges. Without the dialogic discourse group in which the reflective act takes place, the student would have to face reality on her own without any support or feedback from the group, which acts as a sounding board, expressing different and contrary opinions. Our community of learners is in fact a research community in the field of learning about learning.

These dialogical-reflective processes are of great significance in the State of Israel – a nation state characterized by a hierarchical system of centralized education with strict policies relating to teacher supervision, assessment, and evaluation. This reality affords the reflective discourse community of teacher-trainee students the opportunity to engage in an open and dialogical discourse of the system's structure, regulation, and methods of supervision. At this early stage, before they have become fully qualified teachers, they can use the community to develop their own views, challenge their presuppositions, and test them in relation to the requirements of the systems – both on the philosophic-curriculum and the practical classroom level. The egalitarian community of learners allows their views, thoughts, hopes, and fears regarding their profession and future placements to be taken into consideration at a significant stage in their training while laying emphasis on relevance and diversity of opinion. The “other” – whoever s/he may be – can thus express his/her views openly and honestly.

The discourse group session is followed by a period during which the students observe lessons taught by their school mentor. The students then engage in another open discourse with the latter around the subjects that arose in the classroom that posed pedagogic and educational challenges, the mentor sharing his thoughts about his work process and in most cases also allowing room for feedback from the student. Herein, the teacher involves the student in his thoughts and deliberations regarding what occurred, the practices s/he adopted, and her/his regrets, this process forming a personal example for reflection as part of a revelatory dialogue, the mentor turning from “knower” to “hesitator” and even sometimes to “not-knower.” This reversal of roles gives the student an opportunity to experience, imagine, and envision herself as engaging in such a dialogue when she has become a teacher herself.

A high school principal described the process in the following words:

I picture the dialogical reflective process between the mentor and student as a type of “striptease” in which the teacher shares a lot with the student. It's a process that ostensibly weakens the teacher, but in fact it makes him better, both personally and professionally. In my opinion, as a principal, it's a process in which the mentor grows in the most important way possible because he says: “I would do it differently” – thus in

effect declaring the beginning of a change. This is reflection that, in most cases, is even better and more beneficial than my observing a teacher in the classroom. The students serve as mirrors in this process, even as “professional mirrors.”

During the day, the students also conduct a class, or part of one. This may be a full or half class, a one-on-one lesson with three to five students, a group of students working on a project in a specific area, or preparing a lesson unit with the help of students. They also observe classes taught by their peers, sitting in the class and then discussing it afterwards with the PDS coordinator and mentor. The latter activity contains a reflective dimension in which the students analyze their performance and receive feedback from the mentor, coordinator, and their peers. They also conduct a class dialogue designed to examine their pedagogic, educational, ethical, and philosophical performance in the classroom while observing the mentor (or other teachers), during extracurricular activities, and their own taking of a class.

The second form of dialogue they conduct is an organizational dialogue. Slotte (2004) proposes adopting dialogue as a way of strengthening organizational intelligence. Basing his ideas on Bohm (1992, 1996) – a physicist who employed the dialogic approach in his scientific work – he argues (2004) that dialogue is a form of philosophic work that can be internalized within an organizational culture and employed in such organizational activities as daily meetings, developmental discussions, work-related meetings, problem-solving, developing organizational strategies, leadership, and determining an organization’s moral vision. Drawing on examples from the daily life of leaders, organizations, and employees, he found that staff enjoyed the advantages achieved through such philosophical dialogic endeavors. Dialogue embedded in the organizational culture also improved communication and work relations while serving as a basis for problem-solving and the creation of organizational trust.

Organizational dialogue occurs in a series of circles. In the first circle, students observe and interview school staff, being made a partner to their difficulties and challenges. In the second, they meet with various school staff, from the principal to subject teachers. The goal of each organizational dialogical circle is to lay emphasis on the education system’s obligations to the new teacher and give her full access to the professional community as possible in order to enable her to understand the structure, performance, roles, and challenges that face the school and the teacher working as part of a team.

In contrast to student visits to schools designed to boost PR for the schools, showcase their curriculum and educational projects, and present

their outward appearance, organizational dialogue seeks to train teachers to share their professional difficulties, concentrating in particular on helping those in authority engage in disclosure and reflection. As one of the PDS coordinators noted:

One of the great advantages of organizational dialogical discourse is that it makes a broad, long, and deep cut through performance, primarily regarding the deliberations made by those in the job. The students are impressed by the powers of disclosure and reflection of those already working as teachers, the atmosphere of trust and equality, and above all by the partnership that seeks to reach organizational truth.

According to a school principal:

To the extent that a mentor does an act of professional exposure in front of the students and has to engage in very honest self-examination – so too do the top echelon. This may be me as principal or my deputy. We have to possess reflective abilities on the one hand and the professional ability to present the job on the other. It's not always an easy process, but it's a process that brings maturation.

The students' learning day in the school also includes several elements of the pedagogy of dialogue and the pedagogy of reflection. In many respects, this pedagogy is based on the premise that human beings possess the capacity to change, to be more than we were, and to welcome constant change – one of the key demands of the teaching profession. Teacher-trainee reflection is driven by an ethical commitment to dialogical and reflective work, both with their school students and with the school staff and faculty. It encourages overcoming the perception of man as an object and becoming an educating subject committed to an internal struggle that will prepare them for working toward achieving a reflective lifestyle that seeks social change to strengthen and support the weak (including the student population). One of the elements of the pedagogy of reflection is the understanding that a reflective lifestyle contains within it the willingness to be flexible – that is, philosophical motility and lability – and a refusal to be rigid personally and professionally.

This philosophy of education also guides the PDS coordinators, the mentors who guide work with students as group leaders in the various schools. In precisely the same way in which the student groups become learning, studying, and dialogic communities, so the coordinating groups work in parallel within and between one another as a reflective community that reflectively and dialogically scrutinizes the students' mentoring. Once every few weeks, the group of mentors meets together and studies/examines their work, bringing cases and responses and analyzing their performance via dialogical-reflective tools. This group work constitutes a guiding model

for the student-group activity and the mentors, the latter putting it into practice both in the staffroom/faculty lounge with other teachers and with the students and PDS coordinators with whom they conduct an ongoing discourse that includes reflection on their work.

Manifestations of reflection exist in each of the dialogical and reflective circles in parallel with the goals of broadening, deepening, and investigating professional thinking reflected in van Manen's taxonomies of reflection — which are based on Dewey's dimensions of the immediate, intuitive day-to-day aspect of reflection and the more distant aspect that enables personal growth in the demand for change. In the pre-reflective stage, guidance is given within the advisors' group, the students' group, and the mentors' group, the school staff also helping the teacher-trainees. In the second stage, the reflection broadens out to include the daily experiences of each of the groups, which thereby receives a voice and forms the basis for conclusions regarding dos and don'ts. In the third stage, the reflection becomes more systematic, no longer being confined to personal experiences but also focusing on the experiences of others (advisors, students, and mentors), with the goal of shaping theoretical and critical insights into teaching experiences and organizational performance in the school. In the fourth and final stage, each of the learning community's members reflects on his/her own reflective processes and the way in which s/he constructs theoretical knowledge in order to reach a better understanding of his/her reflection on the nature of knowledge, the ways it works, and how it can be applied in practice.

EXAMPLES OF THE PEDAGOGIES OF REFLECTION

This section describes two cases in which student communities in the DRPDS framework integrated dialogue and reflection in their work via the creation of extracurricular teaching units that challenged the students themselves, their peers in the learning community, and the students in the school.

Narrative Interpretation of the Idea of "Slavery" in an English Class

In one of the schools, a Jewish preservice student and Muslim Arab preservice student decided to collaborate in creating a learning unit around the theme of "slavery in the world" in the context of Barak Obama's election as President of the United States. The two female preservice teachers who

were studying to teach English worked together on the unit that was not a compulsory part of the English curriculum. Over the course of a month, they each wrote the learning unit individually. When they met to plan the unit – intended to be studied on a peak day in school – they discovered they had deep differences of opinion. The Jewish student regarded present-day slavery as a learning space in which infringement of workers', migrants', and children's rights could be discussed alongside statistics, personal testimonies, film clips from websites, and a class discussion following presentation of the facts. The Muslim Arab student viewed slavery in today's world as the infringement of Palestinian rights in the PA-ruled territories and the State of Israel, emphasizing facts regarding the employment hierarchy of Arabs in Israel and the infringement of Palestinian rights in the territories and fields of work and the rights related to these subjects. After having presented these facts, she planned to have a discussion in class with the high school English students.

The preservice teachers engaged in a painful dialogue that became a confrontation between two narratives. The discussion was conducted in the presence of the academic coordinator of the PDS program, the didactics English teacher, and within the community of students. The latter individuals split into two groups – one, supporting the Jewish student, and the other, the Arab student. Each of the students engaged in a reflective move, reviewing the weaknesses and strengths of her project and the reasons why her partner was upset by it. After the dialogic process revealed the national narratives of each of the students, they began to jointly study the subject of national narratives.

The Jewish student said:

Through the dialogue I understood that my Muslim friend belongs to a minority population and that she finds a way to express herself via presenting a learning unit through the prism of a national narrative and in a concrete, actual, local way. The joint study allowed me to look at myself more critically and to consider her criticism of the government of my state.

The Arab student said:

I understood that by presenting slavery through the eyes of my national narrative I was hurting my Jewish friend because she related to the subject of slavery as the slavery of the blacks in America whereas I related it to my own community. The word "slavery" carried totally different connotations for each of us.

As a result of the dialogue, the students decided to integrate elements from both narratives into the learning unit, agreeing that they would explain the narrative approach versus the "one truth" approach to the high

school students, believing that this would allow multiple perspectives and a much greater relevancy, as well as a way of coping with the issue of the Other. They also decided to share the difficulties they had experienced in creating the unit with their English classes. “We think that this way allows the student to understand that teachers also face dilemmas, disagree, have different interpretations of things and that learning includes diverse perspectives, disagreement as well as consensus, and that all of these lead to learning,” stated the Arab student during an interview.

The Palestinian Nakba as a Learning Subject for the Student Community

An Arab student who defined himself as a “Palestinian Arab Israeli” did his practicum in a high school in which the language of instruction was Hebrew and the majority of students were Jewish. He suggested to the principal that the students do a project on the *nakba* – the Palestinian “catastrophe” of 1948. She refused, on the grounds that there was no time and the Israeli Ministry of Education prohibits study of the subject. In consultation with the PDS coordinator, it was decided that the student community would study this unit, thereby students practicing the skills linked to teaching-training learning processes. The group of his peers from the university were divided equally into Jewish and Arab participants. The learning unit was very charged and aroused a great deal of controversy. The Jewish side objected to the way in which the Arab students presented the issue, with the Arab side supporting and identifying with the Palestinian national narrative. Over a number of weeks, the students moved from one side to the other in a dialogical fashion that also exhibited a reflective process. The Jewish students began demonstrating empathy toward the Palestinians’ pain after the Arab students increasingly criticized the lack of empathy some of their group’s members showed by focusing on historical facts rather than on human pain. The learning experience had a great effect on the whole learning community. At the end of the academic year, the two sides reported that the meetings had been very meaningful for them, allowing them to see the other side while dealing simultaneously with planning a learning unit, choosing materials, selecting emphases, and addressing a nationally, historically, and emotionally charged issue.

The student who taught the unit decided to teach in the school in which he did the practicum, documenting his teaching processes in a reflective journal. He eventually acknowledged in his journal that he had gone about presenting the subject the wrong way and that the method he had chosen

(like that adopted by the students) had in effect encouraged radicalism “and even acts of violence,” in his own words. He summed up his journal with this statement: “I become a more aware person after the reflection that I learnt during my teaching-training. Today, I understand better that I have to examine what I do, get to understand the class, myself, and the material, and only then start working. Today, I understand that I can’t teach the way I taught before.”

HOW EFFECTIVE ARE PEDAGOGIES OF REFLECTION?

Over the course of the four years (2010–2013), an academic dialogical-reflective school qualitative and quantitative study also formed part of the teacher-training curriculum in all the PDS in which the students did their practicum. This quantitative research sought to evaluate the importance of each teacher-training element – from the teaching exercises in the specialized subjects through the university pedagogic coordinator, the group dialogical-reflective community, the mentor in the specialized subject, the students in the discourse community, and the staff in the schools who participated in the organizational dialogue. Each of these circles was analyzed via two-part questionnaires, first part asking the students to rank questions divided into subjects related to their teaching practice, giving a mark of between 1 (“not at all”) and 5 (“greatly”) to each subject, and the second asking them to describe the links that had been forged during their year of practical training and the school in which they had been placed, the university PDS coordinator, their mentoring teacher, and their peers, adding their insights.

The study revealed that over the four years, the statements directly linked to the pedagogy of dialogue and reflection gained the highest rating. Thus, for example, the statements ranked highest (between 4 and 5) with respect to teaching exercises were: “Contribute to my development of professional responsibilities as a teacher” (4.71 in 2010; 4.23 in 2011; 4.22 in 2012; 4.21 in 2013); “Contribute to my development as a professional team member” (4.44 in 2010; 4.23 in 2011; 4.21 in 2012; 4.30 in 2013); and “Contribute to my comprehensive knowledge of the school system as a whole and the school staff” (4.17 in 2010; 4.11 in 2011; 4.01 in 2012; 4.25 in 2013).

The statements ranked highest with respect to the PDS coordinator were: “Contributes to my rethinking regarding the teaching profession”

(4.71 in 2010; 4.67 in 2012; 4.44 in 2012; 4.67 in 2013); “Contributes to my comprehensive knowledge of the school system as a whole and the school staff” (4.55 in 2010; 4.32 in 2011; 4.22 in 2012; 4.20 in 2013); and “Contributes to my development of self-study skills” (4.22 in 2010; 4.44 in 2011; 4.32 in 2012; 4.44 in 2013).

The statements ranked highest (between 4 and 5) with respect to the dialogical-reflective community of discourse were: “Contributes to rethinking my views of the teaching profession;” “the group session constituted a place of support;” and “Contributes to my development of self-study skills.”

With respect to the mentoring teacher, the statement ranked highest (between 4 and 5) were: “Contributes to rethinking my views of the teaching profession;” “Contributes to my development of professional responsibilities as a teacher;” “Contributes to my development of integration-into-school skills;” “Contributes to my development of self-study skills.”

The quantitative section was composed of interviews with the student focus group, PDS coordinators, and school principals. This part addressed the efficacy of the pedagogy of reflection in teacher-training, focusing on two central elements: group dialogue and organizational dialogue. The interviews provided data regarding the way in which the reflective and dialogical components of the curriculum helped the students’ gain professional confidence as future teachers and increased their ability to tailor themselves to diverse student communities. In the words of a Jewish preservice teacher,

Before I did my dialogical teaching practicum I thought that being ready was teaching the material. Today, I understand that I lead a community of learners that I have to engage in ongoing reflective processes and be committed to a dialogue of equality and respect. I’m learning all the time, both in and for myself and as part of the organization. I’m in effect a microcosm of the school as a whole.

In the words of an Arab student,

My ability to understand what dialogue with pupils in the classroom is based on the fact that my commitment to them on the personal and professional level has been reinforced through this year. I understand that I stand in front of a group composed of many individuals with many needs and that I’m not a lecturer but a teacher who in effect is a person committed to each pupil. My view has changed from “teaching a group” to “teaching pupils.” My idea of equality regarding pupils from different backgrounds has also changed because of the reflective processes I engaged in over the year.

One high school principal stressed that the dialogue with young students was “enabling,” “developed thought,” “refreshed us organizationally,” and

“prevented stagnation.” Another observed that the process was sometime “organizationally painful because it exposed us to an aspect of our organizational weakness. But it strengthened us as an advancing and learning organization.” Another noted: “The pedagogy of dialogue and reflection exemplified in the PDS reinforces the sense of belonging the young teacher feels to the organization. It also reinforces their feeling that they are capable, that they’re not alone, and for us, the top echelon, it reinforces our sense of commitment to them. It builds a community, an educational community.”

CONCLUSION

This chapter has outlined the importance of the pedagogy of reflection in a DRPDS in the multicultural educational space of the preservice education field in Israel, analyzing the first university PDS model – which I termed DRPDS – and a four-year study whose effects are still being felt.

The pedagogy of reflection in the context of the educational dialogue of educators at the preservice stage of teacher preparation is outlined as a tool for student empowerment, achieved through a community of learners who dedicate space to the developing of their whole personality within the profession, taking a moral stance toward the educational discourse, minimizing judgmentalism and prejudice, creating national/gender equality with the goal of examining the fundamental question of educational performance, and reinforcing their sense of organizational belonging within the system.

The dialogical-reflective community of learners is constantly faced with objections to this form of education because while boasting of an egalitarian relationship between teachers and school students in practice, it in fact preserves the authoritarian hierarchy of traditional education, merely creating the outward appearance of equality by educational manipulation. In the form in which it has been presented in this chapter, this objection has been proved both correct and erroneous. Educational performance always entails that one body take the initiative for another to grow and learn. If it takes place under the clear rules of reflection, however, it allows for the reaching of truer notions regarding the nature of the relationship between teacher and school students, primarily their democratic character. In the context of teacher education presented in this work, the process of constant reexamination of basic personal, collective, disciplinary, and even national

questions around education and work with young people – children and adults alike – is given center stage.

This chapter was based on the elements of dialogical philosophy exemplified in the thought of Burbules, Nelson, Isaacs, Bohm, and Heckmann, and the reflective basis of educational and organizational performance exemplified in the writings of Van Manen (1991). The taxonomies the latter proposed a four-fold hierarchy, with reflection taking place with thinking in each phase. In the first stage of thought, pre-reflection, intuition, and habit reign. In the second stage of the hierarchy, reflection is directed toward daily experiences (in our case, student experiences) where conclusions are drawn regarding dos and don'ts. In the third stage, reflection becomes more systematic, extending beyond the boundaries of personal experience to focus on the experiences of others, with the goal of shaping theoretical and critical insights regarding daily experience. In the fourth stage, reflection is directed toward our own reflective processes and the way in which our theoretical knowledge is built so that we can reach a better grasp of self-reflection with respect to the nature of knowledge, how it performs in practice, and the implementation options of knowledge in our praxis. The students who participated in the dialogical-reflective learning communities attested in the study that they reached the final stage and that a teacher education curriculum based on the pedagogy of reflection helped them attain higher stages of reflection and educational language, as well as new develop personally.

The chapter featured two examples from a project in which teaching units based on dialogue and reflection were developed within a dialogic community that represents in its very being collective empowerment, the possibility of coping with problems that are too large for an individual to solve on his/her own, and an alternative to sealed and alienated organizations (Berger & Neuhaus, 1977). The community elements evident in these examples are partnership, involvement, and mutual commitment – qualities that naturally engender a sense of belonging and comradeship while constituting an effective response to the feeling of alienation and marginalization individuals and groups frequently experience in society. Modeling these examples – constructed on the basis of extracurriculum themes – enabled the students to engage in an inner dialogue with themselves and the student community and then with the school community. This valuable educational challenge offers preservice teachers an empowering professional experience that molds them into potential agents of change and quality professionals with proven abilities to rethink some of their fundamental assumptions underpinning their unique educational skills. In sum, the

preservice teachers experienced a process similar to that proposed by Giroux (1987) and others, who maintained that unempowered teachers are unable to empower the students they teach.

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