Clinical Entrepreneurship: A Student Teacher Assigning Desktop Documentary Making

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Abstract

This qualitative research study examines a student teacher's assignment of a historical documentary project in her eighth grade U.S. History class. Data for the study consisted of classroom observations, document retrieval, and interviews with both the student teacher and her cooperating teacher. Using a triad of frameworks (ambitious teaching, student teaching experimentation, and Cultural Historical Activity Theory), this study sought to understand what led the student teacher to employ documentary making and how she employed it into her classroom. Results reveal that this student teacher proposed the documentary project to the cooperating teacher, who supported the student teacher as she integrated it. Additionally, the two teachers employed documentary making as a means to foster a personal connection with students as well as a personal encounter with the past. Finally, the student teacher was proactive in light of experiencing adversity with assigning the documentary project. Implications of these findings are discussed.

Keywords: student teaching; teacher education; desktop documentary making; history education

Introduction

The clinical experience of student teaching is a pivotal period for most teachers. Teacher candidates, during this time, experiment with employing methods and strategies that were first introduced to them in their preparatory coursework or that their cooperating teacher offers them. It is also a time where the teacher candidate learns the rigors of the job such as lesson preparation and classroom management. Student teachers who seek to enliven their classroom instruction are more willing than their peer teacher candidates or experienced teachers to enlist new or

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unconventional strategies during student teaching, especially those strategies that involve the use of emergent digital technologies (Kılınç et al, 2016).

Desktop documentary making (DDM) is one tool based in new digital technologies that teachers may use to position history students to construct their own knowledge. Research on student's use of DDM (e.g., Schul, 2012a) indeed demonstrated that students are actively problem solving if their teachers position them to construct historical narratives on their own. However, history teachers selectively appropriate (Fehn & Schul, 2014; Rozenweig, 2011; Yilmaz & Kirtel, 2015) digital technologies to suit their own pedagogical purposes and their use of DDM is no exception. In one study (Schul, 2010a), for instance, a history teacher was investigated who integrated DDM for the purpose of engaging students in problem solving and historical inquiry whereas another study (Schul, 2012b) examined a teacher who used DDM to teach research skills. Yet, why and how is DDM employed by student teachers during what is likely their most pivotal clinical experience? No research currently exists on a student teachers' experiences with integrating DDM into their classroom. This particular study focused on a singular beginning teacher's student experience as she sought to integrate DDM into her classroom. This study was guided by the following two questions:

1. What led the student teacher to employ desktop documentary making into her classroom?

2. How did the student teacher employ desktop documentary making into her classroom?

Several theoretical frameworks contributed to the investigation of these questions. The following section sheds light on these frameworks and how they related to this study.

Theoretical Frameworks

Since this study sought to understand the factors contributing to a student teaching employing DDM in her clinical experience, the notion of ambitious teaching was invaluable with understanding this particular case.

Ambitious Teaching

S.G. Grant (2003, 2005) developed the construct of ambitious teaching to describe teachers who dare to take risks and who are willing to innovate. According to Grant and Gladwell (2010), ambitious teachers "deeply understand their subject matter and actively seek ways to connect their subject matter with the lived experiences of their students" (p. 2). Ambitious history teachers create and assign activities in their classroom that align well with constructivism in that they engage students to construct their own histories. These risk-taking teachers usually have a strong constructivist bent (i.e., they seek to position students to construct knowledge rather than rely on direct instruction) in their instructional approach (Marlowe & Page, 2005; Mishra, 2014). Such teachers are usually willing to experiment with new digital technologies as a means to enhance the teaching and learning experience in their classroom because these technologies promise to engage students in their own learning through fresh and relevant means (Molebash, 2004; Wenglinsky, 2005; Swan, Hofer, & Swan, 2011). Student teachers whose characteristics are akin to ambitious teaching are likely to experiment as they plan and teach lessons during their clinical experience.

Student Teaching Experimentation

Cooperating teachers (those who closely mentor teachers during their student teaching experience) play a central role in the development of a teacher's preparation (Fairbanks, Freedman, Kahn, 2000; Waters & Russell, 2016). Whether a teacher becomes an ambitious

teacher or not may hinge upon the nature of the student teaching experience that the cooperating teacher fosters (Demirhan & Yücel, 2016; Clark, 2015). Cooperating teachers perceive three types of student teaching experiences from the lens of their cooperating teachers: mimic, experimentation, and benign neglect (Valencia, Martin, Place & Grossman, 2009). While both the first and third types infer that the cooperating teacher puts little effort forth to intentionally nurture and develop the student teacher as a professional, this second type of student teaching, experimentation, involves scaffolding on the part of the cooperating teacher. Cooperating teachers of these experimentation student teachers "provide supportive and respectful contexts in which student teachers can experiment and take risks and they attempt to go beyond technical supervision to engage student teachers in authentic dialogue" (McNay & Graham, 2007). In sum, successful cooperating teachers help to develop their student teachers' sense of efficacy through verbal persuasion and vicarious experience (Knoblaugh & Hoy, 2008).

Cultural Historical Activity Theory

Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) was employed in this study to help investigate the second research question that focused on how the student teacher integrated DDM. CHAT enabled the analysis of the actions between the student teacher and her cooperating teacher as they integrated DDM into their respective classroom. Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT), a model based upon Vygotsky's theory of mediated action conceived by theorists (e.g., Engeström, 1987, 1999; Leont'ev, 1974, 1978) and used by researchers (e.g., Kaptelinin & Nardi, 2006; Roth, 2004; Roth & Lee, 2007; Schul, 2010b, 2012a, 2014; Yamagata-Lynch, 2007) describes the complicated processes individuals engage in as they seek to create "objects' or, as in the case with the teacher in this study, a documentary making class project. A central premise behind CHAT is that activity (i.e., a student teacher and a cooperating

teacher assigning together a DDM project) is ever-changing and is affected with the infusion of several various types of mediators. Mediated action suggests that the relationship between human action and the environment from which it took place is innately bound together (Wertsch, 1998). Vygotsky (1978) offered the basic premise for mediated action by claiming that development occurs first between people and then within the individual, therefore a mediating effect exists where a person internalizes what was once exclusively external to her or him. This mediation in an individual's thought process can only be discovered in unison with the social and cultural environment from which it emerged (Wertsch & Tulviste, 1992). One important aspect of analyzing an activity system through a CHAT lens is how individuals within it handle "tensions" that naturally emerge. How these individuals handle these "tensions" is central to understanding their philosophy and training as related to producing a particular outcome. In this study, as you will see, the tension highlighted is the teachers' handling of technological difficulties that posed problems during the integration of her DDM project assignment.

Figure 1 depicts the CHAT heuristic created by Engeström (1987) used for this study as the student teacher integrated DDM into their classroom. The socio-cultural nature of CHAT contends that mediating agents (i.e., psychological tools, human tools, and material tools) affect human behavior within the activity system (Kozulin, 1998). These mediating agents such as rules, community, division of labor, and tools, are employed throughout activity where an object (in this study's case, a DDM project the teacher assigned) may be created. There are three primary classifications of tools: material, cultural, and human (Kozulin & Presseisen, 1995).
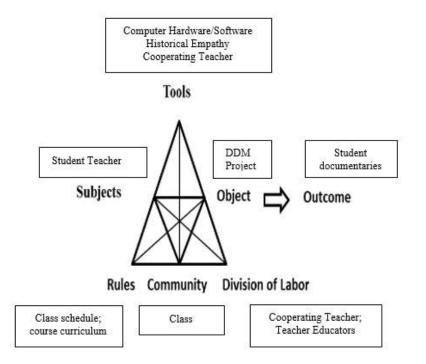
Figure 1. Activity system of the student teacher assigning a DDM project

A teacher's integration of DDM includes a wide array of these mediators (Schul, 2010b). A

classroom, for instance, includes a plethora of material mediators from textbooks, computer

software/hardware, and the physical space of the room itself. Cultural mediators, also known as

psychological tools, can be contrasted with material tools because "unlike material tools, which

serve as conductors of human activity aimed at external objects, psychological tools are

internally oriented, transforming the inner, natural psychological processes into higher mental

functions" (Kozulin 1998, pp. 13-14). Cultural tools that a teacher may use when integrating

DDM may include their instructions, but also their personal conceptual dispositions as well as

concepts such as historical empathy. According to Barton and Levstik (2004), historical

empathy may include perspective recognition as well as care and commitment. Human tools that

a student teacher may employ with DDM involve any person who was directly or indirectly

involved in her integration of the project. Due to the nature of this study, the primary human

tools analyzed will be the student teacher and her cooperating teacher. Regarding the other mediating agents as they pertain to this study, the documentary project itself may serve as an initial *object*, with *rules* perhaps representing the class schedule as well as the explicit and implicit objectives, goals, or parameters where teachers and students teach and learn within the course curriculum, *community* may represent the students and teacher within the history class, and *division of labor* may represent any resources (material or human) that the student teacher uses to complete their documentary. The *outcome* at the particular moment of activity depicted in Figure 1 is the student-produced documentary. It must be noted that activity is fluid, with one action dependent upon another. This holds true with a teacher assigning a project like DDM as these mediating agents may shift throughout the process with the realization that many *outcomes* may be achieved in the process of completing the ultimate outcome of a completed documentary.

Research Setting and Participants

This study took place in a middle level, eighth grade, American History course in the Spring of 2013 during a three-week long project where the students were assigned to compose a desktop documentary focused upon the American government's forced removal of American Indians from the East of the Mississippi River to the Oklahoma territory in the late 1830s. The two participants in this study were Miley James, an undergraduate middle level education major in the midst of her capstone student teaching experience, and Mrs. Fisher, a fifteen year middle school teacher and Miley's cooperating teacher during the student teaching experience (all names are pseudonyms to project anonymity). The school where the teachers worked, Belleview (a pseudonym), was situated in a predominately middle class small town in the American Midwest. There were twenty-three eighth grade students total in the classroom under study, 9 females and 14 males, with 22 being White-Caucasian and 1 African-American.

At the time of this study, Miley James was twenty-one years of age. Miley, like Mrs. Fisher, was a White-Caucasian female who was raised in a predominantly middle class neighborhood. Miley's student teaching experience was the final capstone project of her undergraduate teacher education program at a private university in a town nearby the Belleview school district where she majored in middle childhood education with specialty in Language Arts and Social Studies Education. This researcher served as her middle level social studies methods instructor in the Fall of 2011 and served as her student teaching supervisor at the time of this study. Miley was first introduced to DDM during her methods course and was required to compose one of her own and reflect on how she might use it in her own classroom. She first came to know Mrs. Fisher during this methods course since they were placed together during a field experience connected with the course. Mrs. Fisher first became aware of DDM through Miley and they decided to integrate DDM during this field experience. The relationship built between Miley and Mrs. Fischer led to a mutual agreement between Belleview and the university that Mrs. Fisher would be a suitable cooperating teacher for Miley's student teaching experience, the culminating curricular experience for teacher candidates' professional preparation.

This study was prompted by Miley sharing, with this researcher, that she would like to integrate DDM during her student teaching experience. Since this researcher also served as Miley's student teaching supervisor, I told her that I would like to study this phenomenon and she gladly obliged. Mrs. Fisher's course load consisted of both seventh and eighth grade social studies courses and Miley's placement consisted of a responsibility to work with both grade levels. Mrs. Fisher's classroom, the bounded setting (Stake, 1995) for this study, had student desks arranged linearly, facing the front of the classroom. A video projector hung from the ceiling and was connected to the *Smartboard*® that hung adjacent to a whiteboard. A few, but

not many, posters hung in the room that focused on various documents and principles embedded in United States political history such as the Declaration of Independence. Mrs. Fisher's course curriculum mirrored Belleview's state social studies standards and the class featured in this study was entitled "U.S. Studies from 1492 to 1877: Exploration through Reconstruction." At the time of this study, the course curriculum focused upon the Westward expansion of the United States in the nineteenth century, particularly the displacement of American Indians.

Data Collection and Methods

The data sources for this qualitative case study consisted of classroom observations, document retrieval, and interviews. Multiple data sources infused depth to the study as it allowed this researcher to check my conception of the reality of the phenomenon from one data source to another (Creswell, 2007; Stake, 1995). Upon receiving Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval in the Spring of 2013, data collection commenced soon afterward with classroom observations. These observations, five in all, occurred in late March and early April, 2013, and centered on Belleview's eighth grade Social Studies class scheduled from 1:33 until 2:18 p.m. (See Table 1). The timing of the study revolved around when Miley chose to integrate DDM since this researcher was primarily interested in the teachers' phenomenon with integrating DDM together during this clinical experience.

Table 1.

Classroom Observations

Date	3-26-13	3-27-13	3-28-13	4-2-13	4-4-13

During these observations, I sought to be an inconspicuous observer. While the teachers and students proceeded with their routine, I took notes on a laptop computer of what I saw and

heard during these observations with the intent of examining the whole phenomenon involved in the integration, with an emphasis on the teacher's perspective, their relationship with one another, as well as the students' response to the teachers (Lofland & Lofland, 1995). Occasionally, one of the teachers voluntarily approached me and shared commentary with me, these conversations were recorded and included in the data analysis.

Documents relevant to the study's research questions were collected. These documents consisted of any handouts that the teachers distributed to their students. I spontaneously collected these documents as the participants used them throughout this study. Each teacher was interviewed after the conclusion of the DDM project, Miley was interviewed on April 16, 2013 while Mrs. Fisher was interviewed on the following day, April 17, 2013. The interviews were semi-structured (see Appendix A for teacher interview questions) and audio-recorded by this researcher and later transcribed.

Analysis of data commenced simultaneously with data collection, with coding categories developing throughout the investigation (Erickson, 1986). All codes were developed under the auspices of the study's theoretical framework that enabled patterns to be revealed within the case (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Shank, 2002) resulting in a convergence of evidence from these multiple data sources (Yin, 2013). For instance, whenever the two teachers mentioned the purpose of the DDM project to the class, or informally to an individual student, I immediately coded that vignette under the category of "purpose." I also sought to compare and contrast the words and practices between the two teachers to reveal any congruity, or lack thereof, that they may possess in their thoughts and actions. To do this, I coded some vignettes or observations as belonging to Mrs. Fisher or Miley. Data were analyzed to shed light on the research questions.

The analytical procedures of this study consisted of analysis, synthesis, and illumination (Shank, 2002). Thematic analysis is based on finding emergent patterns and trends that cut across data (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Analysis required the dissection of data into manageable forms for the sake of interpretation and understanding (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999). I used the theoretical framework to pinpoint, for instance, the effect the cooperating teacher had on the student teacher. Synthesis required a reassembly of the data so that it "takes on a more anecdotal, more personalized, more interpretive character" (Shank, 2002, p. 138). Illumination consists of finding emergent patterns and trends that cut across data (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). These patterns and trends became the findings reported in this paper. For instance, a persistent trend in the data set was the parallelism between the teaching philosophies of the two participants in this study as well as the cooperating teacher's continual support of the student teacher. Since this trend was observed throughout the study, it became a finding for this study.

Inter-rater reliability of the coding process with an undergraduate education major who was disassociated from this study as well as member checking with the teacher was used as means to ensure validity of the study's results (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Stake, 1995). Inter-rater reliability involved the researcher initially coding the data, then following up with the undergraduate student coding the same data on their own. For instance, one code included the teachers' philosophy. Anytime the teachers shared their philosophy, whether it be through an interview or through classroom observation, the code was highlighted and separated from the data set. This researcher then compared the data sets from this code to see whether the teachers' philosophy was observed similarly. Member checking simply consisted of the researcher sharing with the teachers an initial draft of a manuscript of this study as a means to ensure that the

phenomenon was observed accurately. The feedback provided by the study's participants was minimal and consisted mostly of affirmation to the researcher that the phenomena in this study was observed accurately. A limitation to this study is that this researcher was also the student teacher's methods professor prior to her student teaching experience that this study investigates and also served as her university supervisor during this time. It became a priority for me to be as objective and inconspicuous as possible, while fully aware of the possibility that this case study may not be completely authentic due to my presence in the bounded setting.

What follows is a report of the results that emerged from this study that reveal the teachers' rationale for integrating DDM into her instruction and the knowledge, skills, and practices it took for this tandem to integrate DDM into Miley's student teaching experience.

Findings

This study yielded three key findings in answering the research questions. These findings indicate: (a) the student teacher proposed to employ DDM and the cooperating teacher offered support and encouragement; (b) the teachers saw DDM as a means to foster a personal connection with students as well as a personal encounter with the past; (c) preparation and proactivity enabled the student teacher to persevere in light of difficulties with integrating DDM. **The student teacher proposed to employ DDM and the cooperating teacher offered support and encouragement.**

During Miley's junior year field experience in Mrs. Fisher's classroom, Mrs. Fisher approached Miley "to do some sort of project rather than give a typical test." Miley shared with Mrs. Fisher that she had just learned about documentary making in her social studies methods course and thought it might be an appropriate fit. Mrs. Fisher thought that Miley's idea of a documentary project was "perfect for our Trail of Tears project." Mrs. Fisher shared with Miley

her goal for an upcoming unit on the American Indian experience in early nineteenth century

American History. This goal centered upon Mrs. Fisher's interest in positioning the students, as

Miley put it, "to understand what the American Indians went through." This development of

empathy (perspective recognition) toward the American Indians during the Trail of Tears was a

secondary purpose of this DDM project. Miley proceeded to share with Mrs. Fisher about how

DDM might fit well to accomplish this goal:

> I had just done a documentary project for my social studies
> methods course and I did mine on the Vietnam War but it still
> involved emotion and turmoil and what not – so I said that it
> involves moving making software – and so I brought in the
> documentary to let her see it.

Mrs. Fisher saw Miley's documentary production and agreed that it had the potential to fulfill

this educational purpose. "I believe it is an excellent format for students to think about and

convey the emotional impact of historical events," Mrs. Fisher asserted, "I thought a

documentary project was perfect for our Trail of Tears project, because I wanted students to

make real connections to the people affected and evaluate the impact it had on their lives." The

teachers proceeded to plan out together how they might fit the DDM project in the upcoming unit

and collaborated together in how they would integrate it in their classroom.

The two teachers tried out something unconventional, for both they and their students, when

they embarked on assigning the DDM project. Rather than assume students were capable of

composing a documentary on their own, the two teachers decided to assign the project

incrementally to ensure student understanding. In fact, this initial step of assigning the project

was where Mrs. Fisher worked the closest with Miley, often being with her in the classroom

assisting students who may need extra assistance, or enriching the directions that Miley gave to

the students. This approach to mentoring a student teacher is prototypical of the experimentation

type of student teaching experience where the cooperating teacher provided support as they

moved from technical supervision to authentic dialogue with their students (McNay & Graham, 2007).

During the first day of the DDM project, Miley directed her students to report to the computer lab down the hallway from Mrs. Fisher's classroom. When Miley assigned DDM on this first day, she distributed a handout to the class (see Appendix B) and briefly read it to the class. She proceeded to show the class a sample documentary that she found on the topic. "As you can see, this is basically a movie," Miley announced to the class, "I'm going to show you how to use the software that is called *Photostory*. It is on all of your computers in the lab. I'll show you how to use it" (Classroom Observations, March 26, 2013). Miley proceeded to show the class how to use the *Photostory 3®* software, clicked on the "New Project" button on the software and followed that by opening a blank *Microsoft Word®* document. She proceeded with the assignment of the project in these four incremental steps protracted throughout the duration of the allotment class time for the project: collecting images; narrative development; software integration and music; assessment and closure. The teachers were present with the students during this entire process as each student progressed at various levels during each stage.

Stage One: Collecting Images

As she first assigned the DDM project, Miley wrote the following on the white board at the front of the computer lab: "Photostory 3 -find images -copy website onto Word document" (Classroom Observation, March 26, 2013). The students were free at this time to work on their individual projects as both teachers walked around the room helping any students in need. "Now remember, you're looking for your images," Mrs. Fisher reminded the class as she perused around the room and noticed students off the given task, "Your goal today is to get a whole folder full of photos, nothing else" (Classroom Observation, March 26, 2013). This provided

instructional support for the students but also public affirmation and support for Miley's initial step in assigning this unconventional project. Miley's confidence, as a result, visibly grew. Later on, Miley reminded the entire class: "Remember, you want to get a variety of pictures" (Classroom Observation, March 26, 2013). Miley also reminded the students, as they collected images, to copy the website's Uniform Resource Locator (URL) where they found the images and paste them onto a Word Document.

Stage Two: Narrative Development

On the second day of the project, Miley distributed a slide sheet to the class (See Appendix C) that required the students to write down the text that they wanted to go along with each image. Miley assigned the DDM project with an intent to have each student write an explicit message on each image. The directions on this slide sheet state: "In your own words, write out the text that will accompany each of your photos and then order them on the sheet" (Classroom Observation, March 27, 2013). Students were busily at work on this second day of the project collecting their images and then writing down text on their slide sheet. The two teachers patrolled the class during this second step – offering little whole-class instruction but instead connecting with students on a one-on-one basis, answering any questions the students may have had or clearing up any problems they might have been encountering. The two teachers were connecting with the students on a more personal level, which was also one way the teachers were meeting their primary objective for the project. This second step also further revealed that Mrs. Fisher's relationship with Miley was one of authentic dialogue rather than technical supervision (McNay & Graham, 2007) as she treated Miley as an equal in power and authority by providing academic freedom to assist students in her own personal way.
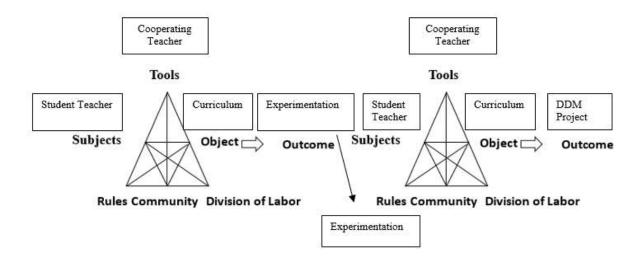
Stage Three: Software Integration and Music Addition

On the third day of the project, the teachers direct the students that they will be working closely with the *Photostory 3®* software. Mrs. Fisher gave the following announcement to the class to guide the students to this objective for the third day as well as what they should expect when working within the computer software:

> Ok, remember when we saw the sample a few other days? Well,
>
> you might have noticed that the text was a little hard to see – and
>
> that was because of the color used for the text. Please remember
>
> that – the color will look different on your software than it does
>
> when it plays. (Classroom Observation, March 26, 2013).

Mrs. Fisher proceeded to have a lower profile during this project after making this announcement. Miley was completely in charge of the project and was completely empowered to take the project lead as it was nearing conclusion.

Figure 2 shows how Mrs. Fisher (cooperating teacher) served as a human tool for Miley (student teacher) as a means to develop an outcome of experimentation during this student teaching experience, which became a rule that led Miley to create and sustain the DDM project.

Figure 2. The cooperating teacher is a human tool who supported the teacher to experiment with her pedagogy, which became a rule the student teacher following during the DDM project.

While Miley was left on her own during this third step, it was also a step where the students were required to employ other features of the digital technology beyond mere image collection and storyboarding. While the students navigated their way through the *Photostory 3®* software, they also were at the stage where they had to add music to their documentary. This additional component of this particular stage was to come after Belleview's brief Spring break. On the day immediately following the Spring break, Miley advised the students the following about their music options:

> Ok, you're going to eventually need to put music on your story.
> The software program has some music of its own – it could be
> classical music or something like that. However, on Tuesday
> you'll need to bring a song on a flash drive if you want to bring
> one of your own. (Classroom Observation, April 2, 2013)

The class had to wait to integrate music because it required Belleview's technology coordinator to work "on something with the computers to make sure that this can be done" (Miley, Classroom Observation, April 2, 2013). As Miley worked with some computers with students, she discovered that the technology coordinator had already altered the computers so that the music could be added. "Ok, please give me your attention," Miley announced to the entire class that they can now add music: "So, if you're ready – you can feel free to download music today. But if not, you can wait until tomorrow" (Miley, Classroom Observation, April 2, 2013).

Stage Four: Assessment and Closure

On the final day of the project, April 4, 2013, the students watched one another's documentaries as they were projected on the *Smartboard®* in front of the class. Miley was in a rush to complete this final stage of the documentary because of the time-consuming technological problems that occurred at the onset of the project. "This project took longer than I

thought and I need to get started on the next unit," Miley explained to me as I walked in the room at the start of the class period (Classroom Observation, April 4, 2013). As a result, students merely watched the documentaries during this stage without a discussion prompt.

The teachers saw DDM as a means to foster a personal connection with students as well as a personal encounter with the past.

A crucial component of this collaboration between Mrs. Fisher and Miley was their shared commitment to provide an opportunity for students to employ creativity. Mrs. Fisher believed that "when students are given the chance to be creative, they flourish." Miley echoed Mrs. Fisher's conviction to consider student interests when designing instruction: "I believe that each student is unique and educators need to take that into consideration before instruction. I think it is important to allow students' individuality to show." Miley shared in her interview that students found DDM attractive as opposed to other technology-based tools: "I don't like that we're in this rut of doing Powerpoints - I think that students find documentary making so much fun." Since DDM enables students to create something that interests them, namely movies, the teachers are more likely to garner a more meaningful and personalized response from the students as they created their documentaries.

While both teachers saw the potential of DDM as a means to enliven their classroom instruction, they saw it as an important tool that would enable students to have fun, be creative, and connect with one another in a more meaningful way than if they engaged in a more traditional teaching and learning tool. The ability to understand and share the feelings of others, permeated as a purpose throughout the two teachers' classroom. Put simply, the classroom was a caring environment. "I want students to know I care about them and want them to succeed in school in life," Mrs. Fisher shared in an interview. "Not only should educators look at the way

students learn, but also at the students as people. Many students have very different personal

lives, which affect their education," Miley maintained in her interview. This concern for

students was not hollow talk that poured from the teachers' mouths, classroom observations

supported that the teachers really did care for their students. Both teachers greeted students with

a smile, were patient with students whose attitude and behavior may have otherwise been

burdensome to a less caring leader, and their instruction allowed space for students to ask

questions with the teachers gladly clarifying any confusion students may have encountered. The

teachers saw the DDM project itself featuring a means for the teachers to better care for their

students. "It is very important to me to get to know my students, so I can best reach them,"

Miley emphasized in her interview, "this activity is one that allows me to get to know more

about my students from this project."   Miley went on to provide a specific example of how she

saw DDM privileging some students' talents or interests that she may not have known about

through other instructional tools and methods:

> There were some students who had not been as verbal in the past –
> they were fine students – but quiet – but some of those students
> created the best projects. This was a reminder that this activity is
> one that allows me to get to know more about my students from
> this project. Like one student wants to play the flute – and I never
> would have known this about her if it weren't for this project
> because they shared that with me as they sought to find music for
> their documentary.

Miley viewed the DDM project to be successful chiefly because the activity was personal for her

students and, as a result, she got to know more about them.

While the teacher viewed DDM as a means to garner a personal connection between them

and their students, DDM actually served a dual purpose for these teachers. The teachers, as we

saw in the first finding, also employed DDM as a means for the students to better know the

people from the past, in this particular case the American Indians forced to travel on the Trail of Tears.
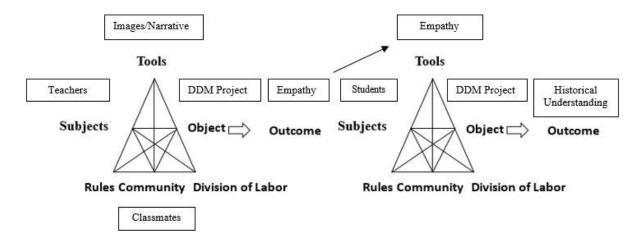

Figure 3. Teachers assign the DDM project with the purpose that the images they use and the narrative they compose leads to empathy for the victims of the Trail of Tears, which will be a cultural tool that leads to students' historical understanding of the event.

Figure 3 shows how the teachers sought to have students construct a story using images and narrative during their DDM project. This particular action led to an outcome of empathy amongst the community of students who used this empathy toward victims of the Trail of Tears as a means to garner historical understanding of the particular event.

While first assigning the project to the class, Miley stated: "With this, I want you to experience what the Native Americans went through" (Classroom Observation, March 26, 2013). Mrs. Fisher liked the possibilities of empathetic development that existed with DDM and was a significant reason why both teachers decided to try out DDM: "I thought a documentary project was perfect for our Trail of Tears project", Mrs. Fisher shared in her interview, "because I wanted students to make real connections to the people affected and evaluate the impact it had on their lives." According to Miley, Mrs. Fisher shared with her, as the two considered lesson development that led to the initial DDM Project in their field experience prior to student teaching, that she desired "the students to understand what the American Indians went through."

As shown in the first finding, Miley shared with Mrs. Fisher her own experiences with DDM in her social studies methods course, which at that time was concurrent with the field experience. This initial experience with DDM for Miley involved "emotion and turmoil" as she composed a documentary project on the Vietnam War, and she speculated that DDM was appropriate for a student of the Trail of Tears because it too involved "emotion and turmoil." Mrs. Fisher agreed with Miley at the onset of the DDM project as well as with its aftermath in the student teaching experience: "I believe it is an excellent format for students to think about and convey the emotional impact of historical events."

Preparation and proactivity enabled the student teacher to persevere in light of difficulties with integrating DDM.

Miley's integration of the DDM project did not proceed without obstacles throughout the project's various stages. In fact, by the fourth day of the project, Miley became peppered with so many challenges that a casual observer might understand it if she discontinued the project altogether. First, numerous emergent scheduling challenges threatened the curricular space that Miley needed for the DDM project to succeed. An upcoming staff development day signaled that Belleview would be on a two-hour delay schedule, thus limiting class time on the project before its completion. School was cancelled just before the project began because of a snow storm that hit the Belleview community, which resulted in a need for Miley to change her lesson plans around to ensure that the project began on time. One class day in the midst of the DDM project was designated by the school as an "incentive day" where students throughout the Belleview middle school were rewarded for positive behavior. A field trip for students enrolled in band was scheduled on yet another day, which meant those students would be absent at the project's closure. Second, Mrs. Fisher's mother became severely ill during this project. Mrs.

Fisher was her mother's caretaker and her attendance would be sporadic throughout the duration of the project. Miley, in essence, was forced to lead the project on her own since the substitute teachers were unable to assist with the project due to their unfamiliarity with it and their short stay as the supervisor of the class. Finally, on the third day of the project, a computer virus infected one of Belleview's computer labs leading to the incapacitation of the project's central tools. However, Mrs. Fisher mentored Miley in such a way to assure that she was supported and had the confidence to navigate through these challenges.

The primary assurance that Mrs. Fisher provided was the authentic dialogue that each had over principles of constructivist teaching. Both teachers were committed to ensuring that students were positioned to problem solve and develop knowledge on their own through the DDM project. Mrs. Fisher also closely supported Miley during the initial steps of the DDM project and eventually, by the project's third day, let Miley free to take the entire class lead. Mrs. Fisher's confidence in Miley and her willingness to put her in the complete lead of the project was put to the test near the very end of the project as she encountered what some teachers might ascertain to be a technological nightmare for them: a complete breakdown of the school's computer infrastructure.

"There was a computer virus that hit the school," Miley warned me as I entered the classroom, "and we're trying to work through this" (Classroom Observation, March 28, 2013). Miley was on her own on this day, with only a substitute teacher in place of Mrs. Fisher who had to miss school to take care of her mother. Belleview school district, like many public schools in the rural Midwest, house their computer technology in computer labs. There were two computer labs available to the teachers during this project. At Belleview, these computer labs represent the exclusive locations in the school building where students have access to computers. Mrs.

Fisher's class had only one computer, intended solely for teacher use. In sum, this virus in the computer lab was a significant threat to the success of the project. Miley proactively handled the technological adversity by reserving the extra computer lab in advance. Mrs. Fisher, who returned on the day following the computer virus attack, praised Miley's composure and foresight during this trial: "She had done a wonderful job with this, she reserved both computer labs just in case this problem arose again" (Classroom observation, March 28, 2013). The CHAT diagram displayed in Figure 4 depict Miley's activity at the particular moment of adversity.
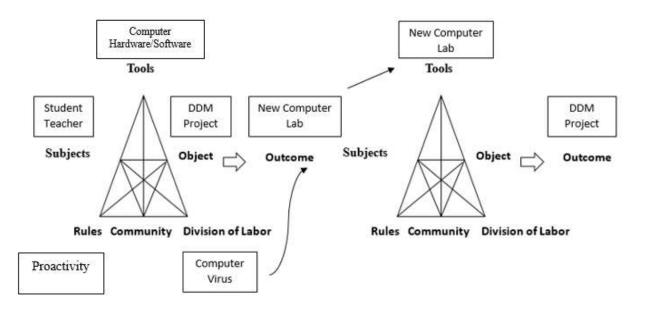

Figure 4. Student teacher's use of proactivity as a rule leads the student teacher to handle the tension from a computer virus to find a new computer lab that ensures the continuation of the documentary project.

The left triangle in Figure 4 depicts the student teacher, Miley, employing a rule of proactivity when the computer virus became a tension during the latter stage of the DDM project. This resulted in an outcome of a new computer, which she used as a material tool (see right triangle of Figure 4) for the remainder of the project. Miley could have done numerous other

things with this tension such as halting the project until the virus was addressed by Belleview's technology coordinator, thus losing precious class time (this might have worked if she transitioned to another lesson and then segued back to the DDM project), or even cancel the DDM project altogether because of this problem that arose within it. Of course, Miley did not cancel the project. Instead she reserved another computer lab so the students could use computers unaffected by the virus. Miley remained committed to her DDM project: "I'm a big fan of this idea," Miley said about DDM at the conclusion of the project, "I think that students find documentary making so much fun." Miley's enthusiasm was supported by Mrs. Fisher: "I will definitely continue to use documentary making in my 8th grade U.S. History class," Mrs. Fisher proclaimed in an interview, "and will consider including a documentary project in my 7th grade World History class as well."

The teachers' positive attitude with DDM despite the adversity associated with this particular project stemmed from many areas. First, the teachers experienced some success with their initial project the previous year. "We did it last year with great success and the students really liked it," Miley shared in an interview. The teachers also saw DDM as being compatible with their personal teaching philosophy that students should be provided freedom by their teacher where they can explore the subject matter and construct their own knowledge and understanding of it. "I want to help them [students] make their own discoveries and connections that make their learning meaningful," Mrs. Fisher explained in her interview. Miley concurred with her cooperative teacher: "I think it is important to allow students' individuality to show. Students deserve some choices in learning because no two students learn exactly the same way." The teachers possessed a similar pedagogical orientation in that they foresaw the potential DDM had with positioning the students to problem solve and create on their own. "I enjoyed seeing

students organize their ideas and present them in a creative way," Mrs. Fisher revealed in her interview, "they took ownership of and pride in their work." "I'm a big fan of this idea," Miley shared when discussing DDM in her interview, "I don't like that we're in this rut of doing Powerpoints - I think that students find documentary making so much fun." The teachers also similarly envisioned DDM as a means for students to emotionally connect with the subject matter under study. "I believe it is an excellent format for students to think about and convey the emotional impact of historical events," said Mrs. Fisher. Miley concurred with her cooperating teacher: "I think it would be a great way to show the emotion of a particular topic – or for students to share a story."

The teachers' satisfaction with their DDM project drew from their respective pedagogical philosophies which enabled them to persevere through adversity rather than perceive the adversity as an obstacle that would deter them from integrating DDM in the future. "It [DDM] reinforced my belief that when students are given the chance to be creative, they flourish," Mrs. Fisher affirmed, "I liked the fact that this project gave students the opportunity to summarize, evaluate, draw conclusions, design and create." "I was really pleased – especially with the students who struggle on tests – did very well on this project," Miley concluded, "the students were very proud of their projects and shared them with one another."

Discussion

Miley James was an ambitious teacher (Grant & Gradwell, 2010) who yearned to engage her students in the development of their own knowledge. This bent toward constructivism made Miley more willing and committed to experiment with digital technologies such as DDM (Molebash, 2004; Wenglinsky, 2005; Swan, Hofer, and Swan, 2011) than a novice teacher who may not have been as oriented toward constructivism. Miley was clearly involved in a student

teaching experience that fostered her desire to experiment with teaching strategies, such as DDM, that had the potential to elicit a constructivist classroom. Miley thought that DDM, in particular, had the potential for students to construct their own historical understanding.

Miley's student teaching placement with Mrs. Fisher proved to complement Miley's desire for ambitious teaching. Mrs. Fisher, herself an ambitious teacher with constructivist tendencies, fostered an experimentation clinical experience (Valencia, Martin, Place, & Grossman, 2009) where Miley could take risks and be engaged in authentic pedagogical dialogue with her cooperating teacher (McNay & Graham, 2007) this helped to instill a sense of entrepreneurship in how Miley designed lessons as well as following through with completing them. Miley's student teaching experience may have gone very differently if she was placed with a cooperating teaching unwilling to allow for risk-taking and who did not seek to engage students in historical inquiry because of an overarching concern with covering content and controlling the class (Barton & Levstik, 2003). For one, she might not have even integrated DDM for fear that it might break students away from traditional history teaching and learning that involved rote memorization and the learning of isolated names, places, and dates. Second, Miley's encounter with technological adversity might have led her to restrict the project assignment or discouraged her from assigning DDM in the future. Instead, Miley persevered with the DDM project and was optimistic with using it in the future to engage her students in a student-centered approach to learn history. In sum, perseverance and proactivity are necessary traits for teachers to have if they seek to be ambitious. In this study's particular case, Mrs. Fisher's encouragement and support of Miley's risk taking with DDM was undoubtedly helpful for Miley as she navigated through difficulty.

It cannot be said for certain that Miley behavior as an ambitious teacher, equipped with a tool of entrepreneurship, within her professional parameters, was exclusively dependent upon her mentorship with Mrs. Fisher. Miley's commitment and perseverance with the DDM project likely came from three forces: Miley's own resolve; Mrs. Fisher's encouragement and support; and, finally, being educated in a teacher preparation program that encouraged such risk taking toward constructivism. However, this study focused solely upon Miley's relationship with her cooperating teacher. The combination of these three forces yield teacher candidates who are well on their way to being ambitious teachers during their career. The level of significance that Mrs. Fisher's support played as it related to Miley's willingness to take risks can only be subjected to speculation. However, Mrs. Fisher was both morally and physically supportive of Miley's risk-taking as a teacher. So, this study did reveal that whatever commitment to ambitious teaching had prior to her student teaching was, in fact, reinforced through her relationship with Mrs. Fisher. Future research, therefore, should build on this particular study by examining multiple student teachers who integrate DDM, or other unconventional teaching tools and strategies, to cross examine the relationship each of the student teachers have with their cooperating teacher. It would also be important to examine the role that a student teacher's own personal resolve, as well as the role of the teacher preparatory program, plays in their disposition with assigning and carrying out projects. Such investigations would enable a cross-case analysis that may yield interesting results. Little is currently known about the influence that a cooperating teacher may have with student teachers' integration of DDM. For instance, more ethnographic investigation of the relationship between a student teacher and their cooperating teachers may unearth findings that help teacher educators and teacher preparatory programs to be more intentional with student teachers' placement in clinical experiences. This research will

help to clarify exactly how important it was for teachers like Miley to have a cooperating

teacher, similar to Mrs. Fisher, who yearns to foster clinical entrepreneurship amongst the

upcoming generation of teachers.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Questions

Questions #1-4 only apply to Mrs. Fisher:

1) What has this experience of integrating documentary making been like for you? (Mrs. Fisher only)

2) What was your initial response to Miley's idea of a documentary project?

3) What are the lessons, both things you like and things you didn't like, that you learned from teaching this project?

4) What future plans do you have regarding including documentary making into your class?

Questions #5-8 apply to both Mrs. Fisher AND Miley.

5) What is your philosophy of teaching?

6) What/Who have been primary influences upon you as an educator?

7) What goals do you have in mind for your career?

8) Anything else?

APPENDIX B

Trail of Tears Desktop Documentary Project

Create a desktop documentary about the U.S. policy toward Native Americans in the 1830s. Your documentary will use images, text, and music to present the following information:

- Describe the Indian Removal Act
- Describe the Cherokee response to the Indian Removal Act and the Supreme Court decision
- Describe the Trail of Tears
- Describe the Seminole resistance and its results
- Describe the impact of all of the above on Native Americans and the United States

Your documentary must have the following components:
- Title slide with creative title, your name, class period and date
- A **minimum** of ten slides presenting the above information with images and text (5 topics – 2 slides per topic)
- All descriptions must be in your own words
- A credit slide at the end of your presentation listing all sources used
- Appropriate music

The project is worth 100 points and will be graded on the following criteria:
- Title slide – 10 points
- Content slides using images and text – 50 points
- Sources slide – 10 points
- Spelling and grammar – 10 points
- Creative presentation of information, using own words – 10 points
- Appropriate music – 10 points

APPENDIX C

Slide Sheet

In your own words, write out the text that will accompany each of your photos and then order them on the sheet

_____
_____
_____

_____
_____
_____