A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY OF DEVELOPING TEACHER IDENTITY AMONG AMERICAN INDIAN SECONDARY TEACHERS FROM THE UTE TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAM

by

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ABSTRACT

A Qualitative Case Study of Developing Teacher Identity

Among American Indian Secondary Teachers

From the Ute Teacher Training Program

by

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The purpose of this foundational study was to explore the factors that contributed to developing teacher identity among new American Indian teachers. Multifaceted research into the history of American Indian education, the design of American Indian teacher training programs, and the beliefs and experiences of four American Indian secondary teachers gave this study a richly detailed context.

Three overarching patterns emerged during the process of analyzing the data: (a) solidarity and independence, (b) habit and change, and (c) tradition and invention. From these patterns, six factors were identified as contributing to developing teacher identity. School-based experiences that affected developing teacher identity included cohort-based peer support, preparation for content area expertise, and teachers as role models. Personal, home, and community beliefs that affected developing teacher identity were as

follows: giving back to American Indian communities, serving American Indian students, and becoming empowered as American Indian teachers.

Participants in this study represented various tribe affiliations but were all registered students in the Ute Teacher Training Program from 2002 to 2005. The goal of this program, administrated by the Ute Tribe, was to mentor, train, and certify American Indian secondary teachers through an ongoing university education program offered at a rural location close to the Ute reservation. Recommendations in the final chapter of this qualitative case study may provide useful information for the design and implementation of future American Indian teacher education programs.

(163 pages)

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The concept of teacher identity is a crucial factor in teacher education and retention. Developing an identity as a teacher is not simply a natural process of professional maturation but rather "an important part of securing teachers' commitment to their work and adherence to professional norms of practice" (Hammerness et al., 2005, p. 383). In other words, teachers who develop a core sense of professional purpose may become more effective and more reliable teachers, as Hammerness and colleagues observed:

> The identities teachers develop shape their dispositions, where they place their effort, whether and how they seek out professional development opportunities, and what obligations they see as intrinsic to their role. (p. 384)

Another way to look at teacher identity is to examine what Palmer (1998) called "the teacher within." Palmer advocated peeling away layers of expectations in a conscious process of personal and professional self-discovery:

> The teacher within is not the voice of conscience but of identity and integrity. It speaks not of what ought to be but of what is real for us, of what is true…. If there is no such reality in our lives, centuries of Western discourse about the aims of education become so much lip-flapping…. We can speak to the teacher within our students only when we are on speaking terms with the teacher within ourselves. (p. 31)

A teacher identity defies precise definition because it is continually under construction, especially for new teachers (Berci, 2007). Participants in teacher education programs bring with them their own preconceptions about teaching based on years of observation as elementary and high school students and these beliefs often come under

siege in their first year as full time teachers (Hammerness et al., 2005; Kardos & Johnson, 2007). New teachers experience a process of professional identity development that involves reconciling at least three competing images: the pre-program self-image as teacher, the "best practices" of highly qualified teaching that preservice teachers study and observe, and the evolving roles of full-time teaching (Berci; Cook-Sather, 2006). Evidence suggests that first, without a strong but flexible professional identity, new teachers are not likely to persist in the teaching profession (Feinman-Nemser, 2001). Second, a better understanding of the professional culture that incubates new teachers and shapes their teacher identities may help improve the retention of new teachers (Kardos & Johnson).

The beliefs and experiences that affect developing teacher identity among American Indian teachers are of particular concern because of increased interest in recruiting and training American Indian teachers. Following landmark federal legislation in the 1970s, a paradigm shift from termination to self-determination of American Indian tribes meant that much of the guidance for American Indian education moved from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to the states and individual tribes (DeJong, 1993; Deyhle & Swisher, 1997; Prucha, 2000). This emphasis on situating American Indian education in public and Indian-controlled schools—from Head Start programs to tribal colleges—has focused more interest on certifying American Indian teachers. However, despite much general interest in American Indian education in the last few decades, students still experience relatively few American Indian teachers (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002).

Nationwide, requirements for diversity and multiculturalism courses in teacher

preparation programs have begun to increase awareness of American Indian culture, learning styles, and language (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2008). In some states, teachers must take Native heritage classes specific to the state's tribal populations in order to obtain or renew their state teaching certification (Juneau, 2001). This is a start, but in addition to training non-Indian teachers beyond a superficial knowledge of American Indian culture and tradition, it is also essential to recruit more American Indian teachers to teach American Indian populations in reservation and off-reservation schools (U.S. Department of Education, 1992). Recent research has targeted the need to recruit and train American Indian educators "not only to increase the number of Native teachers in the schools, but also to bring historically silenced perspectives into the discourse in teacher education" (Belgarde, Mitchell, & Arquero, 2002, p. 52).

The pipeline of potential American Indian teachers is already in existence because American Indian participation in higher education shows encouraging trends. American Indian and Alaskan Native (AI/AN) enrollment accounts for only about 1% of total enrollment in U.S. higher education, but this figure is close to parity, or approximately the same proportion of American Indians to the total U.S. population as American Indian college students to the total college population (Ortiz & Heavyrunner, 2003). Although parity is not necessarily a goal, it is a useful benchmark despite evidence that ethnic fraud (obtaining scholarships and other academic benefits by fraudulently self-identifying Indian heritage) may have artificially increased total enrollment numbers (Pewewardy & Frey, 2004; Snipp, 2002).

Nevertheless, the lack of diversity among public educators persists. Nationwide

over 40% of students but only 13% of teachers in public schools are racially or ethnically diverse (Education Commission of the States, 2003). Most teacher training programs continue to produce predominantly White teachers (National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004), and teachers from AI/AN tribes represent only a small fraction of the minority teachers currently employed (Gay, Dingus, & Jackson, 2003). To remedy this situation, federal and private grants for professional development have funded the establishment of American Indian teacher education programs and increased American Indian participation in existing programs (Beaulieu, Figueira, & Viri, 2005; Education Commission of the States).

Statement of the Problem

There has been very little critical exploration into the training and professional experiences of American Indian secondary teachers. This foundational case study adds information to the ongoing movement to place more American Indian educators in reservation and off-reservation school classrooms by exploring what factors affect the developing teacher identity of new American Indian secondary teachers. At present, no other studies have been found which focus on professional teacher identity formation among American Indian populations.

Teacher training deliberately reinforces the development of particular teaching identities (Hammerness et al., 2005), and some evidence indicates that teacher education programs specifically designed for American Indian students reinforce identities not generally shared by non-Indian educators. For example, in addition to becoming content-

area experts and role models, American Indian teachers are also expected to function as change agents to "stop the leftover undercurrents of assimilation" (Writer, 2001, p. 45), as community bridges to encourage connectivity between the school curriculum and American Indian communities (Pavel, Larrimore, & van Alstine, 2003), and as cultural brokers to "help students navigate their school environment and culture" (Education Commission of the States, 2003, p. 4). Evidence from this qualitative case study indicates that in some schools**,** American Indian teachers must also serve as cultural interpreters for their non-Indian peers on the faculty.

Previous studies of American Indian educators have focused primarily on the experiences of elementary (grades K-6) rather than secondary teachers (grades 7-12). An example is the most comprehensive study of American Indian preservice and new teachers to date: the Native Educators Research Project (NERP). It was a 5-year study of Native teacher education programs that included 242 participants (American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians) enrolled in a total of 27 professional development programs (Beaulieu et al., 2005; Figueira & Trujillo, 2003). The study was specific to elementary education programs and the research focus was on attitudes toward and approaches to various culturally relevant curricula. Like the NERP study, previous studies of American Indian teacher preparation programs and teachers have treated the issue of developing teacher identity as peripheral to other research concerns.

Purpose for the Study

A general purpose for this qualitative case study was to explore what factors

affect the development of professional teacher identity among new American Indian secondary teachers. Because developing teacher identity has been shown to be an important element of teacher education programs (Hammerness et al., 2005) and to affect both persistence and retention rates of new teachers in the workplace (Feinman-Nemser, 2001; Kardos & Johnson, 2007), this exploration of teacher identity may help to redesign future teacher education programs for American Indian students. The recent graduation of a cohort of American Indian secondary teachers from the Ute Teacher Training Program (UTTP) provided the opportunity to explore experiences and beliefs which were factors in developing teacher identity among a small group of new secondary teachers as they pursued teaching careers in various reservation schools.

A secondary purpose for this study was to follow the progress of UTTP graduates as they entered the workforce. Members of the Ute Tribe Education Committee were not aware of any studies that were completed after their previous two teacher education programs, one in the 1970s and another in the 1980s, during which the Ute Tribe partnered with two other universities. Some of those graduates were hired to teach in elementary schools near the reservation, but because of the gaps between each cohort there was little transfer of information from program to program. In 2005, after the completion of the UTTP grant, a consulting firm compiled a quantitative program evaluation but there was no grant-mandated plan to follow the progress of former UTTP participants after teacher certification. This foundational study offered a way for the Ute Tribe Education Committee to track how their UTTP graduates fared as full-time teachers, and to evaluate how to design the next teacher training program. Data from this

study may also be useful for expanding educational opportunities on the Ute reservation. The Ute tribe resolved in 2002 to begin the process of establishing a tribal college (Northern Ute Nation, 2002). One potentially important program to offer in a new tribal college would be teacher certification because public and charter schools near the Ute reservation have problems recruiting and retaining teachers (Hetzel, personal communication, 2007).

A broader purpose for completing the study was to contribute information for the development of other American Indian teacher education programs. There is much to be learned from educational partnerships like the UTTP, which functioned as part of a Utah university's regular teacher education program. The Ute tribe was responsible for UTTP administration and overall mentoring of participants, and faculty members from the university taught education and content-area courses leading to state secondary certification. This qualitative case study identifies factors from the program that were instrumental in developing a professional teacher identity, and these factors may be transferable to other American Indian teacher training programs.

Terminology

One of the conundrums of research with American Indian populations is the nomenclature. Federal documents and governing bodies have historically used the term "Indian" to refer collectively to all indigenous people (e.g., the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Department of Indian Education). The word "Indian," however, is freighted with negative stereotypes despite its proud heritage in American history, and the term is arguably a

misnomer since Columbus thought the native Caribes were from India; thus, the original word *indios* (Reyhner, 2002).

A terminology shift occurred in the 1990s, influenced in part by *The Final Report of the Indian Nations at Risk Task Force* (U.S. Department of Education, 1991). The report was written with significant input from American Indian task force members and used the term "Native" in addition to the formal phrase "American Indian and Alaska Native." The latter term was selected by the U.S. Census Bureau for the 2000 Census (Snipp, 2002), and it was also chosen for reports from the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Educational Statistics (Freeman & Fox, 2005). Educational researchers working with American Indian tribes in the last decade have also begun to use the terms "Native American" or "Native" (Beaulieu et al., 2005; Gere, 2005; Klug & Whitfield, 2003), partially as a result of strong opposition to the use of more conventional terminology by American Indian writers and researchers within the academy (Lomawaima, 2000; Swisher, 1998; Wilson, 2004).

The term "American Indian" was chosen for this study after meeting with representatives from the Ute Tribe and discussing possible alternatives, including "Native American," "Native," and "Indigenous." The Ute Tribe Education Director and the UTTP grant coordinator both preferred the term "American Indian" for this study. To them it is the most acceptable terminology, and this was an important concern. In addition, the participants in this study considered "American Indian" as well as "Native American" accurate formal descriptors, and used both terms during the interviews. When terminology other than "American Indian" is used in this case study, it is to preserve the consistency of quotes from a particular author or case study participant.

A second terminology explanation is necessary to distinguish between the words "identity" and "role." The etymology of "identity" is rooted in sameness, from the Latin *identidem*, a contraction of *idem et idem,* or literally "same and same." Traditionally, then, an identity is an essential character—something that does not change in different situations—whereas a role is assumed or assigned and is therefore more superficial than an identity. By the traditional definition, a person could take on multiple roles but his or her core identity would remain fixed. However, through the postmodern and poststructural lens, identity is process-oriented: "While role is often imposed, [teacher] identity is individually constructed, through negotiations with self and others, and is never stable or fixed" (Berci, 2007, p. 65). This qualitative case study explored the factors that affected developing teacher identity among new American Indian secondary teachers as their professional identities were under construction.

A final explanation of terminology involves the process by which students become certified teachers. "Teacher training," "teacher preparation," and "teacher education" are used interchangeably in this study. The term "training" derives from vocational programs (as opposed to career-oriented education) historically funded by the federal government for American Indians (DeJong, 1993); therefore, this phrase may carry negative connotations. Although "teacher training" is rarely used in academia, it is the name of the program (Ute Teacher Training Program) on which this research was based, and it is a term still used in federal grants. "Teacher preparation" and "teacher education" are more commonly used at colleges and universities for programs designed to certify teachers.

Setting for the Study

This qualitative case study was set in the UTTP, and focuses on four of the five participants. The UTTP was created in 2002 as one of eight educational partnerships across the western United States funded by professional development grants under Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Northern Ute Nation, 2002). Other Title VII professional development grant recipients in 2002 included colleges and universities in Arizona, Colorado, Illinois, Montana, Oklahoma, Utah, and Washington. Utah was the only state to receive two grants, one through Utah State University and one through University of Utah (Guzman, personal communication, 2006). Following state teacher certification, all participants of the grant-funded programs were required to teach for at least 2 years in schools serving a significant population of American Indian students.

The original goal of the UTTP was to recruit American Indians who were considering a teaching career but who had only completed an Associates degree or equivalent. The Ute Tribe Education Director and a newly hired UTTP grant administrator targeted recruitment efforts towards elementary and secondary teachers' aides employed in the two school districts within Ute reservation boundaries (Guzman, personal communication, 2006). Each participant could receive a generous monthly stipend with the understanding that no UTTP participant would work a paid job more than 20 hours per week for the duration of the program. Grant funding allowed UTTP participants to focus on a full-time educational program without having to worry about a full-time job income to finance it.

The rationale seemed like a win-win situation: American Indian students would benefit by streamlining their progress towards a college degree, local school districts would benefit by diversifying their workforce, and secondary students would benefit by experiencing more American Indian teachers in their classrooms. However, the required number of funded slots available for the UTTP could not be filled by Utah residents so the Ute Tribe advertised elsewhere for applicants. Additional students were funded through the UTTP grant at off-site locations, primarily at colleges and universities outside of Utah.

Academic courses for the five UTTP students in northeastern Utah were delivered by the faculty at a Utah university from a branch campus location. The university provided specialized teacher education courses as part of a three-semester, 36-credit-hour Secondary Teacher Education Program, which included five other students in addition to the five cohort members of the UTTP. In other words, the UTTP was a program-within-a-program. UTTP students were encouraged to participate in additional structured mentoring activities implemented by their grant administrator throughout the school year, including individual academic and job counseling, family potluck dinners, and field trips to several annual conferences sponsored by the National Indian Education Association.

Theoretical Framework

The concept of teacher identity is part of a larger research focus on social and professional identity. The theoretical framework for this qualitative case study is based partly on the work of Brown and Duguid (2002), who advance Bruner's (1977)

distinction between *learning about* and *learning to be*. Bruner's point is that *learning to be* requires more than knowing information; it requires the ability to engage in a practice. Brown and Duguid's study of corporate communities of practice examined the traditional concept of apprentice and mentor, and found that peer-to-peer networking was a key component in the process of evolving from *learning about* to *learning to be*:

> Despite the metaphor of apprenticeship, the relationships involved in enculturation are not simply ones of novice and expert. Putting learners in contact with "the best in the field" has definite value. Peers turn out to be, however, an equally important resource. (p. 221)

This concept of peer mentoring is related to expert/novice research by Lave and Wenger (1993), who used the phrase "legitimate peripheral participation," referring to the experiences of novices observing experts. The key concept here is that workplace learning takes place within a community of practice (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). As Brown and Duguid (2002) explained:

> In learning to be, in becoming a member of a community of practice, an individual is developing a social identity. In turn, the identity under development shapes what the person comes to know, how he or she assimilates knowledge and information. So, even when people are *learning about*, in Bruner's terms, the identity they are developing determines what they pay attention to and what they learn. What people learn about, then, is always refracted through who they are and what they are learning to be. (p. 138)

The relationship between the lens of teacher identity (both a social and a professional identity) and the process of *learning to be* is at the core of this qualitative case study.

Much attention has been paid to examining school learning as a form of apprenticeship where students must develop expertise in order to become experts. Although recent studies have documented the difficulty of translating findings from expert/novice research into K-12 student learning (Alexander, 2003; Hatano & Oura,

2003), studying new teachers through the lens of expert/novice research can provide a way to examine the process of *learning to be*: "Progressive problem solving characterizes not only people on their way to becoming experts, but it also characterizes experts when they are working at the edge of their competence" (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1996, p. 266). Progressive problem solving is very much the process of developing teacher identity. Hammerness and colleagues (2005) noted that new teachers develop their professional identity along a continuum; they must make incremental changes in both observation and enactment, seeing and doing things differently from when they were students observing teachers, and differently from when they were student teachers.

The model of domain learning (MDL) is another way to look at expert/novice research within the field of education (Alexander, 2003). Although MDL focuses on learning in academic domains, this is precisely the area of expertise that is emphasized in secondary teacher education. Alexander avoided the false dichotomy between experts and novices in developing MDL, and instead identified three stages of expertise development: acclimation, competence, and proficiency/expertise. Although these stages were not used as benchmarks in this qualitative case study, MDL highlights changes which occur along the journey to expertise and in this way the model provides a convenient framework for examining how developing teacher identity plays into the process of *learning to be.*

Delimitations and Limitations

This qualitative case study was delimited by participant selection, by the researcher's previous experience with participants, and by the timing of primary research.

First, local grant recipients from the UTTP were purposefully selected for this the study because they were all members of a cohort: they lived close enough to a university campus to attend classes and participate in specific mentoring activities together. Second, the researcher had prior contact with UTTP participants and administrators; the experience of working with the Ute tribe was crucial in establishing and maintaining a trust basis for this research. A final delimitation was that the researcher chose the window of opportunity for primary data gathering. Initial interviews took place at the end of the first year of teaching for the participants in order to assure a rich and varied recollection of experiences, both in the UTTP and in their new classrooms. Follow-up interviews took place at the end of the second year of teaching, after participants completed the requirements of the UTTP grant.

This study was limited in two ways. The first limitation was that additional American Indian students funded through the UTTP grant at teacher education programs housed on other university campuses were not part of this qualitative case study. The off-site students were able to take advantage of the same stipends and academic scholarships, and some of the same national conferences. However, they did not share school-based experiences with the four cohort members of this study during the three-year grant cycle. The researcher targeted only those UTTP participants who took secondary teacher education courses and completed their student teaching experiences in northeastern Utah.

A second limitation was that after completing the UTTP not all the participants followed the same path; one did not remain in the local area for the first 2 years of teaching, and one did not complete the required 2 years of classroom teaching within the

time period covered in this study. However, the researcher determined that both participants should remain in the study because as members of the original UTTP cohort, their stories help validate the experiences and beliefs which emerged as key factors in the study.

Organization of the Study

This qualitative case study will continue with a literature review in Chapter II, which focuses on the legislative background of American Indian Education, on the gradual shift to encourage American Indian Teacher Education, and on research literature regarding professional teacher identity. Chapter III presents the research questions and describes in depth the qualitative research methodology used in this dissertation, including an explanation of rhetorical structure, sample selection, data collection, and data analysis. Chapter IV provides extensive narrative information from the four participants, primarily in their own words. This is the longest chapter and in many ways it is the heart of the case study. Chapter V synthesizes that data with current research literature and the central research question: "What school-based experiences and what personal, family, and community beliefs affect the development of professional teacher identity?" This chapter includes an illustration of the research outcomes. The study concludes in Chapter VI with a summary of chapter content, a discussion of outcomes, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter II presents an overview of the issues that inform this qualitative case study. The first part of the literature review gives a brief history of American Indian education. The second section establishes the significance of American Indian teacher education as a historically important phenomenon. The third section explores research on identity development in preservice and professional teachers, and how a teacher identity changes as preservice teachers move from student teaching to the first year of full-time teaching in the classroom.

American Indian Education

This section briefly reviews the history of American Indian education. It is important to note here that there is a long and proud tradition of education within every tribe, and that the issues discussed in this chapter relate only to American Indian education as legislated and funded by federal and state governments. Providing educational opportunities is part of the government's trust responsibility to American Indian tribes under the principles of tribal sovereignty. In over 400 treaties between 1778 and 1871, American Indians gave up land to the federal government in return for promises of goods and services, including the provision of education (Pavel, 1999). The principles of trust responsibility are grounded in the government-to-government agreements between sovereign Indian nations and the United States (personal communication, Cuch, February 13, 2004).

American Indian education has endured almost 200 years of varying quality, with more poor quality than good under this trust responsibility. DeJong (1993) commented, "The history of education among American Indians in many respects constitutes miseducation" (p. 263). Lomawaima (1999) referred to the "unnatural history" of Indian education which involved not just nineteenth and twentieth century Americans, but early colonizers of America: Spain, England, and France. These nations propagated ideas and practices which "served specific agendas of the colonizing nations" and which "continue to undergird contemporary stereotypes about American Indians" (p. 3). The following colonial assumptions had a direct influence on how education was envisioned and delivered to American Indian students:

> 1) Native Americans were savages who had to be civilized, 2) Civilization required Christianization, 3) Native communities should be politically and legally subordinate to the nation state, even if it means relocating them, and 4) Specific pedagogical methods were needed to overcome deficits in mental, moral, and physical characteristics. (pp. 19-20)

The U.S. government's original rationale in allocating federal tax dollars for American Indian schools—assimilation through education—grew out of these assumptions.

As early as 1819 and continuing through the 1870s, the federal government gave Christian missionaries "civilization funds" to use education among American Indian tribes as a tool for assimilation (Juneau, 2001, p. 49). Even before that, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Christianity was seen as a critical component of Indian education. Colleges such as Harvard, Dartmouth, and William and Mary were established partly to civilize American Indian boys. Dartmouth's 1769 charter included the goal of teaching "Indian boys to read and write…and especially to teach them thoroughly the

catechism and the principles of the Christian religion" (as cited in DeJong, 1993, p. 243).

Boarding Schools

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), created in 1824 as part of the War Department, was initially designed to oversee the subjugation and, in some cases, the eradication of American Indian tribes. Through the Indian School Service, the BIA began to wield power over American Indian schools as well. By 1842 there were 37 day schools run by the BIA and in 1860 the first federal boarding school for American Indians was established on the Yakima reservation in Washington (Child, 1998).

Boarding schools became ubiquitous examples of government control of American Indian education. Photographs of obedient Indian children with hair shorn and buckskins or serapes traded for wool suits or cotton smocks demonstrated to the American public the alleged success of assimilating Indian tribes by civilizing their children: "Educational assimilation supplanted battlefield genocide as a late nineteenth century strategy for dealing with 'the Indian problem,' [and] this policy shaped the material conditions and curricula at schools operated by the Indian School Service" (Gere, 2005, p. 40). However, boarding schools also represented an opportunity for cultural persistence because the very institution that was supposed to eradicate American Indian culture also enabled many students to form social and cultural attachments with a broad range of other American Indians (Child, 1998; Deyhle & Swisher, 1997).

Perhaps because of rather than in spite of efforts by the BIA to remove individual tribal associations, boarding school students often developed a sense of pan-Indian identity (Deyhle & Swisher, 1997). In 1917, the last year of operation for Carlisle Indian

School, the student body consisted of representatives from 58 different tribes (Child, 1998). “This peculiarly pan-Indian quality of the boarding schools is not what assimilationists, who were committed to the repression of tribal languages and culture, had in mind when they founded the institutions” (Child, p. 2). To a large degree, the legacy of pan-Indian awareness became part of the American Indian identity and may have had a direct bearing on the move toward self-determination decades later (Josephy, Nagel, & Johnson, 1999).

Many Ute families continue to send their children to American Indian boarding schools because of the “harassment and racial discord” that Utes face in some local public schools (Duncan, 2003, p. 217). Indeed, one of the main duties of the Northern Ute Tribal Education Department, according to Duncan, is to help tribe members “research, apply to, enroll, and transport students to boarding schools off the reservation” (p. 217). During the 1983-84 school year 69 Ute students attended four different boarding schools spread across three states (Ute Tribe, 1984); more recently, in the 2001-2002 school year, 84 Ute Tribe students attended a total of five off-reservation boarding schools in four different states (Ute Tribe, 2001). The establishment of a charter high school in 2000 on the Ute reservation was an attempt to keep more of the Ute secondary students in schools closer to home (Ute Tribe, 2002).

Another result of the boarding school institution was the education of future American Indian teachers. Boarding schools founded by American Indian tribes actually pre-dated those run by the BIA and during the mid-nineteenth century Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek/ Muskogee, and Cherokee boarding schools in what is now Oklahoma

educated some of the earliest American Indian teachers within the boarding school system (Gere, 2005). Other teachers such as Sarah Winnemucca Parker, who wrote the first book published by an American Indian woman, lived and taught in isolated schools farther west. Winnemucca Parker openly criticized white school administrators and was one of the first vocal supporters of training American Indian teachers to teach at schools serving American Indian students (Gere). In 1899, the year that Winnemucca Parker died, there were a total of 25 residential schools operated by the Indian School Service through the BIA for American Indian students (Child, 1998), and 45% of the staff members were from American Indian tribes (Gere).

Although not all of the American Indian staff members at federal boarding schools worked in classrooms, over 15% of the total American Indian employees in boarding schools at the turn of the century were trained and employed as teachers (Gere, 2005). However, few Indian teachers had opportunities to transfer to other schools: “The education that made it possible for them to teach often made them objects of suspicion among their own people, but their academic accomplishments were not sufficient to overcome the racist perceptions of whites” (Gere, p. 46). In addition, “As Indian teachers they were frequently paid less than their white counterparts, and they often lost their jobs to whites through the corrupt patronage system of the Indian Service” (p. 57).

By 1928 there were 77 American Indian boarding schools in operation (Szasz, 1977). That level began to decline shortly thereafter when the Merriam report was published, and smaller boarding schools were closed or consolidated with larger institutions, but during fiscal year 1970 there were 79 boarding schools—almost the same

number as forty years before—operated by the BIA in 15 states (Szasz). These statistics indicate how much boarding schools remained part of the educational options available to Indian tribes in the late twentieth century. In many cases Ute parents thought that boarding school was a better alternative than local public schools (Duncan, 2003). For example, the small Uintah Boarding School on the Ute reservation was closed in 1952, after which many Ute students were sent to the closest American Indian boarding school to their reservation, Intermountain Indian School, 200 miles away (Duncan). Thirty years later, the Ute Tribe filed an injunction in Federal District Court to oppose plans to close Intermountain. Their claim was denied in 1984 and the boarding school was closed shortly thereafter (Ute Tribe, 1984). The Ute Tribe's official response was a proud rebuke of their legal defeat, a supportive nod to the history of Intermountain Indian School, and a testimony to Ute involvement in American Indian education:

> The Ute Tribe, through the responsible action of the Tribal Business Committee, did not lose the respect of those students, Ute and otherwise, who benefitted greatly from this fine institution, and Indian educational institution which was closed forever May 28, 1984. Neither will the general public nor the Utah Congressional Delegation forget the intense publicity which the education division generated for our cause. (Ute Tribe, 1984, p. 66).

Merriam Report

The Merriam Report, published in 1928, was the first government document to take a comprehensive and primarily critical view of government policies towards American Indians, including the BIA-run education system. The National Indian Education Association calls the Merriam report "the most significant investigation ever conducted in the field of Indian affairs" (National Indian Education Association, 2003).

Commissioned during the Coolidge administration and directed by Lewis Merriam, it was an “enlightened, readable work” that “became a guide for government actions in regard to the Indians for more than 20 years” (Prucha, 2000, p. 219). The Merriam Report highlighted the isolation and lack of opportunities prevalent in most American Indian communities at the time. Answers to surveys of American Indian tribes administered by Merriam’s team of researchers gave specific and unavoidable confirmation that American Indians generally lacked opportunities for higher education, experienced inadequate federal services and expenditures, and also suffered from deplorable lack of access to adequate health care, housing, and education in general (Reyhner & Eder, 1992; Szasz, 1977).

One of the most important influences of the Merriam Report was to challenge the assumption that American Indian education should be oriented towards assimilation. The report recommended providing bicultural and bilingual education in reservation schools—a radical suggestion at the time—and ultimately led to the gradual closure of many American Indian boarding schools as well as to changes in curricular content at those which remained (Szasz, 1977). Closing the boarding schools was not easy, partially due to the opposition of congressmen from areas which gained economic benefits from staffing and maintaining those boarding schools during the difficult depression-era economy (Szasz). At first there was no net loss of students because other boarding schools continued to increase enrollment: “Even though twelve schools were closed from 1928 to 1933, the Indian population continued to grow and the number of children in boarding schools was greater in 1933 than it had been in 1928” (p. 31).

Indian Reorganization and the Johnson-O'Malley Act of 1934

The Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, also known as the Wheeler Howard Act or the Indian Bill of Rights, was spearheaded by Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier during the Roosevelt administration (Prucha, 2000). The Act finally legislated many of the changes that had been suggested in 1928 by the Merriam Report (Reyhner & Eder, 1992). This reversal of federal policy was an acknowledgement of the failure of allotment policies—assimilating Indian tribes by forcing American Indians to own land privately rather than collectively. These policies began with the Dawes Act of 1887 and the catastrophic authorization for individual American Indians to sell off parts of reservation property (Reyner & Eder).

The Indian Reorganization Act halted the forty-year practice of undermining land-based sovereignty through the allotment process, preserving the integrity of existing reservations. Second, tribes were encouraged to strengthen tribal governments by forming constitutions and tribal corporations. Third, American Indians became eligible for federal loans for college and vocational schools (Juneau, 2001; Szasz, 1977). All of these actions had previously been discouraged by a federal government threatened by educated, politically savvy, and economically powerful American Indian tribes. The Ute Tribe wasted little time in writing their constitution and by-laws, and also established a corporate governing body only three years after the passage of the Indian Reorganization Act (Uintah and Ouray Ute Indian Reservation, 2002).

When the Johnson-O'Malley Act (JOM) was signed into law in 1934, Congress agreed to limit the centralized power of the BIA by contracting with individual states for

providing educational services to Indian tribes (Prucha, 2000). The JOM gave states the ability to do what only the BIA had done before; it wasn't quite local control, but JOM legislation loosened the exclusive grip that the BIA had held on Indian education (Rehyner & Eder, 1992; Szasz, 1977). Originally this federal assistance went into the general operating funds of school districts serving American Indian students, and from there the money could be used for any purpose, not just Indian education. Until the 1970s, many school districts failed to provide the kinds of programs for American Indian students for which JOM was intended (Duncan, 2003). However, amended legislation directed that JOM-sponsored programs must be approved by an Indian parent advisory committee, and that funding must only be used for programs which directly affect American Indian students (Duncan). Many of the Ute tribe members who eventually became certified teachers began by tutoring or administrating JOM programs at local elementary and secondary schools.

Post-World War II

Although the legislative pendulum had swung towards improving American Indian education from the Merriam report to WWII, it swung back to a more repressive environment for American Indians for the next 20 years. During World War II economic and political reality intersected with the progressive trends in American Indian education set in motion by Lewis Merriam and John Collier. At first the loss in funding for BIA schools was counterbalanced by additional educational opportunities elsewhere. According to Reyhner and Eder (1992):

Most of the gains made in Indian education were quickly wiped out as funding

> was shifted from domestic programs to the war effort. However, education that was lost in the schools owing to funding cuts was more than made up in the field. (p. 109)

Over 24,000 American Indians served in the armed forces; they received vocational training while enlisted, and also qualified for additional funding through the GI Bill after the war. In addition, there was a rapid demographic shift in the American Indian population; over 40,000 American Indians left the reservations for war-related factory jobs in urban areas (Szasz, 1977). Effects were widespread from this unprecedented exodus of young people from their cultural homes:

> The demands made by [WWII] cut across Indian tribal society, and there were few who escaped its influence…. It was not by mere coincidence, therefore, that Indian concern for [public] education was more clearly articulated in the postwar period. (Szasz, 1977, p. 107)

Then the pendulum began to swing. The House Select Committee on Indian Affairs determined in 1944 that a final solution to the Indian problem, as it was called, could be made by denying the rights of certain tribes to receive federal services—in essence, terminating the trust responsibility by denying sovereignty: "The goal of such a policy was to make Indians better Americans rather than better Indians" (DeJong, 1993, p. 266). The result, however, was to leave many American Indians economically and educationally destitute, forcing more young people as well as adults off the reservations (DeJong).

House Concurrent Resolution (HCR) 108, passed in 1953, set the federal termination policy in motion. One of the most vocal supporters of HCR 108 was Senator Arthur V. Watkins of Utah, who spoke glowingly of Indian termination policies, comparing them to Lincoln's freeing of the slaves in the Emancipation Proclamation

(Prucha, 2000). “According to Senator Watkins, freedom from reservations should have been the apex, the best possible outcome of U.S. Indian policy, but Resolution 108 was the nadir of tribal rights” (p. 240). Although the Ute Tribe was not one of the ten terminated tribes, the federal government legislated other forms of termination. In 1954, as a result of Public Law 671, all Utes were required to document blood quantum—whether they were full blood or mixed blood American Indians (Ute Tribe, 1960). By 1961, all 474 mixed blood Ute adults and their children were scheduled to be “terminated from Federal Government wardship” (Ute Tribe, p. 17). They would no longer be eligible for educational, health, or economic benefits (no matter how meager at the time) enjoyed by other Utes, even though many of them had spent their lives on the reservation as members of the Ute Tribe. It was no surprise that various termination policies made all American Indians apprehensive about future legislation (Prucha). On the Ute reservation, the BIA closed the Uintah Boarding School in 1952, the year before HCR 108 was passed, and although Ute families did not like the atmosphere or the curriculum at local public schools (Duncan, 2003), they were less willing to press for more educational funding or better treatment in the public schools in light of the fact that their own senator so vehemently opposed American Indian sovereignty (Prucha).

Despite the negative influence of HCR 108, there was a growing national interest in civil rights legislation which culminated, for American Indians, in groundbreaking legislation during the 1970s, which will be discussed in the next section. Even in the 1950s and 1960s, however, there was a slow change in the demand for training and research in American Indian culture. Arizona State University, in 1954, was the first post-

secondary institution to open an Indian Education Center, and within twenty years undergraduate and graduate courses in American Indian history and culture were available on numerous college campuses (Szasz, 1977). The American Indian Law Center was established at the University of New Mexico in 1968, and a year later the National Indian Education Association was formed as a research clearinghouse and professional organization for American Indian educators. The first tribally controlled community college, Navajo (now Diné) Community College, opened in 1968 (Juneau, 2001). Many universities and private colleges, including tribal colleges, now offer majors and graduate degrees in Native American Studies.

American Indian Teacher Education

The overview of American Indian teacher education in this section deals with the modern era of Indian education, generally referred to as a period of self-determination (Juneau, 2001; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002). This term dates from President Nixon's *Special Message to the Congress on Indian Affairs,* a surprisingly strong position statement written in 1970. Nixon's speech coined the phrase "self-determination without termination" and repudiated the "suffocating pattern of paternalism" inflicted on Indian tribes by the BIA (Josephy et al., 1999, p. 107). Although the speech did not create self-determination in Indian education, it substantially redirected public policy and "demanded new thinking and attitudes from those in the federal agencies who dealt in Indian affairs" (p. 101).

Landmark federal legislation during the 1970s, most notably *The Indian Self-*

Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975 (Prucha, 2000), validated tribal sovereignty and gave Indian tribes increased control over administrative and funding options for education, including tribal colleges. However, funding amounts remained and still remain out of tribal control (DeJong, 1993) because most of these allocations are set by Congress rather than by the recipients (Juneau, 2001). This period also marked the beginning of national attention on the dearth of Indian educators for Indian students. Between 1969 and 1992, many federal commissions on Indian education published comprehensive reports which continued to press for more Indian teachers. Three of these reports and one critically important piece of legislation are summarized below.

The Kennedy Report

Indian Education: A National Tragedy—A National Challenge (Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, 1969), commonly known as the Kennedy Report, featured a notable break with previous federal protocol. Members of the Special Subcommittee on Indian Education visited rural and urban Indian communities throughout the country to hear testimony from Indians, not just from legislators or bureaucrats representing Indians (Carney, 1999; Szasz, 1977). A common criticism of the report was that by assuming "all social and economic ills facing the Indian people were educational in nature," the Kennedy Report sought to increase tribal participation in a flawed system, rather than fix the system (DeJong, 1993, p. 196). Nevertheless, it embraced and expanded on findings from two previous task forces on Indian affairs (1961 and 1966), which recommended, among other educational improvements, increasing grants and scholarships for American Indian students (National Indian Education Association, 2003).

The Kennedy Report initiated an important change in government policy towards American Indian education by publicizing historic weaknesses in federal funding programs. These criticisms of the federal government, hence the "national tragedy—national challenge" referred to in the title of the report, included the following: (a) failure to encourage Indian participation in Indian education, (b) lack of proper accounting in Title I and Johnson-O'Malley programs, (c) continued discrimination against Indian students, and (d) the low quality of teaching at reservation and off-reservation Indian-majority public schools (Szasz, 1977). A key recommendation from the Kennedy Report was that recruiting and training Native teachers should be a priority strategy for improving Indian education (Committee on Labor, 1969).

Indian Nations at Risk Task Force

The Indian Education Act of 1972 was originally passed to provide comprehensive educational funding for American Indian education. It was the first time federal money was authorized for urban public schools serving American Indians as well as reservation schools (Reyhner & Eder, 1992), and for preschool through graduate-level education for American Indian students (National Indian Education Association, 2003). When the Indian Education Act was amended in 1975 as part of *The Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975*, several provisions were added. It mandated the involvement of American Indian parent committees in the planning of programs funded by the Act. It acknowledged the unique educational needs of American Indian students, including the importance of culturally relevant curriculum materials and native language components. Finally, it authorized the establishment of community-run

American Indian schools (Reyner & Eder; Szasz, 1977).

The overall rationale of the amended legislation was closely tied to the concept of Indian self-determination (Prucha, 2000). The Indian Education Act supported the rights of American Indians to develop and control their own schools, to participate in the administration of programs for American Indian students within public schools off the reservations, and to apply for teacher training grants. Perhaps the most interesting part of this law was that Congress required a 20-year progress report to be published in 1992. This became *The Final Report of the Indian Nations at Risk Task Force* (U.S. Department of Education, 1991). By 1991, little had changed in the recruitment of Indians for careers in education. The Task Force established four national priorities, one of which dealt with "training…Native teachers to increase the numbers of Indian educators and other professionals and to improve the quality of instruction" (p. 22). The Task Force also recommended that Indian tribes "build partnerships with colleges and universities in order to ensure the training of Native educators, professionals, and technicians" (p. 20). This is precisely what the Ute tribe did in order to obtain each of their three grants for teacher training. The first program, starting in 1974, was with Brigham Young University; the second program, a partnership with Weber State University (WTTP), was initiated in 1986 (Ute Tribe, 1988); the third program, the UTTP with Utah State University, began in 2002. The UTTP is where this qualitative case study begins.

White House Conference on Indian Education

The Final Report on the White House Conference on Indian Education (U.S.

Department of Education, 1992) was mandated by amendments to the Indian Education Act of 1975.The authors of *The Final Report* continued to press for legitimizing tribal control of educational funding and encouraged the establishment of educational partnerships. One of four resolutions on teacher training mentioned that the presence of Indian teachers in public school classrooms would provide role models for Indian students. The report went on to recommend that "state institutions with the assistance of Federal, state, [and] tribal funds provide a [culturally] relevant teacher training program" (p. 42). The Report's final section included an explanation of "pay back obligations" (p. 52) for Indian students who receive financial assistance for professional education. In other words, new Indian teachers would be obligated to teach for at least two years in schools which serve a significant percentage of Indian students, or risk paying back their grant stipends. This guideline was later used for the federal grants which funded the three different teacher training programs sponsored by the Ute Tribe.

Professional Teacher Identity

Determining the experiences and beliefs that affect the development of teacher identity is important not just for American Indian teachers, but for all educators because understanding the beliefs of teachers is fundamental to improving practice. Rex and Nelson (2004) referred to "the invisible and comprehensive power that identities exert over instruction" (p. 1317). In addition, having a strong professional teacher identity is a contributing factor in teacher retention (Kardos & Johnson, 2007). Understanding the beliefs of teachers could ultimately affect how well and how long they teach, and by

extension affect how the next cohort might be taught.

Many studies of new teachers include a component related to strengthening professional identity. Mahlios (2002) examined three domains related to how a teacher identity changes from preservice to full-time teaching: (a) self-image, (b) program conceptualization, and (c) issues in work context. The findings from this study indicated that teachers in teacher education programs need to be aware of what images preservice teachers bring with them into the program, and explicitly address these images in order to strengthen the practices and pedagogy of good teaching. Webb (2005) selected three factors crucial to secondary teacher identity: (a) initial subject area expertise, (b) ongoing learning, and (c) opportunities for reflection. A specific theme from this study was the recurrent tension between a preservice subject-determined identity (teacher as content area specialist) and the broader professional identity which evolved from actual classroom experience.

Hammerness and colleagues (2005) mentioned three "widely documented problems in learning to teach" which impact teacher education programs, including the fact that new teachers must think about and understand teaching differently than they did when they were students. In essence, they must learn to "think like a teacher" (p. 359). Gomez, Black, and Allen (2007) also examined the crucial role teacher education programs play in shaping the interplay between personal and professional identities. Berci (2007) found that both learning to teach and learning to teach better require flexibility. This study found that the journey through various roles or forms of educator is part of developing professional teacher identity, but that new teachers need to distinguish

between the requirements of externally imposed and self-constructed identities. The constructed teacher identity is the more positive and powerful (Berci). New teachers may negotiate a teacher identity (Agee, 2004; Mahlios, 2002), construct it (Berci; Hammerness et al.), consolidate it (Feiman-Nemser, 2001), or craft and finesse it (Cattani, 2002). The common thread from previous research is that the conscious process of developing a professional teacher identity must begin early in teacher training and continue into full-time teaching.

Some researchers bundled teacher identity with other elements of becoming a teacher. McNay and Graham (2007) found among exemplary cooperating teachers (professional teachers who mentor student teachers) that their beliefs about teacher vision encompassed a sense of calling, mission, and professional identity. Farrell and Weitman (2007) reported how action research strengthened the professional identity of individual teachers by getting them involved with a learning community. McGrail (2006) studied national technology mandates and how the uses of technology by both students and teachers weakened professional identity without better training and decision-making opportunities. In this research, a strong professional identity was related to the presence of structured professional development opportunities.

Providing mentoring opportunities for new teachers to strengthen their identification with teaching as a career was a key recommendation in several books and studies on the teaching profession (Hammerness et al., 2005; Kardos & Johnson, 2007). However, the multidimensional aspect of teaching makes the identity process difficult to quantify. Hammerness and colleagues suggested five roles or directions of identity

development that contribute to an overall teacher identity: teachers as professionals, subject-matter scholars, change agents, nurturers and child advocates, and moral agents. Reflecting on these different aspects of being a teacher was an important process in establishing the mental constructs of becoming a teacher (Hammerness et al.; Mahlios, 2002). The area of greatest agreement in the literature on developing teacher identity was that conscious reflection on the images of teaching which students being to teacher education programs, and which novice teachers bring to the classroom, may strengthen the development of teacher identity through cognitive dissonance (McNay & Graham, 2007; Mahlios; Webb, 2005).

Summary

The review of literature in Chapter II situated this qualitative case study in an historical framework of American Indian education, in legislative and social issues concerning American Indian teacher education, and in the development of teacher identity in preservice and professional teachers. The sections on American Indian education and teacher education included national issues as well as historical elements related directly to the Ute Tribe. Chapter III will present the methodology used to research and write about a cohort of four American Indian participants from the Ute Teacher Training Program.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This qualitative dissertation includes elements from two types of case studies identified by Stake (2000): intrinsic and instrumental. It is intrinsic because the unique nature of this case is of interest to the researcher, who was peripherally involved with the UTTP from recruitment to final program analysis. According to Stake, "[Research for an intrinsic case study] is not undertaken because it illustrates a particular trait or problem, but because, in all its particularity *and* ordinariness, this case itself is of interest" (p. 437). It is also an instrumental case study because the exploration of developing professional teacher identity may be useful to others. Specifically, this case study may be instrumental in shaping the content or process of future teacher training opportunities initiated by the Ute Tribe. The findings may also be transferable to teacher education programs initiated and/or administrated by other American Indian tribes.

Chapter III is organized into seven sections: (a) research questions, (b) rhetorical structure, (c) sample selection, (d) data collection, (e) data analysis, (f) ethical concerns, and (g) timeline. Each section details the methodology of researching and writing this qualitative case study.

Research Questions

The primary research question in this qualitative case study situated new American Indian secondary teachers from the UTTP in an evolving professional identity: What school-based experiences and what personal, family, and community beliefs affect

the development of professional teacher identity?

Focusing questions for this study included the following avenues of inquiry:

1. What elements of the UTTP influenced teacher identity development?
2. What factors influenced the transition from a pre-service teacher identity to a professional teacher identity?
3. What factors continue to influence teacher identity development in the first year of teaching?

Rhetorical Structure

The rhetorical structure of this case study featured extensive use of narrative in order to situate the study in a thick descriptive environment (Creswell, 1998; Patton, 2002). To obtain that depth of description, the researcher conducted multiple interviews with a cohort of four participants from the UTTP. All of the participants took teacher education and other content area courses through the branch campus of a large state university with the intention of obtaining secondary teacher certification. These participants will be described more fully in the Sample Selection section below.

Because all forms of qualitative interviews are naturalistic extensions of conversations, interviewees become "partners in the research enterprise rather than subjects to be tested or examined" (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 12). This partnering strategy was well suited to studying new American Indian secondary teachers from the UTTP. The original grant application for this program noted the importance of maintaining "a process-based approach [to teacher education] that is more concerned with the journey

than the final destination and is therefore more in line with the Ute culture" (Northern Ute Nation, 2002, p. 10). By using extensive quotes in the participants' own voices, the researcher was able to illustrate diverse and sometimes conflicting factors which influenced the development of teacher identity as the participants' professional teaching journeys began.

Sample Selection

Participants for this qualitative case study were purposefully sampled from among the five American Indian students who were initially recruited for the UTTP in northeastern Utah, and who completed training to become certified secondary teachers. After initial conversations with the Ute Tribe Education Director and the UTTP grant administrator, the researcher contacted all five individuals by email. Four out of the five agreed in writing to participate in this study. The four participants, one male and three female, represented different content areas (mathematics, Spanish/English, history/ English, and health/physical education) and tribe affiliations (Ute, Navajo, Ute/Navajo, and Ute/ Sioux). However, as a cohort they took the same secondary education courses and received similar mentoring opportunities for the duration of the teacher education program.

Data Collection

Data collection for this qualitative case study utilized multiple sources, including participant interviews, primary documents from the UTTP, as well as researcher journals

and methodological logs. The resulting information created a triangulation or convergence of sources (Creswell, 1998) regarding the developing professional identity of new American Indian secondary teachers. The convergence of these three sources provided a scaffold for data analysis.

The most significant sources of information for this case study were participant interviews. UTTP graduates were interviewed several times during the spring and summer of 2006, including follow-up interviews in the fall of 2007, until analysis saturation was reached. All interviews were arranged to accommodate the participants' schedules and were conducted in locations selected by each participant. This was important in order to ensure that participants were as comfortable as possible during the interviews. The researcher used a small digital data recorder with an internal and external microphone so that data collection was both accurate and unobtrusive. Each interview was saved in a digital folder on the recorder; later the files were downloaded directly to a computer and burned to a CD, providing three duplicate sources of original material in case a back-up was needed.

The second source of information consisted of primary documents from the UTTP program evaluation. This quantitative evaluation, completed in December 2005 by a private contractor, was mandated by the federal grant which provided core funding for the UTTP. Materials from the program evaluation which were utilized for this qualitative case study included pre- and post-program surveys as well as narrative reports focusing on program-sponsored events, student participation, and general program outlook. The UTTP grant administrator submitted reports on a quarterly basis during the 3-year grant

cycle (2002 to 2005). Permission to use this classified material, which included participants' real names and significant amounts of financial information, was secured in writing from a representative of the firm contracted to complete the quantitative program evaluation (Appendix D).

The third source of information consisted of researcher-generated materials, including reflective journals and a methodological log which the researcher maintained during the 2-year period of researching and writing this qualitative case study. The journals explored personal and professional issues in the research process; the methodological log documented data collection and analysis of information, and served as key evidence for the audit trail on this qualitative case study. A key focus in the reflective journals was what Denzin and Lincoln (2000) called "working the hyphen" between insider and outsider, or simply exploring the awareness that "researchers are always on both sides of the hyphen" (p. 1,021). In this paradigm, the concept of insider-outsider is not one of duality but of paradox; there is strength in writing from positions in both perspectives. As an "insider," the researcher helped recruit the original cohort of American Indian students for the UTTP in 2002, worked directly with the UTTP for one semester as a doctoral intern, and taught each of the participants in at least one secondary education course while the UTTP was a funded program. As an "outsider," the researcher is not an American Indian. In addition, it could be argued that the same roles which made the researcher an insider (recruiter, intern, and lecturer), also made her an outsider to the case study participants. Acknowledging the insider-outsider paradox and documenting data collection through journals and logs involved the researcher in a process of personal

identity reflection that informed the critical analysis of developing teacher identity.

Data Analysis

Participant names for this qualitative case study were coded with hurricane names. This decision was made not because any of the participants were "stormy" or problematic, or even because the researcher's writing desk looked like a hurricane blew through. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) offered a practical source for manual coding because the NOAA National Hurricane Center website publishes multiple name lists on 6-year rotations. In this way tropical cyclones in various regions of the world can be named in alphabetical order as each season progresses, and the names will not be repeated in successive seasons. These names reflect multicultural influences and have been chosen annually since 1953 (although men's names have only been included since 1979) by an international committee from the World Meteorological Organization (National Hurricane Center, 2007, p. 1). The Atlantic hurricane name list for 2011, the most distant year on the NOAA website at the time of data coding, was chosen by the researcher to provide a gender-specific code name for each case study participant.

Data for this qualitative case study were analyzed manually through categorical aggregation (Creswell, 1998) beginning in fall 2006. Information from each interview transcript was assigned a paragraph number, divided into categories, and listed chronologically as "Category Notes" using a standard word-processing program; each of the four participant interviews resulted in 20 to 25 categories. The individual categories

for each participant were then placed on a large wall chart, coded with related paragraph and transcript reference numbers to allow for overlaps between participant comments, and analyzed for word and phrase repetitions. At this point over 40 categories were represented.

Next, all categories were collapsed into 12 meta-categories, listed alphabetically as follows: (a) challenges, (b) control/classroom discipline, (c) empowerment/ motivation, (d) expectations from family/community, (e) gender issues, (f) identity, (g) learning/teaching styles, (h) peer support, (i) reflection, (j) teacher status, (k) teaching metaphors, and (l) time commitment. Finally, the coding for information in each of the twelve meta-categories was expanded into conventional paragraphs in order to include fully illustrative quotes from the participants. The process of combining quotes from all four participants resulted in a reference document entitled "Meta-categories: Regrouped and Expanded." This preliminary aggregation of quotes served as a companion to the individual interview transcripts. A recursive process of discovering both convergent and divergent patterns (Patton, 2002) in the preliminary document and the interview transcripts resulted in the final themes developed for this qualitative case study.

Ethical Concerns

The researcher followed specific research guidelines established by the Ute Tribe and by Utah State University (USU). As a first step, a letter of request to research was submitted to the Ute Tribe in April 2005. At this time, the researcher planned to write a qualitative program evaluation of the Ute Teacher Training Program. The next step was

to appear before the Ute Tribe Education Committee, which functions as the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for any academic or medical research involving the Ute Tribe.

By September 6, 2005, when the researcher discussed her original letter of request with the Ute Tribe Education Committee, the proposed research had changed from a program evaluation to a case study. After discussing the proposed qualitative case study, the Education Committee voted to approve the study pending receipt of a revised letter of request to research. A revised letter reflecting changes in both concept and methodology for a qualitative case study was submitted by the researcher to the Ute Tribe Education Committee on February 20, 2006 (Appendix A). No other application materials were required by the Committee. The Ute Tribe Education Director sent a signed letter of approval for the researcher to proceed with this qualitative case study on March 22, 2006 (Appendix B).

The IRB approval process through USU began in March 2006. In addition to submitting a revised study design reflecting Ute Tribe approval, the researcher completed an overall research application for USU's IRB office prior to data gathering. Individual permission forms (Appendix C) were signed by each participant before the interviews were recorded. Data for the proposed case study, including hardcopy transcripts of interviews, copies of primary documents, and the researcher's reflective and methodological journals were kept in a locked file cabinet in the researcher's office. The researcher also maintained electronic audio and print data files on two different password-protected computers, and was responsible for validating the authenticity of each file. A final precaution to keep the data confidential was to generalize place names

and code all personal names in the dissertation, but in such a small and detailed study there could not be absolute anonymity. This fact was made clear to participants before they agreed to participate in this study, and it was explicitly stated in the permission forms signed by each participant (Appendix C).

A primary concern addressed in this qualitative case study was cultural sensitivity in research design. Previous research in American Indian education has been criticized for culturally-biased methodologies, inaccurate assumptions, and statistical discrepancies (Brayboy & Deyhle, 2000; Swisher, 1998). While these complaints were leveled primarily at quantitative studies of K-12 students, a meta-study of research on teachers of color also found problems with "irregularity, currency, and completeness" in data sources (Gay et al., 2003, p. 42). Gay and colleagues specifically noted the benefits of qualitative studies for educational research involving teachers or students of color, primarily because of the relatively small samples available. This qualitative case study sought to avoid some of the pitfalls of previous studies by focusing on a small number of American Indian participants from a specific teacher training program. More importantly, the research and writing process was tailored to the Ute Tribe Education Committee's desire for inclusion in the review process. Brayboy and Deyhle noted the importance of collaborative relationships between researchers and American Indian participants. This study was no exception. The collection and narration of data was carried out as a partnership between researcher and participants, with input from the UTTP grant administrator, the Ute Tribe Education Committee, and the Ute Tribe Education Director.

Even before field research began, the researcher collaborated with the UTTP grant

administrator and the Ute Tribe Education Director for advice on interview protocol. They also reviewed the proposed interview questions for cultural relevance. Interviews were transcribed manually rather than electronically in order to assure nuances of expression in participants' comments. Member checking of interview transcripts, one of the ways that Rubin and Rubin (2005) recommended to partner with research participants, was an integral part of the research process. As Stake (2000) explained, the ethos of interpretation in any case study involves "seeking out [those values] held by the people within the case" (p. 441). Each participant in this qualitative case study reviewed and approved his or her interview transcript before data analysis began, and member checking for accuracy was recursive through the analysis stages. Drafts of Chapters IV, V, and VI were shared with case study participants, with the chair of the Ute Tribe Education Committee (formerly the UTTP grant administrator), and with the Ute Tribe Education Director. Their comments and suggestions during the writing process were invaluable in revising both voice(s) and content.

Timeline

Permission to begin research with the participants was granted by the Ute Tribe in March 2006 (Appendix B), and permission to use data from the UTTP program evaluation was granted in November 2006 (Appendix D). Data collection took place over a period of three months during the late spring and summer of 2006. Initial interviews were conducted face to face, with follow up interviews in the fall of 2007. This window of opportunity gave the data gathering phase some logical and specific boundaries. In

summer 2006, the participants were between their first and second years of full time teaching. By fall 2007, most of the participants had completed their grant-mandated two-year teaching commitment. Still relatively new teachers in 2007, their memories and ongoing perceptions of developing professional teacher identity provided additional information for this case study.

Member checking began immediately after the initial interview transcriptions were prepared. Data analysis began in summer 2006, after all participants had reviewed and approved the interview transcripts. The dissertation itself was written and revised during 2007 and 2008. Member checking continued during the process of writing and revising Chapters IV, V, and VI.

In addition to a qualitative dissertation, the researcher also prepared a shorter report summarizing major findings from the study. This executive summary was mailed electronically to all case study participants, to the chair of the Ute Tribe Education Committee, and to the Ute Tribe Education Director at the conclusion of the study. A bound final copy of this dissertation for the archives of the Ute Tribe was personally presented to the Ute Tribe Education Committee.

Summary

Chapter III included seven sections detailing the methodology used in this qualitative case study. Following a discussion of case study rationale, this chapter provided substantial background information on research questions, rhetorical structure, sample selection, data collection, data analysis, and ethical concerns. The final timeline

section situated the entire research process in a two year period from 2006 to 2008.

Chapter IV presents four narratives which provide the thick description necessary to understand these case study participants. Each narrative focuses on a single participant as he or she progressed through public school and college, enrolled in the teacher training program, experienced student teaching, worked as a first year teacher, and reflected on developing a professional teacher identity.

CHAPTER IV

FOUR NARRATIVES

This qualitative case study is built around four participants, all members of the UTT) between 2002 and 2005. They formed a cohort of American Indian preservice teachers funded by a federal grant for professional development. During the three years of grant funding, participants took college classes and experienced mentoring activities leading to secondary teacher certification. After 2005, under the terms of the grant, UTTP graduates were expected to teach for a minimum of two years in schools serving American Indian students.

The following four participant narratives—one each from Maria, Arlene, Vince, and Rina—contain stories about becoming teachers and developing teacher identities. Participants' names have been changed, although gender identification has been preserved. Most other narrative details except for academic majors and tribe affiliations have been generalized to provide as much anonymity as possible for participants, their families, and their schools.

Each narrative is divided into five sections: (a) personal, family, and community background; (b) the ute teacher training program; (c) student teaching; (d) first year teaching; and (e) professional identity. These sections correspond to elements of the primary research question.

Participant One: Maria

Personal, Family, and Community Background

Maria was a math major and psychology minor who was born and raised on the Ute reservation. At the time of this study Maria was in her early thirties with two sons in elementary school. As a divorced single mother with a very supportive extended family, she was able to rely on family members to help her with childcare during the program. Maria was the type of student for whom the UTTP was designed because of her commitment to the Ute community, her prior employment in local schools, and her need for financial assistance to complete an academic degree and obtain professional certification.

When Maria was growing up, she admired teachers: "A teacher was someone you looked up to, someone that, they were a *teacher*. And I thought, 'I would like to be that.'" Prior to the UTTP, Maria had worked for ten years in various educational support positions through the Ute Tribe: a staff member for the Johnson-O'Malley program (a federally funded mentoring program for American Indian students attending public schools), an after-school tutor, and a teacher's aide. Unlike most of the other local paraprofessionals, however, Maria chose to become a certified teacher:

> Working as an aide in the school was good; I enjoyed that, but why not become a full time teacher…not be the aide but be the teacher. The grant [for the UTTP] came about and sounded like something I wanted to do. There was no reason to continue being an aide.

One of the influences on Maria's decision to enter the UTTP was the fact that she felt the pull of history. She knew people who were graduates of two previous teacher

training programs available to Ute Tribe members, one in the 1970s through Brigham Young University and one in the 1980s through Weber State University. A few of the original program participants kept the dream alive to begin a third program:

> Our tribe has always talked about a teacher training program…We have some old school teachers that have been there for awhile and that was their first teacher training program…and they have always talked about wanting to do the same type of program again but it was always talk. [That talk] has been there for as long as I can remember.

At the time of this study some of the participants from the first two Ute teacher education programs were still working in local elementary schools, although many were reaching retirement age. Maria experienced only one of them as a teacher, but he made an impression on her:

> I remember some of those people that went through. My first-grade teacher and his wife were some of these people that were Native, and I believe that was probably the only Native teacher I had…. He wasn't from our tribe. His wife was [Ute] but they both were teachers and they were Native American. It was someone you saw in the community and they were an example.

A teaching career had been on Maria's radar screen since she was a youngster, in part because of the influence of a handful of American Indian teachers from previous programs offered through the Ute Tribe. However, she was not focused on any particular subject area until she started working in the school system:

> As I worked in the schools, I enjoyed math…it came easy to me; as I worked in the school as an aide, a lot of teachers said, "Man, you can explain to these kids and you can *do* this." I do remember in grade school they always said, "What do you want to do when you grow up?" I wanted to be a teacher or I wanted to be a child psychologist. Wherever I got those, I have no idea…but never, ever did I think I'd be a *math* teacher.

Maria took general education courses at a branch campus of a state university when she had the money and the time, and finally earned her associates degree. By the time she

was accepted into the UTTP, she was committed to becoming a math teacher at the secondary level.

The Ute Teacher Training Program

Maria was one of the first to sign up for the program, but not without plenty of soul searching. Her first hurdle was the financial commitment; a punitive caveat to the UTTP grant was that participants would have to pay back the monthly stipends if they did not finish the program. She noted that there was “a lot of talk amongst the people that were going to apply for it…it was scary. It was a big commitment. That’s a lot of money to sign your name to and not follow through.” The second hurdle was skepticism. Maria explained that, based on previous experience with government grants on the reservation, there was understandable doubt about the legitimacy of any federally funded program:

> There was the “Is this actually going to happen?” kind of thing. Is this teacher ed program going to follow through...? Is it something that’s just going to start out and fizzle out and you’re left on your own? It was just a big commitment.

The UTTP created the opportunity for Maria to forge relationships with other prospective teachers, most of whom had not experienced the camaraderie of other American Indian students in their prior academic experiences:

> There were a lot of things that we did for the program: conferences, attending certain things, participating in certain things. And doing that on your own would be harder. Being in that group probably helped us all out. We were a group. We went in together, we finished together, and we had each other’s help.

Maria added that she felt a certain power being with other American Indian students:

> [Instructors] take you more serious as a group. I think individually they may not take you as serious. I saw that in the [public] schools, and I’m not saying that’s just being Native American. I don’t know what it is. I think that’s a big part of it but walking into a classroom, as an individual, there is a different atmosphere.

But then walking in as a group…. Oh yeah.

Even though the small UTTP cohort was tightly knit on some levels, Maria pointed out that it was full of diversity. Each participant was able to articulate independent positions, breaking out of the generalizations made about American Indian students:

> Native American education today…is always put as a whole and we all kind of believe that in a way. But going into this program, all being Native American, we had so many different opinions. And that was the one thing that stood out to me. I still think…if you were to set four or five of us today in this program, we'd each have a different opinion about [education] and what that means to us. And [the UTTP] was such a neat thing because it didn't put us as a whole. It didn't make us all one mind.

Student Teaching

Maria chose to do her student teaching at a small charter high school on the Ute reservation rather than at the public junior high school where she had been an aide prior to the UTTP. The charter school did not have a certified math teacher, therefore Maria went directly into her own classroom through alternative certification. This is a way for chronically under-staffed schools, particularly in low-income rural and urban areas, to hire uncertified teachers. Through alternative certification, qualified candidates from various fields can be placed in full time teaching positions for a maximum of three years while they work towards obtaining state teacher certification (Utah State Office of Education, 2008).

Maria worked with a cooperating teacher, but he taught other classes at the same time so Maria spent her student teaching semester as a full time math teacher, with one period a day (her prep time) teaching psychology, her minor:

> I had my own [math] classroom…. The prior math teacher still taught there and he was actually the psychology teacher so when I did the psychology student teaching, he went in and did my math [class]…during a prep time of mine so it kind of worked out really good.

Luckily for Maria, the school week at the charter school was only 4 days long so she took advantage of some of her Fridays to visit other secondary classrooms:

> I just went in [on my first day as a teacher], "Here are your books, here are your calculators." I had no curriculum, no help from any others. I had the previous math teacher and he was a help to me but basically [the administration said], "There you go." I basically developed everything I had. It was a big shock. We had school Monday through Thursday, so on Fridays, I don't know how many times, I went to different schools and sat in on a Math class just observing and asking.

Maria felt comfortable in her own classroom despite not being able to ease into or out of her student teaching experience, as she would have been able to do in a traditional certification path. "I believe I was prepared…. I think knowledge content, yes, for sure. Strategies, I knew a lot—[but] how to use them all, maybe not as well." She was proud of her classroom management style and how well her students worked independently:

> One of the most satisfying things was when [my cooperating teacher] came to me before my actual final evaluation and said, "I walk into your classroom and it's quiet." He's like, "You do what you do here, teaching whatever it might be, go to the next exercise, do more teaching, go to the next exercise, and these kids do it for you. And I say that because I've walked through your school before and I've seen in other classrooms where they don't have the attention to the teacher and to the classroom."

Maria felt that classroom discipline was the "toughest task" most teachers face: "If you have that control, any student is teachable but if that control isn't there...it's tough to do anything."

Maria had two concerns about the student teaching experience, which for her was full time teaching. One was about how few resources, other than a textbook, were

provided in her classroom: “I wasn’t given the best supply [of manipulatives and hands-on math materials] so using a variety of teaching styles was a struggle for me.” To counteract the dearth of classroom materials and broaden her own teaching approaches, Maria counted on her peers from the UTTP to share resources and strategies:

> We all went to the same classes; we all learned these different teaching strategies. I may use one that another teacher doesn’t use and it’s so neat because we have each other. The other day [Rina] gave me her e-mail address and she was like, “I went and got this. Can you help me?” We all have each other and we all do our different things, yet if I ever need help, they’re there.

Another concern Maria had during student teaching was her own learning style. She had experienced very traditional math classrooms as a public school student and felt comfortable in that mode. However, Maria knew that the way she learned and retained information did not fit with what she had been taught in her teacher education classes about how American Indian children learn:

> [Educational texts are] always saying, “Hands on, Native American, Visuals.” I would love a math teacher to get up and say, “These are the steps, do it, and this is how you do it.” That’s me. I would love that. Give me those visuals and stuff and I get confused. Direct instruction would be fine for me.

First Year Teaching

Maria was no stranger to the secondary classroom when she entered the UTTP, and she felt comfortable handling content area issues once she had her own students:

> I don’t think I was an expert but I had worked in the classroom for several years. I worked in a school where the majority were Native American students and then I worked in a school where there were few Native American students... I had worked in many different math classrooms and saw what worked and what didn’t work.

One of the things Maria realized in her first full year in the classroom was that the job

was much more complex than she originally thought. She admitted, “There is a lot more in teaching than what they teach you [in teacher education classes].” Maria specifically mentioned the time commitment involved in playing so many different roles:

> I learned that teaching is a 24-hour job…I mean, yeah, that is my main job to go in there and teach them math, but there are so many roles, there are so many different roles a teacher takes on. You’re counseling or whatever it might be…. Being that in-between person with parents and principals, with parents and students, teaching [students] math, teaching them other things like values. The students spend more time with you than they spend with their parents.

Maria remembered many situations in her classroom where her role was simply to be there for her students—to be a good listener:

> Students come into your classroom and just talking to you and maybe telling me things that you know they haven’t told anyone else. Some of those students aren’t going to remember that I taught them math but remember maybe the impact I made on their lives ‘cause I remember those teachers myself.

Maria felt as if she was earning respect for the way she taught math as well as for the way she treated her students. She was making a difference by making personal connections:

> The respect [students] show you tells you a lot. There’s one student, for example, that he was a junior and he was just one of those boys. He was a good student, he respected me, he came to class, he did his work, but he had a reputation and he was just a teenage boy, I guess—a little on the rougher side. But he signed my yearbook and what he wrote in there was very meaningful. They have all their nicknames for me too, but he said, “I know we give you a hard time but don’t ever stop teaching.” And then he said, “I hope to see you next year.”

In fact, Marie said that one of the most common questions she got from her students was whether she was going to come back to teach next year, since there had been frequent changes in faculty at her school in the past.

Parents also showed their appreciation to Maria, even in a community where the

average family income was far below surrounding county averages:

> "Christmastime came along and you don't expect things, and I went to my teacher box, got in, and pulled out all of the regular stuff…, and there was a card from a parent of students I was an aide for [at a junior high school] and I had worked with them on some summer school programs. And it said, "I just want to thank you for all of your help with my children in their schoolwork and I appreciate everything that you do and I'm so glad that you have become a teacher." And there was a $50 gift card… She goes, "This is for you and your family." And this was not even a student I had taught this year.

Teachers had been important influences in Maria's life. Once she had her own classroom she started to realize that the guidance she was giving her own students was as important as teaching her content area:

> I could probably tell you teachers and differences they've made in my life but not be able to tell you what subject they taught. I think teachers are there as guidance, role models. They're part of your life and each teacher does their own unique thing but they are there…It's not the English, it's not the Math, it's not the Science. Teachers teach you so many more things than just that subject that they're licensed in.

Professional Identity

A challenge for Maria in becoming a teacher, as opposed to working as an aide, was that she was more visible in the community. She remembered that her principal at the reservation charter school told her, "We all have chosen this profession and it's something some people can live with, but some people can't because you always have that eye on you." Maria continued:

> It is tough. It doesn't matter where you are, what you're doing….You are a teacher and you are there for a role model and that's not necessarily a struggle but it's always there in your head. You always have people watching you and that's tough. You choose to live your life the way you want to but it's always trying to be that example no matter where you are.

Maria added that being a teacher was even more like being under a microscope in her

situation because she was expected to fulfill not only her own dreams, but the dreams of her tribe:

> I think that's probably one of the toughest things for me is trying to live up to that and especially being a tribal member, being part of that teacher training program, the eye is always on you. Living up to it, did you fulfill what you were supposed to fulfill? Are you teaching our Native American students? Are you giving back to our Tribe? We put you through this program…. No matter what I do, that is always there in my head, knowing that I need to fulfill that, I need to be this role model, I need to be an example and do these things.

Maria considered her professional identity to more than just her own path; she saw herself as part of a proud tradition in the Ute tribe:

> When I was younger, you knew who those tribal teachers were. You knew who the Native American teachers were and I was lucky enough to have one of them. Now, we're that group….They're not going to be talking about that first teacher training program anymore, they're going to be talking about [ours]. And that is a good thing. I hope that they do this more often…. All those teachers are retiring this year, so it's been 30 years.

Even outside her community, Maria clearly saw herself as part of a bigger picture in American Indian education:

> This year I went to NIEA [National Indian Education Association] and being among all these Native American educators, that's powerful. That is *powerful,* knowing you're a part of that—knowing that there are all these Native American teachers out there and that you are a part of them and you are being an example.

Participant Two: Arlene

Personal, Family, and Community Background

Arlene was a social studies major and English minor. Diné (Navajo) was Arlene's first language; she was brought up on the Navajo reservation and attended boarding and day schools there until ninth grade. She remembers having just a few American Indian

teachers in elementary school and only one in junior high. Her role models at the time were more glamorous than teachers or aides; because of "too much TV watching after we got electricity, I wanted to be Miss America when I was very little, then an Olympian."

Arlene came to Utah through the Indian Placement Program, operated by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS). She was one of the last groups of students to participate in this program, which baptized and relocated over 20,000 American Indian children, primarily Navajo, to middle-class white households between 1954 and 1996. Although the placement program originally targeted any American Indian child over eight years old, by the 1980s the LDS organization limited this program to high school students only (Davidson, 2005). Program participants peaked at nearly 5000 students in 1972 but by 1990, the decade when Arlene participated in the program, about 500 American Indian students were relocated annually (de Hoyos, 1992). After ninth grade, Arlene spent her academic years in northern Utah living with a foster family and attending a large, predominantly white regional high school; her summers were spent in Arizona on the Navajo reservation.

During high school Arlene studied for and received the ranking of Certified Nurse's Assistant (CNA), because she—like other American Indian students in her school—was encouraged to pursue a vocational track. However, Arlene had always been an avid reader and she decided to attend a four-year college. She applied for and was accepted to the nearby main campus of a large state university. Later she interrupted her post-secondary studies to fulfill an 18-month mission for her church. Arlene enjoyed the teaching aspects of her missionary experience, and when she returned to Utah she

decided to focus on teaching as a career.

Arlene met her future husband, a fellow student, at college. She had almost completed a history major with an anthropology minor when she left again to join her husband, who had found a promising job with a federal agency out of state. Several years later Arlene, her husband, and infant daughter moved to eastern Utah following another job opportunity for her husband. Arlene explained:

> I think I always knew that [my husband] was going to move on before I could apply for the teaching program, a secondary ed. program, and so I never applied for it.... I knew that I wouldn't have enough time to get into the program, finish it up, and move on with my husband, so that just kind of got scrapped. And so when we moved down here and I heard about the [UTTP], I applied.

The Ute Teacher Training Program

Arlene was in her late twenties by the time she entered the program. Although she was very close to her BA degree, she couldn't get a secondary credential using her accumulated academic credits. Arlene decided to pursue a teaching major in social studies, then change her minor from anthropology to English. This change involved taking a few more undergraduate credits to finish her degree and change her areas of emphasis to accommodate secondary certification.

Unlike other UTTP students, Arlene was new to the area and had no prior connection to the Ute Tribe. The UTTP offered Arlene not only the opportunity to take additional academic courses and obtain her secondary teaching credential, but also the promise of teaching American Indian students:

> I knew that [the program administrators] were looking for Native American teachers to come back into the community to teach Native American kids and I thought, "Well, that would be kind of neat," because…even when I was on my

> mission I always wanted to come back, maybe to the Navajo Reservation to teach school there. When this opportunity came up, I thought about it and I thought, "Well, I'm still going to be working with Native American kids."

Arlene realized that she probably would not be able to teach Navajo students in the near future due to her husband's job trajectory; however, the program's base on the Ute reservation allowed her to reconnect with another American Indian community.

At first the main attraction of the program for Arlene, other than teacher certification, was the financial support. Because Arlene and her husband had no local family members to help take care of their daughter, childcare loomed as a major expense if both parents had to work:

> [The UTTP] allowed me to get my teaching certification without too many hardships. They provided a stipend, they paid our tuition, paid for our books, and so they just really made it easy for me, at least, to get my [teaching] license and to me that was just awesome 'cause I didn't have to work [outside the home].

Arlene also appreciated the fact that the secondary teacher education classes were mostly in the evenings, which enabled her and her husband to keep their young child at home most of the time: "We didn't really worry about childcare because [my husband] was home in the evenings and I was home during the day."

As Arlene continued in the program she appreciated the experience of being a part of a close-knit academic group. Because she had previously taken courses only at a large university campus, she had never experienced the small cohort of American Indian students which defined her participation in the UTTP:

> I liked that in a lot of the classes I took, my classmates were Native American… And we were such a small group, too, that we used to have some really neat discussions just pop up during the course of the class, so I really liked that, just moving in a small group.

Student Teaching

Arlene chose to student teach at a small charter high school on the Ute reservation, and like Maria she was hired through alternative certification. Arlene immediately inherited her own classroom because the school lacked enough teachers in the humanities. She taught several periods of history, one class of anthropology, and one of English (her minor). Arlene had never stood in front of a classroom for more than one period before, yet she began her student teaching semester teaching every period of the day:

> I was really nervous about doing my student teaching anyway because I didn't feel like I was ready. I'd never been in a classroom and it was quite scary…. I mean I did do observations where during one of my observations I taught a Social Studies class but at the end I handed those students back over to their real teacher.

Adding to Arlene's concerns about not measuring up as a "good teacher" was the fact that some of her students initially considered her an outsider; they thought she was Oriental because she looked different than many of the Utes.

Arlene's interest in academics, and specifically in reading as a way of learning about the world, was part of the reason she wanted to become a teacher. After a troubled period in her junior high school years she became a model student, and she credits her perseverance in high school and college to her love of reading. Arlene started the UTTP thinking that this would provide an effective grounding for a career in education: "When I first went into [student] teaching I thought, 'Oh, it's going to be easy,' because I thought, 'If I love this [subject] then I can probably translate that into my kids loving it, too.'" However, Arlene became frustrated that some of her students did not seem receptive to her teaching methods:

> I wanted to make kids love reading as much as I loved reading or love learning about something as much as I loved learning about something. A lot of it in the beginning was that. I wanted…students to love my subject areas as much as I loved [English and history] but when that doesn't happen or when it takes forever to happen it's kind of frustrating.

She added that the range of student abilities in each class made it even more of a challenge to get through the required curriculum:

> Here are all these special ed students who don't know where half of their IEPs are—mainstreamed, you know, so that was really tough. In that first year having to teach a regular classroom [with special ed students] and then we had three or four gifted students, all thrown into one classroom. And so you have three different groups working at three different levels and having to keep up with all of them—I think I just got tired and frustrated. I just know I can't do it year after year after year.

Arlene wanted to establish an interactive classroom where students could share ideas about books and culture, but it took a long time for her to engage her classes in the kind of interchange she envisioned:

> I tried to lead a lot of discussions and it used to just frustrate the heck out of me because they wouldn't talk back to me and I was doing all the talking, and I tried to ask open-ended questions and then nothing from the students. But toward the end of [my student teaching semester] the kids finally opened up and I think a lot of it was because they knew that the classroom was safe. That made me feel really good that they thought [my] classroom was safe enough that they could start talking and we could start having discussions and stuff.

Arlene had modeled her own classroom on the kind of academic experiences which had worked for her, but gradually began to experiment with other approaches. Arlene's own students turned out to be some of her best teachers:

> Some of those kids are their own best self-advocates and so they were like, "Well, when I was in junior high, one of my teachers would always have us do hands-on things." That's been kind of neat to have some of those kids come up and say, "When I was in junior high, we did this, we did that, and it was really fun." And so I've been trying to do a lot more hands-on, a lot more getting away from just the plain reading and writing every day. That's been kind of fun but it's been

> really hard to step away from my own learning style.

Arlene was also able to critically examine how some students behaved in her classes and to adjust her expectations accordingly:

> A lot of those kids don't learn the way I do. In one classroom, we were reading and the one kid was drawing and writing but he always knew where we were in our reading. He could jump right to where we were and there were a lot of kids like that. Some kids I've just had to hold myself back from saying, "You need to put your paper or pen away because we're doing [reading]." I think I've had to learn to just let some kids have their right hand stay busy while we're reading because maybe they can't sit still. Maybe they don't need to…It's just been an interesting year learning about those students' learning styles and how different they are from mine.

First Year Teaching

Arlene struggled during her first year of teaching but still admitted that it was better than student teaching:

> The whole year has been, "I'm going to quit next week," or "I'm going to quit in a month." It's been tough. I come home and talk to [my husband] about it and he says, "It's just your first year," and "You might like it better next year." It's been really hard trying to find some way to teach my subject area and teach it meaningfully and make it so that kids pass my classes. It's been a hard, tough year but I think this year's also been a lot better than last spring because I was able to come on for a full year and so students have gotten to know me for a full year…. I didn't just come in half of the year.

Arlene found that one of the satisfactions during her first year of teaching was that she could create her own unit plans and base her assessments on her own choices of curriculum materials:

> When I did my student teaching I was just kind of dumped into, "Here's what we're doing," and so I carried on whatever it was that the other teacher was doing. And then this year I started out the year with wanting to see where my students were in terms of how well they were reading or how well they were writing and so the beginning of the year I just gauged where they were in their reading and their writing. And from there I tried to develop lesson plans to help them either

> read better or write better. That was the big difference, to be able to stay on the full year and see how much [the students] either gained or lost at the end of the year.

Arlene also came to terms with her own shyness. Her favorite teachers in the past were outgoing and active; she had tried to model her teaching style on theirs but that was not working for her:

> I think a lot of my fears stem from my being a shy person, a really reserved person, and I didn't know how I would do in a classroom, so I think I was afraid of just not being able to open up to my students, or get across what I wanted to say and say it right, and have them understand what I was trying to say…. Some of my best teachers were really bubbly and, not crazy wild but they were open and talkative and whatever; I didn't know if I would ever be like that.

By the end of her first year of teaching, Arlene became more confident in front of a classroom: "I think I did try too hard to be something I was not and I just have had to step back and think who I am. I'm okay. I may not be an outrageous, fun person but I can still teach my students something."

One of the high points of Arlene's first year of teaching was when she was able to teach a cross-curricular unit on Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* with the help of another UTTP participant who also taught at her school:

> During one of my elective classes in World Literature we read Chaucer and that was really fun. [The students] didn't like it a whole lot but they still read it and they got most of it, at least what was in the text anyway. We didn't read all the tales; we just read like maybe three or four of the tales. And it was kind of fun doing Chaucer because I also got to work with [Maria, a math teacher]…. They had to come up with their own little pilgrimage and they had to keep a journal of it and they had $5,000 to spend, which is where [Maria] came in. She helped them budget and set up a budget and follow the budget.

Despite some successes in her classroom, Arlene was disappointed not to be able to have more effect on students' attitudes about school: "The most frustrating was trying

to motivate students to want to be at school because I think for the most part a lot of them just showed up to socialize, to be with friends and see friends." Complicating the challenge of student motivation at Arlene's school was the transient nature of about a quarter of the student population:

> That was just really weird and frustrating...seeing kids shuffle out of that school to go away to boarding school and then to have them come back and have them miss a whole month or two, or three months. There were some kids that stayed on the whole year but we had about 15 to 20 kids who shuffled in and out the whole year. They were either gone to detention or off to boarding school and then they got kicked out and sent back to us.

During her first year of teaching, the school admitted its first freshman class. Arlene found that the younger the students at the charter school, the more teachable they seemed to be:

> Their freshman class had a really high attendance rate. They were always there and they were always ready. Most of them, I'd say like 90% of them were willing. They came in every day prepared and wanting to learn and so that was really fun. And so I think I'm just going to keep working with them and hopefully by their senior year [the school will] have other classes [entering the school] that will want to be there and motivated to learn.

Despite Arlene's excitement about the incoming freshmen, by the end of her first year she was more discouraged than hopeful. In order to keep the curriculum on track, Arlene started assigning "a lot of worksheets. It's really funny because when you try to get kids to think and have discussions, they won't do it but when you give them a worksheet they get it done and they turn it in." In addition, Arlene started wondering if she was really cut out to be a teacher:

> I think a lot of it is I'm just impatient. I want my kids to learn this right now. When I do a unit and I want it for a week, I want it to be a week but sometimes a one-week unit has turned into like a two- or three-week unit and it just gets so frustrating…. A lot of times in my classrooms I would set aside 10 to 15 minutes

> for writing, just something small. But sometimes those 10 to 15 minute writing assignments turned into hour-long writing assignments and that was just so frustrating. I guess I'm just not a flexible person.

Students' reading as well as writing proficiency levels at the charter high school were well below Arlene's grade level expectations:

> I've been thinking of how I can get my students motivated to read because a lot of my kids will come in and they'll say, "I don't want to read; reading's stupid." What I've found to be the case is when they say, "I hate reading," it's because they don't know how or they're not quite confident in their reading.

Overall, Arlene's attitude at the end of her first year was disillusionment: "I'm more in love with my subject area than with my students and I thoroughly hate to say that but I think it takes somebody special to be a teacher and I don't think I'm that person." On the other hand, she still planned to return to the classroom for her second year of teaching: "I don't know. It's just been the first year. Towards the end there, the good days outweighed the bad and I know that by the fall I'll be ready to get back into the classroom."

Professional Identity

Arlene considered a professional identity to be something that took years to attain—something only an experienced, dedicated teacher could claim:

> I don't know if I identify myself as a teacher. When people ask me what I do, I say I'm a teacher but it feels like I should have a halo or something…and I don't. In my mind, a teacher is somebody who's been with the profession for 20 years and they're dedicated. And then here's me, just starting out.

At her most discouraged, Arlene admitted that sometimes, "It doesn't feel like I've been a teacher—just more like a jailer."

Nevertheless, Arlene recognized in herself a baseline desire to reach out to her

students, and she decided the best way to do that would be to create a new Language Arts curriculum:

> I've been trying to think of how I can make the curriculum geared towards Native American students. And so that's what I'm going to be working on this summer is trying to come up with something to motivate these kids to make them like reading…. We have worked out of [standard anthologized literature] textbooks… and it's funny to see the kids going through, reading the essays or reading the poems. There's no connection there and so I'm trying to pull together my own readings to bring into the classroom mostly [oral and written literature by] Native Americans.

Arlene had written on her application to the UTTP, "I will quiet the whispers of the old ones by using the language that was beaten into my grandmother. I, like many others, will tell our story, our way." She hoped that by bringing more Native American literature and history into her classroom, it would be possible to regain some of her initial enthusiasm for teaching:

> I'm not [teaching summer school]—no classes but just having all this time to think about what it is I want to bring back into the classroom…That might be one of the strengths of my teacher identity, is that I'm still thinking how I can get my kids motivated to read, motivated to learn, and wanting to graduate from high school.

Participant Three: Vince

Personal, Family, and Community Background

Vince was a Spanish major with an English minor. He was raised on the Ute reservation and attended the local public schools in northeastern Utah. His wife, whom he met at college, was also a teacher and they were raising two young children. Their third child was born during Vince's first full year of teaching.

Vince remembered having only two American Indian teachers while he was a student, and both of those were in elementary school. No single teacher stood out for him as an early inspiration, but Vince said he had "always kicked around the idea of teaching." Even before participating in the UTTP, Vince had experience in the classroom working with an English as a Second Language (ESL) program:

> Back in the mid-90s the school district here was being investigated by the OCR [Office of Civil Rights], and they were found in violation. They were trying to comply and they asked me to work for them in their ESL department because…a lot of Native American population here are limited English proficient students, and then I spoke Spanish and so that also helped serve those students who are Spanish speakers here, and there are some. And so I was able to kind of…serve both populations and they thought I would fit in really well. So that's where I started getting my ideas about teaching.

Vince was in his early thirties at the time of this study and had experienced a variety of different job situations. After graduating from a large state university, he returned to the Ute reservation and wrote articles for a weekly newspaper, worked with the ESL program, and directed a recreation program for a community organization. Vince even worked as a classroom teacher for awhile at the reservation charter school, but was not certified and did not have the resources to return to school for teacher education courses. Eventually he was drawn to working with high school-aged kids in a group home on the reservation. These students were sent to the home because of substance abuse and emotional issues which put them at risk in a normal school setting. As Vince explained,

> I had a friend who was doing his [graduate] work at one of the group homes here and he asked me to come work with him because he was kind of afraid of the kids…. I stayed there for a couple years working and I really liked it, working with the kids.

The experience of teaching in an alternative educational environment gave Vince a sense of purpose that he had not felt before:

> I have a degree in literature and so I found myself always taking off with some of the kids and reading books. We'd sit someplace and I'd just read to them out loud. It's kind of funny because these kids were "naughty" kids and they don't seem like the type that would sit around and listen to a story but they did. I found books that they'd like. I really enjoyed that and so when [the UTTP] came open and I had the opportunity to go back and get my secondary ed. certificate, I jumped at it because I realized that's really where I want to be, is teaching.

The Ute Teacher Training Program

Vince started thinking differently about the teaching profession during his teacher training program, which he entered after completing a college degree in Spanish. He started observing other teachers during clinical experiences; in these one-credit practicums, preservice teachers were required to observe and reflect on various levels of secondary classrooms in their majors and minors for a total of 30 hours per semester (USU Dept. of Secondary Education, 2007a). Gradually Vince realized that classroom teaching had similarities to what he had experienced in the group home where he worked prior to the UTTP:

> In the beginning [of the UTTP] I thought…the teacher had all this information and they were supposed to disperse that to the students. That was my first thought of what teaching was…although that's not really what good teaching is about. It's more of taking a journey alongside your students and learning something with them rather than just pouring out the information that you know.

Participating in the UTTP was an opportunity for Vince to obtain a credential for something he already enjoyed doing. Being a member of the cohort also connected him to an academic and professional community:

> Besides giving me the opportunity to go back to school again, I had a bunch of

> peers that I was able to work with and we all went through the program together. We were in different fields but we were a cohort together and able to talk about some of our challenges and our successes, as a group. I really liked working with my cohort. I saw them here and there at different activities that were scheduled for us…and I think that's probably the biggest thing that I liked.

Vince said that at the time of this interview, after the UTTP had ended, "It's [still] kind of like a little support group. We all look out for each other and ask how we're doing and how things are going."

Student Teaching

Vince chose to do his student teaching at a public junior high school. He taught Spanish and English to seventh and eighth graders. Because of his previous experience in a variety of education environments, Vince was confident in his teaching ability but still had to learn how to teach differently than he was taught: "Most of the teaching I had as a student was kind of your traditional teaching with lecturing and notes and so that's what I thought teaching was supposed to be."

Vince had a traditional student teaching experience, according to USU guidelines which prescribe a 10-week student teaching experience (USU Dept. of Secondary Education, 2007b). He first observed his cooperating teachers in the classroom and then gradually took over their classes on his own. Vince mentioned how much he appreciated the mentoring influence of his cooperating teachers during this time. In Spanish classes, he explained, "I student taught with…a great guy. I mostly learned from him how to act with students [in the classroom] because he's really good with students; he's really positive. He has great rapport and I learned a lot about that from him."

Vince also admired his cooperating teacher in English, who was nearing the end

of his teaching career. Vince described how his mentor helped him realize that students had to be ready to learn. During wide-ranging prep hour discussions, his English cooperating teacher "would give me insights that I hadn't ever thought of. A lot of these conversations had to do with development and age. We didn't really study much of that with secondary education." Vince explained that "development and age" discussions covered topics such as student attention span and "some of the changes like understanding [their] humor and their self-concepts."

Another advantage of mentoring from his cooperating teacher was that Vince was able to refine his ideas: "I was already set in my direction [when I entered the teacher training program]; I just was allowed to grow more and more and I'm still growing that way." Specifically, he learned some concepts and strategies about how to engage students and plan out his classes:

> [My cooperating teacher] helped me also to understand how I could vary my teaching to build upon [the students'] strengths, to push them and to keep their attention, keep them on task…When I first went to his classroom I thought he was a little strict and almost burnt out but after being there in the classroom with him I really learned a whole lot. He would tell me things and say, "Well, you might want to do this with your teaching. Maybe you can, to make it a little easier on yourself, you can break down your teaching, your time, to break up an hour, into three parts, or maybe three activities." He really helped me understand how I could improve my lesson planning. He was very organized.

Vince was initially concerned about teaching "the right way," and noted that each time he taught a given lesson or unit, it would be slightly different: "There were a few times where I was really excited about certain things I'd planned and I would go too fast but it seems like the second or the third time I'd teach the same lesson, then I would be better." Vince was striving for a perfect melding of course content, instructional timing,

and student interest:

> I told [my cooperating teacher] something about teaching the perfect lesson and he said, "Well there really isn't a perfect lesson. People teach differently and sometimes it will go over really well with one class and it won't go so well in another class. You can only hold on to it and contain it for awhile but it's always something that's in flux so there's no real perfect lesson." That really helped me understand teaching because I had that idea that this is the right way and this is the wrong way, really black and white. And there really is no black and white.

First Year Teaching

Vince chose to teach at a remote residential school in Arizona on the Navajo reservation. "You can't get there on paved roads so it seems kind of primitive that way," he explained, "But once you get there, the facilities and the school are great." He chose to go out of state not only for the pay, but for the opportunity to grow as a person:

> I know a lot of [American Indian] teachers want to stay in their communities and live with people they grew up with and help students that way but that's not always possible. In fact, I think getting away, for me, allows me to be a new person…. It really helps me to be a different person and to be able to be things that people had never thought I could be.

Vince's dad was the one who suggested a trip to Arizona to investigate teaching jobs:

> The Navajo reservation has a lot [of teaching opportunities] and my dad's from there, and when I told him I was looking to see what kind of opportunities were down there, he really wanted to go and show me around. So we took a trip and we went and visited a bunch of different schools and talked to principals. When I arrived at [the school where I teach now] it was really neat to see the campus…. They have housing and the teacher housing was really good and affordable…. And the principal liked me and he wanted to hire me right away. He told me he was interested in me and so they called me back and we had a phone interview and they hired me.

Vince's school serves students from the entire Navajo Nation of over 250,000 residents. The reservation encompasses parts of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah and is the largest Indian reservation in the United States (Navajo Nation, 2005). In contrast, the

Uintah and Ouray (Northern Ute) reservation where Vince was brought up, second only to the Navajo Nation in square miles, has a population of just over 3,000 (Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation, 2002). The Ute population is also more centralized so most Ute students attend schools within driving distance of their homes. Therefore, Vince had to get used to a totally different school system:

> It seems like on the Navajo reservation there are a lot of open-enrollment schools, so if you have a desire to go to [another] school because you liked the athletic program, you can go and send your kid there and have them live in the dorms and go to school there. And so we have kids that are from all over the place…We have a dorm in the community where kids can go and stay and they have the community school and then they have the public school. It's nice because it's all contained on one campus where they have the high school, the middle school and then they have an elementary.

Vince was as upbeat about his teaching environment as he was about the school campus. He taught in a particularly spacious room outfitted with up-to-date technology:

> I have an awesome classroom…. I actually got the old special ed room…so it has a sink and it has a water fountain, it has some cupboards. It's almost like a little kitchen, except it doesn't have a refrigerator or a stove but it's nice in that it has that type of facility. I have three walls that have [white] boards on them, they gave us laptops, and we have projectors in our rooms. Every classroom in the school has a projector which we can [use to] project stuff from our computer.

After his first year of teaching in Arizona, Vince was trying to recruit members of his UTTP cohort to teach at his school:

> I'm out of state now and so I'm in a really good place and I keep thinking I can convince some of these guys to come and work down where I'm at because it seems like a better situation than it is [on the Ute reservation]. [On the Navajo reservation] they need teachers and they need Native teachers a whole lot. There's a need everywhere and there's so many jobs to fill. The pay's better in Arizona than it is in Utah and there's a lot more money in their school system. Their facilities are nice, the technology's better. In fact the school where we're in, we're going to all of the students having laptops and all digital.

The size of Vince's classroom was particularly suited for his use of kinetic

activities with the Navajo students:

> It was a big space; I had two doors, plenty of windows….It was a really nice room. What I did to it was I plastered my walls with Velcro because I like to use word walls and so I hooked Velcro all over my room so I could make these word walls. I also use a lot of pictures, drawings, and do a lot of Total Physical Response storytelling with those. It's a lot of work but it's a lot of fun…. Total Physical Response is a method in which you use your body movements and sound, and the students watch and then they perform and they're able to learn vocabulary that way. With storytelling, you implement that with telling a story, so it's a lot of work…but it's really effective and it makes learning more fun.

Vince was hired to teach Spanish and English, and because he speaks Spanish fluently his students initially thought he was from Mexico:

> I work in a school of 100% Native American [students] and it's neat to be there and to have students look at you, and they ask me if I'm Mexican because I speak Spanish. And I tell them 'No, I'm Native," and I tell them my story, how I learned the language [in school]. And they're really surprised at that because they're not used to having Native teachers. Usually their teachers are from back east, is what they usually get.

Vince's school had about 30 teachers, but very few were from the west and only 5 or 6 were American Indian. He considered the non-Indian teachers at his school, some of whom were placed there right out of college through an alternative certification program, to be a well-meaning but transient population:

> They know their subject areas really well, and they learn a lot of things, and I think they might have had a little bit of [multicultural] training but they don't know much about teaching special populations…. [The reservation schools] pay well and that's why you have all these [teachers and administrators] who come in and they move there. They make $70,000 - $80,000 a year and they're just saving their money. It's kind of sad in a lot of ways because they come in, they stay, they leave; they come in, they stay, they leave; and even though they stay there they never become part of the community…. Because they never become part of the community, the bridge between the school and the community never really gets built and so that's a sad thing but at the same time, it's a huge door that is open for all Native teachers to come in.

Most of the American Indian teachers at Vince's school were in their 50s and 60s,

so he was by far the youngest. Nevertheless, he sometimes found himself the spokesperson at faculty meetings:

> There were a few instances in faculty meetings and trainings that we had in which a certain staff member was asked to give a training [workshop] on, say like on reading…. So they would get up and they would give this training and I would raise my hand and say, "You also don't want to forget that these are Native kids and they think circular. They don't think linearly, like they do everywhere else," and [the faculty members] would look at me and…the principal would say, "Well why don't you come up and explain it," and so I'd have to explain this thing and a lot of them would look at me, and they'd be like, "Wow, I'd never heard that before."

Vince began to understand that his training during the UTTP and his own school career as an American Indian student gave him unique insights:

> Like I said, a lot of [the faculty and administration] were from back east and so they didn't know these things. And so I started to realize that I knew certain things because I had gone through this program and because of my own experience that they hadn't known and so a lot of times I feel like they don't know me and they don't know what I know. But as I get more experience, I can shed the whole this-is-my-first-year-teaching thing and I could probably become a little bit more influential.

Overall Vince felt as if he made progress during his first year of full-time teaching but was philosophical about his learning curve:

> I think I was able to organize myself a little bit better, to clarify some of the methods that I had, be more specific in how I want to do things…. I'm starting to understand more about how to teach, how to plan, how to be specific. Then with the *No Child Left Behind* guidelines…there's more required of us. They're good things but it takes time to be able to soak it up and then to implement it into your own teaching.

Vince figured it would take him a lot longer in his own classroom to feel "really on the top of my game." He explained, "It really is going to take, like, three years and so I've got two more years to go before I feel I'm at the point where I have mastered a certain amount of my teaching." Vince joked that he hoped he knew what he was doing

after his first year, but he knew he was still learning:

> People always ask, "Are teachers born or can they be made?" I think they can be made but it takes a long time to make a teacher. It's not like something you can go through in four years [of college] and be done.

Professional Identity

Vince felt very upbeat about teaching, and in his mind it was a position of status. He did not like to hear other teachers complaining about their jobs:

> Being a teacher is a positive thing. You can go to any place in the United States and just happen to say, "I'm a school teacher," and people will look at you and say, "Oh, that's great, what do you teach?" They automatically get a positive idea of you and that's really nice to have that, besides the discounts you can get as a teacher.... Being a teacher is a nice profession to be in and there are so many reasons not to complain about being a teacher.

Vince also recognized his tendency to look at older teachers and think that they may not have much to teach him about their profession:

> It's really easy to become judgmental of other teachers and say, "Well this is traditional, old-school type," and then to not be so empathetic of them, and to be almost coarse and demeaning. But I think I've grown to the point where I can see a teacher like that and understand that it takes a long time to really implement your ideas and to implement new ideas and to change them—to change yourself—but it's possible.

On the other hand, Vince had some serious concerns about his work as a Spanish teacher and he used a battlefield analogy to describe how it affected him: "As for my identity, I feel like I'm doing something positive but I'm not in the battle with the teachers who count." Specifically, Vince felt as if the *No Child Left Behind* legislation had "beaten up" foreign language teachers:

> The reason why I say that is because most administrators look at [foreign language teachers] now as not [teaching] the important classes because we aren't the ones who have to have our kids at a certain level to be tested and we're not

> held accountable in that regard. So in that way I feel like I'm not in the battle. Even though I try to be supportive of other teachers, it feels like my teaching isn't as important…. Teaching English seems a bit more important than teaching Spanish because the school is held accountable for the scores the students get. And I can teach English but I didn't teach English this past year and it makes me want to teach English because I want to be involved in that battle.

Vince thought that his strong identity as a teacher might actually work against what he really wanted to do in American Indian communities. He talked about "disconnecting" from his classroom role in order to help students and parents see that school-based education is important, but it is not the only solution:

> Because I come from a Native community I know that there is more than one set of rules to how things are done and how families view their kids. Lately what I've been thinking is that [Native] kids and [Native] parents oftentimes think of the education system as being school. You go to school, you learn, you get an education at school away from home, and if you want to continue your education you go to college…. Back a long time ago before we were involved in any of this education that we have today, education was your home life—your family teaching you how to survive in the world. That still exists today but somehow parents have been disconnected from that.

Vince's hope was that he could make systemic changes not just in the schools but in the communities where he taught:

> [American Indians] need to get to the point where we start reconnecting the parents so that they know that the education that students need to learn to survive is very much [from the home]; they need to be involved…. That's what I've been thinking as of late, and so being part of the Indian community…. I want to disconnect myself [from the classroom teacher role] and then help people understand so that they can empower themselves.

Participant Four: Rina

Personal, Family, and Community Background

Rina was a health major and physical education minor. She was the youngest

member of the UTTP cohort, although she was already in her mid-twenties when she applied to the program. As a Ute Tribe member Rina spent some time in public schools near the Ute reservation, but she spent most of her elementary and secondary school years out of state: "I was born in New Mexico…so I knew a lot of Pueblos and a lot of different array of diversity." She recalled the influence that a "handful" of American Indian teachers had on her life goals:

> Having gone to school down in Santa Fe, I've had a little bit more [American Indian teachers] than I may have if I had stayed here [on the Ute reservation]…. As far as leadership goes, they didn't really say, "You need to be a teacher someday." But they definitely encouraged me….They would have you become club president, or something, and just believe in you. And so that kind of pushed me to [say to myself], "Hey, I can do this." And that, later on, helped me out to be a teacher in the end.

Rina began early thinking about a possible teaching career: "When I was younger I used to have my own chalkboard and I'd have my chalk and stuff, and I had all my chairs lined up and so I guess I knew I wanted to be a teacher." Family members also provided role models and a support system for Rina as she grew older. "I always knew I wanted to go to college," Rina revealed. "There was simply no other alternative." Her father earned a masters degree and Rina remembered the stories he told about his experiences as a graduate student. Her older brother attended college at the same time Rina was going to high school, and he provided an inspirational link to university life: "When I would have holiday break at my high school, my brother would take me to class with him. It was great to experience college first hand and be able to see my brother's confidence in class."

Initially Rina followed her brother's academic example by studying health

administration at college, but during her senior year she found her own path. While she was doing her senior project, she realized that she wanted to be a teacher:

> My major was healthy lifestyles, nutrition, and health, and so for my senior project I had to go into the schools and do presentations to the students, and so being in front of the classroom just made me have a yearning to want to be a teacher….Throughout that whole last semester I was there I had been asking teachers, "How is it? How do you like going into the teaching area or field?"

With teaching as a new goal, Rina began an internship to complete her health major:

> For my internship, which was separate from teaching and doing my presentations for my senior project at the schools, I did my internship [on the Ute reservation] at the diabetic wellness center. They had a summer program, which is like three months long and you have all the Native American students come in, all age levels. You're having to teach all of them at one time about health and nutrition, for the full day…. And that was my internship, pretty much just being a teacher.

After her internship, Rina was researching different teacher education programs to apply for when she heard about the UTTP on the radio.

The Ute Teacher Training Program

Rina was skeptical at first that the program would really happen, or that it would last: "[I was thinking that] there's got to be something more to this. Is there going to be something lurking around the corner or some pitfall that I'm going to find out later in the program?" Financially it seemed almost too good to be true:

> Not many times are you offered all this, to get an education pretty much for free and all you've got to do is the [academic] work…. I wouldn't have been able to [obtain a teaching credential] so quick, especially after just graduating.

A primary consideration for Rina after college was to be near family members on the Ute reservation, since she spent most of her K-12 school years in another state, then left home again to complete her BS degree. The UTTP offered not only an inexpensive

local education, but also small classes and a supportive cohort:

> Being able to be here in a smaller place, everybody knew each other. It was tight knit and we all had the same goals and we could help each other. It wasn't so cutthroat, whereas it may be in another area where it's so competitive…it was just a little homier feeling and you knew everybody.

Another plus for Rina was that in the UTTP she could navigate the teacher training process without the competition that she expected to find elsewhere:

> It was better than just having to independently go on your own way because you all learn together and you have to take similar classes together and go through the same thing together so that made it a little less intimidating, because it is a big process [to become a teacher].

Cohorts don't just gel on their own, and Rina acknowledged that the UTTP grant administrator was a motivating factor in the program:

> It was helpful to have [the grant administrator] try to have us do things together as a group and come together.… She'd just have us get together and have potlucks. Then we'd all get together and talk and we'd have certain things, and she'd plan things. So [she] was a big influence in keeping us motivated.

Student Teaching

Rina participated in a traditional ten-week student teaching experience at a public junior high school. She was familiar with the school because she had previously participated in some health outreach programs there. Rina liked the fact that the faculty seemed to be close-knit, and she requested the school for her student teaching experience because of that reason. Rina taught her major, health, and also some physical education classes for grades six through eight. She felt fairly successful with her physical education classes:

> [Students] were receptive. I didn't expect them to be because I'm short. I'm the same height as they are, so they can't look up and see the tall gym teacher—

> especially in gym, I just melt in with them. But they listened to me a lot more than I had anticipated…. Being a female short P.E. teacher, I have to do so much more to get them to listen and if I can get them to respond to me then I've had to work twice as hard as a male teacher who's tall. I guess I succeeded because they listened to me and I wasn't a total wreck.

Rina was also younger than most of the other teachers, so she felt she had to project an authoritarian persona to her junior high audience:

> I'm so young, I just don't want to portray that and have [my students] not listen to me, so I thought I had to be professional and not laugh at some of the stuff, not be so lax or relaxed around them because I wanted to be like, "I'm tough," and I had to have this outer shell. But at the end [of student teaching], I realized that you develop it as you go, your own personality, and that's what makes students remember you.

Rina not only looked younger than the other teachers, but she looked different. Many of her American Indian students did not recognize her as a member of their tribe:

> A lot of them didn't think that I was from the [Ute] reservation because I had been gone so long that some of them didn't know me…I guess because of my skin color. My dad is Sioux and French and the Sioux people from Fort Yates are light complected.

Overall, time management was her greatest challenge during student teaching. Rina quickly discovered how much out-of-school time it took to be a good teacher inside the school:

> It's a very tough job. It's not a 9 to 5 job or an 8 to 4. You don't just go to work and show up. You have to actually go prepared for work. You have to prepare the night before, not only for your lecture but you have to correct whatever paperwork from the day before and come to class prepared.

In addition, the discipline problems at her school drained much of Rina's enthusiasm:

> Awesome school; the faculty are just great and they made [student teaching] an awesome experience…. But [this school] was really challenging once I got in there…. I had a lot of disruptive problems in the classroom. I saw a lot of other teachers did, too, and not just me as a student teacher. It wasn't just me, which made me feel a little bit better after seeing that, so it wasn't so personal but…

> [student teaching] was a lot harder than I thought it was going to be.

Rina was finally able to help motivate some of her students, and recalling some of those experiences almost brought her to tears:

> The most satisfying part about student teaching was that you see that some students are having a hard time in the classroom. And it's really hard for a teacher to look at every single student out there and try to help every single one individually because sometimes [students] don't reach out to you. Not that they don't want the help but they don't know how to ask for the help…. It's just so challenging but—I'm going to cry about this—so rewarding.

Making connections to students came at a price, however. Rina was concerned as much with the paperwork load as with the emotional responsibilities of teaching:

> You take the stuff home with you, not only paperwork but you take, "How am I going to help this student out," or, "This student went through this today," and it's wearing on you…. [Students] tell you a little too much than you'd want to know and it breaks your heart…. I guess a good teacher does, though, invest a little bit more time into their students. That's one thing that I've learned from student teaching is that [being a teacher] is a lot more detailed than what you would expect it to be or than what people think it is.

Rina, a self-proclaimed "nerd," struggled with the fact that her students were not motivated to achieve in the same way she had been at their age. She remembered,

> I've gone through classes where I've been the only minority student there but I never sat at the back of the classroom or was like, "Oh, I can't respond." I always knew that academics and being an academic student was important and so I tried not to stray from the path, and that's where I wanted to be.

In contrast, Rina saw her own students unwilling to succeed if it meant standing out from the crowd:

> I'd have awesome students in the class who were smart, brilliant students but didn't want to be. They didn't want everybody else to see that…. That was so frustrating to me because you'd give them tests and they'd fail on purpose. I guess it's just the peer relationship that, "If everybody's going to be bad then I might as well be, too. I'm going to follow along with everybody else." I heard a student say, "Well I knew that was the answer but I just chose any one. I'd find

the right answer and then I'd pick the other one.

First Year Teaching

Rina went through her student teaching while other UTTP participants were completing their first year of full time teaching. She took some time off after the semester was over, and at the time of this study she was trying to schedule her Praxis test, required by the state of Utah (USU College of Education and Human Services, 2006):

> As far as trying to finish out my [teaching] license…, I had to do some more research about the Praxis because students now have to take the Praxis before they even do their student teaching and so at the last minute, it's like, "Here, you've got to take this. Here's some of the stuff," and they didn't give you any paperwork. So I had to go online and you have correspondence through e-mails and the telephone to have them send me some of the information so I knew that I had everything. I've been trying to track everything down so I have all the resources I need to study off of and actually take the Praxis…and get signed up for that, which is another lengthy process.

Rina was frustrated by the paperwork involved in certification because by this time the UTTP had dissolved and there was no more direct mentoring of UTTP participants. In addition, she was losing her drive to become a teacher:

> I know that after I got through student teaching I found out that it made me a little bit wary, with some of the liability stuff and some of the classes that I took. Some of the students in the [UTTP] worried that, "This is a lot tougher than we expected it to be or than what we anticipated it to be," with having to be a qualified teacher. Not that you shouldn't ever keep up with stuff because you have to stay current, and you have to stay updated and take classes…. There's a reason for it and it's totally understandable but it kind of makes you a little bit wary of being a teacher after all of that.

Nevertheless, Rina still planned to continue her education: "I want to get my Masters eventually, so that's going to come into the picture at some point, which will make it even so much harder trying to be a teacher."

Professional Identity

Rina did not work as a full-time teacher in the 2 years following her student teaching experience because of health issues, but she did have some observations about teaching. Overall, Rina understood that establishing a professional identity would take more time: "I don't feel like a teacher as of yet. Until I can actually have a whole classroom to myself and not have somebody else [as a supervising teacher], then I'll feel like a bona fide or qualified teacher." She explained, "It takes a lot of dedication to be a teacher and the will to do it so if you don't have the will then you're never going to get there." Although Rina wasn't sure whether she had the will to be a teacher, she liked having an audience: "I like the public speaking aspect of [teaching] and being able to be in front of the classroom and just having all the students out there, wanting to learn."

Rina thought that one of the most important aspects of a teacher's job, especially in her local community on the reservation, was being a role model:

> Even when you walk out of the classroom, you have eyes everywhere watching you. Students see you all the time and you don't want to be doing something really off-the-wall. You have to have some responsibility anyway in life but [being a teacher] just makes you think double hard about who you are as a person, so I do.

Rina noted that teachers have to "reach inside [themselves] and…not just [show] the superficial, on-the-surface stuff." She continued:

> If you don't show students that you're there to teach and you're not genuine about it then they're not going to be receptive to you. I've been in classrooms where a teacher was just like, "Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah," and "You go over here, and you go over there." No "Hi, how are you?" and no "get to know you" type stuff. So I think that [teaching is] a lot of reaching into your soul and just being a lot more genuine.

Rina had done some reflection about her goals during the UTTP, and she made a strong

connection between her teacher identity and her own self-awareness: “I’ve realized that [in teaching] it’s probably not only teacher identity but self-identity or self-awareness that matters… You kind of have to know yourself.

Summary

These four narratives followed each participant from pre-UTTP experiences through the teacher training program, the student teaching experience, and finally into the first year of full time teaching. Each participant told slightly different stories, but the narratives were grouped under identical subheadings. The next section of this dissertation will weave together common threads as well as unravel some of the unique insights that each participant contributed to the exploration of developing professional teacher identity.

CHAPTER V

PATTERNS AND OUTCOMES

This chapter reframes the participants' narratives in a structured response to the research question for this qualitative case study: What school-based experiences and what personal, family, and community beliefs affect the development of professional teacher identity? The researcher examined what was learned from creating a teacher-training program in northeastern Utah for American Indian students and, more importantly, what the participants learned about being and becoming teachers after leaving the UTTP. Chapter V reconstructs narrative information from the previous chapter in the form of three paradoxical patterns that emerged from the data: (a) solidarity and independence, (b) habit and change, and (c) tradition and invention. The chapter concludes with an Application section, which applies the three patterns to the research question asked at the beginning of this qualitative case study and to other research on developing a professional teacher identity.

Solidarity and Independence

The first pattern, solidarity and independence, contrasts the participants' personal and professional connections with the feeling of independence that this solidarity created. The UTTP experience was designed to create and nurture a small cohort of American Indian teachers, so the personal connections made during the program were not surprising. However, simply being affiliated with various Indian tribes was not enough of a reason for solidarity among the members of the cohort. There were initially more

differences than similarities among the participants: they had not been in communication before being recruited for the program, they were different ages, they attended different schools prior to the UTTP, and as university students, they were all studying different content areas. “Going into this program, all being Native American, we had so many different opinions,” remembered Maria. “And that was the one thing that stood out to me.”

Prior to the UTTP, each participant had been a distinct minority among predominantly non-Indian students while attending high school and college. Even though the student body at the host campus for the UTTP was configured the same way—with very few American Indian students—the UTTP participants felt empowered to be more independent and outspoken by being part of an academic cohort. Indeed, the secondary teacher education courses which all UTTP students took together served as a haven for individuality among students who were more used to being singled out in other classes as a spokesperson for American Indian students. As Maria explained, “[The program] didn’t put us as a whole. It didn’t make us all one mind.”

After the UTTP, this confidence in articulating independent positions served them well. During her first full year of teaching, Maria spearheaded a move to help the math program at her school become more interactive and less dependent on worksheets. Vince, the youngest American Indian teacher among a predominantly non-Indian faculty, was occasionally called upon at faculty workshops to explain culturally responsive teaching strategies, some of which he was using with his Navajo students. Most of the faculty members at his school knew their content areas well but as he observed, “They don’t

know much about teaching special populations." Vince himself had only recently learned about some of the techniques he explained to his fellow faculty members, but he had the confidence of experiential knowledge gleaned from many discussions with his UTTP cohort about American Indian education. Other teachers at Vince's school did not have his specialized knowledge, even though some of those teachers were older and had more teaching experience.

Vince's ability to speak authoritatively as an advocate for American Indian students endeared him to his peers on the faculty and empowered him to think about his potential as a school administrator. His independence on the faculty also gave him a feeling of solidarity with the wider professional community of American Indian teachers. He observed, "[Teacher turnover at reservation schools] is a sad thing, but at the same time it's a huge door that is open for all Native teachers to come in." Maria also saw her potential for moving into other education positions, perhaps using her psychology minor as a springboard to become a school counselor. Like Vince, she considered herself a member of a wider professional community, and this helped sustain her commitment to teaching. After attending her first National Indian Education Association conference, she enthused, "That is *powerful,* knowing you're a part of that—knowing that there are all these Native American teachers out there and that you are a part of them."

Encouraging solidarity among the UTTP cohort members was the primary goal of the UTTP grant administrator, a Ute Tribe member. She did this by developing opportunities for participants to meet together outside of the classroom, scheduling and funding field trips, and providing academic and career counseling. Participants attended

periodic pot luck dinners for participants, their families, and various university instructors. All UTTP students, both local and off site, were provided funds to attend annual conferences of the American Indian Education Association, as well as local education conferences co-sponsored by the Ute Tribe. The grant administrator also helped arrange summer employment, which for the local UTTP participants included working for Upward Bound, an academic mentoring program for adolescents whose parents had not graduated from college.

The result of these extra-curricular activities was to bring a diverse group of American Indian students from various content areas into a functioning whole. Arlene remembered not just being in a cohort but having a group identity, moving in a small group through the three years of the program. Maria agreed, “We went in together, we finished together, and we had each other’s help.” Rina observed that the program was less intimidating because of the fact that UTTP participants were “tight knit” and they had the same educational goals. According to Vince, “It was kind of like a little support group.”

This solidarity was indicative of the strength of the program—that it nurtured an early interest in peer support—but was also indicative of the lack of conventional mentoring in the participants’ teaching experiences. Maria, Arlene, Vince, and Rina relied on each other for sharing teaching strategies and seeking solutions to other school-related issues. Although all the participants had an on-site educator who signed off on their student teaching, only two participants had a conventional student teaching mentor on site; none of the participants who went on to full time teaching had a designated mentor, nor did they participate in an induction program. In addition, by 2006 the UTTP

was at the end of the grant cycle. After the program lost its federal funding, no other funding sources were identified to continue the mentoring services previously provided by the UTTP grant administrator. In other words, the continuing solidarity among local UTTP participants was a survival strategy.

Only Vince and Rina were mentored in the conventional sense of having a master teacher work with a novice teacher during the student teaching experience. Vince's narrative about student teaching contained many references to thoughtful conversations and helpful ideas that he gleaned from his two cooperating teachers, and Rina praised the supportive environment of her school's faculty. Although Maria and Arlene did their student teaching in a much smaller school, which should theoretically have been more supportive across the curriculum, they filled teaching voids in an under-staffed faculty. They were observed but not mentored in the sense of working with a cooperating teacher who taught the same classes. As Maria recalled, "I had no curriculum, no help from any others…. I basically developed everything I had." Both Maria and Arlene went directly from the frying pan of teacher education courses into the fire of full-time teaching. This may be one reason that their narratives contain more references to peer support. However, all participants noted the paradox of finding independence in the process of experiencing solidarity with other American Indian students and teachers.

Habit and Change

The second pattern, habit and change, focuses on the need for structure and dependability in the teaching profession, as well as for innovation and change. In terms of

structure, the UTTP grant requirements were clear: all program graduates would spend the first two years after certification teaching in schools serving American Indian students. The participants were not just grudgingly compliant with this requirement; they wanted to make a difference in the lives of American Indian children. The challenge they faced was to figure out how to do this. They would have to determine how much of their teaching and learning habits needed to change in order to teach effectively in American Indian classrooms.

The UTTP participants, like other students studying for the secondary teaching credential, were required to take one class in Education and Multicultural Foundations, which covered a wide range of learning theories and cultural backgrounds for diverse student populations (USU Department of Secondary Education, 2007b). Unlike other secondary education students, however, the UTTP participants would be teaching in schools serving a very specific population: American Indian students. This fact did not change the way their academic program was delivered because the required secondary education curriculum was for all students enrolled, not just for the UTTP students. Maria, Arlene, Vince, and Rina received only fragmentary instruction about resources and teaching strategies which might be beneficial in American Indian classrooms, although their discussions in and outside of classes provided peer support for some of the resources and strategies they would eventually employ.

The academic portion of the UTTP provided enough knowledge about learning and teaching styles that the participants knew they were not like many of the students they were expected to teach. During most of their public school years all four participants

had been goal-oriented and attentive, and they had adapted to the lecture/note-taking and discussion format. Rina recalled being the only minority student in many of her classes, but she never felt that she could not respond because of not wanting to seem smart or successful. Arlene had always loved to read and she was fascinated by history. Vince was equally enthralled by the rhythm and power of language. The participants modeled their teaching habits on the strategies employed by secondary teachers they admired, and those teachers taught in classrooms with few if any American Indian students.

The pressure to change started as soon as the participants started student teaching. Arlene's primary discovery was that "a lot of those [American Indian] kids don't learn the way I do." She was an avid reader and an accomplished writer, and initially thought that this would translate into inspiring her own students. However, many of her students did not enjoy reading or writing because their skills were far below grade level. Arlene found herself getting impatient and then discouraged with her students' lack of motivation. Maria preferred direct instruction in the math classes she took as a student, so she felt out of her comfort zone with some of the culturally responsive pedagogy she learned during the UTTP: "They're always saying, 'Hands on, Native American, Visuals'…[but] give me those visuals and stuff and I get confused." Maria claimed that she learned best when a teacher would outline the steps and just let her figure out the problem herself. When Vince was a student he did well listening to lectures and taking notes, and he also had previous success helping students at a group home by reading aloud to them. He figured that what "teaching was supposed to be" was being in front of a classroom, leading students in discussions of language and literature. Vince admitted,

"It's been a process for me to overcome that [vision of teaching] and to implement other things."

All three participants who went on to full time teaching began to adapt their teaching styles by using more participative, visual, and kinetic methods. This change could be interpreted as using more culturally responsive strategies, but it could also be considered as a healthy growth pattern in their teacher identities. They felt independent enough to break with some old teaching and learning habits and shift the classroom focus from a content-driven curriculum to one that is more student-centered. Maria observed that her adaptations were not so much about teaching differently as they were about teaching with a wider range of strategies. "It comes back to using a little bit more variety in my teaching," she explained.

Vince started to use Velcro-attached word walls where students could move words around. He also implemented the Total Physical Response teaching method to link sound and body movements, utilizing storytelling to learn Spanish vocabulary and sentence structure. Vince gradually began to enjoy teaching more and to make more learning connections with his American Indian students: "It takes a long time to implement new ideas and to change them—change yourself—but it's possible." Maria slowly began to introduce math manipulatives and other interactive techniques into her high school classes. The change in routine was not easy. First, there was the difficulty of obtaining the resources, and then Maria had to research and develop her own approaches to use them effectively in the curriculum. Arlene began to utilize "a lot more hands-on, a lot more getting away from just the plain reading and writing every day" in her English

and history classes. She admitted that it was fun to do this but also “really hard to step away from my own learning style.”

Arlene’s change, even though she would not implement it until the following year, was the most overtly responsive to her American Indian students. She decided that the way she would encourage more student interest in the curriculum and connect more effectively with her students was to go back to a goal she stated before entering the UTTP. She wanted to teach English and history from American Indian literature and primary historical documents. Referring to her Navajo grandmother who had been forbidden to use the Navajo language at boarding school, Arlene predicted that as a teacher she would “quiet the whispers of the old ones by using the language that was beaten into my grandmother. I, like many others, will tell our story, our way.”

Tradition and Invention

A third pattern, tradition and invention, contrasts the tradition of being a teacher with the reinvention of self as teacher. There is no question that the tradition of American Indian elders teaching the ways of their people to younger tribe members is intricately woven into the fabric of American Indian culture. The newer tradition of academically trained American Indian teachers is a vision the Ute Tribe has held for many years. The Ute Tribe Education Council has been proactive in many different areas of American Indian education since 1951 (Ute Tribe, 1983). In 1981 the tribe published a Ute history book in both the Ute and the English language, designed to be used in local elementary schools (Ute Tribe, 1981), and in 2000 the Education Council received authorization

from the Utah State Office of Education to open a charter high school on the reservation (Ute Tribe, 2001). Ute Tribe members hoped not only to hire Ute teachers, but also to educate more Ute adolescents on the reservation.

The Education Council has applied for several federal grant cycles for teacher education programs since 1974, partnering with different institutions of higher education. The first grant was with Brigham Young University (Ute Tribe, 1975, 1981), the second with Weber State University (Ute Tribe, 1988, 1991), and the UTTP was with Utah State University. Although the three Ute teacher-training programs have not been consistent in content because each grant involved partnering with a different university, an educational tradition was created. As Maria recalled, “When I was in school, you heard about that first teacher training program and you saw those teachers…and all those teachers are retiring this year.”

One of the first National Indian Education Association (NIEA) newsletters, written just before the Ute Tribe applied for their second teacher training grant, stated clearly that envisioning how educators would face the challenges of American Indian education was less important than simply having the vision and keeping it alive:

> The issue here, in our discussion of preparing educational leaders for new challenges and new perspectives, is not…the substance of the vision, but the importance of having one, and the importance of communicating it consistently and with fervor” (Second Annual NIEA Conference, 1986, p. 1).

The Ute Tribe has kept their vision alive by creating an ongoing tradition of training small cohorts of American Indian teachers.

Being a teacher offered the participants an opportunity not only to be part of a tradition, but also to hold a position of status within the community. On the reservations

where the participants grew up, teaching was one of the most stable and well-paid careers that young people were exposed to. All four UTTP participants were bright, eager students who generally respected the teachers they knew. Vince noted that teaching was "a positive thing." Although he sometimes heard complaints from teachers about low pay, Vince maintained that there were plenty of other reasons not to complain about being a teacher. Rina saw the mentoring relationships that her family members experienced with their teachers; her father, who had earned a masters degree, and brother, who was the first of her siblings to attend college, encouraged Rina's decision to go into education as a career. Maria described teachers as "vital" and recalled the influence that teachers had on her life: "A teacher was someone you looked up to, someone that, they were a *teacher*. And I thought, 'I would like to be that.'" Maria did not say she wanted to be like a teacher, but to "be that"—to be a conduit for knowledge and values, to be respected as a professional, and to be everything that a teacher represented in her community.

Most of the participants thought about becoming teachers while they were still quite young. Maria remembered listing "teacher" as her eventual career when she was still in elementary school, and Rina confessed to emulating teachers as a youngster by playing school at home. Vince said he had "always kicked around the idea of teaching." The participants received additional inspiration to become teachers through their work experiences on the Ute reservation prior to entering the teacher training program— Maria as a tutor and teacher's aide, Rina as a college intern teaching health classes, and Vince as a staff member at a group home for troubled youth. Arlene decided she wanted to

become a teacher while serving a mission for her church. All the participants were interested in helping young people, but the fact that teachers held a position of respect in their American Indian communities was a compelling reason for them to join the profession.

In Maria's case there was an additional reason to join the teaching profession: the tradition of becoming a Ute teacher. Unlike the other participants, she had stayed on the reservation to attend college at a branch campus and work as an aide at local schools, so she felt the strongest pull from Ute elders to enter the program. It was with great pride that Maria spoke about the significance of the UTTP: "When I was younger, you knew who those tribal teachers were…. Now, we're that group….and that is a good thing." She saw the UTTP not just as a personal opportunity but as a duty to carry on the tradition of Ute teacher training programs and to help replenish the supply of Ute teachers in the local schools. Maria was expected to fulfill the dreams of her tribe. The downside of this was that Maria sometimes felt as if tribe members were monitoring her behavior: "Did you fulfill what you were supposed to fulfill? Are you teaching our Native American students? Are you giving back to our tribe?" She said that these questions were always in the back of her mind.

Vince also felt the power of tradition to become a teacher on the Ute reservation, but he chose to resist those expectations by "giving back" to another tribe. He left Utah to teach on the Navajo reservation in Arizona, and he found it liberating: "I think getting away, for me, allows me to be a new person…and to be able to be things that people never thought I could be." Although Vince acknowledged the benefits of American

Indian teachers returning to work in their own communities, he said that route was not for him. For Vince, continuing to teach in the small rural community where he grew up meant living under a microscope as well as earning a lower salary than he could command in other states. The tradition of teaching on the Ute reservation, which Maria proudly upheld, was something that constricted Vince's personal and professional life. He was eager to reinvent himself as an unknown beginning teacher a thousand miles from home.

Arlene, Rina, and Vince also found themselves reinvented by their students, some of whom did not initially think of their new teachers as American Indians. Arlene's students at the Ute charter school thought she was Oriental, Rina's junior high students thought she was too light complected to be one of them, and Vince's students on the Navajo reservation thought he was Mexican because he spoke fluent Spanish. Although the participants thought these misinterpretations were amusing, they learned from this that sharing an American Indian heritage with their students would not guarantee them acceptance in the classroom.

Participants also realized that students in these reservation schools assumed their new teachers would be non-Indian and would not stay for very long. At the Ute charter school, Maria and Arlene heard variations of the same question from multiple students as the academic year came to an end: "You're going to come back next year, aren't you?" This is not generally a comment heard from students at schools that have a stable teacher population. Vince noted similar issues with teacher turnover at his school in Arizona, a remote boarding and day school where the faculty of about thirty full-time teachers

included only six American Indians. Some of the non-Indian faculty members were recruited to teach on the Navajo reservation through a revolving student teaching program from a Midwestern university. According to Vince, "[The teachers] come in, they stay, they leave; they come in, they stay, they leave, and even though they stay there they never become part of the community."

The traditions of community were important to each of the participants, and parent involvement was both a challenge and a necessity. Maria spoke about "being that in-between person with parents and principals, with parents and teachers." At other times, teaching seemed less like mediating and more like parenting; Maria observed that of the students who came to school regularly, some of them spent more time hanging out at school than they did at home. Vince, who taught at a school with many boarding students, worried that he was doing too much of what he believed was the job of the parents. He was not just talking about discipline; Vince sensed that education and family had become separate worlds in the American Indian community:

> Back a long time ago before we were involved in any of this [required public] education that we have today, education was your home life, your family teaching you how to survive in the world and that still exists today but somehow parents have been disconnected from that.

Vince believed that as a teacher educating American Indian students who were often far from home, he was part of this disconnect between school and home. He wanted to honor the American Indian tradition of education by being aware of his own limitations as a teacher, and in this way he would "help people understand so that they can empower themselves."

At the beginning of the UTTP, participants envisioned joining a noble teaching

tradition. They would communicate knowledge and values, serve the community, and command respect. At least one thought it would be fun, and another believed that teaching would be easy. Three years later, the participants were grounded in a more gritty reality. First, communicating knowledge and values in jobs with no assigned mentors and few curricular materials meant that each participant spent additional hours on preparation that cut into family and personal time. Often the new teachers were emotionally drained. Rina noted, "You take the stuff home with you, not only paperwork but you take, 'How am I going to help this student?'" Second, serving an American Indian community meant giving up some personal privacy, "trying to be that example no matter where you are," according to Maria. Third, commanding respect—both in school and in the community—meant refining strategies for classroom discipline, which did not always work, and trying to help students stay in school, which did not always happen. As Rina reflected, "[Teaching is] a lot more detailed than what you would expect it to be or than what people think it is." All of the participants spoke about the dedication it took to be a teacher and the difficulty of overcoming the fatigue and discouragement of being a new teacher.

The participants had to make some adjustments in their expectations in order to re-invent themselves as teachers—sometimes tentatively and sometimes with conviction. Arlene had difficulty identifying herself as a teacher because she did not think she accomplished much: "[At the end of the school year] it feels like I should have a halo or something… and I don't." At her most discouraged, Arlene saw herself as "more like a jailer" than a teacher because she did not have enough patience to deal with what she saw

as a chronic lack of student motivation at her school. Arlene did not see herself as a bad teacher but rather as a novice with a long way to go. Nevertheless, she was proud of creating a social and intellectual safe haven for some of her American Indian students and she was still thinking of ways to motivate the rest of them. Arlene believed that this "thinking like a teacher" might indicate a developing teacher identity despite her disillusionment with the profession.

Rina, the youngest participant, was sensitive about her age and feared that if she did not act tough, the students would not respect her. Her solution was to invent an "outer shell" which was her teacher persona. Only after her student teaching experience did Rina come to the conclusion that teacher identity was built from the inside out rather than the outside in. She observed that the most effective teachers taught like themselves in the classroom—not totally relaxed, but with a genuine personality. She spoke with awe about how the teachers she admired were able to reach deep inside themselves to access a core self. "If you don't show students that you're there to teach and you're not genuine about it," Rina explained, "then they're not going to be receptive to you." Like Arlene, Rina was not sure about her teacher identity—she did not think she was there yet. "You have to develop [a teacher identity] as you go," she decided. Because of health problems that developed after the end of the UTTP, Rina did not go on to work in the classroom after her student teaching experience.

Maria willingly fulfilled the expectations of her tribe to become a teacher even though she struggled with the lack of privacy that this entailed. Her observation that "you always have people watching you" refers not only to the concerns of any rural teacher but

also to the expectations Maria felt as an educated Ute tribe member. She believed that above all, teachers had to be role models for students and other community members on the reservation; she accepted the heightened level of scrutiny as a job requirement. Maria was certain about her identity as a teacher and her part in the tradition of Ute education.

Vince became a vocal advocate for the needs of American Indian students on the Navajo reservation. He also saw himself as a warrior on the battlefield created by *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB). The battle was for resources. Vince thought that the two core content areas, English and math, commanded more than their fair share of resources from the school's budget. Students must be tested on English and math skills for measuring Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), the annual criteria established by each state in order to comply with NCLB legislation (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). As the only Spanish teacher, Vince felt that he had to fight for academic equity with English and math teachers. He explained, "I feel like I'm doing something positive, but I'm not in the battle with the teachers who count." Vince was actively developing an independent teacher identity, and he appeared to relish the process.

Application

The Application section connects three patterns or themes that emerged from the participants' narratives with research focusing on teacher identity and American Indian education. The intersection of the research question with the emergent patterns resulted in six key outcomes summarized here and illustrated in Figure 1, "Wheel of Emergent Patterns." The outcomes are a series of observations radiating from an inner circle

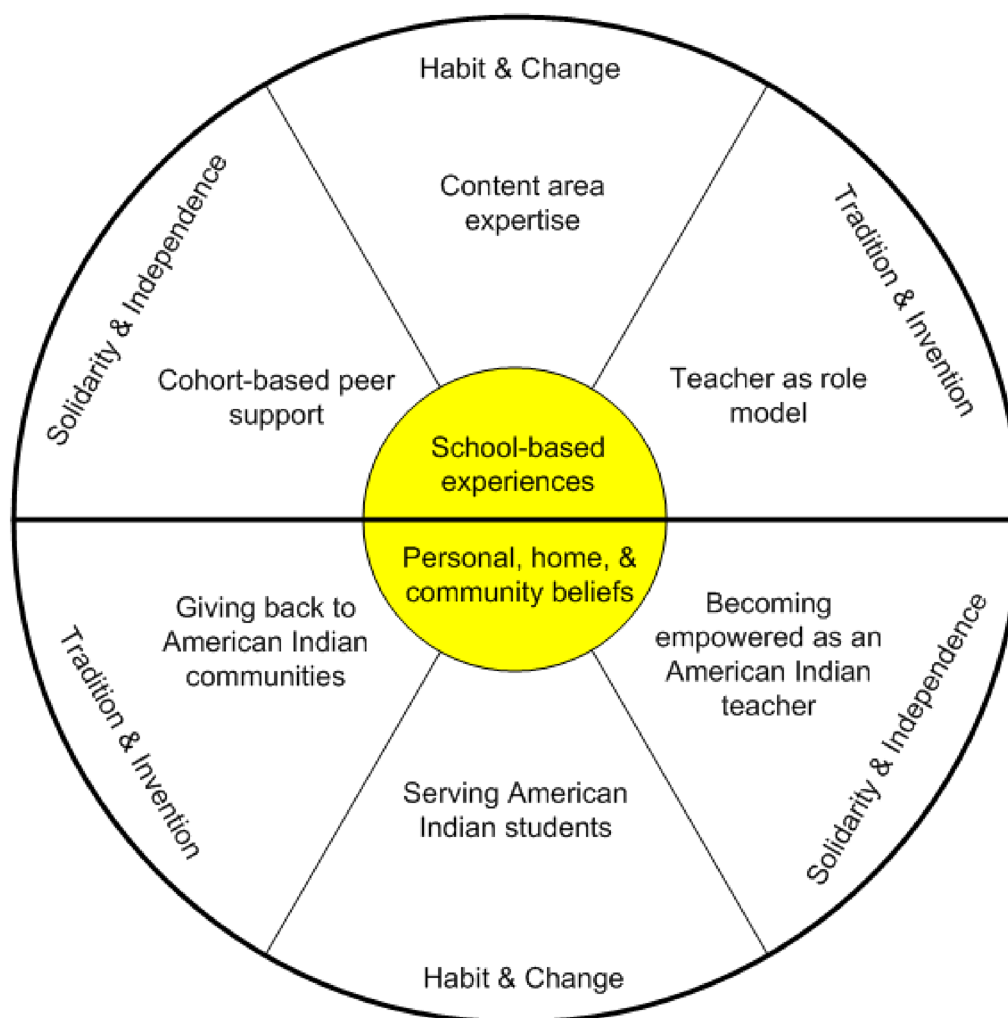

Figure 1. Wheel of emergent patterns showing the factors that affected developing teacher identity among new American Indian secondary teachers.

containing the two parts of the research question (What school-based experiences and what personal, family, and community beliefs affect the development of professional teacher identity?). Like mirror images of a sunset, outcomes related to school-based experiences radiate from the top half of the inner circle, and outcomes related to personal, home, and community beliefs radiate from the bottom half. Around the circumference of

the circle are the three patterns: Solidarity and independence, Habit and change, and Tradition and invention. Each pattern or theme can be traced through the center of the circle to its related outcomes in the top and bottom half of Figure 1.

Solidarity and Independence: School-Based Factors

The participants were all highly experienced as students. Like most preservice teachers, they had experienced a long apprenticeship in the classroom, from first grade through college. They had to make the transition from *learning to be* the teacher to being the teacher. This transition was not easy to accomplish, especially for the two participants who had the least experience in front of a classroom. The challenge was to think of themselves as authority figures. All the participants mentioned discipline or classroom management as a challenge they were concerned about, and Maria stated that classroom discipline was her "toughest task." As Cattani (2002) noted, "Comfortable or not, authority is the mantle of a teacher and cannot be ignored or discounted without consequences" (p. 6). Without the authority of extensive experience in the classroom, the participants relied on the authority of extensive peer support.

The curriculum of the university teacher education program was not geared specifically to American Indian teachers or students, so there was much to talk about within the cohort. The structure of the UTTP included group activities that encouraged the interaction of participants outside of classes, and participants became accustomed to talking strategies, sharing resources, and arguing about educational issues. As Maria commented, "[The program] didn't put us as a whole. It didn't make us all one mind."

What made the UTTP an effective program for the participants was the cohort as well as the courses. The courses provided an academic structure, but the cohort provided much-needed social and emotional support. Seifert and Mandzuk (2006), in a study of cohorts in a university teacher education program, found that emotional support was the primary benefit listed by participants in a large cohort. The researchers also concluded that although the cohort fostered "cooperation and connection among peers…it was less successful at fostering students' individuality and personal development" (p. 1,316). This may have been because of the size of the cohort studied. The much smaller UTTP generated solidarity as well as independence. Participants all acknowledged the interplay of ideas within the cohort, both in and outside of academia, and the social relationships built during planned activities together. They also came to know their personal voices as distinguished from their American Indian voice.

Fostering an environment of solidarity within and after an American Indian teacher education program was one of the recommendations from the Native Educator Research Project (Beaulieu et al., 2005):

> In the field of Native education, [high teacher turnover] is too high a price and every effort must be made by [teacher training] Programs to provide university/college support systems to bridge the gap between Programs and the classrooms and well-prepared Native mentors to support the teachers in their new, challenging roles. (p. 37)

Although the UTTP participants lacked formal mentoring programs within their schools, they had access to other mentoring experiences provided through the UTTP grant administrator to help bridge the gap between the university and their own classrooms during student teaching. They also had each other, because after student teaching there

was little or no formal support—a situation that is common across the curriculum for all beginning teachers (Kardos & Johnson, 2007).

Their experiences as preservice teachers provided what National Indian Education Association president, Dr. Willard Sakiestewa Gilbert (2008), called the three cornerstones of Indian education: rigor, relationships, and relevance. The rigor of participating in an academic cohort provided an appropriate challenge to absorb what was presented in the university courses as well as to discuss what was left out of the secondary education curriculum. The participants learned early to rely on each other and this habit continued into their professional careers—they asked each other for help and advice through their first year of teaching, when this study concluded. The relationships forged with other American Indian preservice teachers and the relevance of diverse opinions in the UTTP cohort were additional factors in developing a professional teacher identity based on peer support.

Solidarity and Independence: Personal, Home, and Community Factors

Working at schools located on Indian reservations was both a foreign and a familiar experience. It was foreign because most of the participants had spent considerable time off the reservation, and each had spent a minimum of eight years in primarily non-Indian schools as students. On the other hand, teaching on the reservation felt familiar because the participants had all spent their early years in schools serving predominantly American Indian populations. The reason they were participants in the UTTP was that they were American Indians and they were, in essence, coming home to

teach, even if they were not teaching on the reservations where they grew up:

> Who teachers are as professionals is so intricately tied to who they are as people that to think of teaching as a job that can be performed separately from what one believes to be important is to dehumanize the role of teacher. (Rex & Nelson, 2004, p. 1321)

In their own classrooms, the participants struggled with issues stemming from their individual personalities and learning styles: Arlene was shy, Maria liked to figure things out on her own, Rina and Arlene wanted their students to be as studious and proactive as they were, and Vince wanted to teach the perfect lesson. However, who they were as professionals was intimately related to who they were as American Indians, not just as separate personalities. Webb (2005) found that constructing a professional teacher identity involved "becoming part of a teacher 'culture' in its various forms" and a primary component of this identity is "about seeking common ground, or adopting the values of the group" (p. 2). The teacher culture to which each of the participants belonged was both the larger professional culture of all American Indian teachers as well as the smaller professional culture of teachers in their local schools. The participants already had a great deal of common ground, and found that their values were aligned within the teacher training program even if their personalities were completely different. This was the paradox of finding independence in the solidarity of the UTTP.

A problematic issue that affected their teacher identity was the relative lack of mentoring and supervision in their teaching experiences. Kardos and Johnson (2007) noted the importance of "integrated professional cultures" in keeping new teachers long enough to develop a strong professional identity (p. 2). They found that teachers are more likely to stay in teaching if schools promote interaction between faculty members,

recognize the needs of new teachers, and develop shared responsibility for the school and the students who attend it. However, as Kardos and Johnson explained, in practice approximately one half to two thirds of new teachers are “solo practitioners,” planning and teaching alone. In addition, new teachers “tend to be (a) isolated in their classroom work, (b) presumed expert, and (c) not part of a collective, school-wide effort” (p. 10).

The UTTP participants all belonged in one or more of those categories. Although they used each other for invaluable peer support, they were used to planning and teaching alone. Only two of them had significant mentoring and supervision during student teaching, and none participated in an induction program. In fact, the two without mentoring experiences were definitely presumed expert because they were hired in an understaffed school and their student teaching experiences were simply a designated ten weeks out of a full time teaching job. They were, however, part of a school-wide effort that resulted in some shared responsibility for everything from maintenance to professional development, so the solo practitioner habit was not completely regimented.

Of the four participants, two were still tentative about becoming teachers at the end of this study. Rina did not obtain a full time teaching job because of health problems, and Arlene felt as if she fell far short of what she had envisioned teachers could or should do. She mostly felt inadequate in the classroom after her first year of teaching: “In my mind, a teacher is somebody who’s been with the profession for twenty years and they’re dedicated. And then there’s me, just starting out…. I don’t know if I identify myself as a teacher.” Arlene and Rina were not willing to give up; they were interested in working with young people but they were less certain about continuing on as classroom teachers.

Maria and Vince, on the other hand, were able to find a connection with the larger community of American Indian teachers, and they strongly identified themselves as teachers. They felt empowered by developing a teacher identity based on the strength of becoming more than one—becoming part of a professional community.

Habit and Change: School-Based Factors

New teachers are creatures of habit, so much so that teacher education programs have varying effects on the preparation of new teachers. Feiman-Nemser (2001) referred to the typical preservice program as merely an intervention, and “a weak intervention” at that, “compared with the influence of teachers’ own schooling and their on-the-job-experience” (p. 1,014). This is because pre-service teachers are grounded in specific teaching & learning schema through the long apprenticeship of their own experiences as students (Feiman-Nemser, 2003; Gomez et al., 2007). When they participate in teacher education programs, their pre-existing mental constructs of what school and teaching are supposed to be act as filters to the information presented to them (Mahlios, 2002), and these beliefs may persist years into their teaching experiences (Webb, 2005).

The most prevalent assumption among participants of the UTTP was that content area expertise would make them effective teachers. This belief is common to new secondary teachers across the curriculum and across a broad spectrum of ethnic backgrounds (Hammerness et al., 2005). Webb (2005) concluded from a study of new secondary teachers that “the view of teacher as ‘technician,’ the *what*, subsumed participant awareness of learning *how* to learn, and often *why*” (p. 12). Despite the fact that the UTTP participants subscribed to the classic metaphor of education-as-journey,

with students and teachers sharing the adventure, initially they saw themselves primarily as givers of information. Cook-Sather (2006) referred to this as "imagining rather than enacting their identities as teachers" (p. 198).

The participants were all good students, and their previous academic success was one reason they chose to teach at the secondary level. This trajectory is not unusual for teachers as a whole, since "those who choose to go on and become teachers are often the kind of people who have lead past lives of academic success and sufficient obedience to view school positively" (Catani, 2002, p. 6). Academic success also appears to equate with some conservatism, according to findings from the Native Educator Research Project (Beaulieu et al., 2005) that preparing American Indian students in teacher education programs to become change makers is "a daunting task as most of the program students are products of mainstream systems of schooling" (p. 38).

The UTTP participants strongly identified with their major and minor fields of study. Three of them had already earned a bachelors degree by the time they entered the teacher training program, and the fourth had extensive experience as a math tutor, so they came into the UTTP well grounded in their respective academic disciplines. *No Child Left Behind* legislation (U.S. Department of Education, 2007), which required secondary teachers to pass a Praxis exam in specific content areas in order to be considered highly qualified, provided further reinforcement for participants to think of themselves as content area specialists. This belief in the power of content area expertise affected the way all of the participants initially understood the teaching profession: that their own knowledge of and appreciation for the subjects they taught would motivate their students.

The requirements for secondary certification as well as the participants' academic histories were early and powerful factors in developing a teacher identity based on content area expertise.

Habit and Change: Personal, Family, and Community Beliefs

Ironically, the long-awaited influx of American Indian teachers in local classrooms serving American Indian students was a factor that worked against the formation of a strong teacher identity for some of the participants. They all believed strongly in academic self-determination, partially as a result of their own academic successes, and this created some rigidity in their expectations. They shared a baseline belief with other minority teachers that if they could break the stereotype of the unsuccessful student of color, their students could, too (Cardelle-Elawar & Nevin, 2003). The participants had adapted to challenging academic environments, and their successful adaptations put them at an initial disadvantage for teaching many of their American Indian students.

Motivating students is a challenge for any teacher, but it was a particularly significant goal for the participants. They were offering an educational opportunity to their students that had never been offered to them: the chance to learn from an American Indian secondary teacher. Sometimes that was not enough to effect change. Rina commented that she was never the typically quiet minority student, so she felt frustrated by American Indian students at a public junior high school who did not want to be singled out as achievers, even though she understood their behavior from a cultural

standpoint. An American Indian student at Stanford University explained the dilemma Rina was talking about: “You have to speak and you have to participate in order to get good grades. But if you’re raised traditionally, you have no authority to say that you’re right and assert your opinion” (Rogers, 2008, p. 32). Arlene had little patience with students at a reservation charter school who had the benefit of small classes and a supportive cultural environment, yet who remained unmotivated to increase their skill levels or simply failed to attend school regularly.

The UTTP may have reinforced the participants’ own frustration. First, the participants were required to take only one multicultural course and that served as an introduction to diverse populations, which ranged from immigrant students to African Americans and American Indians. One semester of multicultural instruction was simply not enough to cover specific issues in American Indian education in depth. A second challenge, mitigated by the number of American Indian students available for discussion, was the education textbooks. Gomez and colleagues (2007), in their study of secondary teachers, noted that White teachers often learn about equity and social justice as external topics, whereas students of color are more likely to have experienced and internalized these issues to varying degrees. Textual recommendations for teaching diverse students can therefore marginalize preservice teachers of color by addressing equity issues from the majority standpoint (Agee, 2004).

A third element affecting the frustration level of the participants was that they came into the UTTP believing that they could be effective teachers in American Indian classrooms because they had a similar cultural heritage as their students. This was an

assumption shared by program instructors from the university, program staff members from the Ute Tribe, and indeed by many other community members; American Indian preservice teachers embodied a tangible hope for the future. Because of this beneficial climate of hope, the belief was widespread that the UTTP participants mainly needed to work on content rather than technique or pedagogy. However, studies show that preservice teachers of color do not necessarily have intuitive knowledge about culturally relevant pedagogy or teaching strategies (Hammerness et al., 2005; Klug & Whitfield, 2003). As Agee (2004) concluded, "[It is] not adequate for change…to place teachers of color in classrooms and hope that their presence will transform the sensitivities of colleagues or students" (p. 772).

What *is* adequate for change is flexibility—the ability to adapt to student needs within a framework of culturally appropriate pedagogy. The UTTP participants were aware of what Webb (2005) called "externally ascribed views of 'good teaching'" (p. 1) and this created dissonance with their pre-held beliefs about teaching which they brought to the UTTP. Indeed, Webb concluded in a study of new secondary teachers, "The need for ongoing learning and rapid catch-up…became apparent for participants not only in pedagogy but also in their specific discipline. Teacher-as-learner emerged as an ongoing construct for their new identity" (p. 12). The situation for American Indian teachers was similar to the situation described by Webb. UTTP participants began their teacher education as well as their classroom teaching experiences using textbooks and other materials developed for a mainstream culture to which they had already adapted. They were able to code switch into academia but many of their students had not developed this

capability.

When Arlene's high school students were assigned essays or poems from a standard secondary English textbook, she observed, "There's no connection there." The disconnect between experience and academic texts is not just on the reservation. Many widely-used teaching materials "are geared to the same types of teaching that abstract knowledge, making education irrelevant for many of our nation's students, not only Native Americans" (Klug & Whitfield, 2003, p. 289). The participants had to change not only what they taught but the way they taught.

Arlene's solution was to create her own curriculum using Native American literature. Maria and Vince experimented with using participatory, kinetic, hands-on methods with their students in reservation schools because they noticed that these methods generally worked better than the strategies they were prepared to use. The participants were eventually flexible enough to see in their own classrooms what the research shows: that American Indian students generally approach tasks visually, require observation before performance, and prefer to learn by doing (Gilliland, 1999; Klug & Whitfield, 2003; Swisher & Deyhle, 1994). What the participants were still working out was how to apply what they wanted to teach to their specific Ute and Navajo students. This was a risky venture for the participants to teach classes in ways they had never experienced in their own public school experiences, and in ways they were only superficially exposed to in the UTTP. However, by bringing their students to the curriculum rather delivering a standardized curriculum to their students, each of the participants found a way to strengthen professional teacher identity. The ability to be

flexible and take risks in order to engage their students was a strong factor in developing a teacher identity based on making connections with American Indian students.

Tradition and Invention: School-Based Factors

The transition from the anonymity of a student to the relatively public life of a teacher is a dilemma faced by most new teachers. Cattani's (2002) study of White novice teachers advises new teachers to live in a different town or community than the school in which they teach in order not to compromise their professional images: "[Too much visibility] pierces the shield of privacy that allows for a professional identity in the first place" (p. 48). The UTTP participants, however, knew that as American Indian teachers their visibility in the community was inevitable. They were highly educated and they came home to teach—not necessarily on their own reservations, but in places where they could serve American Indian communities.

Webb (2005) concluded that determining "personal and professional boundaries emerged as an essential part of teacher identity" (p. 9). For the UTTP participants, however, the boundaries were blurred because of the need to be a role model in their communities as well as their classrooms. This was a baseline expectation—an imposed as well as a constructed identity (Berci, 2007). Being a role model was one of the primary goals of all three of the Ute tribe's teacher training programs. The Ute Tribe Annual Report of 1992 noted that an objective of the Ute-Weber State College teacher training program was "to utilize the teacher education program as a means of providing Ute role models in the two school districts serving Ute children" (pp. 84-85). One of the grant

applications for the Ute-Brigham Young University teacher training program stated, "Placing Indian trainees… in the classroom has proven to be a technique for the Indian child to feel he can maintain his identity as an Indian and still be considered a success by members of both societies" (Ute Tribe, 1980, pp. 49-50). At the very least, "Students need to see Native Americans in leadership roles, not just as secretaries or bus drivers" (Gay et al., 2003, p. 10).

The UTTP participants all placed considerable importance on the teacher as role model, but some of them chafed at the scrutiny involved in becoming an American Indian teacher on the Ute reservation. Both Maria and Rina commented that there are "eyes everywhere watching you." This is why Vince left to serve another tribe, although Maria stayed and embraced the Ute Tribe's expectations. Arlene was not of Ute descent and did not have local relatives, so she felt less scrutinized but no less subject to being a role model. Part of this involved conformity. As Agee (2004) found, a professional teacher identity often comes at the expense of giving up the desire "to become a change maker" (p. 77). None of the participants gave up making changes in their approaches to teaching, but their immediate need was to be a stable influence for students who were used to non-Indian teachers and administrators who did not stay long in reservation schools. As Vince observed, "Because [those teachers] never become part of the community, the bridge between the school and the community never really gets built." The cultural and professional need to be dependable and visible was a strong factor in developing a teacher identity based on being a role model

Tradition and Invention: Personal, Family, and Community Beliefs

Becoming an American Indian teacher carries with it a cultural expectation within the Ute Tribe. The educated American Indian adults who completed the UTTP were expected to “give back to the tribe,” as Maria explained, by staying on the reservation to teach the young people. This aspect of service—not just giving but giving back—should not be confused with “payback,” as in justifying the grant money spent on college courses and monthly stipends for UTTP participants; “giving back” involves a deep moral and ethical commitment to doing the right thing for the American Indian community. It is a traditional expectation and it carries weight, especially in education.

The concepts of honor and service are inextricably connected in the Ute view of education. For example, the Ute Tribe’s goals for the Education Department in the 1990 Annual Report included, “We pledge… to be fiscally responsible and to get the best that our students can offer for the honor of the Ute Tribe” (Ute Tribe, 1990, p. 86). In the same Annual Report, an introductory message from the Ute Tribe vice chairman stated that he believed in “education to help oneself and, if possible, the Ute Indian Tribe” (p. 7). The mission statement of the Ute Tribe Education Department in a later publication added, “We believe that it is possible for each individual to maximize their potential while being productive contributors to Tribal tradition and customs” (Ute Tribe, 2004).

As teachers in reservation schools, the tradition of contributing productively to the reservation was to work with the American Indian community, including the parents. This was an area where the participants had very little observational or clinical experiences prior to full time teaching, so they invented their own approaches. Vince in

particular was focused on changing the perception of American Indian parents who depended on schools to solve problems. As he saw it, “There is more than one set of rules to how things are done and how families view their kids.” The set of rules American Indians often followed, Vince believed, was that the white culture would know what to do with their children: “You go to school, you learn, you get an education at school away from home, and if you continue your education you go to college [away from home].” It was the price that had to be paid for living on the reservation: sending one’s children away to get educated. According to Vince, giving back to the community as an American Indian teacher involved connecting students to the curriculum as well as re-connecting parents to the school and to their children.

Giving back to the community also meant doing the right thing as a professional teacher. For some of the participants, serving the community by being a self-defined “good teacher” involved negotiating a professional identity that seemed too restrictive. Novice teachers often have to deal with the disconnect between their desire to be nurturing educators and the necessity for more directive behavior necessitated by high stakes testing demands (Agee, 2004; Rex & Nelson, 2004). Concerns about legal responsibility and classroom management, NCLB testing requirements, and special needs students overwhelmed several participants. Arlene mentioned that she felt more like a jailer than a teacher after her first year in the classroom. Rina recalled that after she finished her student teaching, “It made me a little bit wary with some of the liability stuff…[teaching] is a lot tougher than we expected it to be.”

The connection between teacher identity, student achievement, and being a “good

teacher" for the benefit of the community was a daunting prospect. Arlene did not consider herself a good teacher if her students were not succeeding:

> Teacher identity is probably strongly tied to how well your students do. I think that if you can see students succeeding, if you can see that what you are teaching is getting across to kids…in that sense, you are being a good teacher.

All the participants initially understood that the best teachers loved their subject areas and were well prepared to teach content. They were grounded in this belief. However, the participants had to redefine their "good teacher" contribution to the American Indian community without clear indications, in some cases, of academic achievement among some of their students.

Coming home to teach at reservation schools meant being able to embrace an alternative measure of success, one similar to the philosophy of the Ute Tribe Education Department: "Education will enable [students] to make individual choices for the preservation of one's harmony and balance in the Indian and non-Indian world" (Ute Tribe, 2004). None of the participants had the answers for how to preserve this harmony in their students or their communities, but the fact that they all ultimately embraced the concept of coming home to reservation school systems began to change their professional identities. They could have chosen to teach at other, more urban school systems serving American Indian students, but their commitment to teaching locally was a strong factor in developing a teacher identity based on giving back to the American Indian community.

Summary

Each section of Chapter V weaves together the participants' observations with

research literature on American Indian education and teacher identity. Three patterns were explored in depth: (a) solidarity and independence, (b) habit and change, and (c) tradition and invention. The concluding Application section detailed how six outcomes emerged from the data analysis. Three outcomes answered the first part of the research question about the effects of school-based experiences on developing teacher identity: cohort-based peer support, preparation for content-area expertise, and teacher as role model. Three additional outcomes answered the second part of the research question about the effects of personal, home, and community beliefs: empowerment as an American Indian teacher, serving American Indian students, and giving back to American Indian communities. The final chapter will discuss the implications of this study and suggest areas for further research.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

TO HOLD THE WORLD TOGETHER

The phrase “to hold the world together” originally appeared in an 1861 government report from the first survey party sent to Uintah Basin, now home to the Uintah and Ouray Ute Indian Reservation. The report noted that the land encountered by nineteenth century surveyors in northeastern Utah was “measurably valueless except for nomadic purposes, hunting grounds for Indians, and to hold the world together” (as cited in Gruenwald, 1989, p. 1). The final chapter of this dissertation is subtitled “To Hold the World Together” because holding the world together is what teachers do; teachers are essential but subtle contributors to school-based education and to the communities where they work. This qualitative case study was an exercise in appreciation for how and to what degree four new American Indian teachers constructed professional teacher identities that held together the world in which they found themselves.

Chapter VI is divided into three sections. The Summary section gives a brief overview of each of the previous five chapters. The Discussion section, written in first person, presents personal observations from researching and writing about the developing teacher identity of four new teachers from the UTTP. This section is arranged in three subsections corresponding to the three patterns suggested in the previous chapter: (a) solidarity and independence, (b) habit and change, and (c) tradition and invention. The Recommendations section suggests areas for future research in American Indian teacher education and in teacher identity development. Chapter VI ends with a brief update on the four participants.

Summary

Chapter 1 presented the context for this qualitative case study in six sections: (a) statement of the problem, (b) purpose for the study, (c) terminology, (d) setting, (e) theoretical framework, and (f) delimitations and limitations. The statement of the problem situated the study in attempts to educate American Indian students more effectively. The purpose for the study focused on the need for educating, training, and certifying American Indian teachers. The terminology section gave an explanation of and justification for specific terminology used in this case study, including “American Indian” and “identity.” The setting section delineated the boundaries of this study through additional background information on the UTTP as well as the four American Indian adults who graduated from the program and agreed to participate in this case study. The theoretical framework section situated the study in previous novice/expert research and in the concept of school learning as a form of apprenticeship. The final section of Chapter I, delimitations and limitations, explained how the study was defined by circumstances that were controlled or not controlled by the researcher.

Chapter II provided both an historical and a sociocultural background in three sections: (a) American Indian education, (b) American Indian teacher education, and (c) teacher identity. The American Indian education section provided a brief historical overview and connected historical events to the Ute Tribe in four subsections: (a) boarding schools, (b) the Merriam report, (c) The Indian Reorganization Act and the Johnson O’Malley Act, and (d) post World War II legislation, including the termination policies initiated through HCR 108. The American Indian teacher education section

reviewed the landmark federal legislation of the 1970s and focused on reports from three different federal task forces that made specific recommendations to recruit and train American Indian teachers. The last section, professional teacher identity, identified research literature that examined different aspects of professional teacher identity.

Chapter III explained the research methodology in seven sections: (a) research questions, (b) rhetorical structure, (c) sample selection, (d) data collection, (e) data analysis, (f) ethical concerns, and (g) timeline. The research questions section broke down the primary research question into several focusing questions. The rhetorical structure section explained the use of extensive narrative. The sample selection section detailed how participants were selected for this qualitative case study. The data collection and data analysis sections described how participants were interviewed and how their narratives were transcribed and analyzed for content and thematic similarities and differences. The ethical concerns section included how the researcher addressed the issues of cross-cultural research and culturally appropriate research techniques. Finally, the timeline section illustrated how this qualitative case study was constructed over a 3-year period.

Chapter IV presented four participant narratives in one section each from Maria, Arlene, Vince, and Rina. The narratives were written as much as possible in the voices of the participants, and each narrative is divided into five subsections: (a) personal, family, and community background; (b) the Ute Teacher Training Program; (c) student teaching; (d) first year teaching; and (e) professional identity. The participants' stories personalized the process of becoming teachers and developing teacher identities. This is the longest

chapter and in many ways it is the heart of this qualitative case study.

Chapter V synthesized the narrative information from Chapter IV and reframed the data in the first three sections of the chapter: (a) solidarity and independence, (b) habit and change, and (c) tradition and invention. These paradoxical patterns provided an analytical structure for the data. The application section addressed the outcomes that emerged from the intersection of these three patterns with the primary research question.

Discussion

What surprised me about the outcomes was how much the school-based experiences of the UTTP participants resembled those of other new secondary teachers. Beaulieu and colleagues (2005) made a similar observation about novice American Indian elementary teachers. The cohort-based peer support and emphasis on content-area expertise that emerged from the UTTP data had parallels in many other teacher education programs; the corresponding lack of mentoring and over-reliance on content-area expertise once the UTTP participants entered their own classrooms also resembled common experiences of new teachers from other states (Kardos & Johnson, 2007).

I also thought that the third school-based experience, teacher as role model, would be a somewhat predictable common assumption for new teachers as a whole, but Cardelle-Elawar and Nevin (2003) noted that Anglo preservice teachers generally did not mention being role models as part of the reason they were training to become teachers. The other three outcomes related to personal, home, and community beliefs (empowerment as American Indian teachers, serving American Indian students, and

giving back to American Indian communities) probably reflected the participants' first year teaching experiences in reservation secondary schools and further honed their commitment to American Indian education.

Solidarity and Independence

One of the most significant lessons from this research is that there will be gaps in the pipeline of American Indian teachers as long as tribes are dependent on competitive government grants to support teacher education programs. The UTTP was funded in 2002 for a 3-year program with the possibility but no guarantee of renewal. Like two previous teacher education programs, which the Ute Tribe sponsored with other universities, the UTTP was not renewed for another grant cycle. Only nine teacher-training programs were funded nationally in the next round of grant applications; the UTTP grant administrator and Ute Tribe Education Director were given no reasons why their application came in eleventh out of thirty applicants (Hetzel, personal communication, 2008). The UTTP ended when the money ran out, leaving participants in their first year of teaching without the structured mentoring that helped sustain them during the program. This situation was no surprise to Ute Tribe members who work with federal grants; even successful programs often parachute onto the reservation for a one-shot implementation without follow-up or renewal. All of the participants in this study mentioned their initial skepticism about whether the teacher training program would last, much less be renewed. The closure of the UTTP after 3 years confirmed their expectations and to some degree the expectations of the reservation community about the lack of continuity in educational opportunities for American Indians.

The cohort-based peer support found among UTTP participants could continue to be a powerful force for recruiting and sustaining future American Indian teachers, but only if the programs do not lapse for a decade or more. The long drought between each program meant that although the tradition remained strong to educate Ute teachers, there was little direct mentoring from previous generations of program graduates. This seemed like a missed opportunity, but the lack of contact may also have been because the two previous programs trained elementary-level teachers and the UTTP included only secondary teachers. Luckily, UTTP participants were able to interact with other American Indian teachers at the national level through various conferences, and this proved to be a powerful influence on teacher identity for several of the participants.

I believe the Ute Tribe can use the paradoxical pattern of solidarity and independence as a model for future action. Although the federal government needs continual prodding to honor its trust responsibility to educate American Indian students of all ages, the Ute Tribe could also consider allocating long-term funding of its own to sustain opportunities for teacher education in order to supplement government grants. Sustaining educational opportunities for local American Indian students should be a top priority, not only for the Ute Tribe but also for the surrounding communities and for the university that serves them. This is not a popular point of view at this time because the perception in local communities is that the Ute Tribe is wealthy from federal oil and gas leases and can well afford to fund their own programs. Likewise, members of the Ute Tribe, like many American Indian citizens, have a great deal of skepticism and historical resentment about working with adjacent communities as well as state and federal

agencies.

A coalition of local, state, and Ute Tribe partners needs to be built and sustained, not just cobbled together for a specific grant. This is not a new concept; the White House Conference on Indian Education recommended that “state institutions with the assistance of Federal, state, [and] tribal funds provide a [culturally] relevant teacher training program” (U.S. Department of Education, 1992, p. 42). Temporary partnerships have been developed three times before in order to obtain prior Ute teacher training grants, but in order to plan more than one program at a time, a paradigm shift has to occur. Community, university, and Ute Tribe partners will have to build solidarity on the concept that training American Indian teachers is an investment in the community as a whole, not just for the Ute Tribe. Oil and gas revenues in northeastern Utah—both on and off the reservation—have already resulted in financial commitments for local educational facilities and college scholarships; some of that community investment can be earmarked for a fund to mentor and certify American Indian teachers in existing teacher education programs as well as in staggered programs—perhaps every four years—designed specifically for American Indian students.

Habit and Change

Many of the conditions that existed for American Indian teachers 100 years ago resonated in some ways with the experiences of the UTTP participants. Gere (2005) listed the challenges faced by American Indian teachers working in federal boarding schools during the late 19th and early 20th centuries:

Trying to preserve Native-American cultural heritage in the face of powerful

> institutional forces arrayed against it; negotiating with English-only language policies; contending with racist views that remained impervious to even outstanding achievement; struggling with the economic constraints imposed by both gender and race; and existing outside both white and Indian worlds. (Gere, 2005, p. 47).

In the 21st century, the UTTP participants still experienced elements of these four challenges.

First, they struggled to determine how to incorporate American Indian cultural and historical elements in their curricula, but not because of fighting assimilationist policies. In their modern reservation schools, even with supportive staff, the participants often did not have the resources and their school administrators or fellow teachers did not provide much direction for their efforts. Second, standardized testing supplanted English-only policies as a major issue for the participants and their reservation students. Third, racist views still affected the participants in adjacent communities, off the reservations. However, the participants had a variety of teaching opportunities to choose from, and generally commanded professional respect in their reservation schools regardless of gender or tribal affiliation. It remains to be seen whether the participants will encounter any resistance if they apply to off-reservation public schools. Fourth, the participants all felt very much at home in various American Indian communities, but they, too, felt the effects of living in two worlds. Their experiences of competing academically in White-dominant secondary and post-secondary schools created some dissonance when they began teaching in 100% American Indian classrooms.

I have found no single template for creating and maintaining an American Indian teacher education program because each tribe and each school serving American Indian

students has different socio-cultural and academic needs. However, the "one size fits all" university teacher education program, such as the one which housed the UTTP, needs to be re-evaluated as a context for future Ute teacher training programs. Common recommendations for designing an effective American Indian teacher education program include four major elements: (a) run the program on a cohort model; (b) utilize a curriculum that takes into account local community values, language, and culture; (c) involve American Indian teachers and scholarship in the program; (d) provide opportunities to observe and practice culturally relevant pedagogy and techniques (Beaulieu et al., 2005; Belgarde et al., 2002; Klug & Whitfield, 2003). The UTTP was designed on a cohort model and the participants had some access to other American Indian teachers and scholarship through extracurricular activities, but the curriculum for the UTTP was that of the regular secondary teacher education program run by the partnering university. Exposure to issues of cultural relevance was largely incidental, outside of a required Multicultural Foundations course. Opportunities to practice what participants read about and discussed were limited, even though over half the teacher education program at the time consisted of American Indian students. In other words, the UTTP was not a template for the perfect program, but it accomplished the goal of recruiting, mentoring, and certifying American Indian teachers.

Tradition and Invention

The UTTP had a past that could have taught some lessons to the university, but these lessons were never realized. The UTTP was one of several programs since the 1970s during which the Ute Tribe partnered with Utah colleges and universities to

educate and certify much-needed American Indian teachers for local schools. To the instructors and administrators at the university, however, the UTTP was all new. It seemed from the university's standpoint like a bold and positive move to partner with the Ute Tribe for teacher training—and it was, since this particular university had not been involved with the previous programs. To the Ute tribe, however, the UTTP was part of a very long history to create post-secondary opportunities on or near the reservation. Very few of the university instructors knew much about Ute history, and there was no attempt prior to the UTTP to prepare or educate the university teacher educators for working with the program. I say this because I was one of many instructors in the UTTP. I believe that future university partnerships with the Ute Tribe should involve professional development seminars for the university faculty and staff that address specific historical and cultural elements of working with the Ute tribe.

Knowing more about the previous teacher training programs may have been helpful in planning the UTTP, but historical evidence was not readily available. UTTP participants and administrators knew there had been at least one previous teacher training program, yet details were fuzzy. This is understandable since the two previous programs had taken place twenty and thirty years, respectively, before the UTTP, and many different education directors and grant writers had been employed at the Ute Tribe during that time. There was very little continuity. To research the past programs I spent one day going through poorly organized racks of dusty boxes and loose files in a storage room behind the Ute charter high school, and another few days reviewing manila files full of miscellaneous Ute Tribe materials at the county library's historical archives. Only after

contacting some of former participants was I able to put the scraps of factual information together. Because there appear to be no written accounts of the teacher training programs outside of brief articles in the Ute Tribe annual reports, compiling a written as well as an oral history of specific Ute Tribe teacher training programs would make an excellent project for future research. The documentary materials, a legacy of the tribe's past teacher training programs, could be housed with the Ute Tribe as well as with the local county libraries.

The graduates of the UTTP are the program's more immediate legacy. As of May 2008, most of the UTTP participants were three years into their professional teaching careers—long enough for some of them to receive tenure. They found constructive ways to give back to American Indian communities, continued to make connections with American Indian students, and remained empowered as American Indian teachers. Maria was still teaching math at the Ute reservation charter high school. Arlene moved to Washington state with her family and was working as the coordinator for a mentor/tutor program on the Skokomish reservation. Vince was still teaching Spanish at a secondary school on the Navajo reservation. In addition, Rina finally resolved the health problems that had kept her from working as a full-time teacher; she applied for a job as the health and physical education teacher at a public high school in northeastern Utah.

Recommendations

The recommendations from this qualitative case study include suggestions for teacher education program design as well as for future research with American Indian teachers,

students, and teacher identity. Recent research in American Indian teacher education programs focused on the diversity of programs available, and this is an important consideration in understanding effective practices. Large scale mixed method research studies, such as the Native Educators Research Project (Beaulieu et al., 2005), need to be continued to provide insight into the broadest possible range of American Indian, Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian teacher training programs. This type of project was one of the first to systematically examine program content at state universities, private colleges, and tribally controlled colleges. Future research on American Indian teacher training programs might also include studies that compare rural programs like the UTTP to urban programs housed on large campuses with a more diverse student population.

Research on American Indian students could impact the design of American Indian teacher training programs. As Beaulieu and colleagues (2005) observed, “Indigenous control of education has become policy over the past forty years. What that education looks like is still an issue” (p. 38). For example, much of the research on American Indian students has been done on the educational needs of reservation-based American Indian students from particular tribes, so native language and culture are central to these school programs because of the single culture involved. There is very little research on urban American Indian students in a multicultural environment, or on students who continue to attend American Indian boarding schools in a multi-tribe environment. Future teacher education programs could benefit from research studies directed at the educational needs of these specific populations and the pedagogy that may emerge from this research.

The Ute Tribe itself could provide a robust opportunity for historical research into

American Indian teacher training programs, since various programs have served tribe members over the last 30 years. The timing is crucial since many of the previous Ute teacher-training program graduates are retired or near retirement age. Taping interviews and documenting other evidence of the three programs would add an invaluable centralized resource to dispersed archival records. In addition, the resulting audio-visual evidence and written report(s) could serve as a recruiting tool for future teachers from the Utes and other Indian tribes.

Finally, several research opportunities could be developed directly from this qualitative case study. A comparative study examining UTTP graduates and the two previous Ute teacher training program cohorts in terms of school-based experiences and personal, family, and community beliefs may add to the information about developing teacher identity that was explored in this foundational study. In addition, follow-up studies at the 5- and 10-year marks (2010 and 2020) with the participants of this study may provide useful data about the way more experienced American Indian teachers develop and refine a professional teacher identity. As Vince said, “It takes a long time to make a teacher.”

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