a place of mind
THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

PROGRAMME

The Final Oral Examination
For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
(Education, Leadership and Policy)

PETER GORDON SKIPPER

B.A., University of Victoria, 1976
M.Ed., University of Victoria, 1984

Wednesday, October 21, 2015, 12:30 pm
Room 203, Graduate Student Centre
Latecomers will not be admitted

"How Do Teachers Construct an Understanding of Teaching?"

EXAMINING COMMITTEE

Chair:
Dr. Penney Clark (Curriculum and Pedagogy)

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Andre Mazawi, Research Supervisor (Education, Leadership and Policy)
Dr. Daniel Pratt, Co-Supervisor (Education, Leadership and Policy)
Dr. Wendy Poole (Educational Studies)

University Examiners:
Dr. Pierre Walter (Education, Leadership and Policy)
Dr. Anne Phelan (Curriculum Studies)

External Examiner:
Dr. John Wiens
Faculty of Education
University of Manitoba
Winnipeg, Manitoba

ABSTRACT

This mixed methods study examined the teaching perspectives of 14 teachers and how they constructed their understanding of teaching. During the 2012-2013 school year interviews and an online survey were administered to these 14 teachers employed in two school districts and one private school in British Columbia. The teachers varied in terms of gender, years of experience and levels of grades taught.

The study was conducted in two phases: a Teaching Perspectives Inventory (TPI) survey was followed by interviews. The TPI results described the dominant teaching perspectives of each teacher as transmission, apprenticeship, developmental, nurturing or social reform. The interview data then helped explore teachers' personal, educational and teaching experiences and the way they shaped those dominant teaching perspectives.

The research was conceptualized and guided by a constructivist approach. Social reality is created by individuals to explain their experiences and is influenced by what an individual brings to such experiences. Conceptual lenses interpret what you see. The study was framed by the dimensions of examining teaching as a process of expertise, of interdependence, judgment skills and the self-expression needs of teachers.

Study findings highlighted the multifaceted problem solving contextual nature of teaching in shaping understanding as an improvisational experience towards ideals that may change over time. Such experiences ultimately favored collegially centered relationships and co-constructed learning support and opportunities with other trusted educators. The identity or understanding of what is good teaching is not fixed over time and developing awareness is a matter of reflexive practice and accumulating experience. Teaching is not simple acts of productivity but productive acts of thinking to celebrate both emotional and intellectual ends.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Place of Birth:	Vancouver, B.C., Canada
Academic Studies:	B.A., University of Victoria, 1976 M.Ed., University of Victoria, 1984
Current Position:	Retired School Principal

GRADUATE STUDIES

Field of Study:	Methodologies of teaching and constructing understandings of teaching

Courses:		**Instructors**
EADM 501	Research Traditions	Dr. E. Decker
EDST 577	Social Context of Educational Policy	Drs. D. Kelly & M. Stack
EDST 601	Doctoral Seminar	Drs. D. Coulter & M. Daniel
EDST 602	Doctoral Seminar	Drs. D. Fisher & A. Mazawi
EDST 690	Thesis	Dr. Mazawi
EDST 508	Research in Educational Studies	Drs. D. Fisher & A. Mazawi
EDST 580	Directed Study	Dr. A. Mazawi
EDST 596	Ethics in Leadership	Drs. T. Sork & D. Vokey

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

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Daniel Pratt, PhD. Co-supervisor
John Collins, PhD.
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