Chapter 1
Teacher Constructed Theories for a Post–Method Paradigm

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ABSTRACT
Although there are many educational contexts that allow the freedom of an out-of-the-box approach in the transactions of teaching and learning, there are still many systems that are quite prescriptive. The very nature of teacher preparation, particularly in the Western world, lays out a prescriptive methodology that educators are told should be implemented in order to achieve results. Educators find it difficult to construct their own pedagogy given an unfamiliar context for fear of deviating from the way it should be done or has always been done. This chapter explores how educators can modify prescribed methodologies, as well as conceptualize and construct “intuitive pedagogies” based on Kumaravadivelu’s three Ps: particularity, practicality, and possibility.

INTRODUCTION
“No theory of practice can be useful and usable unless it is generated through practice” (Kumaravadivelu, 2001). There are many defined methodologies to be used and strategies to be implemented in the teaching of English Language Arts. The choices are numerous, but the teacher must carefully select the most appropriate ones based on his or her students’ particular needs and her specific understanding.
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of the concepts and skills to be taught. When the teacher and her students have distinctly different sociocultural and sociolinguistic experiences, as well as different “political particularities” due to cultural differences, he or she may be motivated to be continually reflective and, in so doing, develop what Kumaravadivelu (2001) has identified as personal theories. The differences in backgrounds will influence how the teacher defines his or her post-method teaching context and how he or she intuits what changes and tweaks in methodology will need to be made in order to create common ground and help students learn.

BACKGROUND

This chapter first discloses unfamiliar methodologies and the process used by the authors as they sought to adopt these prescriptive practices and adapt them to fit their teaching contexts. There is an exploration of how the authors fused experiences and expectations in order to be successful. Then, the chapter goes on to discuss the strategies that the authors used to reconcile their new teaching designation. There is a particular focus on the philosophical recalibration which the authors went through as their confrontation of their limitations led to the organic growth of impromptu PLCS. The heart of the chapter lies in the discussion of a variety of scenarios where the authors share their individual and combined experiences in constructing intuitive pedagogies and, through reflection, offer up a theory on the place of post method practices in modern day education.

The authors, Nyree and Natalie, were ELA teachers in Sumter District 2 Schools schools in South Carolina, USA, from 2006- to 2009. Nyree taught High school and Natalie, taught Middle school. It was an unfamiliar context in that some of the methodologies were new, but there was also unfamiliarity of culture and expectations. Test scores were important. Approaches, such as Mini Lessons, Reading, and Writing Workshops, The Balanced Literacy Model, Process Writing, and other such strategies were required. Some of these approaches were unfamiliar to the authors. They found the philosophy of teaching, which permeated the time and place, to be that best practices were embedded in the approaches and strategies themselves (the science of teaching) rather than growing out of the teachers’ own ideas and styles (the art of teaching). As the authors found themselves in such a prescriptive context, it became clear that some innovation would be required in order for the students’ interests to be repeatedly piqued. The repetitive nature of the required methodologies needed some novel entry points, not just for the sake of novelty, but also to meet a variety of learner needs. The authors unwittingly found themselves fusing two approaches together. The prescribed paths had to be followed, but it was to be influenced by their teacher preparation in a Jamaican context, former teaching experience, and
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