PART IV

Mindful L2 Teacher Education

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Responsive Mediation: The Nexus of Mindful L2 Teacher Education

In our earlier work, we argued that taking up a Vygotskian sociocultural theory of mind radically transforms how we understand L2 teacher learning, L2 teaching, and the entire enterprise of L2 teacher education (Johnson, 2009; Johnson & Golombek, 2011). In this project, by looking closely at our teachers as they are learning to teach and our activity in mediating their learning, we have become mindful of our role in cultivating their professional development. And this, according to Vygotsky, is the ultimate goal of formal education: “to point the road for development...to create conditions for certain cognitive processes to develop...for a child to transform an ability ‘in itself’ into an ability ‘for himself’ [sic]” (as cited in van der Veer & Valsiner, 1991, p. 331). As L2 teacher educators and applied linguistics researchers, writing this book has created the conditions for our own professional development, enabling us to become mindful of our pedagogy for L2 teacher education. By putting our pedagogy under a microscope, we have deliberately sought to unpack what we have fully internalized as L2 teacher educators, and, in true Vygotskian fashion, externalized our own expertise as we seek to cultivate L2 teachers’ professional development. Doing so, we believe, has changed our expertise as well, cultivating a higher level of consciousness, a more nuanced understanding of our work, and a mindfulness of what, how, and why we do what we do and its consequences on and for our teachers. As we mentioned at the outset, we believe that the educational value of analyzing our practices with our teachers, in our programs, is in enabling others to scrutinize their practices, to hold themselves accountable to the teachers with whom they work, and to become mindful of their pedagogy for L2 teacher education.

Early on in this project, the notion of responsiveness captured our imagination. We could feel and see an intense level of responsiveness in how our interactions with teachers unfolded. Yet to articulate what we meant by responsive
mediation, we needed to tease out its dynamic, emergent, and contingent qualities while also articulating a theoretically sound rationale for why we do what we do with the teachers with whom we work. We also needed to empirically document the consequences of our pedagogy on and for our teachers’ professional development. The end result of this project, the writing of this book, has led us to conceptualize our pedagogy as Mindful L2 Teacher Education.

Framed as Vygotsky might, Mindful L2 Teacher Education is about creating the ‘social conditions for the development’ of L2 teacher/teaching expertise. It is about engaging in dialogic interactions that assist teachers as they transform knowledge, dispositions, skills, and abilities ‘in itself, for themselves.’ It is about exposing teachers to psychological tools that ‘point the road toward’ more theoretically and pedagogically sound instructional practices and greater levels of professional expertise. In practice, Mindful L2 Teacher Education requires that we recognize and intentionally direct what happens inside the practices of L2 teacher education. To do this, we need to be mindful of our motives, intentions, and goals when designing, sequencing, and enacting our pedagogy. We need to be mindful of who our teachers are, where they are in cognitive, affective, and experiential terms, how they are experiencing both being and becoming teachers, and what we collectively are attempting to accomplish throughout our time together. We need to maintain an intense level of responsiveness, one that permeates all of our interactions, whether moment-to-moment, asynchronous, or at-a-distance, in order to encourage collective responsiveness within our practices. We need to be mindful of the consequences of our pedagogy on how teachers come to understand both the scope and impact of their teaching. More now than at any point in our professional careers, we have become mindful of the tremendous level of reflexivity, sensitivity, and specialized expertise that is required of us if we are to cultivate L2 teachers’ professional development.

Yet we are also well aware that in a time when there is growing public consensus that teachers matter, this has not been matched by a consensus that teacher education matters (Cochran-Smith, Feiman-Nemser, & McIntyre, 2008; Edwards, Gilroy, & Hartley, 2002). On the contrary, political challenges to the value of teacher education and alternative pathways into teaching through initiatives such as ‘Teach for All’ (http://teachforall.org/en) have reified the common sense notion that teaching is best learned on the job. Additionally, the neoliberal deskilling of the teaching profession that is being propagated through teacher-proof, scripted curriculum (see Beatty, 2011) is purposefully designed to take the mindfulness out of teaching by telling teachers exactly what to think, say, and do irrespective of who the students are or where the educational setting is. These trends and their socially situated meanings both reflect and are reflective of contemporary societal, institutional, and political expectations that shape and are shaped by the sociocultural contexts in which teachers and teacher educators live, learn, and work. Mindful L2 Teacher Education, we believe, offers a counter-narrative to these discourses. Mindful L2 Teacher Education requires that we make visible the unique
contributions that teacher educators as professionals and teacher education as professional preparation make toward the development of L2 teacher/teaching expertise and its deeply personal and moral consequences on and for L2 teachers.

We once again call attention to Vygotsky’s idea that properly organized formal education is the exemplary activity to achieving a deeper understanding of the object of study, and thus argue that L2 teacher education can be that compelling force in teacher professional development. Vygotsky argued that children go through critical periods, not linked to age, but periods of upheavals, where new psychological tools (literacy, math, etc.) are introduced with the goal of reconstructing the child’s mental structures. These critical periods are marred by contradictions between the child’s current abilities and the dominant mental formations, what we described in Chapter 2 as the *social situation of development*. Overcoming these contradictions creates the potential for cognitive development. We thus envision *Mindful L2 Teacher Education* as a critical period in the learning of teaching, in which contradictions emerge between teachers’ *apprenticeship of observation* (Lortie, 1975) and what they are experiencing and being exposed to in and through the practices of L2 teacher education. *Responsive mediation*, as the nexus of *Mindful L2 Teacher Education*, emerges during systematic instruction aimed at the ceilings of teachers’ ZPDs and supports the emergence of new meanings, enabling teachers to gain increasing control over *true concepts* that regulate their teaching activity and burgeoning teaching expertise.

In Chapters 1–4 we offered the foundation of sociocultural theory and a collection of Vygotskian and Vygotskian-inspired theoretical concepts to situate and operationally define the concept of *responsive mediation*. In Chapters 5–9 we highlighted various iterations of *responsive mediation* that emerged in different material cultural activities that constitute our own L2 teacher education practices. In this chapter we shift our attention to a much more abstract level, one in which we consider the logic that is ignited when *responsive mediation* becomes a psychological tool for L2 teacher educators, teachers, and researchers to both examine and inform their own pedagogy. We propose *responsive mediation* as an *academic concept* that “develops dynamically through use, to be learned over time and formed through a process of synthesis and analysis while moving repeatedly between engagement in activity and abstract reasoning” (Johnson, 2009, p. 20).

Given our Vygotskian sociocultural stance on internalization as the ongoing process of transforming from the social–external to the personal–internal, we know that readers will not simply read about *responsive mediation* and use it to regulate their thinking and activities. Nor does *responsive mediation* include just any interaction. Through our description of *responsive mediation* as a psychological tool, we encourage readers to ascend to the concrete by externalizing and examining the conceptual and material features of their L2 teacher education practices (activity). We invite readers to document and analyze empirically the impact of *responsive mediation* on, for, and with the L2 teachers with whom they work.
Dialectics and responsive mediation

In proposing responsive mediation as a psychological tool for L2 teacher educators, we draw on the origins of Vygotsky’s approach to investigating the development of higher-order mental functioning (i.e., human cognitive development). In his attempt to reformulate the dominant psychological theories of his time, Vygotsky sought to overcome the deficiencies of binary logic (i.e., mind versus body) by uncovering how dialectical principles functioned in the domain of human consciousness, specifically the uniquely human ability to use symbols to mediate the psyche (Mahn, 2009). Dialectical logic, based on the writings of Hegel (1965), is a method of reasoning that aims to understand the world concretely in all of its movement, change, and interconnections, unifying its opposite and contradictory sides. Put simply, to understand anything in our everyday experience, we must know something about how it arose and developed (processes) and how it fits into the larger context or system of which it is a part (relations). Vygotsky was attracted to how Marx had used dialectical principles in his political-economic analysis of capitalism, and thus he attempted to apply these same principles to the field of Psychology. Obviously much more can be said here, but for our purposes, it is Marx’s dialectical methodology that we find fruitful in articulating the internal logic of responsive mediation. Briefly, Marxist methodology entails deconstructing the present to find its preconditions in the past (how did it come to be as it is), which allowed Marx to project its likely future (what it could be), in essence, seeking out the preconditions of the future in the present (what is happening now that allows us to imagine the future). Marx’s ‘dance of the dialect,’ according to Ollman (2003), is never truly finished. Thus, while “change is always part of what things are, the central question becomes how, when, and into what they change and why they sometimes appear not to (ideology)” (Ollman, 2003, p. 66). For teacher educators, this means thinking dialectically and having a theorized idea of how, when, and into what we expect teachers to change their thinking and activity, all the while recognizing why they may not change, or choose not to change, in ways that we may have intended and/or imagined.

We find this dialectical methodology vital in defining the internal logic of responsive mediation. When we respond to our teachers’ blog entries, when we discuss their videotaped instruction, or when we ask them to conduct narrative inquiry projects, we continually ask ourselves, “Given the activity we are currently asking our teachers to engage in (present), how have their ways of thinking, talking, and acting come to be as they are (past)?” Moreover, “How can we collaboratively co-construct an imagined future, one in which they come to embody theoretically and pedagogically sound ways of thinking, talking, and acting (future)?” Thus, while we are engaged in the present, we must collaboratively and cooperatively acknowledge the past and imagine the future, all the while recognizing what we are doing as happening in an evolving, ever-changing, and challenging system. And as a result, responsive mediation has come to represent the nexus of our pedagogy for L2 teacher education through which this process is
accomplished. It is not simply about what we do, but how we think about what we do that matters. And how we think about what we do is grounded in an ideal/material dialect that (re)shapes responsive mediation continually.

**Ideal/material dialect**

In addition to being driven by dialectical logic, we also find responsive mediation as constituting an ideal/material dialectic. One opposition, the ideal (conceptual), represents our motives, intentions, and goals, which inform not only the design and sequencing of the mediational spaces, tools, and activities that we create, but also how we envision our teachers should begin to think, talk, and act. The other opposition, the material (activity), is what we actually say and do together, our moment-to-moment, asynchronous, and at-a-distance interactions, that are, of course, enacted with real people, with histories, needs, emotions, in real time and in real contexts. This dialectic is endemic to our work in that a new path forward, or a new way of thinking, must be put forth both ideally and materially for development to occur. And this is where responsive mediation comes into play. Teacher educators have an ideal of what they want to accomplish in an activity and an individualized sense of each teacher, but it is in the material, the *in situ* enactment of that activity, that teacher educators attempt to identify concretely the lower and upper thresholds of each teacher’s ZPD as they seek to cultivate development. The *in situ* activity, on the social plane, may alter the teacher educator’s ideal, as well as understanding of the teacher, while also, we hope, altering the teacher’s ideal and activity. Responsive mediation, once again, functions as the mechanism through which to resolve the dialectical relationship between the ideal (conceptual) and the material (activity) that exists in the social conditions and interactional spaces, mediated through language, where *obuchenie* takes place. Not every interaction between a teacher educator and a teacher leads to development, so when enacting responsive mediation, the concept of *obuchenie* positions teacher educators squarely on the instructional side of expert/novice interactions, as the ultimate goal of *Mindful L2 Teacher Education* is to cultivate teachers’ professional development.

The ideal/material dialectic does not only represent the teacher educator’s mental processes and activity in L2 teacher education. Teachers likewise come into these interactions with an ideal (conceptual), though we expect that this ideal does not contain the specificity characteristic of the teacher educator’s expertise. Teacher educators thus also need to have some understanding of the teacher’s ideal if they are to mediate responsively. This is where intersubjectivity is particularly important as teacher educators try to create a shared understanding of the instructional situation that is the focus of their activity. This dialectic plays out in dialogic interactions with teachers, when teacher educators and teachers are highly responsive to one another, when they share some of the same motives and are working toward the same objective, and when their dialogic interactions are directed at the upper limits of teachers’ current capabilities.
Junctures within mindful L2 teacher education

Given the complexity and dynamism of the dialectic we are describing, especially the ideal/material, readers may be struggling to understand how to place these abstract notions into concrete activity. We have found it helpful to consider the ideal/material dialectic emerging at three unique but continuously interacting junctures in our work as teacher educators—intentions, in situ, and consequences.

The first encompasses our intentions. In whatever practice or sequence of practices that we are creating for and/or enacting with teachers, we begin with basic questions concerning what we hope teachers will accomplish, what we anticipate as being difficult for them, and what the consequences of activity may be on and for teachers. The second juncture is in situ, as it is happening, in moment-to-moment, asynchronous, or at-a-distance interactions. The dialogic nature is obvious in both moment-to-moment and asynchronous interactions, but it is also evident in the at-a-distance interactions. If we consider Bakhtin’s (1986) notion of dialogism as utterance and discourse, chains of utterances and discourses not only anticipate a listener, but also anticipate a response, being “shaped and developed in continuous and constant interaction with others’ individual utterances” (p. 89). As teacher educators, our mediational intentions at-a-distance serve to anticipate teachers’ responses, and to maintain an ongoing dialogue. We again ask ourselves questions in situ concerning what we seem to be achieving and how it links with our and our teachers’ intentions. The third juncture entails the end result, the consequences on and for cognitive development. As we enact our intentions in activity, we expect there will be significant consequences for teachers, for their students, and for ourselves, so we question what those consequences might be, both in situ and after the fact.

We emphasize both the recursive and interactive nature of these junctures. Even when one juncture is a focal point, the others are still present. When considering our intentions, we are concomitantly reflecting on what we anticipate, to some degree, will happen in situ, as well as the possible consequences. When interacting in situ, we are appraising whether and how our intentions are being carried out as well as their potential consequences. And when we experience and appraise the consequences, we are reflecting on their effect on our intentions and the in situ.

Responsive mediation

We emphasize that our concept of responsive mediation is theoretically informed and multifaceted and, thus, cannot be reduced to a bite-sized definition. Grounded in dialectical principles, responsive mediation starts with the teacher as a whole person, or as much of the person as teacher educators know or can come to know. It also requires establishing a sense of teachers’ perezhivanie, both past and present, as well as recognizing teacher educators’ own complex
interplay of cognition and emotion, originating in and reshaped through their perezhivanie. Thus, responsive mediation recognizes how teachers have come to be who and where they are (processes) as well as how they and what they do fit into the larger sociocultural contexts in which they operate (relations). From here responsive mediation proceeds to the particulars: the challenges teachers are facing, the tensions they are experiencing, the excitement they are feeling. These particulars may represent potential growth points where responsive mediation may be most beneficial. For example, a teacher’s idealized teaching persona (e.g., Kyla’s persona as fun and mellow), or the partial understanding of an academic concept (e.g., Ryan’s everyday notion of parallelism), or an externally imposed teacher identity (e.g., Patrick’s identity as ‘grammar inquisitor’) all represent the particulars or preconditions that exist in the present that can help open up the past and imagine the future. As teacher educators work on and through these particulars, they must come to recognize the upper limits of teachers’ potential, be strategic in the sort of assistance given, and remain highly responsive to teachers’ immediate needs and emerging capacities. As we mentioned previously, we emphasize the multidirectional nature of these dialogic interactions and the fluidity with which responsive mediation evolves. Such responsiveness requires that teacher educators intentionally forge intermental development zones (IDZs)—multiple and sustained opportunities to think together about the problems, concerns, and/or issues at hand; offer assistance that is responsive to immediate needs and emerging capabilities; and design, sequence, and enact various meditational spaces, tools, and/or activities through which teachers can function successfully ahead of themselves. Yet, responsive mediation also entails moving back and forth between the particulars and the abstract, drawing on academic concepts to restructure everyday concepts, assisting teachers in naming or renaming new ways of reasoning about and enacting their teaching activity in various instructional situations, for different pedagogical purposes. As new generalizations take shape, true concepts begin to emerge and hopefully become the psychological tools that enable teachers to enact theoretically and pedagogically sound instructional practices in the settings and circumstances where they teach.

Responsive mediation also requires that teachers come to think dialectically too. We expect teachers to reflect on their experiences with us by recognizing the past in the present, and imagining the future, as predicated on the present. For example, in Chapter 6 Kyla’s idealized teaching persona originated in her past and was challenged when she was unable to enact it in the present, but with the teacher educator’s assistance and their dialogic blog exchanges, she became increasingly capable of materializing her idealized teaching persona. As a consequence, her idealized teaching persona had changed. Her mellow and nice attitude now had a purpose and clear objectives that regulated her thinking and activity. She was not only able to describe what she did, she was able to imagine what she could have done. Her newly imagined teaching persona...
emerged from the fluid social relations and dialogic interactions that she had with the teacher educator. These interactions were not and could not have been predicted ahead of time, but instead were negotiated and constituted in situ as teacher and teacher educator engaged in and with the blog during Kyla’s practicum placement. We saw a similar tension unfold for Abra in Chapter 5. Her idealized conception of teaching originated in her perezhivanie about what it means to be a ‘good’ person in how she treated others. Even though she did not enact this conception materially in her instructional activities, at least to her way of thinking, engagement in the digital video protocol (DVP) with the teacher educator created a safe zone, a ‘do over’ of sorts, where she was able to express what she could have done differently to engineer student participation in the future. And in Chapter 9, we saw how Arya expressed her ideal conceptualization of teaching as students co-constructing their understanding of language as discourse through texts, and how she thought she was enacting it until she participated in the DVP. Even though the teacher educator’s assistance through their emerging, moment-to-moment dialogic interactions in the DVP enabled Arya to design and enact material activity aligned with her ideal conceptualization in her next class, when faced with new classroom conditions, she resorted to her teacher-fronted approach. The self-inquiry and mediation provided through the process of writing a narrative inquiry enabled her to re-story this entire experience, transforming her understanding that she could implement her conceptualization in material activity with any number of students if they were ‘primed to participate’ and she ‘trusted [her]self as the teacher.’

As we have argued throughout this book, L2 teacher education as a culturally embedded, socially constructed educational activity is designed and carried out to support the development of L2 teacher/teaching expertise. Yet, in many ways, and based on our analyses in Chapters 5–9, what we are really attempting to do in our pedagogy is to project an imagined future on, with, or sometimes for our teachers. For us, Mindful L2 Teacher Education is about how to enact obuchenie, focusing specifically on the central role of social interaction and meaning-making in building teaching repertoires for how to be and how to mean in the L2 teaching world. Mindful L2 Teacher Education entails attention to what teachers bring to their learning-to-teach experiences (pre-understandings), how teachers are experiencing what they are learning (perezhivanie), the emergent, contingent, and responsive nature of teacher/teacher educator mediation (responsive mediation), the development of new understandings (concept development) in situations where teachers’ pre-understandings are inadequate, and the mediational means (mediational spaces, tools, and activities) through which teachers begin to reconceptualize how they think about and attempt to enact their instructional practices in the setting in which they teach. To enact obuchenie as Vygotsky intended, we argue, responsive mediation lies as the nexus of Mindful L2 Teacher Education.
An invitation for L2 teacher educators, teachers, and researchers

In the opening pages of van der Veer and Valsiner’s (1991) book, *Understanding Vygotsky: A Quest for Synthesis*, they offer a quote from Vygotsky that captures the principles that have inspired us to write this book. In true dialectical thinking, Vygotsky states:

> Every inventor, even a genius, is always the outgrowth of his time and environment. His creativity stems from those needs that were created before him, and rest upon those possibilities that, again, exist outside of him. That is why we notice strict continuity in the historical development of technology and science. No invention or scientific discovery appears before the material and psychological conditions are created that are necessary for its emergence. Creativity is a historically continuous process in which every next form is determined by its preceding ones. (p. xi)

In this book we have opened up for closer scrutiny the material (practices) and psychological (conceptual) conditions of our work as ‘inventors,’ as teacher educators, and in doing so, unpacked what we know and do as L2 teacher educators and researchers. By turning our analytic gaze inward and grounding what we know and do in a sociocultural theoretical perspective, we have articulated our pedagogy for L2 teacher education by uncovering ‘the material and psychological conditions’ underlying it. It is our hope that by making our pedagogy accessible to others, we have created the theoretical and pedagogical conditions that will promote *Mindful L2 Teacher Education*. Our commitment to *Mindful L2 Teacher Education* and the concept of *responsive mediation* as the mechanism through which it is enacted would not have been possible if we had not empirically documented and analyzed the material and psychological conditions of our work as L2 teacher educators. Thus, to conclude, we invite readers to take up a mindful stance, one that we believe will enable them to enact *Mindful L2 Teacher Education* in the settings and circumstances in which they work and that offers a counter-narrative to dominant discourses that degrade teacher/teaching agency and the role of teacher education in the development of teaching/teacher expertise.

**Cultivating development**

Teachers do not enter L2 teacher education programs to mirror the experiences they have in the everyday world. Instead, they expect to engage in practices that will, by design, enable them to materialize and enact theoretically and pedagogically sound instructional practices that support productive language learning within the contexts in which they teach. In the introduction of our 2011 edited book, we argued that a Vygotskian sociocultural theory of mind offers tremendous explanatory power to both capture the elusive processes of teacher
professional development and articulate sound ways to support and enhance teacher professional development within L2 teacher education programs (p. xi). While much of our earlier work focused on capturing the processes of teacher learning, our more recent work, and this book in particular, has focused on the deployment of specific Vygotskian-informed concepts and principles in order to intentionally promote the development of L2 teacher/teaching expertise. It is for these reasons that we have sought to examine not only how we attempt to cultivate teachers’ professional development but also the consequences on and for the development of L2 teacher/teaching expertise. We see our work as very much in line with Lantolf and Poehner’s (2014) recent attention to the pedagogical imperative in L2 education. They state that the pedagogical imperative reflects “Vygotsky’s position that to be successful, psychology cannot be a science limited to observation of human psychological processes and their development, but it must become a science that takes seriously the obligation stated succinctly in Marx’s Eleventh Thesis on Feuerbach: ‘The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it’ (Marx, 1987b, italics in original)” (Lantolf & Poehner, 2014, p. 7). This project and our conceptualization of Mindful L2 Teacher Education is a serious attempt to change L2 teachers, L2 teaching, and L2 teacher education.

**Thinking dialectically**

This is hard for most of us to do. Thinking dialectically about anything we do requires a sea change in how we understand the world. Aristotelian philosophy has long dominated Western thinking through its dualistic mind/body distinction, based on formal logic and characterized by a schism between the ideal (mind) world and the material (body) world. Thus, in L2 teacher education we are often stuck in dualisms such as theory/practice, novice/expert, or teaching/learning, positioned as if they represent fundamental distinctions that distort our understandings of the relationship between and consequences of teaching and learning, how and what we need to know to learn to teach, and what it means to be a teacher and a learner. Dialectic thinking, in contrast, is the logic of interconnectivity, of movement, of change, and accepts as fundamental that reality is constantly changing especially through the dialectic unity of opposing forces (Novack, 1971, pp. 77–78). To enact Mindful L2 Teacher Education, teacher educators and teachers must think dialectically. The present must be viewed as reflecting the preconditions of the past that made it possible and the future can only be imagined by reflecting on the preconditions in the present that make the future possible. We believe our characterization of responsive mediation does create the social conditions for dialectic thinking and, thus, makes development possible. But, as we mentioned above, we are also humbled by the reflexivity, sensitivity, and expertise that are needed to cultivate teachers’ professional development.
Unpacking expertise

As we mentioned in Chapter 1, Ball and Forzani (2010) describe the activity of teaching as ‘unnatural work’ since it requires teachers to unpack something that they know so well, yet now must make accessible to and learnable by others. We argue that the same can be said for teacher educators. To enact Mindful L2 Teacher Education, teacher educators must unpack their own expertise, or what they have internalized; make it systematic, accessible to, and learnable by their teachers; and provide appropriate assistance as their teachers attempt to first imitate, then play, and eventually internalize features of their expertise, moving from external (interpsychological) to internal (intrapsychological) and thus establishing the psychological basis of L2 teacher/teaching expertise. We have done this for our work in Chapters 5–9, and invite other teacher educators, teachers, and researchers to do the same. We believe for teacher educators and teachers, doing so will change the nature of their expertise, while for researchers, doing so will change the nature of their understanding of expertise. The materialization of teacher educator expertise, whether through self-study or study by others, reveals the complexity and social-situated nature of such expertise, located L2 teacher education (Johnson, 2006), and thus offers evidence against the de-skilling of teachers, discourses of teaching as ‘learning on the job,’ or teaching as scripted activity.

Forging true concepts

As we mentioned in Chapter 1, Vygotsky (1986) did not privilege academic concepts over everyday concepts, arguing that neither is sufficient for a child to become fully self-regulated. Instead, he argued that the goal of formal education is for academic concepts and everyday concepts to become united into true concepts; an academic concept “gradually comes down to concrete phenomena” and an everyday concept “goes from the phenomenon upward toward generalizations” (p. 148). We believe this same process of internalization is essential for the development of L2 teacher/teaching expertise. Mindful L2 Teacher Education that supports the internalization of true concepts, a concrete example of how we can think dialectically, assists teachers as they transform their tacit knowledge and beliefs acquired through their schooling histories, enabling them to rethink what they thought they knew about teachers, teaching, and student learning. Mindful L2 Teacher Education supports teachers as they begin to use true concepts as tools for thinking, enabling them to see themselves and classroom life and the activities of teaching/learning through new theoretical lenses. Mindful L2 Teacher Education assists teachers as they begin to think in concepts (Karpov, 2003), to reason about and enact their teaching effectively and appropriately in various instructional situations, for different pedagogical purposes, and to articulate theoretically sound reasons for doing so. Likewise, through unpacking expertise, we expect that teacher
educators can, as they identify what they do in their pedagogy and why, engage in a similar process of thinking through concepts more intentionally and responsively—with the goal of cultivating teacher development.

**Working responsively**

In line with cultivating development, thinking dialectically, unpacking expertise, and forging true concepts, enacting *Mindful L2 Teacher Education* requires that teacher educators work responsively as the nexus. We invite readers to embrace responsive mediation as a continuous process of recognizing and then working at the upper limits of teachers’ ZPD, mindful of their own and their teachers’ perezhivanie, sociocultural history, idealized conceptions, motives, and goals, while continually responding to teachers’ needs, motives, and goals as they unfold in moment-to-moment, asynchronous, and at-a-distance dialogic interactions while engaged in the practices of L2 teacher education. As we articulate our pedagogy, we are even more humbled by the reflexivity, sensitivity, and expertise that are needed to work responsively to, ultimately, cultivate L2 teachers’ professional development.

**Conclusion**

In this book we offer *Mindful L2 Teacher Education* as a counter-narrative to the dominant political and educational discourses that teacher education doesn’t matter. We believe it does. We see *Mindful L2 Teacher Education* as theoretical learning that is intentional, deliberate, and goal-directed by teacher educators who are skilled at moving teachers toward more theoretically and pedagogically sound instructional practices and greater levels of professional expertise. We have empirically documented how teacher learning and development are assisted by the dialogic interactions that emerge inside the practices of L2 teacher education. We propose responsive mediation as a psychological tool for examining the quality and character of the dialogic interactions that emerge inside the practices of L2 teacher education, as well as a mediational means for orienting to and enacting a mindful pedagogy that supports the development of L2 teacher/teaching expertise. We end by leaving our readers with the same ‘quest for synthesis’ that Vygotsky called for more than 85 years ago. Though this book may be completed, our quest for understanding, supporting, and enhancing L2 teacher professional development inside the practices of L2 teacher education continues to constitute the essence of our scholarly and professional work.

**References**


Author Queries

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