

Meta, Meta, Meta: Modeling in a Methods Course for Teaching English

By Joelle K. Jay

In teacher education, how instructors teach is as important as what they teach (Wilson, 1987; Stover, 1990; Wilson, 1990). Pre-service teachers learn about teaching *by example* as much as through the content and activities of these classes (Stover, 1990; Wilson, 1990), particularly in methods classes, where the subject matter and pedagogy most closely resemble that which students in the class will most likely someday teach (Wilson, 1987). In the language of teaching and learning, “teaching by example” is generally referred to as *modeling*.

Modeling presents one way of helping students gain deep understanding of teaching, for it offers an “image of the possible”—a foundation in developing a sense of effective instruction (Grossman, 1991; Shulman, 1983). The importance of modeling is magnified when pedagogy contradicts the images formed in pre-service teachers’ minds from years of schooling (Lortie, 1975). Because students generally rely on their school experience to inform their learning as teachers, learning new or complex ways of teaching can be a considerable challenge (Grossman, 1991). Further complicating the situation is the fact that teacher education students are unlikely to have experienced as learners the instructional strategies they are taught to use as teachers (Grossman, 1991). If pre-service teachers are to learn complex ways of teaching, they must be able to form new images and come to under-

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Meta, Meta, Meta

stand them in meaningful ways. And yet, we know little about how this happens in teacher education.

To begin with, evidence exists that modeling is not commonly practiced in teacher education (Anderson & Armbruster, 1990; Wilson, 1987); correspondingly, little research exists that describes its use. The literature that does exist suggests that modeling is an effective strategy in teacher education (Bass & Chambless, 1994; Payne & Manning, 1991; Stover, 1990) as well as professional development (Boiasky, 1985). A small body of research discusses issues and approaches to modeling in teacher education (Gorrell & Capron, 1990; Stroble & Lenz, 1990); however, the issues associated with teaching with modeling have gone largely unexamined and the influences quite unexplored.

In this article, I explore the strategy of modeling in an English methods class of teacher education. What does it mean to model? How do students respond to modeling as a way of learning to teach? What issues, challenges, and concerns surround the use of modeling as a pedagogy? These questions frame this inquiry into the use of modeling to teach methods. In order to get an in-depth view on the use of modeling for teaching a complex concept, I focus on the modeling of one specific concept: instructional scaffolding.

In the teaching of English, *instructional scaffolding* (Applebee & Langer, 1983) is a concept that is tremendously useful, and yet complex and unfamiliar to preservice teachers. In this model,

the novice reader or writer learns new skills in context where more skilled language users provide the support necessary to carry through unfamiliar tasks. In the course of this process, the structure provided by the skilled reader or writer is gradually internalized by the novice, who thus eventually learns to carry through similar tasks independently. (Applebee & Langer, 1983, p.168)

This approach can be invaluable to English teachers. Drawing on the work of Bruner and Vygotsky, it emphasizes the targeting of instruction toward tasks that students just about know how to do (Langer & Applebee, 1986). A more experienced partner, like a teacher, helps students to do what is just out of their reach; instruction is “scaffolded” in the sense that students are supported over time, with support being gradually removed as learners become more independent with the targeted skills. Derived from theories of language learning, scaffolding particularly applies to the teaching of English (Applebee & Langer, 1983). However, the framework is generalizable to a number of related areas concerned with reading, writing, and discussion (Applebee & Langer, 1983), including, as illustrated below, teacher education.

In the English methods class described below, the concept of scaffolding is modeled on two levels: it is both *used* in the teaching of preservice teachers and *taught* as a strategy for use in the secondary English classes they will ultimately teach. In other words, the modeling is both explicit and implicit. Conversations with

two students, Cliff Carney and Harriet Saxton, and the instructor, Linda Rhodes, provide insight into the process, tensions, and effectiveness of modeling. Results of the study have interesting implications and raise further questions for teacher education.

Background Information

The examples presented in this paper are drawn from observations of Dr. Rhodes' English methods class in a graduate-level certification program. Observations (in two-hour sessions, twice per week), document collection (syllabus, handouts, overheads, and assignments), and interviews with Rhodes and two students (each audiotaped and transcribed) took place over eleven weeks. The information was then organized thematically to inform this discussion of modeling, scaffolding, and the teaching of writing.

The methods class is a two-quarter sequence that students take early in their program, along with a full schedule of other courses and relevant field experiences. The goal of the class is to "introduce prospective English teachers to the core issues involved in teaching English to diverse students" (Course Syllabus). Toward this end, students experience a variety of pedagogical strategies, like instructional scaffolding, and their associated conceptual underpinnings, in part through the instructor's modeling.

In this article, study results are presented according to the ways Rhodes modeled the concept of scaffolding: demonstrations and explicit instruction, use of assignments, and multiple representations. Each section contains a description of instruction and a description of student and instructor perspectives.

Demonstrations and Explicit Modeling

In this approach to modeling, Rhodes demonstrates the use of scaffolding in teaching imagery. She opens class by asking students to pretend to be high school students for the modeled lesson. After the lesson, students and Rhodes debrief the experience. Third, Rhodes conducts a brief lecture on scaffolding.

The Demonstration: Three Scaffolded Activities

In the demonstrated lesson, three scaffolded activities are introduced. One activity provides students ample support with a complex concept: imagery in writing. Another activity provides less support with the same concept in a different context, and the final activity, even less support with the same concept in a yet another context.

Activity: Free-Associating with Imagery. Rhodes hands each student a yellow card, face down. The side facing up shows a number; the side facing down contains a single word expressing an emotion (i.e., anger, sadness, joy). She also hands out sheets of paper with evenly spaced words along the left-hand side: color, smell, taste,

Meta, Meta, Meta

sound, object, animal, food, beverage, place or setting, and weather. She directs the students to free-associate with the emotion on their card, using these words to guide their thoughts: “So for example, if a color associated with your emotion is ‘blue,’ what kind of blue?” (Observation, 10/13/00). Students write, brainstorming their way through the words on the handout, for five minutes.

After students have had time to write and brainstorm, they get into groups by the number on the back of their card. Groups consist of about five students, each with a different emotion on their cards, which they keep confidential. One by one, students read their list of free-associated words. For example:

COLOR: barely-see black—not opaque, but shadows
SMELL: rotten, musty
TASTE: steely
SOUND: none; wind
OBJECT: wishing rock; talisman
ANIMAL: wolf; bat (uncaring, mysterious)
FOOD: none—hunger
BEVERAGE: water
PLACE OR SETTING: field—wide open with shadows at edges
WEATHER: cold (“chilled”)

Group members then try to guess the emotion: in this example, fear. Students take turns reading and guessing the emotions, revealing the way writers create unique expressions of emotion through imagery.

Back in a large group, Rhodes then asks students a series of questions. “How did you come up with your free-associated words? How were people able to guess each others’ emotions? How was it different than saying, for example, “I’m angry! I’m happy!”? (Classroom Observation, 10/13/99). As students respond to the questions, it becomes clear that emotions are common enough to be recognizable by the symbols chosen to represent them, but that the specific images and associations also serve to illustrate how people experience emotions differently. With this discussion, Rhodes has elicited her point: imagery evokes feelings and allows readers to experience emotion. Rhodes concludes, “This is why authors use imagery” (Classroom Observation, 10/13/99). These points having arisen from the activity and the discussion, the class moves on to the second activity in which they practice the skills in a slightly different context and with slightly less instructional support.

Activity: Imagery in the Context of a Poem. Following the group discussion, Rhodes hands out a poem by Theodore Roethke (Appendix A) with the title removed and directs students to use their list of prompts from the previous activity to pick out examples of imagery. Rhodes also asks students, “Now look at all the things you have marked and see what you would title the poem.” Quietly students circle or label parts of their poem as “color,” “object,” and other parts of the list. After some time, students finish, Rhodes asks for feedback, and students share. What are

some of the objects of the poem? What are some of the smells and sounds? A feeling of community fills the room as students share what they believe the poem to be about, what experiences it evoked, how it made them feel and why. Finally, Rhodes asks students what they think the title of the poem would be. Most students guess titles following a similar strand of thought, and Rhodes finally imparts the actual title: “Dolor.”

This ends the second activity. The class then moves on to the third activity, in which they again practice the skills in a slightly different context and with even less instructional support.

Activity: Making Imagery Personal (“Homework”). Ending the demonstration, Rhodes “assigns” the homework she would normally give high school students to continue their learning about imagery:

Write a paragraph or a poem about a time or a day that you felt this way (i.e. the way Theodore Roethke feels in “Dolor”). Use as many specific images as you can. For example, here is the opening line of my paragraph: ‘The day was grey and foggy. I sat in the laundromat, sorting socks, and watching the goldfish swim around and around in a bowl.’” (Classroom Observation, 10/13/99)

In a gesture that confirms the success of this sample lesson, Rhodes’ students hurriedly write down the assignment, until she notices and points out, “this is only the homework I *would* give high school students at the end of this lesson. You don’t have to actually do it!”

Class Debriefing of the Modeled Lesson

As is evident from their hasty scribbling down of the assignment Rhodes gives at the end of this lesson, her students have become *completely* engaged in the sample lesson. At this point in the class, Rhodes turns the lesson in a different direction, asking students to “become themselves” again. They stop pretending to be high school students experiencing scaffolding as a way of learning about imagery and become graduate students again, experiencing scaffolding as a way of learning to teach English.

Following this sample lesson, Rhodes leads the class in an interactive discussion about the nature of scaffolding. If the modeled lesson was one example, she asks, “What is the nature of scaffolding? What did we do?” (Classroom Observation, 10/13/99). Students respond with a list of ideas that correspond to the attributes of scaffolding. First, they talk about the imagery free-association:

“The worksheet had starting points. We didn’t have to *generate* ideas.”

“We started with something easier.”

“We started with ourselves [in looking for images to match our assigned emotion]; we didn’t have to pull it out from something else.” (Classroom Observation, 10/13/99)

Meta, Meta, Meta

Thinking about the activity of looking for imagery in the context of the poem, students recognize that having free-associated in the first activity prepared them to do the second. Thinking about the homework assignment, they see that they were being asked to do on their own what had been practiced with others in class. Last, students brainstorm ideas for where the lesson could lead: into an assignment on writing with imagery, into a unit on word choice, or into a lesson on poetry with more complex imagery.

Explicit Instruction on Scaffolding

In the last turn of the lesson, Rhodes shifts the focus of the class once again to discuss a concept. This time, students are positioned as preservice teachers discussing scaffolding as an instructional tool.

In a short, 10-minute lecture, Rhodes explains the concept of scaffolding, which she calls “one of the most useful tools I’ve found for thinking about teaching English” (Observation, 10/13/99). She defines scaffolding briefly: “Scaffolding means supporting students’ learning over time. Like ‘real’ scaffolding, it eventually disappears” (10/13/99). She explains the thinking behind the theoretical concept: students should be treated as competent participants in their learning, but teachers should also recognize that there are some things students can’t yet do on their own. Referencing Vygotsky, she explains, “It’s a social process. We learn to do things with other people, and ultimately we can do them alone” (10/13/99).

Rhodes then presents five components of instructional scaffolding. These components, drawn from Applebee and Langer’s (1983) description of scaffolding in the teaching of reading and writing, have been adapted to suit the needs of teacher education students. Rhodes describes *ownership* (or *intentionality*) as “making kids want to learn” (Observation, 10/13/99). *Appropriateness* means “targeting instruction toward the things that students just about know how to do” (10/13/99). *Choice* is emphasized as a way of helping students identify their learning needs and interests. *Structure* concerns the structure of the discipline and “where you are going and how; so you can structure supports” (10/13/99). *Collaboration* involves asking, “What’s the role of the adult with the child?” (10/13/99). Rhodes suggests a collaborative role. About *internalization* (to which Rhodes has added “/Transfer of control”), Rhodes reminds students, “Scaffolding aims at self-destruction. Eventually kids can do [what you’ve taught them] alone.” Rhodes illustrates each component with examples from the demonstrated imagery lesson and anecdotes from other contexts, like scaffolding as a way of thinking about learning to drive a car. Finally, Rhodes gives students a handout that contains the five components, written as directions for teachers about what to do in planning scaffolded instruction. This ends the class.

To review, in this class session Rhodes uses modeling in the form of a demonstration for the purpose of illustrating the concept of scaffolding. With the various activities, Rhodes has used her own instruction “for high school students” as a shared experience back to which the class can refer. The class then debriefs the

lesson to get a sense of the concept of scaffolding before Rhodes concretizes the learning with Applebee and Langer's (1983) five components and the handouts. This is Rhodes' most explicit modeling of scaffolding, and the one that serves as a foundation for students' learning of the concept.

The Students' Perspective on the Lesson

When I interviewed them four months later, students Carney and Saxton vividly remembered this day as an example of Rhodes' modeling to teach them the concept of scaffolding. Their concepts of scaffolding were consistent with Rhodes' explanation. Saxton described scaffolding as a way of providing students experience with tools that they could eventually adopt as their own to use in approaching tasks of reading and writing. Carney used a metaphor to describe his understanding of scaffolding:

You can also look at it in terms of training wheels or something. Something that gets the student rolling within a discipline. In other words, in terms of scaffolding, it's just something that sort of assists them in developing a sort of knowledge and a structure that can kind of fall away as they become more masterful in using the elements of that discipline, ways and means of sort of making cognitive headway. (Interview, 1/11/99)

As Saxton noted, such scaffolding is hard, for it requires teachers to be aware of the processes they themselves use to accomplish various tasks. Although Saxton and Carney's explanation is theoretically incomplete, it is nonetheless accurate. The most important message they seemed to have learned about scaffolding is the notion that it gradually falls away, so that students can eventually use the concepts taught on their own. As Saxton put it, if students can't use the concepts alone, they're not really *learning*.

The Instructor's Perspective on the Lesson

The lesson described above is an example of what Rhodes calls *explicit* modeling. It is one of the primary ways she sees herself modeling scaffolding. "So I used the poetry example as a way of scaffolding the understanding of a concept of imagery—having students sort of first doing something, sort of working towards the concept and providing a structure for them understanding" (Interview, 2/2/00).

Even though students have in fact learned the concept, Rhodes finds the approach problematic, primarily because it requires positioning graduates as middle or high school students. Not only are her students *not* middle or high school students, they also cannot really 'pretend' that they are. Rhodes notices that her students are usually more eager to participate than young adults might be, and more likely to grasp complex concepts. To compensate, Rhodes points out the contrast to students, but nevertheless finds the "pretending" aspect of modeling artificial. The tension between not wanting to patronize students, yet wanting to give them

a sample lesson appropriate for secondary students is one with which Rhodes must constantly struggle.

Class Assignments and Implicit Modeling

Lesson demonstration is only one approach Rhodes uses to model scaffolding. In this section, Rhodes uses a written assignment to model, again with the concept of scaffolding.

Writing Lesson Plans

Another way that Rhodes models the concept of scaffolding is through the use of assignments such as the final assignment of the quarter, which is to write a pair of related and scaffolded lesson plans. Throughout the quarter leading up to this project, Rhodes works with students periodically on creating discrete parts of a lesson—establishing objectives, creating tasks that address students’ learning needs, and the like. Together, these separate lessons create the scaffolding over time that prepares students to do the final project: students are asked to create two lesson plans that would take place in the context of a single unit, incorporating components of scaffolding and focused on the teaching of writing.

Many of the tasks of the lesson planning assignment are familiar in teacher education. For example, students must include a rationale: “What concepts and skills do you hope students will learn in the course of the assignment? Why?” They must also provide a description of the class to which the lessons are targeted, connections to the state standards, activities involved, an assessment question (“How will you know if your students learned what you want them to learn?”) and a final reflection. Although the project is clearly aimed at helping her students learn to write lesson plans, it also helps them learn about instructional scaffolding. A close look at the assignments reveals how Rhodes has modeled for students *via the assignment* what she wants them to learn about scaffolding, *even as she assigns them to use it*. Rhodes’ lesson planning assignment is very supportive of her students, who are writing a “real” and complete lesson plan for the first time. In fact, it is what one would call “heavily scaffolded”; an analysis of the assignment itself reveals Rhodes’ careful use of the components of scaffolding.

Overall, the project seems *appropriate* for novice teachers. The assignment sheet—five pages long—contains scaffolding as written support: directions, explanations, reminders, and suggestions. Moreover, Rhodes offers students sample lesson plans from previous years. In this way, the project targets what Rhodes’ students are “just about” ready to do. The class has practiced planning sections of lessons and in some cases drafted ideas for whole lessons; they will now draw on these previously learned skills. But the project also pushes students to address internal coherence and detail more than they have previously done; in this final project, students fully develop plans for the first time.

Students can either *choose* to develop an assignment introduced in class or create their own, with instructor feedback. This frees students who wish to experiment to do so, while simultaneously supporting those who, for now, wish to follow a model.

Rhodes invites *ownership* by offering students the freedom to choose lesson content that suits their interests. Within appropriate constraints (i.e., that lessons must incorporate the teaching of writing), students make important decisions about the genre, the activities, and the topics that they will use in their plans. As for *collaboration*, Rhodes makes herself available as a facilitator, downplaying her ultimate evaluative role. Rhodes has made this a partnered assignment, with partners being responsible for providing feedback on drafts. An entire day of class is devoted to collaboration, with partners sitting face to face in desks, talking and planning while Rhodes walks around helping as needed. Although she will ultimately evaluate the students' work, on this day she is valuable to students as a collaborating resource.

By designing this assignment as she has, Rhodes is clearly *using* the concept of scaffolding that she wants her students to use in their lessons; this is the essence of modeling. However, it is also important to note that in the final project, Rhodes directly asks the *students* to put the concept to use by guiding their thinking along Applebee and Langer's five (1983) components:

√ Ownership: Rhodes asks students to create goals and objectives "that address students' own feeling about writing." In this way, Rhodes' students think about how to build in ownership for *their* students.

√ Structure: Rhodes asks students directly to explain how they will scaffold this lesson, building on students' previous learning and leading toward the development of new understanding and skills.

√ Collaboration: Rhodes asks questions that get students to reflect on their roles in the lessons.

√ Appropriateness: Rhodes asks her students to find and attach the resources and materials they will have available for students, emphasizing the need to support students where they are in their learning.

√ Intentionality/Transfer of Control: By virtue of the two-plan design, this assignment leaves room for students to design activities with diminishing support.

Thus, the requirement that students practice the modeled concept of scaffolding is part of the assignment.

The combination of Rhodes' *use* and *directions to students to use* the modeled concept of scaffolding creates the opportunity for students to both understand and work with the concept. She reduces potential for confusion by sticking closely to

Meta, Meta, Meta

the model in her own teaching and by asking students to stick closely to it in theirs. Moreover, Rhodes demonstrates the usefulness and purpose of the concept by making it an important and authentic strategy for teaching. However, what Rhodes does *not* do is expressly expose her own modeling. As opposed to the imagery lesson discussed earlier, the class does not metacognitively discuss the scaffolding approach embedded in the lesson plan assignment; hence, the modeling, though thorough, is implicit.

The Students' Perspective on the Lesson

Surprisingly, despite the several instances of modeling that led up to the final project and the heavy scaffolding in place, students Saxton and Carney found the task to create scaffolded lessons “very hard” (Interview, 1/11/00), and the project an agonizing experience that they didn’t feel ready to do.

Saxton: “I didn’t feel well scaffolded into it, at all....It hit me like a tornado, and I didn’t know what to do....But I think for some, probably, it was a different experience. Cliff?”

Carney: “Actually, I found the lesson plan that week to be almost physically painful.” (1/11/00)

These two students tried to recall the occasions they believed might have prepared them for the project.

We had dealt with some overheads that I remember, and we talked about objectives and learning targets, but for some reason it didn’t click that that was an actual lesson plan.” (2/2/00)

In fact, Saxton is referring to at least three days of instruction—one in which the students focused on the writing of goals and objectives, and two others in which they practiced creating a short lesson plans. The structure of these days closely resembled the structure of the imagery lesson, with several activities taking place, each comprising the components of scaffolding and each expecting slightly more independence on the part of students. Thus, Rhodes had actually *modeled* the use of scaffolding *as she modeled the writing of lesson plans*. As in the final project, however, the modeling remained implicit. That is, Rhodes and her students did not, on these days, debrief the activities in terms of her efforts to scaffold instruction.

This conjecture is supported by an anecdote from the following quarter. At one point, Rhodes actually gave her students a copy of the lesson plan she used in the imagery lesson—the one in they learned scaffolding—as an example of a scaffolded plan. Using that as a model, Saxton and Carney said the next lesson plan they wrote was much easier. As they said the day they turned in these new plans,

Carney: “This lesson plan that’s due today was fine!”

Saxton: “Fine!”

Carney: “No problem!” (1/11/00)

This suggests that Rhodes' explicit use of her imagery lesson as a model made a difference for students in planning, in contrast to the implicit use of modeling in the final project.

The Instructor's Perspective on the Lesson

Rhodes' perspective on the assignment of the writing lesson presents an interesting comparison.

I also actually see the whole class as scaffolded in a certain way so that by the time they get to the writing lesson plans, they've actually done versions of that already in class. So the in-class writing lesson plan they did [previously in the quarter] actually asked them to do a lot of what they had to do for their final [project]....So they actually had some experience on a modified form of what I finally asked them to do before they had to do it. (Interview, 2/2/00)

However, as noted above, in the class sessions to which Rhodes refers, she modeled the use of scaffolding implicitly, *using* it in activities to help students write lessons *without* debriefing the modeling.

Rhodes situates these efforts within the broader context of the class; these experiences will prepare students for a unit plan they write later on in the course, which contains a series of lessons. Overall, Rhodes says, "I guess what I'm trying to scaffold is a way of thinking about teaching that has them consider what they want students to learn" (Interview, 2/2/00). Thus, the assignment to create scaffolded lesson plans is an example of modeling in and of itself, but it is also just one piece of the modeling Rhodes uses throughout the quarter as she tries to show students how the concept evolves over time.

Addressing the difficulty students experienced in their final lesson planning project, Rhodes points out that scaffolding aims at the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978). "It shouldn't be easy. And part of what I kept trying to assure them was, if you already knew how to do this, you wouldn't be in the class. I mean, then it would be an *inappropriate* assignment" (Interview, 2/2/00). This makes an important point about the use of modeling; even when students *understand* a concept, like the scaffolding of lesson planning in Rhodes' class, they may not find it easy to *do*. What is much more significant is that, whether or not the students *felt* prepared to write lessons, "in the end it turned out fine" (Interview, 1/11/00). Both Saxton and Carney were pleased with the way their projects turned out, as was Rhodes.

However, another tension underlies Saxton and Carney's feeling that the lesson plan was hard: an issue of time. Rhodes mentions that she had had to cut out a few additional days of modeling to give students to work on their plans. But she says, "in my assessment of the student work, [for] most of them it was the right level of difficulty. It was hard for them, but they were able to do it" (Interview, 2/2/00).

On-Going Modeling and Reflective Analysis

So far, Rhodes' approach illustrates the modeling of scaffolding in two ways: explicitly with the use of a demonstrated lesson plus accompanying debriefing and instruction (the imagery lesson), and implicitly by embedding the use of the modeled concept in an assignment (the final project). This section presents two more ways Rhodes models scaffolding to illustrate the breadth of her approach. The first involves the implicit use of modeling in teaching about student conferences. The second involves Rhodes' explicit effort to analyze a failed attempt to model scaffolding; by contrast, she shows her students an example of what *not* to do.

Responding to Writing

Using Atwell's *In the Middle* (Atwell, 1998) as a common text, Rhodes' students learn strategies for responding to student writing. Once again, Rhodes incorporates modeling by scaffolding assignments as students' learn the new skill. In a multi-layered, complex way of teaching, Rhodes implicitly models the use of scaffolding as she explicitly models the new concepts she wants her students to learn. For example, Rhodes begins her instruction with a demonstration on using writing traits to respond to writing. She asks a volunteer to pretend to be a high school student who has written a paper; Rhodes then "conferences" with the student over the paper, asking questions and making suggestions for future revisions. After a short debriefing, she assigns students to work in pairs to try responding to a piece of writing. Students are free to choose the focus of their response, but are asked to employ the language of the writing traits in doing so. For homework, the students respond to sample student essays using the traits. Thus, they work in more and more independent ways as they practice responding to writing.

In this sequence, the approach to responding to writing is made explicit, while Rhodes' scaffolding of the activities remains implicit. The progression of activities includes the five components of scaffolding and the gradual removal of instructional guidance as students become more familiar with the task, but these elements of the class session are not examined as part of the class.

Student Conferences and A Model of What Not To Do

This last approach to modeling is somewhat unique. After a particularly troubling day, Rhodes discovers an opportunity to do some explicit modeling—a model of what *not* to do.

On a day Rhodes is teaching her students about conducting student conferences, she becomes aware of that things aren't going well. The next day, she "stops the action" and uses herself as a *negative* example of scaffolding. She tells students she has realized that in her haste to get through a day, she cut out several activities that were planned to be carefully scaffolded. Postponing the activities scheduled

on the syllabus, she tells the class, “I want to stop and reflect on Monday’s class” (Observation, 11/10/99). She describes to the class what she had planned to do—a sequence involving the gradual removal of support that is characteristic of scaffolding. She was going to start with a discussion, demonstrate a student conference, conduct a class-effort conference where students could “coach” a peer’s conferencing style, then model and debrief a good and a bad conference. Finally, she was going to ask students to role play conferences and practice the skills they had learned. Instead, Rhodes had skipped several activities, to save time. Now, she asks her class, “why was it problematic that I skipped the activities?” (11/10/99).

Students answer her readily; evidently they had felt unprepared when the scaffolding was removed too quickly. They express having “had no idea what to do” and feeling their “lack of background knowledge” (Observation, 11/10/99). One student says he felt they had “jumped over rungs”; another adds, “I had the abstract, but no way to make it concrete” (11/10/99). Following the discussion, which highlights the importance of good scaffolding *and* good modeling, Rhodes announces, “we’re not going to compound the problem by going on. We’re going to go back” (11/10/99). The class then does the activities they had missed on the previous day. Exposing the failed example of modeling prevents students from taking away the wrong message about what it means to teach. Rhodes seems to realize that with her instructional style of modeling comes a responsibility to do it well.

The examples above portray the multiple ways Rhodes works scaffolding into her class. It would be unrealistic to debrief every instance of scaffolding used in her class; after all, this is not a class on scaffolding, but a course on the teaching of English. Instead, she makes scaffolding a part of her teaching and the culture of learning to teach. In the first example (responding to writing), Rhodes simply practices what she preaches. In the second (analyzing her mistakes), she reveals to students the thinking behind her modeling of scaffolding.

The Students’ Perspective on the Lessons

Asked to talk in general about some of the different ways Rhodes models concepts in class, two of Rhodes’ students realize their instructor models, but they hesitate in calling up specific examples.

I’ve noticed her modeling things to us just as grad students, you know, but I can’t think of any examples right now....Just ways she’s going about conducting the class that seem doable on a variety of levels. Like, oh, this would work in high school. (Interview, 1/11/00)

This suggests students have a tacit sense of the lessons using implicit modeling. This raises a question as to whether, when modeling *isn’t* made explicit, students ever make sense of the model.

The students’ ideas about modeling reveal a pattern in the degree to which they consciously shift perspectives. These students seem to remember best the lessons

Meta, Meta, Meta

in which modeling is explicit, and remember less the lessons in which the modeling is implicit. In the former, their attention is drawn to the method behind the instruction; they move from thinking like students to thinking like teachers. In the latter, they take the lesson at face value; they view the lesson from a students' perspective without attending as teachers to the features of the approach.

But in many ways, the students are becoming adept at viewing the classroom world on more than one level. As one student explained jokingly, "There's this subject area, which we know, and we're going to teach these actual things, plays, novels, books, then we're looking at how to do that, you know? Everything's meta, meta, meta in this program. I hardly exist anymore!" (Interview, 1/11/00). Besides poignantly expressing what it must be like to learn from the strategy of modeling, this student's reaction communicates his development of a capacity to take on the various perspectives that exist in any classroom—an essential skill for teachers who are critical about their practice.

The Instructor's Perspective on the Lessons

When asked to talk in general about the ways she uses modeling, the instructor's response, not surprisingly, differs significantly from that of the students. Her awareness of what she is modeling, when, and why revolve around several topics—curricular decisions, features of modeling, and tensions.

In making curricular decisions for her class, Rhodes chooses to model "some of the pedagogical approaches [students] might adopt," of which scaffolding is only one. She makes an effort to give students the materials for adopting her lessons, as seen in the way she has given students all of the materials, including the lesson plan, for the scaffolded lesson on imagery. Additionally, Rhodes adds her belief in the importance of multiple models, as seen in the many ways she models scaffolding for her students. Like her students, Rhodes seems to find modeling valuable. Rhodes sees her students adopting some of the lessons she models—creating an argument that they are, in fact, learning from modeling.

At the same time, this point is a tension. What Rhodes does *not* want is for students to uncritically copy her lessons. Rather, her approach to modeling preserves the complexity of teaching. This, too, seems to be effective, for Saxton and Carney feel free to grow on their own. As one student says, "we're not totally locked into doing it Rhodes' way the rest of our careers." Having a model as a *starting point* for designing their own teaching seems to be important to both Rhodes and her students; but all of them realize it shouldn't be a *blueprint*. When students are ready, they should teach in personalized ways.

Rhodes points out some features of her modeling that make it effective. One is the use of common texts and assignments. When students engage in the same activity, modeling creates a shared experience for the class to discuss. Another feature of modeling is the chance to teach content—to talk, for example, about "what makes literature hard, not just what makes *teaching* literature hard" (Inter-

view, 2/2/00). But a corresponding tension is that Rhodes' class is not actually an English class. She tells a story of students who, in a modeled discussion about a novel, wanted to continue discussing the novel instead of thinking about the instruction. "And so again, there's a tension between really providing the full model, and what the class is really about. So I think working on those two levels can sometimes be a challenge" (2/2/00).

This points to one last feature of modeling: it requires being able to shift perspectives and work on more than one level at once. As Rhodes points out, it's important for students to know *why* they are doing what they are doing, but these levels can create tensions for students and instructors alike. Says Rhodes, "the tricky part about modeling in teacher education... is modeling on a level that is appropriate for the [graduate level] learners in that particular class" while also giving students a demonstration of a secondary level class (Interview, 2/2/00). Like the students who feel like "everything is meta, meta, meta," Rhodes says that teacher educators are "always sort of working back and forth between these two levels" (2/2/00).

Discussion

Having examined the different ways Rhodes models a complex concept in a methods class, as well as student and the instructor perspectives on the use of modeling, I turn now to a discussion of key points.

1. Modeling can be explicit or implicit.

The most compelling distinction arising from this study is the contrast between explicit and implicit modeling. The examples above illustrate that modeling can be effective whether it is explicit or implicit—that is, whether the students and instructor metacognitively discuss the modeled concepts or not. Although Rhodes' students were better able to articulate their learning with explicit modeling, it also seems as though they are learning via implicit modeling. According to their own reports and those of their instructor, many of the concepts and strategies Rhodes models do in fact show up in the assignments and lesson plans that the students write. Both explicit and implicit modeling are supported in research.

Explicit Modeling. The tendency of explicit modeling to affect student learning is easily understood with an analogy to case study. From this framework, Rhodes' demonstrations can be seen as a three-tiered case study approach. First, the instructor presents a "case" of teaching that serves as an illustration or exemplar (Carter & Anders, 1996; Sykes & Bird, 1992). Second, students dissect and discuss the case—an important element in teaching with cases (Neil, Chambers, Clark, Swarbick, & Wackett, 1993). Finally, Rhodes steps back from practice and shares her thinking behind the lesson, using the case as an opportunity to connect the approach back to theory or to expose her rationale. This is similar to the notion of "inviting students backstage" (Grossman, 1991) or "taking of the top of your head"

(Atwell, 1998)—notions that bear resemblance to the concept of cognitive apprenticeship (Collins, Brown, & Holum, 1991). In the examples used in this paper, the cases of teaching were largely simulations (Carter & Anders, 1996); however, this approach can also work with students' authentic learning experience—resolving the tension of “pretending to be a high school student” (Wineburg, 1991).

Implicit modeling. The lesson Rhodes' students learned from her implicit modeling is of a different kind: how it feels to participate in a class where the instructor believes in and uses the strategies she promotes. The approach to implicit modeling differs from this three-tiered approach significantly, suggesting a different influence, as well. Because neither Saxton nor Carney explained the influence of learning when instructors “practice what they preach,” they did express their belief in its importance. The benefits seemed tacit, but essential. Compared to the negative, even venomous, feelings they expressed about classes in which instructors did *not* model best practice, they found Rhodes' class to be a place for discovering the teaching they someday hope to do.

One way of understanding the influence of implicit modeling is through social learning theory, which suggests that “positive modeling influences can simultaneously change observers' behavior, thought patterns, emotional reactions, and evaluations” (Bandura, 1986). In other words, the influence may be affective, and therefore central (Bass & Chambless, 1994; Stover, 1990). Another way of understanding the influence of implicit modeling is to think of teaching as a cultural activity, for “cultural scripts are learned implicitly, through observation and participation” (Stigler & Hiebert, 1998).

Although the distinction between explicit and implicit modeling is helpful in understanding the effects a modeling approach, several other points seem pertinent to make. I will touch on them briefly.

2. Modeling can take many forms.

Whether explicit, implicit, or somewhere in between, approaches to modeling can take several different forms. Especially in the modeling of complex concepts like scaffolding, there seems to be merit in developing students' understanding of the concept in a variety of ways.

3. Modeling can be a way of learning what a strategy or concept is and how it can be used, but is limited as a way of learning to actually put the modeled strategy to use.

This is an important distinction to make. In the lesson above, it could be argued that modeling gave students a sense of what scaffolding is and a variety of ways it can be used; nevertheless, actually putting the concept of scaffolding to use as they wrote their own lesson plans was a difficult task. Nevertheless, despite the difficulty, students were able to use the scaffolding in their plans.

4. Modeling requires both the students and the instructor to view teaching and learning from multiple perspectives.

Depending on the approach to modeling being used, students and instructors must be aware of multiple perspectives. Students move between the perspective of the students they intend to teach, their graduate student frame of mind, and their new perspective of preservice teachers. Instructors must be aware of which perspective students are taking at a given time. Additionally, instructors must be aware of whether students are operating from a perspective of learners about the *content* of the lesson or of the *process* of using the modeled strategy. Students can become so immersed in the content—for example, writing about imagery, thinking about planning, or discussing a novel—that they don't want to analyze the instruction. Modeling requires students and instructors to hold two things in mind, fluidly moving between more than one level at once—an extremely complex way of thinking.

5. Modeling involves the use of examples.

Although modeling should not involve uncritical imitation, students in Rhodes' class were greatly appreciative of Rhodes' willingness to show them her lesson plan as an example of how the lesson plans they would write might look. However, it should also be noted that students did *not* in this case find it as helpful to look at examples from the previous year's students (which were available for the writing lesson plans students created as a final quarter assignment). One student actually indicated that looking at the variety of ways previous students had approached the writing lesson plans was confusing, for two reasons. First, the fact that the lesson plans represented a variety of approaches made it difficult to recognize the essential features of the lessons. Second, the fact that the lesson plans were created by students like themselves created a credibility issue; in other words, Rhodes' students weren't convinced that the plans they had to use as examples were good enough for them to use as models.

6. Modeling in a teacher education class has implications related to the relevant subject matter, not just instructional strategy.

Because this was an English methods class, the instructor used subject matter to inform students' understanding of pedagogy and vice versa. Students experienced common texts and assignments; for example, the entire class read a novel together—and a novel that would be appropriate in a secondary school. This made it possible for the instructor to model strategies for teaching around the text. But students also were able to learn about subject matter issues associated with common texts and assignments—an outcome that would be difficult to achieve without a shared experience.

7. Modeling communicates a message to students about what is important in teaching.

Although this point has not been elicited from the examples presented in this article, Rhodes' students shared their feelings about some of their other classes (in teacher education and elsewhere) where modeling was *not* used. In at least one case, the lack of modeling evoked a hostile reaction and a feeling that the teaching was ironically disconnected—even hypocritical. As Carney pointed out, “It’s like that hypertext book I’m reading. It’s just in book form! You know, it should be in hypertext!” (Interview, 1/11/00). Both students agreed that they do learn in the absence of modeling; however, they were quick to note, they don’t learn how to *create* such learning. In a profession filled with dilemmas, these students appreciated the complexities of teacher education, which they called a “very self-conscious environment” (1/11/00).

Conclusion

The preceding descriptions of Rhodes' class as seen through her own eyes and two of her students contribute an image of how modeling might be used in teacher education and serves as evidence that it is both useful and complex. Its limitations suggest it should remain one strategy among many that teacher educators employ, but its advantages suggest that it should take its place as a viable instructional pedagogy. Overall, in the case of Rhodes and her students, modeling created “images of the possible” (Shulman, 1987) for the teaching of English.

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Joelle K. Jay

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Appendix A

“Dolor”
by Theodore Roethke

I have known the inexorable sadness of pencils,
Neat in their boxes, dolor of pad and paper-weight
All the misery of manila folders and mucilage,
Desolation in immaculate public places,
Lonely reception room, lavatory, switchboard,
The unalterable pathos of basin and pitcher,
Ritual of multigraph, paper-clip, and comma,

Meta, Meta, Meta

Endless duplication of lives and objects.
And I have seen dust from the walls of institutions,
Finer than flour, alive, more dangerous than silica,
Sift, almost invisible, through long afternoons of tedium,
Dropping a fine film on nails and delicate eyebrows,
Glazing the pale hair, the duplicate grey standard faces.