

# The quality of qualitative teaching

## *An interview with Patti Lather by Tone Saugstad at the University of Copenhagen*

*This interview with Patti Lather is part of an interview study on university teaching; how university teachers learn to teach, reflect upon their teaching and how they help students develop analytical and independent thinking. To talk about teaching in a dialog is a way to capture the concrete experiences of the teaching, that sort of practical knowledge, which seldom is described in textbooks and in the curriculum of teacher training. For the same reason this interview takes its concrete starting point in the 3 courses Patti Lather teaches in qualitative method at a Ph.D. level; the first is a 10-week introductory course to qualitative research method, the second is a 10-week field method course and the third is a 10-week data analysis course. The purpose of the interview is to describe Patti Lather's concrete experiences with teaching, how she teaches, how she develops her teaching and how she reflects upon it. Furthermore, the purpose is to discuss how her postmodern theoretical commitments influence her teaching.*

Patti Lather (PL) is Ph.D. Doctor of Philosophy, Indiana University and a professor of education at the Ohio State University. She teaches qualitative research and feminist methodology at a doctoral level. In her research Patti Lather is concerned with post-modern deconstructive and feminist theory. She has published many articles on qualitative method and philosophy of science and has among others published the following books: *Getting Smart: Feminist Research and Pedagogy With/in the Postmodern* (1991), *Troubling the Angels: Woman Living With HIV/AIDS* (1997), and *Getting Lost: Feminist Efforts Toward a Double(d) Science* (2007).

Tone Saugstad (TS) is Ph.D. and an associate professor of education at the University of Copenhagen where she teaches history and philosophy of education, adult education and university teaching. This interview is the third of a number of interviews about university teaching. The former two interviews were with Professor Hubert Dreyfus and professor Phillip Jackson. In her research she is concerned with the status of knowledge in the postmodern area, the role of practical knowledge in educational and professional life and the relation between educational theory and practice in an Aristotelian perspective.

## **Introduction**

Tone Saugstad (TS): Because I am teaching university teachers in how to teach I am interested in how teachers learn to teach. I think good teaching involves more than general didactical knowledge delivered on a teaching course as I also think it entails practical knowledge, which is developed situated in the teaching context. The practical knowledge is difficult to capture in the general terms of textbooks and decontextual teaching courses, and this is the reason why I

in this interview want to discuss your concrete teaching experiences. Furthermore my own great concern, as a university teacher is how I can help students develop independent thinking and get hold of abstract and complicated theory. For this reason I would like to discuss with you how postmodern theory affects your teaching and how you deal with abstract and complicated theory in your teaching. You have argued that one cannot simplify complicated questions when writing about them. I guess this counts for teaching as well, which leaves us with the important question about how a teacher should deal with difficult theories and questions in the teaching.

So for the above-mentioned reasons I am happy you agreed to join me in a dialog on university teaching with your own teaching as the concrete case. I would like to start by asking you to characterize your teaching? I have heard you once in a Ph.D. course and some 3 or 4 times giving speeches ... (*..... means interruption*)

PL: ...speeches. That is not teaching....

TS: .... but both in the course and in the speeches I was impressed with your clearness, your ability to communicate with your audience and with the performance part of your teaching. It seems to me that you like teaching, and have a spontaneous and natural style, so for this reason I wonder how much you do think about your style.

PL: I do like teaching very much and I actually do not think about the style very much, but I spend a lot of time thinking about the syllabus; the content, the reading and the order of the reading.

TS: Which aspects of your teaching are concerning you the most?

PL: The thing that is concerning me most right now is that I am so burned out of teaching that I could just die. I am a teaching machine, I teach too much, I have too many students and I want to stay fresh and engaged but I just get tired. Remember that I am in the front of a sabbatical so I am hoping that I will get rested.

TS: Oh you are in front of a sabbatical, so this is the wrong time to ask you about your teaching.

PL: I need to sort of not be teaching for a while, thank God for the sabbaticals. There is a lot of work to do, you know, when you teach - to engage people.

TS: Do you mean this kind of double reflection you have when you teach, being both concerned with the subject matter and being very sensitive to the audience, trying to find out 'do they follow me?' ....

PL: .... How broad based is the discussion in the group? Is someone left out? Is somebody dominating?

TS: So this is what you put energy into? But it also takes energy to teach difficult stuff. When you for instance teach deconstruction and postmodern theory, which is difficult.

PL: Very difficult

### **Avoid understanding too quickly'**

TS: How do you organize your courses in qualitative method?

PL: I generally organize my courses so that the first part is lecturing. But my teaching is never only lecturing; there is always some discussion. I need the interaction to let me know whether I am getting through or not. In the first part of a course I fill the students up beyond the point where they think they can be filled up; sort of bursting with what they are reading and what we are talking about. I try to provide conceptual maps of various kinds for them.

TS: What kind?

PL: I'll have them read and then give them a little chart, a one page chart, that maps the big ideas, and then I'll talk about how the reading fits into that conceptual map.

TS: Like the map of.....

PL: .... paradigms - that would be an example. That chart I'll use for 5 weeks in the introductory qualitative research course that goes on for 10 weeks. I'll have that chart up every day and the students will come to class and we will talk about how what they have read fits into that chart.

TS: But charts do not always fit, because it is a way of simplifying...

PL: ...yeah, then we start talking about charts or conceptual maps having their limits, and then I start introducing them to a variety of ways of mapping the knowledge, trying to get across the idea that there is not just one way and that any way has limits as well as possibilities. So the students are doing a combination of reading more than they think they can possibly ever read.

TS: Like many pages?

PL: Pages and difficult stuff, which they think, is too difficult. I am always looking for articles that are acceptable without oversimplifying the ideas. But it is hard to find something and I want them to read some of the difficult stuff that is typical of the field and I see it as my job to help them figure out that they can do this.

TS: At the AERA conference in Chicago (2003) I heard you say that one does not necessarily understand what one reads and I got very curious. Could you explain this a bit more?

PL: (laughter). I use a quote, I think it actually is from Lacan, who said that 'reading does not entail understanding. First it is necessary to read. Avoid understanding too quickly'. I actually talk with the students about this the very first day. I figure it is my job to help them learn that you don't have to understand something in order to read it. You read things you don't understand and you go on reading it and you still don't understand it.

TS: I think it is so important to talk with the students about how to read a text. I tell my students almost the same, that when they meet a difficult text they should just read it and get the rhythm....

PL: ..... get it under your belt and get the smell of it.....

TS: ..... and then afterwards go for the meaning.....

PL: .....I also give them another quote, I think it is from Barthes, who says how important rereading is. So I say: 'you will read these things once and you won't understand much about it, but you reread, and you reread and reread and reread.' When we go over the course syllabus I talk about the Lacan quote and I say: 'Look at all these things you will be reading, it is not so important to understand everything as you go along. What is important is to get a feel for the language and begin trying to understand and pick up what you can. And then come to class and

it will be my job to help you begin to understand it. And I say 'here is an assignment for you, take some of these articles that we are reading now and that do not make much sense to you. And a year from now, read them again and it will be a gauge for you, about how you are doing in your doctoral work'.

TS: It seems that your teaching is very demanding. What kind of students follow your courses then, are they the stubborn kind of students that not will give up and drop out?

PL: I have a very low drop out. It is the Ph.D. students. But although they have finished their masters, the US masters are generally so weak that they come without knowing very much. They don't know any philosophy of science for example, and actually they know very little about philosophy. So here I am, dropping them into this sort of philosophy of knowledge and debates around objectivity and they are pretty lost - but I tell them that is good. I put them in groups and I have them meet once a week for at least one hour and their job is to help one another to figure out as best they can what is going on in the readings, so that when they come to class they have wrestled with the reading with the group. These groups can become very strong social support networks. I call them survival groups.

## **The courses in qualitative method**

TS: Are you in charge of the syllabus?

PL: Yes, and in the first course they read 'The Handbook of Qualitative Research' (Denzin & Lincoln) or part of it. I put a package of reading together that includes different debates about objectivity and I give them some examples of qualitative research. I try to give them an example of interpretive work, critical work and deconstructive work, so that they can see how it differs. Actually we start with an example of work from each of the paradigms, so they begin to see the differences. The first course is sort of introductory to the philosophy of qualitative research and is trying to get their hands on the paradigmatic talk, assumptions and philosophies. And then we do a very quick overview of going out in the field, data analyses and some of the political and ethical issues involved with it.

TS: How do you organize the learning process?

PL: I build the courses around many optional ways of earning your credit. The first day I would give them a list of the many options they have to earn points and one option is to join these survival groups and I give a lot of points to those who join these groups. If they join the groups they will have to make a presentation at the end of the course. So there is quite an incentive in terms of grade wise to join them. But I have to be sure that the very busy ones are not penalized, that there are ways for them to earn lots of points too. Another option is that they can keep a weekly journal of the reading, and give it to me, but I only want to see it twice. They can also read outside of the course reading and write a reaction paper, but I actually recommend against that, because the course reading is quite rigorous in itself. They can furthermore do qualitative research, like go out in the field and do an interview or an observation.....

TS: ..... don't they all have to do that, as it is a course in qualitative research?

PL: The first course is an introductory course to qualitative research method. If they don't want

to in the first course they don't have to. Furthermore some of the students actually already had a fair amount of experience of doing interviews and observations and some of them really want to focus on the philosophical aspects of it. But in the second course, the field method course, they are required to go out in the field. About half of the students don't go for the second and the third course, because they are basically doing quantitative research. But more and more the professors and schools require that they at least have one course in qualitative research and one course in quantitative research no matter what they are doing. So for many the first course will be an introduction and they will not do much with it. I think it's important, even in that introduction, to give them a feeling for the issues involved in fieldwork and data analysis. But it is a pretty quick tour. And because the students are different I give them the different options.

TS: How do you administrate it? Are you allowed to make your own rules for the point system?

PL: Yes. Over years I learned how to do it. It is quite easy and it makes my life easy. I have a point system that is tied to grades, so if you want this grade you have to earn this many points. Then I give them a midterm examination after 5 weeks, which I control and I give them points on that. They can do the midterm in their groups, so they have a sort of group assignment. In the midterm examination they can work in groups and they can also work individually if they want to, to produce their own map. They think 5 weeks are too soon, that they can't do it, but they can. I spend the first part of the course to convince them that they are smart enough to do this stuff and then I spend the second part of the course to convince them that they are not near as smart as they think they are, because after they made their midterm they think they got it. I say: 'look at all the reading I made you do and you just touched the surface. For everyone of these topics where you felt that I had you read too much we could have a whole course on doing just interviewing or a whole course on just objectivity for that matter'.

TS: What I hear you say is that you use the tests so that the students can control their learning?

PL: Yes, I use tests so that the students can control their learning and I can control how the teaching works. At midterm I tell my doctoral students that 'if you did not get the good grade that you hoped for, you better do some extra options. But you also have to study very hard on the second half, so that you can do pretty good on the take home essay exam. That's my way of controlling, because otherwise I find that some of them did all the options, but would do very poorly in the midterm and the final.

TS: Do you think everybody can manage to get good grades if they only work hard enough? Don't you think there are differences between the students?

PL: Some people just can't get a passing grade, because they don't produce enough.

TS: But it is not only a matter of producing, but also about understanding.

PL: Yes, but if they don't produce at a certain level they don't get the grade they want. And I have students who work hard and still don't get the passing grade. Then I tell them, 'well I don't know if doctoral school is for you'. What happened here?' And sometimes they have taken too many classes or have personal problems. But I do feel that it is the combination of options, where they feel that they have some control over what they are doing. It makes them feel more responsible for the outcome. If it is not everything they wanted to be, then they did

not take advantage of the options and could say: 'I should have done some more options or I should have studied harder for the final'. Because there is no surprise. The final is a surprise because they don't know what grade they get on that, but otherwise they know exactly how many points they have. So they go to the final having a reasonably good idea of how they are doing.

TS: And you give them feedback all the time?

PL: I give them feedback at the midterm and at the final.

TS: And in the classes? How do you respond on stupid questions?

PL: I used to say that there is no such thing as stupid questions.

TS: But there are stupid questions.

PL: Well, then I might say something like 'we covered that last week'. Generally speaking I try not to put them down in class, in front of their colleagues. So they feel that it is a friendly supportive learning space. If I got very difficult or irritating students sometime I would call them out separately and then I am very direct.

## **About how to teach difficult and complex theories**

TS: How do you manage to get the students to understand the difficult stuff?

PL: Well, in the first class, I basically say that 'my major job is to teach the interpretive paradigm, because that's the basis of qualitative research. And if you only have a good understanding of the interpretive paradigm when the class is over I'll be happy. But I'll also be talking about the critical and deconstructive paradigm, because they are alive and well and actually part of the world. Your job is to situate yourself in the paradigm conversation, so we have to talk about them and you are expected also to understand the critical paradigm'. And I say 'I am going to talk about the deconstructive, but it is very difficult stuff and as Derrida says, in order to deconstruct you have to have something to deconstruct. So in many ways you have to understand the interpretive and the critical before you can possibly understand the deconstructive paradigm. Our job in here is to give you a good base of the critical and interpretive paradigm and I'll throw in enough of the deconstruction so that you can decide whether you are interested in following up on it in your future courses'. So I kind of sneak it in. I give them permission to not pay much attention to it. I give them permission to know how difficult it is and then I say 'I am going to de-emphasize it', but I actually do quite a bit with it. Like my chart is all very much about it, the logic behind the chart is very much deconstructive.

TS: Do you also tell them that deconstruction is more than a method dealing with political aspects as power?

PL: But so is the critical, so again you have to understand the critical paradigm before you can begin to deconstruct. I have some that come in the class and are quite interested in the post stuff and I have to sort of slow them down. I have to say lets make sure you understand the interpretive and the critical before you start deconstructing everything. And then I have others that are not particularly interested in it and never will be. And they don't go on in courses with me. We have other people that teach qualitative method and if they dislike my sort of deconstructive feminist critical angle, they can go study with colleagues that teach more

mainstream qualitative method.

TS: So do you think it is good for your university environment that teachers have different profiles?

PL: Yeah, I actually encourage the students taking the three courses not to take them all with the same person. Qualitative research is a very big field with lots of competing voices and I say to my students that 'it is actually important that you would study with at least two of us, so that you don't have it all from the perspective of just one person. Because my reading of the field is not necessarily the dominant one, or, God knows is it the only one.....'

TS: .... but the best one?

PL: Well, maybe but maybe not (laughter)....

TS: ...so you are very open with it?

PL: Yeah, I am very open and my feelings are not hurt at all if someone decides to go study with someone else.

TS: Is it only a method for you?

PL: No it is more than that, it is not only political either. It is very much the way you live your life and understand your way in your life. But I think you can't convert people, you can't force people. You can expose people to the variety and then let them find their own path.

TS: But how do you come beyond only teaching it as a method?

PL: Well, in the first course I don't worry about that very much. I sort of flirt with it and I point the logic out of it every now and then and try to have some fun with it. And then in the introductory course I focus mostly on the interpretative paradigm. In the field method class I focus mostly on critical ethnography and in the data analysis course deconstruction comes in pretty heavy when we start to make meaning out of the data. If they take a data analysis course with me they know what they are getting in to, they want the deconstructive perspective. So by the time I get the people who kind of self selected into the more deconstructive data analysis course, oftentimes they would get more deeply into it. I then often get reactions from the students. People would say things like: 'This is how it can be figured out why I lived my life the way I did and how I see the world'. And it is about sort of the philosophy of living in some way, but you have to get deeper into it for them to start figuring that out.

TS: Is it only for people who choose it?

PL: Yeah, and in the introductory class I have 30, in the field method class I have 25 and in the data analysis course I only have 15. So there is a smaller number, as you get higher also, because you can go deeper with a small group of people.

TS: But still it is difficult stuff to teach, what can one do?

PL: I will say I have one trick, that I use in the introductory course that I think helps them begin to see it. A very simple trick. I say: 'Take any binary system; take male and female for example. Step number one: identify the binary. Step number 2: reverse binary. Step number 3: use the energy of the reversal in a way that some people are going to be happy and some people are not going to be happy, but the energy of that reversal is used to get to the third space, which is the 'both-and' and the 'neither-nor'. And then begin to think about what the world would look like if it is both feminine and masculine and yet neither masculine nor

feminine and those categories will no longer be useful for us any more, because we are living in a space where they don't mean much any more'.

TS: So you kind of encourage them to think in a specific way.....

PL: ..... and I do that very dramatically. And in the teaching I will have a few mantras, you know like I use Foucault 'Nothing is innocent and everything is dangerous, but just because it is dangerous does not mean that it is not useful'. I say that at least once every class period and the students start laughing and then they start repeating it. And I also will make them say things with me, like 'statistics aren't innocent, numbers aren't clean'. I'll say: 'all right' time for our little mantra, Foucault mantra! And then the whole class will say, 'everything is dangerous nothing is innocent....' So we will have some fun out of it, but it also gets it into their bones.

TS: How do you explain to them that it is easy to misread a text? Do you take this topic into your class?

PL: We probably don't do that so much at the beginning, but by the data analysis we certainly talk about it a lot because we talk about reading the data, rereading the data and misreading the data and then I even have them do intentional misreading. I make them take some of their data and then intentionally misread it or I'll make them put it into a little frequency table for example. Oh, they hate that because they are qualitative people, they don't do frequency tables. But I make them do it and then we talk about what a distortion of the complexity of the data this is, how reductive it is. They feel like they have done such violence to the data, and I say, 'well remember that.'

## **Evaluation as a way to develop the teaching**

TS: Do you teach the same courses every year?

PL: Over and over and over again.

TS: Tell me how that is?

PL: From my perspective? Well, one has to work to keep oneself fresh. I sometimes joke that I can tell what jokes I am going to tell; it is week 10, you know, and it is time for this particular joke. I am so programmed, I have done it so much that I am almost on automatic pilot.

TS: Well, you will never be that because students are different, topics are different and you are in different places in your own research.

PL: Yeah, one keeps oneself fresh by engaging with the students. But also I do work to keep sort of updating the reading without spending too much time on it. Part of what keeps me fresh and engaged is my interest in the students' responses. What's working and what's not working? How are they making sense of it? And I have gotten pretty good at having them to do the exams, like the midterm helps me see whether they are picking up on things. But especially by the final exam I can look at the final and see who has been reading and who has not and who has been giving it a lot of thought.

TS: How do you encourage the students to tell about their doubts and what they do not understand?

PL: I do a midterm evaluation of the course. I do it orally. I have them meet in their groups and

spend 20 min. or so talking about what's working and what's not working and then give any suggestion for change for the second half of the course. Each group comes back and gives me a report.

TS: Do you change your teaching after their suggestions?

PL: I try very hard to change at least one thing.

TS: If they suggest anything?

PL: Oh, they always have something to say.

TS: So you believe in student evaluation. Are you not afraid it could be consumers market; that teachers have to change their teaching even to the worse?

PL: I do believe in it. I think that the oral form I use works pretty well. What I learned early on as a teacher is that if you just have them do the written evaluation they can be quite cruel. But if they are sitting in a group they have to say whatever their complaints are in front of the other students who are taking the same course, so they are kind of accountable to their colleagues or peers and are more responsible for what they say.

TS: Is it the teaching method or the subject they evaluate?

PL: A combination, but it is mostly my teaching - my teaching of the subject, like how I am doing in terms of helping them to understand the difficult ideas. So the groups come back and each group gives the report of what's working and what's not. One group might say that they don't understand the objectivity debate very well at all or, sometimes I hear from the students that I interrupt too often, I speak too fast or they don't like the way they are sitting, because they can't hear or see one another. So in the second half of the course I try very hard to take up some of that critique and change my practice. I would work very hard to not interrupt them so much or slow down or put them in a circle or whatever it was. If it is the content I will go back over some of the content if a couple of groups say: 'this is a really important idea and we do not think we have an adequate grasp on it'.

TS: Are they not afraid of saying that?

PL: No, because the group also protects the students' anonymity. I don't know who said what, all I know is the report the group gives me. So it is accountability to their colleagues in terms of what they say but it is also anonymity in terms of what I hear. And it seems to create a space where they can say both good things and bad things. Then I also have them write a paragraph, a kind of self-evaluation about how they feel they are doing in the first half of the course, and in that way I can get another angle [angle] on how they are doing.

TS: It seems that you have found a good evaluation form doing oral evaluation in groups. In Denmark all teachers are supposed to evaluate at the end of a course using standardized written formulas. This often keeps teachers away from doing non-formal midterm evaluation. In this perspective I am afraid evaluation could become 'consumers' market'. When I teach university teachers in teaching I as a joke say that if the teachers want good evaluation they should be entertaining and teach some easy stuff just before the evaluation - and the students will give them good evaluation. What I think is dangerous with this institutional form of student evaluation is that you put so much emphasis on the teaching style and method and not on the subject and on what the students learn. I find it important to evaluate what the students have

understood of the subject, but it seems to me that it is more difficult for them to evaluate the form, like e.g. if you interrupt them too much. Furthermore the students can't understand why you interrupt, if you interrupt to get it formulated right - put into the right words or because some students are talking too much.

PL: I find that the oral evaluation helps provide a kind of pressure release. You see that oral evaluation is just oral. Nobody ever sees it except the class and me so it does not go to anybody else. It is both feedback for my teaching and me, and of course I can decide what to pay attention to and what not to. I think oral evaluation is important in qualitative research where we try to teach people to have open dialog. I always point out that 'in a way this is a "member check" and I am trying to teach you how to do member check', so it works there. Then I do the same oral evaluation at the end of the course. At the end there is also the institutional one, and I have to leave the room when the students are filling out the form.

TS: Do you see them afterwards?

PL: I see the numerical results; I don't see the forms themselves.

TS: I don't think the institutional forms are very useful.

PL: I don't find them very useful either, that is why I do the oral. I find the oral useful on many levels. Because they hear each other both at midterm and at the final, they hear how other students reacted to the class. You always get a spread, this one over here was so enthusiastic about the class and this one over here was not, and it is good for them to hear the differences of response to the same teaching. The institutional form I just look at as an institutional requirement, I don't make a big deal out of it.

TS: The institutional evaluation at the end would not help the students of that particular class, so they are not really responsible for what they are saying. How then can their evaluation be trusted?

PL: I just do it because it is an institutional requirement, whereas I use the oral evaluation as one way of developing my teaching.

## **About good and bad teaching**

TS: To sum up, what I hear you say is that when you teach, you are very serious about the subject and you are more focused on the subject matter than the style. You are also very serious about helping the students how to study and how to control their learning. Furthermore your teaching is developed in dialog with the students. Is it normal to do so?

PL: I would say that is what good teachers do, but not everybody is a good teacher. And I think there is a lot of dreadful teaching at a university level.

TS: What is dreadful teaching to you?

PL: Dreadful would be everything from not really caring if the students get it or not, dreadful would be the mechanical teaching, when one keeps teaching the same way for a hundred years, or university teachers who don't like students, or like that two or three that are bright, but not the other 28 that have to work harder, so they will teach to those two and they would not care about the rest of them. There is a lot of arrogance I think at university level teaching, where

people are very disdainful of people who don't pick up quickly. I work with a lot of international students who are of course fighting the language as well as ideas, and I find that those study groups help them. Arranging study groups I think communicates to students that we want to work with them to help them.

TS: As you know everybody has their own darling, and mine is, that university teachers very often forget to tell the students the questions, they just give the answers. They forget to tell why this topic originally was interesting.

PL: Too much didactics.....

TS: ..... yeah, that could be one reason.

PL: I also am a fairly personal teacher in the sense of autobiography, I tell students my own struggles, like I always tell that when I was a doctoral student I used to read a lot of Habermas and I read and reread Habermas and I didn't understand, but I kept reading and then finally - I still did not fully understand it, but there would be five or six sentences that would make all the difference in the world to my project. Because I do think that if the students think you are smart, they think you were always smart and they forget that you have had struggles along the road too.

TS: It is also important to show the students the way you think, because students will use you as a role model.

PL: They will, but you know, I raise a lot of cautions about everybody thinking like me as I try to present what I do as an overview of a big field, where there are many places one can be. I am here, but there are other places you can be too, and they are all perfectly respectable, and it is not like everybody has to become like me.

TS: Is everything just as good?

PL: Especially in the front end I actually teach that way. For one thing I have a lot of statisticians coming in and having that introductory class, I can't do that big or hard critic on positivism, so as that's the devil. I am very careful, and I do a very relativistic thing at the front end, you need to understand about the different places and you need to understand the strengths and the weaknesses of the different places and then find your place there. And then in the more advanced class I actually have another thing from Lacan that I use for evaluation. This would be after I had the students through all three classes and we know each other pretty well. I have a quote from Lacan, I can't remember it exactly, it is kind of long, but it says that the actual mistake of teaching is to turn everybody into thinking like the teacher and that good teaching does not do that. In fact good teaching undercuts the authority of the master. So here at the very end of the three courses I say: 'how has it worked in the experience with me? Have you felt like you have been forced into a thinking like me or do you feel like there has been enough room for you to find your own way?' And then we talk about that.

TS: To end up, have you any recommendation for teachers starting the difficult job of becoming a teacher?

PL: Share your struggles with the students, and make it your learning how they are learning from you. Make sure that there is lots of dialog about how things are going. Bring your problems out of the closet, so that they can work with you to help you be a good teacher instead of setting up an opposition. If students feel like you are trying hard, and not have to be

the big authority all the time, that you do make mistakes, but you want to work with them to be a better teacher, they will work with you to help you be a better teacher. Well I don't say it is easy (laughter).

TS: Thank you very much.

PL: You are welcome. You see, I am tired of teaching but I guess I like it still.