



**The Journey of two Physical Education and Health Teachers
in Learning to Teach Personal and Social Responsibility**

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Abstract

Responsibility development is a key feature of the Province of Québec's elementary school physical education and health (PEH) curriculum. However, it does not provide teachers with a clear direction on how to teach personal and social responsibility. A nine-month action research project was conducted during a school year (2008-2009) with two PEH teachers willing to implement the *Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility* (TPSR, Hellison, 1995, 2003, 2011) model in their respective settings. The purpose of this study was to describe each teacher's journey in learning how to teach personal and social responsibility. Data sources included participant observations, semi-structured interviews, and post-teaching self-reflections. Core categories qualifying PEH teachers' professional development processes were generated from data analysis and revealed two different profiles. The findings are discussed through Cotin-Martinez's (1993) professional development model.

KEYWORDS: TPSR, Physical education, professional development, responsibility, action research

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Résumé

Le cheminement de deux enseignants d'éducation physique et de santé dans l'apprentissage de l'enseignement du sens des responsabilités personnelles et sociales

Résumé

L'acquisition d'un sens des responsabilités constitue une composante clé du programme-cadre d'éducation physique et de santé de niveau élémentaire de la province de Québec. Par contre, ce programme n'offre au personnel enseignant aucune directive claire sur la façon d'enseigner le sens des responsabilités personnelles et sociales. Un projet de recherche-action de neuf mois a été mené au cours d'une année scolaire (2008-2009) avec deux enseignants d'éducation physique et de santé désireux d'implanter le modèle *Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility* (TPSR, Hellison, 1995, 2003, 2011) dans leurs milieux respectifs. Cette étude visait à décrire le parcours de chaque enseignant à la recherche de façons efficaces d'inculquer un sens des responsabilités personnelles et sociales aux élèves. Les données comprenaient des observations participantes, des entrevues semi-structurées et des réflexions personnelles des enseignants. L'analyse des données a permis d'établir de grandes catégories décrivant le parcours de perfectionnement professionnel des enseignants d'éducation physique et de santé. Elle a aussi fait émerger deux profils différents. Les résultats sont examinés dans le cadre du modèle de perfectionnement professionnel de Cotin-Martinez (1993).

Mots clés : éducation physique, perfectionnement professionnel, sens des responsabilités, recherche-action.

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Introduction

The development of responsible behaviors and attitudes is a key feature of the Québec elementary school curriculum, as well as of other curricula around the world (Hellison & Martinek, 2006). Through a competency-based approach, it sees the student as playing an active role in his or her learning process. The main goals of the Physical Education and Health (PEH) curriculum are the development of three interrelated competencies: (a) performing movement skills in different physical activity settings; (b) interacting with others in different physical activity settings; and (c) adopting a healthy, active lifestyle (Gouvernement du Québec, 2001). Because of their highly interactive contexts, PEH courses can provide students with opportunities to take responsibility individually and socially (Hellison & Martinek, 2006; Metzler, 2005). In order to learn to take responsibility, students should experience a range of responsibilities in a safe environment (Hellison, 1996; Parker & Stiehl, 2005). Thus, PEH teachers are responsible for creating an environment in which students may experience and develop responsible behaviors and attitudes. Despite its focus on students' responsibility development, the curriculum does not provide teachers with a clear direction on how to teach responsibility development in their settings. Teachers might lack effective strategies to promote these outcomes in PEH (Parker & Hellison, 2001; Parker & Stiehl, 2005), despite the fact that it is relevant, given the curriculum's main goals. Therefore, they might benefit from professional development opportunities to learn to implement a responsibility-based instructional model to create positive responsibility development opportunities for their students (Metzler, 2005; Wright, Li, Ding & Pickering, 2010).

The Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR) model

Hellison's *Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility* (TPSR) model offers a holistic approach to teaching. It uses physical activity to teach youth to take more responsibility for their own and others' well-being (Hellison, 2003). It has been field-tested for almost 40 years in various settings, predominantly with underserved students from urban environments. Originally created in the United States, it has been applied in various countries, namely Canada, New Zealand, Spain, Korea, South Africa and Brazil (Martinek, 2012). The model's ultimate purpose is for students to transfer responsible behaviors and attitudes learned in PEH outside the gym, in class, at home and in the community. The model presents five levels of responsibility: (1) Respect and self-control; (2) Participation and effort; (3) Self-direction; (4) Leadership and caring; and (5) Transfer outside the gym.

In his model, Hellison (2011) refers to "program leader responsibilities" (p. 22). As leaders, PEH teachers should embody these responsibilities, regrouped under five themes, in order to effectively teach personal and social responsibility. The first and most important theme is developing a respectful "kids-first relationship" with students. The second theme relates to the integration of responsibility to physical activity content, rather than being taught separately. In other words, PEH teachers must be competent in teaching physical education and health, but also in integrating responsibility development opportunities in the proposed learning activities. They should also be able to seize potential opportunities as they occur in class. The third theme requires teachers to gradually empower students to make positive decisions for themselves and others. The fourth, promoting group and self-reflection, involves providing students with multiple opportunities to self-reflect on responsibility goals and to improve problem solving

abilities through empowerment. Finally, the fifth theme implies teaching students how to be personally and socially responsible in various settings and is referred to as transfer.

Many studies have been conducted on curriculum development and students' learning outcomes in physical education (McCaughy, Sofo, Rovegno & Curtner-Smith, 2004; Metzler, 2005; Metzler & McCullick, 2008). According to McCaughy and colleagues:

It would seem that all the benefits of sound curriculum and student learning would unravel if we fail to understand how teachers learn a curriculum and implement it. In other words, it has become clear that assuming teachers seamlessly learn to teach a new curriculum is presumptuous, and that focused research is needed to better understand pitfalls and facilitators to the process (p. 136).

While a growing body of literature documents the impacts of TPSR implementation on students (Balderson & Martin, 2011; Escarti, Gutierrez, Pascual & Llopis, 2010; Gordon, 2010; Hellison & Walsh, 2002; Wright et al., 2010), little exploration has yet been done on teachers' training and support in the implementation of TPSR (Wright, 2009). According to Pascual, Escarti, Llopis, Gutierrez, Marin & Wright (2011), such studies are needed since important outcomes and issues could emerge. More evidence is needed regarding how in-service teachers learn to teach personal and social responsibility in physical education.

Action research

Action research was first introduced as a social studies form of research through the work of Kurt Lewin in the 1940s. A variety of action research traditions can be found in several fields of study, such as management, health care, social studies and education. Unlike traditional research, action research requires some kind of intervention: its main focus is to provoke changes and study them (Savoie-Zajc, 2001). Action research can be defined as an ongoing three step process of *look* (gather information), *think* (analyze the information) and *act* (devise solutions) (Stringer, 2008).

In the field of education, it has been used “both as an individual route to professional development and as a collaborative route to professional and institutional change” (Herr & Anderson, 2005, p. 17). Action research provides a framework to study and improve practices (Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998). According to Harnett (2012), action research is particularly appropriate for teachers' professional development because of its direct links with classroom practices. The use of such an approach could contribute to build a stronger bond between theory and practice (Van Looy & Goegebeur, 2007).

Having the ability to reflect on practice is key for effective educational action research (Savoie-Zajc, 2001), as it is for effective teaching (Harnett, 2012; Hellison & Templin, 1991). Indeed, Schön (1987) has raised the importance of *reflection-on-action* (afterwards) and *reflection-in-action* (while teaching) for professional development. Many studies have used action research as a methodology to improve teaching practices in physical education (e.g., Casey & Dyson, 2009; Casey, 2012; Gubacs-Collins, 2007; Martinek & Butt, 1988). According to Casey & Dyson (2009), action research should be used more systematically to achieve real pedagogical change in PEH. As this form of inquiry closely supports teachers through their

change process, it might be an appropriate approach to learn more about TPSR and its implementation in PEH.

Professional development

According to Lee (2012), the interplay of facilitating or impeding factors related to TPSR implementation is yet to be explored. For instance, many studies have shown that a teacher's professional development stage influences his/her adoption of a new curriculum (Lee, 2012; Metzler, Lund & Gurvitch, 2008; Sinelnikov, 2009). The use of a professional development framework during TPSR implementation might help support and understand such changes in teaching practices. Several authors have presented such frameworks for teachers' professional development. Fuller (1969) and Fuller and Bown (1975) have conceptualized a framework to describe a certain pattern of the evolution of concerns over a teacher's career (from self, to tasks, to impacts). In physical education, Siedentop (1991) has suggested a sequence of five stages of skill development in teaching, from *Stage 1: The initial discomfort* to *Stage 5: Confidence and anticipation*. For her part, Cotin-Martinez (1993) has identified three major goals in the process of professional development: 1) to manage the classroom; 2) to motivate the students; 3) to make sure they learn. She has highlighted that one could be self-oriented or student-oriented while pursuing these goals. According to Cotin-Martinez, physical educators' professional development involves a gradual shift from being "self-oriented on classroom management" to "student-oriented on students' learning". At the beginning of the continuum, a physical education teacher displaying a "self-oriented - classroom management" goal is more likely to be concerned with behavioral issues and authority challenges, while a student-oriented teacher is rather looking for a well-organized, engaged class. A step further is to have students' intrinsic motivation for a goal. A self-oriented physical educator engaged towards this last goal focuses on students having fun playing, rather than planning activities which are challenging, dynamic, stimulating, original and meaningful (Florence, Brunelle & Carlier, 1998). The final goal is to be concerned about students' learning and achievement. Self-oriented teachers are preoccupied by delivering the content and therefore teach uniformly, without taking students' initial abilities into account. In contrast, student-oriented teachers adapt the goals and activities to each student's needs and developmental differences.

Teaching personal and social responsibility requires teachers to gradually share responsibilities with the students (Hellison, 2011). Being student-oriented is necessary for the teacher to be able to share responsibilities and make students accountable. Cotin-Martinez's model offers clear indicators on each teacher's professional developmental stage that could help provide the appropriate support to make this important shift. In this study, it was used as a professional development theoretical framework to support and understand each teacher's journey through TPSR implementation.

The purpose of this study is to describe two elementary school PEH teachers' journey in learning how to teach personal and social responsibility using the TPSR model through a year-long action research project. It aims to extend TPSR literature by providing insight on the model's implementation process from a PEH teacher's perspective, thus eventually helping other researchers and physical education teachers better understand and support its implementation.

Method

Participants and Settings

Participants in this study were selected using purposeful sampling (Patton, 2008). Two PEH teachers who had demonstrated strong interest in learning and implementing the TPSR model, whose teaching load was more than 80% and who were teaching 3rd graders and higher grades, agreed to be involved in the action research. Both teachers and their students are identified by pseudonyms.

Caroline is 27 year-old beginning her fourth year as a PEH teacher. Her school is located in a wealthy rural community. PEH classes take place in a small but well-equipped gymnasium. She chose her grade 5-6 class for TPSR implementation. A total of 23 students, five boys and 18 girls, were enrolled in this PEH class. Robert is a 25-year-old teacher starting his second year as a PEH teacher. He teaches in an urban elementary school, located in an underserved community. Yet, the school gymnasium is large and equipped with many materials for physical activity use. He chose his grade 6 class to implement TPSR. A group of 20 students, 10 boys and 10 girls, were enrolled in this PEH class. Time allotted to PEH was the same in both settings - two periods every five school days for a total of 120 minutes.

Data collection

An action research project was conducted during the 2008-2009 school year. Each teacher individually participated in several action research cycles (Stringer, 2008) to support TPSR implementation. Teachers were gradually empowered to take charge of each step of the action research cycle through a self-supervision process (Brunelle, Coulibaly, Brunelle, Martel & Spallanzani, 1991). Each teacher was introduced to the TPSR model and to the basic three steps process of the action research. The five TPSR themes lead the look, think and act iterative process. After observing and analyzing their own teaching practice during a specific class, each teacher was invited to self-reflect by answering specific TPSR related questions. Each cycle was done either by the teacher himself/herself, or with the help of the first author. Thus, the first author played the role of an outsider in collaboration with an insider (Herr and Anderson, 2005), helping each PEH teacher improve his/her practice while studying the TPSR model implementation. A broad description of each PEH teacher's self-supervision activities and the responsibility-based strategies that were used to empower them can be found in a related article (Beaudoin, 2012). For the purpose of this article, we have chosen to focus on the documentation of the teachers' journey through TPSR implementation.

Data discussed in this article were collected from: (a) participant observations; (b) semi-structured interviews with PEH teachers; (c) post-teaching self-reflections; (d) semi-structured interviews with students; and (e) a researcher's log. *Participant observations*: The first author followed each PEH teacher throughout several school days (Caroline: n=9; Robert: n=7) and recorded relevant observations. The observations were oriented on the five TPSR leader's responsibilities (Hellison, 2011) and were done to gather data on the 'look' process of the action research routine (Stringer, 2008). *Semi-structured interviews with PEH teachers*: Through specific questions, the first author guided the teacher to reflect on the TPSR leader's responsibilities and strategies used or established during his or her class, and to elaborate potential effective strategies to upgrade students' responsibility development opportunities when

needed. *Post-teaching self-reflections*: After each selected group's PEH lesson, both teachers were invited to audio-record a post-teaching self-reflection, answering the same questions as during semi-structured interviews. Both semi-structured interviews and post-teaching self-reflections helped gather information about the 'think' and 'act' processes of the action research routine (Stringer, 2008). *Semi-structured interviews with students*: Questions about empowerment, self and group reflection, transfer, integration to PEH content and teacher-student relationship were individually asked to selected students to collect their perceptions. Students' participation in these interviews was not mandatory, and only those whose parents had signed informed consent and who volunteered to answer the questions were selected. *Researcher's log*: Early interpretations, questions, decisions' rationale and field notes were recorded throughout the action research. According to Lincoln & Guba (1985), it is crucial to document a study in which the researcher is deeply involved in data collection. In this study, more than 220 pages of relevant data were collected through the researcher's log. Data sources relating to Caroline represent more than 60 hours of participant observations (n=9) and close to eight hours (470 minutes) of various interviews. She did 10 self-reflections, for a total of more than an hour. Data sources relating to Robert represent more than 50 hours of participant observations (n=7) and close to eight hours (460 minutes) of various interviews. He did 18 self-reflections, for a total of almost four hour (233 minutes).

Data analysis

To document the TPSR implementation process, data were first transcribed verbatim and examined through an analysis method based on conceptualizing categories (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2008). Adapted from Glaser and Strauss's grounded theory (1967), this inductive analysis method seeks to theorize participants' experiences. To achieve such an analysis, one needs to go beyond content analysis to conceptualize empirical phenomena. In this action research, this method was used to unveil underlying processes that qualified each participant's experience throughout TPSR implementation. For example, themes emerging from early data were confronted with data collected later in the process to shed light on changes that had or had not occurred from point A to point B. Using this analysis method is particularly adapted for action research considering that initiating and documenting change processes is its principal feature. Thus, constant interplay with different sources of data was essential throughout this iterative and long term process, which led to the construction of final core categories qualifying each teacher's journey in TPSR implementation process.

Trustworthiness

Rigor in action research is based on specific criteria to ensure that its outcomes are trustworthy (Feldman, 2007). Several assessments were done throughout this study to provide evidence that the research has been carried out rigorously. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), a prolonged engagement in the setting coupled with persistent observations, and the use of multiple data sources is the key to establishing credibility. A detailed description of action research's activities and context was systematically reported in a researcher's log to ensure transferability of the study's outcomes. An expert committee of two people also played an important role by providing feedback to help the first author debrief on her experience. Their active commitment throughout the process supports the action research's rigor and trustworthiness.

Results

Caroline

Data analysis revealed four core categories that characterized Caroline's experience in the TPSR implementation process: (a) operational inefficiencies; (b) need for support; (c) self-oriented focus; and (d) reactive responsibility development.

Operational inefficiencies. This first category highlights Caroline's operational inefficiencies, which result in her difficulty to create an efficient learning environment for students to experience social and personal responsibilities. There was a gap between what she said she was doing to promote responsibility and what she actually did in her classroom. For example, in one semi-structured interview, she insisted on the importance for students to use task cards to self-evaluate their progression. Despite the fact that she had such task cards in her office, she didn't make them available to students in her PEH lessons. Caroline also had difficulties to react rapidly when situations happened in the gym. Many times during participant observations, it was noted that an action on her part could have improved the students' learning opportunities. For example, in a modified dodgeball game, less skilled students were rapidly eliminated and stayed on the side bench for long periods of time. Despite the fact that Caroline told the first author that inclusion is important to her and valued in her classes, she had them play a game that was not promoting personal and social responsibility and she did not change the rules to reintegrate students into the game.

Need for support. Caroline stated at the very beginning of the action research that she needed support in order to implement TPSR. The analysis of her action research routine processes revealed that she was right. Her need came mostly from her difficulty to self-reflect on her teaching. The ten post-teaching self-reflections she did over the course of the action research revealed only superficial reflection-on-action about responsibility matters. She mostly described the class context and motivational climate with few to no concerns about TPSR leaders' responsibilities and strategies to work on. No problematic issues were raised and consequently, no effective strategies were planned for the next classes. Because of Caroline's need for support, the first author's participant observation sessions became more frequent and focused on basic teaching skills. These sessions were helpful to bridge the gap between theory and practice, as she stated: "I liked it when you came to the gym, observed the lesson and asked questions. You provided me with field examples, and it helped me a lot. It made everything easier." Despite more frequent on-site observations and precise post-teaching questions, her ability to self-reflect on responsibility matters did not improve over time.

Self-oriented focus. Data showed that Caroline seemed more concerned about the impact that her teaching practices had on her than on her students. Her major concerns were good class management and respect of class rules. Activities were also planned according to her teacher needs, despite students' needs and contextual matters. For example, she chose to teach badminton despite a major lack of space, low ceilings and not enough rackets for everyone, which made it hard for students to learn while playing safely. When asked why she had chosen this activity despite all these constraints, she said: "I want them to know every sport's rules by grade 6 so they won't look stupid in high school. Some kids made fun of me in high school

because I did not know how to play some sports: I don't want them to feel the same way as I did.”

Evaluation means were chosen by Caroline to better fit her needs and not necessarily to develop the students' responsibility. In a semi-structured interview, she said: “Yes, I do have self-evaluation sheets for students to assess themselves, but... personally, I think it's boring, so I try not to use them that much.” Caroline also believed that providing students with information is enough for them to learn and transfer new skills. Direct instruction was therefore the main strategy used to teach TPSR in her PEH lessons. When asked in the final interview how she could improve responsibility development the next year, she said: “What I think I should do is really take some time to talk about responsibility. I have to write it down in my agenda: ‘talk about responsibility in today's lesson’.” Various examples from semi-structured interviews and observations showed that using other strategies to teach responsibility didn't seem to be a practical option to her.

Reactive responsibility development. Caroline's conception of students' responsibility development was focused on classroom management, and more specifically, on the application of disciplinary measures in reaction to students' misbehavior. It was focused on TPSR's first goal (respect and self-control). It was also characterized by an absence of follow-up when the misbehavior stopped. Thus, the notion of progression within the responsibility levels was not integrated into physical activity lesson content. The model was taught as a separate outcome and used as a behavior management tool. Her reactive responsibility development conception is also reflected by this quote by Maxime, a student in her class: “She's ruling the gym. I don't know exactly how to say it, but it is like... she's at the top and we're at the bottom, you know. She's the one saying what we can or cannot do in PEH.” Again, discussing with the first author about her students' responsibility development throughout the year, Caroline said: “They are better, you know! They now listen when I teach and raise their hand before talking. They are more willing to follow my instructions.”

In these conditions, it is not surprising that we saw signs of burnout in Caroline's words and actions. In a semi-structured interview, she told the first author that she was overwhelmed by her everyday routine. She admitted having planning issues. She said it was difficult for her to commit to her students since she knew she would not be teaching in the same school the next year. Doing post-teaching self-reflection on her own, or the self-directed part of the action research, was very demanding for her. Even if her reflection-on-action process became easier as the first author's visits increased, authentic TPSR implementation turned out to be an unrealistic goal to achieve for Caroline.

Robert

Data collected throughout Robert's journey showed a different profile. Data analysis revealed six core categories that characterized his experience in the implementation of the TPSR model: (a) systematic regulation of teaching; (b) shift to a student-orientated focus; (c) gradual shared decision making; (d) moving from a preventive to proactive responsibility development intent; (e) systematic integration of responsibility development; and (f) difficulties with leadership/caring and transfer operationalization.

Systematic regulation of teaching. Robert's journey through TPSR implementation was characterized by systematic regulation of teaching. He regularly questioned himself and continuously adapted his teaching strategies to improve his students' responsibility development opportunities. A sign of this systematic regulation was the presence of examples of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action in his post-teaching self-reflections. Reflection-on-action also concerned individualized interventions with specific students. For example, one month into the action research, during a post-teaching self-reflection, he said: "I could have asked them 'Which level are you at now?' And not only to those at Level One, struggling with self-control, but also to those who already are self-directed. These students also need feedback." The very next lesson, he implemented a responsibility goal self-evaluation system. Within this system, students had to self-reflect and choose a responsibility goal they wanted to achieve at the beginning of each PEH lesson. During warm-up, students were invited to write their goals on a class list put up on a wall next to the gym entrance. At the end of every lesson, Robert asked each student to say out loud which goal they had achieved. In case of a mismatch between a student's self-evaluation and Robert's observations, the student was asked to explain why he thought he had achieved the goal or not. Robert also used this strategy to reinforce an improvement in responsibility.

Shift to a student-oriented focus. Data analysis also highlighted Robert's shift from being self-oriented to student-oriented. At the beginning of the school year, Robert was teaching responsibility uniformly. As the action research project went by, he became more and more concerned on individualizing his teaching strategies. His post-teaching self-reflections were full of individualized strategies that he could use with specific students in order to help them achieve their responsibility goals. Displaying these individualized strategies also contributed to the creation of a quality kids-first relationship. When asked about what they thought about Robert, students had lots to say. According to François: "Robert? He's my PEH teacher, yes, but he is also my friend. He's very reliable, kind and always ready to listen to you. He's always there when you need him." Marie added: "I trust him. When I feel sad, I don't need to tell him, he already knows." Finally, Julie shared to the first author: "I think Robert is a great example for everyone and for me too."

Gradual shared decision making. Gradual shared decision making occurred throughout the action research. Students were invited to take charge of various decisions in their PEH class. At first, most decisions were oriented on behavior management. Gradually, opportunities for learning-centered decisions were introduced, like choosing: (a) a role in a team sport or other learning conditions after self-assessing one's own needs and abilities; (b) individual and collective tactics; (c) personal goals to achieve; and (d) duration and intensity of the activities. Thus, gradual shared decision making referred not only to increasing opportunities for choices in PEH, but also to an evolution in the nature of the choices throughout the school year.

Moving from a preventive to a proactive responsibility development intent. Moving from a preventive to proactive responsibility development intent involves an evolution from using effective teaching and learning strategies to prevent or eliminate misbehaviors to using these strategies to consciously develop students' personal and social responsibility. At first, Robert was more concerned about planning effective and group-adapted teaching-learning settings in order to prevent misbehaviors. His students' decisions were mostly oriented on showing respectful behaviors. Rapidly, his intent to maximize individual responsibility

development opportunities became clear. In the final interview, he self-reflects on his experience during the action research: “At the beginning of the year, I used some teaching strategies to facilitate classroom management. Now, I use some strategies, like peer teaching or task sheets to help my students become more personally and socially responsible in PEH.”

Systematic integration of responsibility development. Data analysis showed that responsibility development was valued not only in Robert’s activities and teaching strategies, but also in the way he interacted with his students and his co-workers. Here is an example of Robert’s integration of the model, as reported in one of his post-teaching self-reflections. A few minutes before teaching to his 6th-graders, he learned that a close friend of his was diagnosed with cancer and had virtually no chance of survival. He was shocked. He knew he would struggle with self-control that day, so he raised the issue in the group welcoming talk. Later, Robert told the first author: “I thought it was somewhat unusual, afterwards. I couldn’t believe that I had referred to TPSR levels to explain what I was going through. I now use these kinds of everyday life situations to make links with responsibility development.” Students’ commitment in TPSR strategies was also a sign of Robert’s systematic integration of responsibility development. His follow-up on the self-evaluation routine seemed to have played an important role in students’ commitment. The use of a TPSR poster gave the students a framework for self-assessing and helped Robert choose appropriate strategies for each student. Jonathan, one of Robert’s 6th-graders, said to the first author: “(*TPSR poster*) helps me be more responsible... have self-control, respect others, and be self-directed. It helps me do that. And it also helps me self-assess if I do it or not in PEH.”

Difficulties with leadership/caring and transfer operationalization. Robert also experienced some difficulties during TPSR implementation, related to leadership development and transfer. Robert’s conception of leadership interfered with the implementation of specific strategies to develop it. In one of his last post-teaching interviews, he stated: “I believe that leadership is something you are born with. That probably explains why I can’t think of any strategies to develop it in my PEH lessons.” When present, leadership opportunities would be available only to those who displayed good athletic skills, as if helping others could only be accessible to skilled players. Another difficulty referred to helping his students transfer responsibility behaviors and attitudes learned in PEH to other settings. Robert felt powerless in building activities that could teach transfer to students: “I really try to build some initiatives... but I realize that I am really anxious to work in the same school for more than a year to implement more sustainable actions. I need to reach parents and other teachers, which is difficult for me to do right now.” However, even if transfer was perceived by Robert as a struggle, he still managed to build a tool for his students to self-reflect on transfer issues. Students were able to write, on a blank TPSR poster put up on the gym wall, examples of responsible behaviors they had demonstrated in other settings. For instance, Jonathan wrote “Helping my brother doing his homework” as an illustration of TPSR model Level Four at home. Students also perceived Robert’s teaching for transfer intent, as Mike, one of Robert’s 6th-graders, stated: “Robert shows me ways to be responsible outside of the gym. Helping others and stuff like that.”

Robert showed a high level of professional accountability throughout the action research project. During the final interview, Robert stated: “If I had not self-reflects, I would not have changed my teaching practices, some situations would have stayed the same, and would have

been problematic over and over throughout the year. Self-reflection forced me to try new things and to adapt.”

Discussion and conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore the journey of two physical education and health elementary school teachers in learning to teach personal and social responsibility through a year-long action research. The findings revealed two different profiles of teachers who experienced two distinctive processes. Cotin-Martinez’s professional development model (1993) might help understand how their teaching concerns have affected their journey through the action research project.

Results show clear discrepancies between each teacher’s concerns. Caroline showed self-oriented concerns throughout the year she was involved in the action research. She was struggling with TPSR model Level One issues: Respect and students’ self-control. These difficulties are clear indicators of her professional development stage. According to Cotin-Martinez’s model, they characterized a “self-oriented on classroom management” teaching concern. This self-oriented focus combined with planning and class management struggles led Caroline to see TPSR model as a behavior management tool that could help her survive throughout the school day. Its implementation was viewed as a solution to the many problems she was facing. It supports Lee’s (2012) statement that teachers at the beginning stage of TPSR implementation are mostly focused on personal concerns. However, the use of the TPSR model as a behavior management tool might also come from the particular needs and challenges of PEH (Mrugala, 2002), where large class sizes and other contextual issues inhibit full implementation of TPSR (Hellison, 2003; Wright & Burton, 2008). Yet, according to Mrugala (2002) and Lee (2012), using TPSR as a behavior management tool can be considered as a first step, which could eventually lead to changes in teaching practices. Authentic TPSR implementation was obviously an overwhelming challenge for Caroline. According to her professional development stage, she needed to improve her basic teaching skills first. This finding is in line with a statement by Hellison (2003), who highlights teaching competency as a prerequisite for teaching personal and social responsibility. In a recent study, Pascual *et al.* (2011) have recommended more individualized training and ongoing supervision to facilitate TPSR implementation. However, in Caroline’s case, even if she was provided with extensive on-site presence and individualized feedback to support her professional development, the results presented here seem to indicate that it would still be insufficient to achieve authentic TPSR implementation.

Robert’s journey showed a different profile. According to Cotin-Martinez (1993), his teaching concern gradually shifted from “self-oriented” to “student-oriented” on students’ learning and achievement. Results provided clear indicators of this shift throughout the action research project, like gradual shared decision-making, individualized teaching strategies, and increased opportunities for his students to experiment with various kinds of responsibilities. Showing a high level of commitment to the action research, Robert was able to self-reflect and adjust his teaching strategies according to students’ individual needs and PEH objectives. His TPSR implementation difficulties were associated with the two “higher” levels of Hellison’s model (Level Four: Leadership/caring and Level Five: Transfer). His beliefs on leadership development may have been a limitation, which is consistent with previous literature (Martinek & Hellison, 2009). As for transfer, it is considered by many as a difficult outcome to achieve and

evaluate (Lee & Martinek, 2012; Martinek, Schilling & Johnson, 2001; Walsh, Ozaeta & Wright, 2010; Wright & Burton, 2008), as it can be influenced by a complex interplay of different internal and external factors (Lee & Martinek, 2012), often out of the control of the teacher. Being student-centered and individualizing several of his teaching strategies also led to the development of a strong kids-first relationship. Establishing a meaningful relationship is a “cornerstone” of TPSR, as this can “engage participants and allow for ownership of the program” (Walsh, Ozaeta & Wright, 2010, p. 25). Robert’s buy-in to TPSR values led him to embed it as a “way of being” (Forsberg, cited by Hellison, 2003), which had great influence on his 6th-graders’ commitment to TPSR strategies.

Although the primary intent of this article was to document each teacher’s journey, students provided us with relevant data regarding the impacts of TPSR implementation. For instance, Robert’s more authentic TPSR implementation showed impacts on “higher” levels of the TPSR model. On the other hand, TPSR implementation oriented on class management issues, as in Caroline’s case, mostly showed impacts on reducing students’ misbehaviors, like talking without raising their hand and not following teacher’s instructions. These findings are in line with a growing body of literature which documents the impacts of TPSR implementation on students (Hellison & Walsh, 2002; Pascual *et al.*, 2011). They also confirm previous findings about TPSR model’s positive influence on students, even when used solely as a behavior management tool (Mrugala, 2002).

The findings of this study underlined three main recommendations to support TPSR implementation. First, professional development opportunities should help teachers shift their concerns on their students’ needs and PEH content. Cotin-Martinez’s professional development model (1993) could provide professional development facilitators with appropriate indicators to help them accompany PEH teachers in their journey. Second, greater emphasis should be put on systematic integration of TPSR strategies into the activities provided to students. We agree with Hellison (2011) as it might be “the most difficult aspect of TPSR implementation” (p. 86). For instance, building a self-assessment tool to help teachers reflect on each activity’s responsibility development potential could be used in this regard. One such instrument that has been recently published is the Tool for Assessing Responsibility-based Education (TARE; Wright & Craig, 2011). Doing such a qualitative self-assessment requires that the teacher provides clear field examples, which might help bridge the gap between what one says he or she’s doing and what one actually does in his or her lessons (Harnett, 2012). Finally, gradual shared decision making with the students should be stimulated throughout the implementation process, which is consistent with one of the TPSR leader’s responsibilities (Hellison, 2011). Nevertheless, relinquishing control to students is a difficult shift one has to do when implementing responsibility-based teaching strategies (Casey & Dyson, 2009) and student-oriented assessment practices (Patton & Griffin, 2008).

According to Sinelnikov (2009) and Patton, Parker & Neutzling (2012), external help plays an important role in stimulating reflection, leading to effective changes in teaching practices. Results discussed in relation with Cotin-Martinez’s model (1993) emphasized the importance of individualizing the support offered to each teacher. As Lee (2012) stated, facilitators should “understand both individual candidates’ stages of concern and their actual implementation stages in order to provide the appropriate support and facilitation strategies”

(p. 167). Thus, keeping this external help in line with the teacher's professional development stage could be a valuable educational strategy. Also, follow-up is not only important when learning to be a personally and socially responsible student: follow-up is also crucial when learning to teach TPSR. Our findings confirm Sinelnikov's (2009) recommendation that extensive on-site presence of an external person is essential to train, observe and assist in the implementation of a new curriculum. These findings raise the issue of the quality of school supervision, which is unlikely to provide teachers with the appropriate on-site and long term support to implement this kind of innovation.

This study is one of the few to offer an insight of TPSR implementation process from a PEH teacher's perspective throughout a school year. Using an action research methodology to initiate, support and document each teacher's change process helped gather relevant data on their journey towards TPSR implementation. It is also in line with contemporary approaches to professional development, which focus on inquiry and reflection, while engaging teachers in relevant tasks (Patton, Parker & Neutzling, 2012). However, according to Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin (2011), effective professional development must be "collaborative, involving a sharing of knowledge among educators and a focus on teachers' community of practice rather than on individual teachers" (p. 82). In our action research project, TPSR implementation was supported by the first author, not by fellow teachers, which represents a limit to the extent of our findings. For example, Caroline might have benefited from Robert sharing effective TPSR strategies, which could have provided her with interesting insights. Therefore, creating a TPSR community of practice (Wenger, 1998) or professional learning community (Armour, Makopoulou & Chambers, 2012; Armour & Yelling, 2007) might be effective ways to stimulate follow-up and support teacher change. Yet, more studies are needed to evaluate the impacts of such learning communities on TPSR implementation.

Our findings also support some previously identified limits to TPSR implementation, such as one's beliefs and own professional accountability (Martinek & Hellison, 2009; Pascual et al., 2011). Indeed, exhibiting a low level of professional accountability could limit the extent to which one learns to teach personal and social responsibility. Since PEH teachers are responsible for creating an environment in which students may learn personal and social responsibility, learning and experiencing responsible teaching behaviors and attitudes themselves through pre-service education might have an impact on their future teaching practices (Lee, 2012; Oslin, Collier & Mitchell, 2001). Therefore, a promising trend of research could be to study the implementation of TPSR's philosophy and strategies in PETE curricula.

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