



Supporting Teachers' Professional Learning through Collaborative Inquiry: A Case Study

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PURPOSE

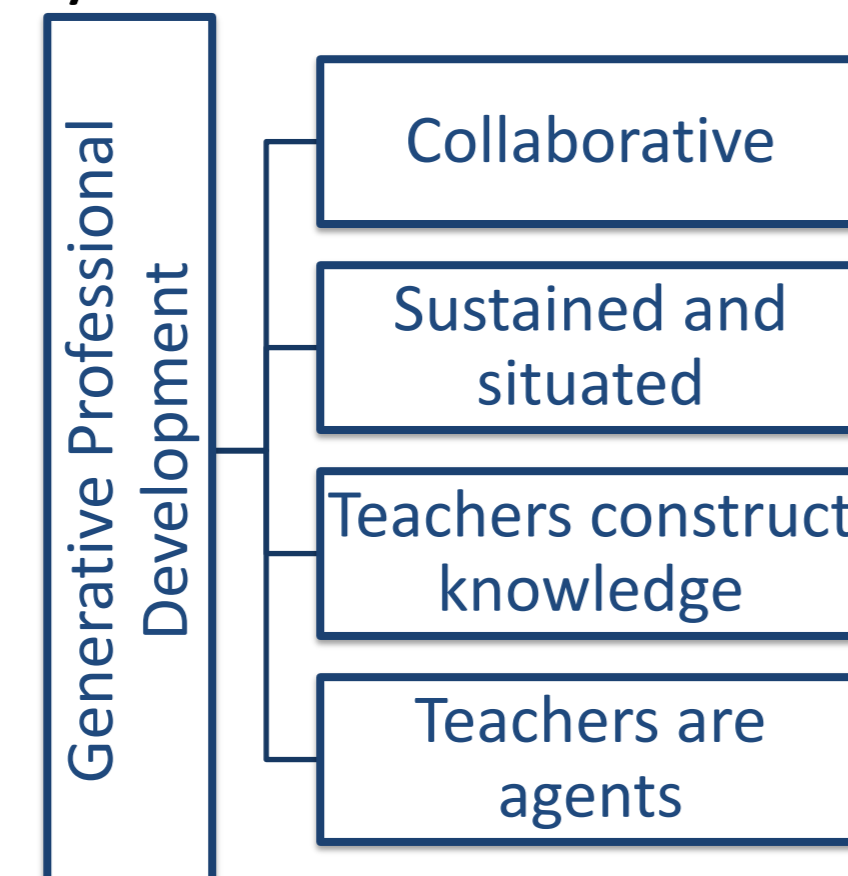
Despite growing research about effective professional learning for teachers, supporting change is difficult (Guskey, 2014). Collaborative inquiry (CI) is a way forward offering teachers opportunities for agency as they build from experiences and actions to co-construct new learning (Butler et al., 2015). The intention of this study was to better understand how teachers experienced learning and impacts through a CI initiative designed with key aspects of generative professional learning in mind.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How did professional development processes unfold in this Community of Inquiry (Col)?
2. How did educators take up opportunities for learning as constructed in the Col?
3. How was teachers' learning and practice impacted through participating?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

CI incorporates facets of generative professional development (PD) while teachers participate in socially shared learning stemming from questions of individual and/or shared interest (DeLuca et al., 2014). CI is promising because it provides opportunities for educators to collaborate for critical reflection (Vangrieken et al., 2015) and co-generate new understandings (Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015); make connections between new learning and practice in sustained and situated ways (Admiraal et al., 2021); engage in a process of knowledge construction (Webster-Wright, 2009); and act with agency to make decisions for their learning (Philpott & Oats, 2017).



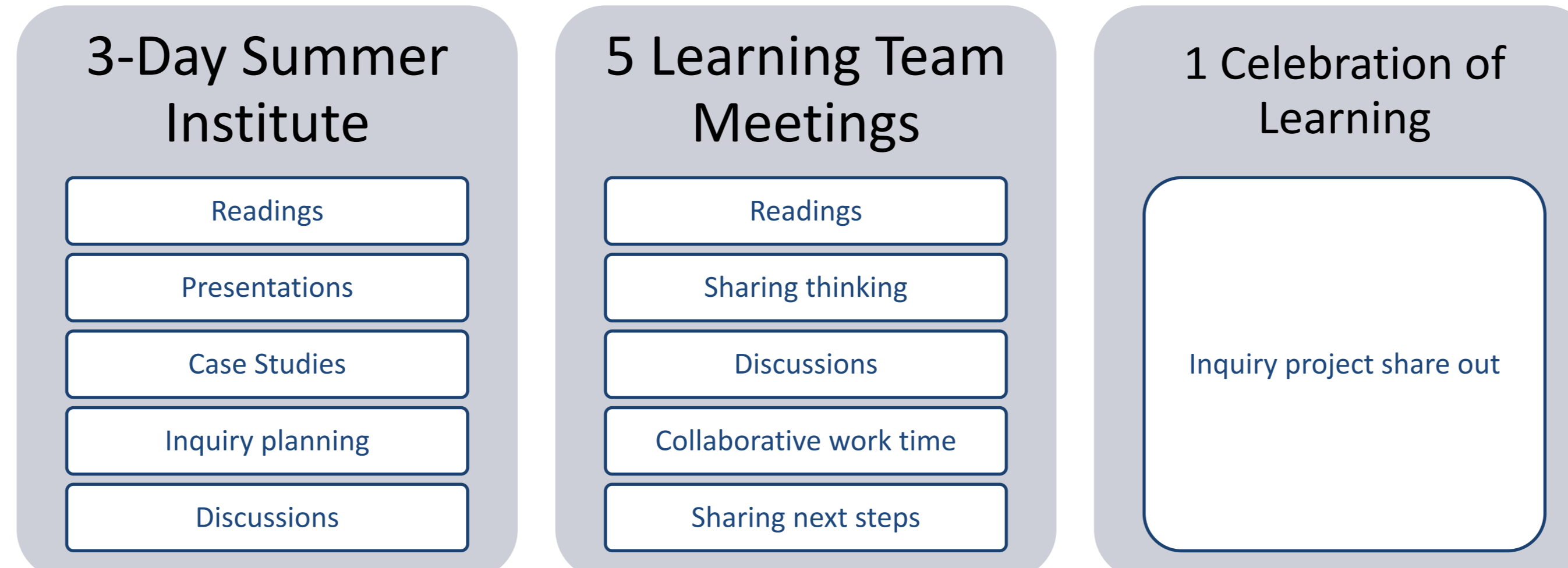
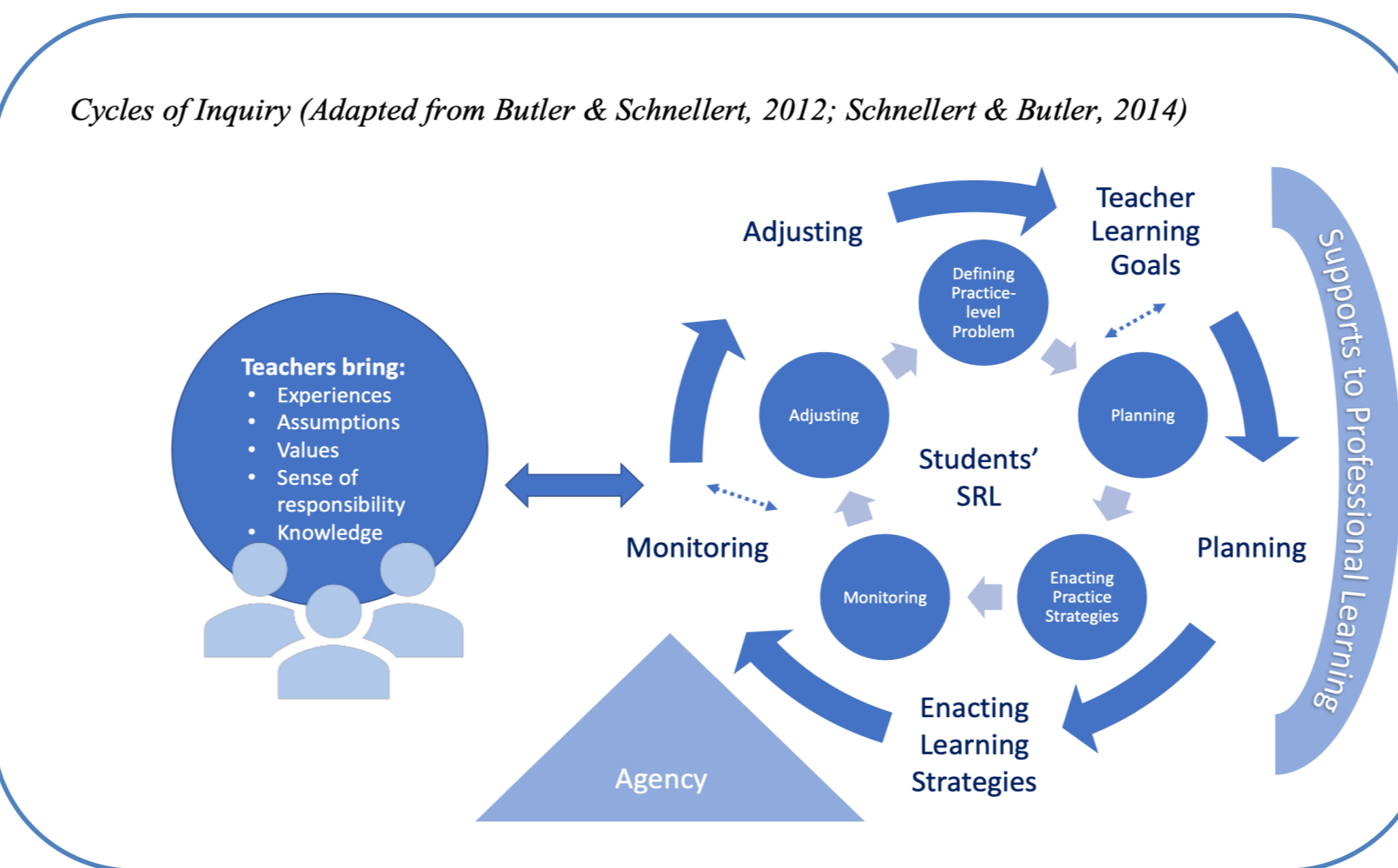
Research is needed about how to support productive collaboration, fuller forms of practice- and learning-focused inquiry, and the ways resources and supports work to foster teachers' learning and agency in tandem.

CONTEXT

- One Community of Inquiry borne out of a partnership between a University and local school district
- Teachers came together to learn about empowering diverse learners in inclusive contexts by supporting their self-regulated learning (SRL)
- Teachers could choose to participate in only a 3-day Summer Institute or also extend to full the ten-month Community of Inquiry, for course credit or not

COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY PROCESSES

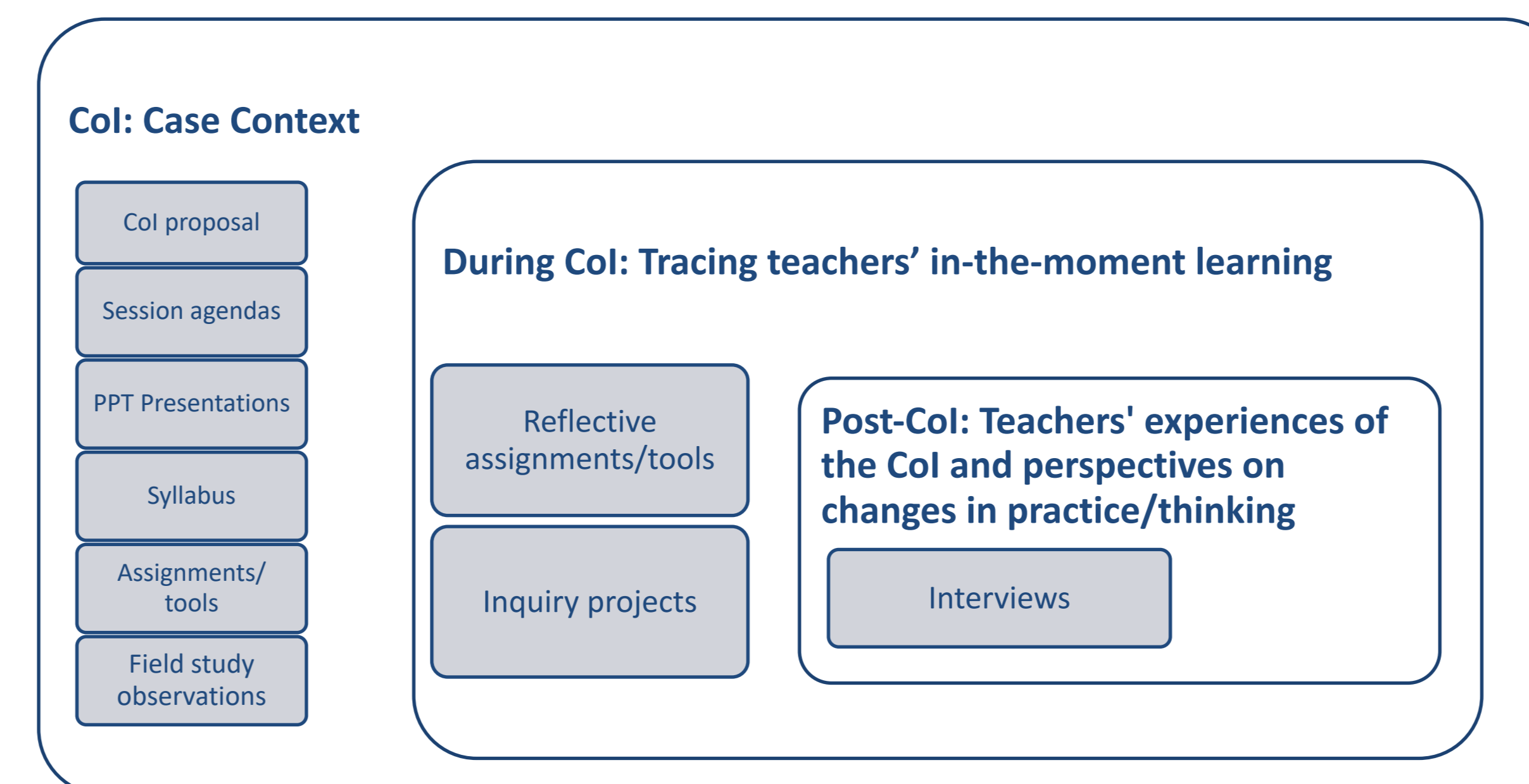
- Col was structured to foster opportunities for educators to:
- Build from unique profiles
 - Engage in Cycles of Inquiry
 - Collaborate
 - Access content resources and researcher-educator feedback
 - Reflect on practices in relation to new learning
 - Exercise agency



RESEARCH PROCESSES

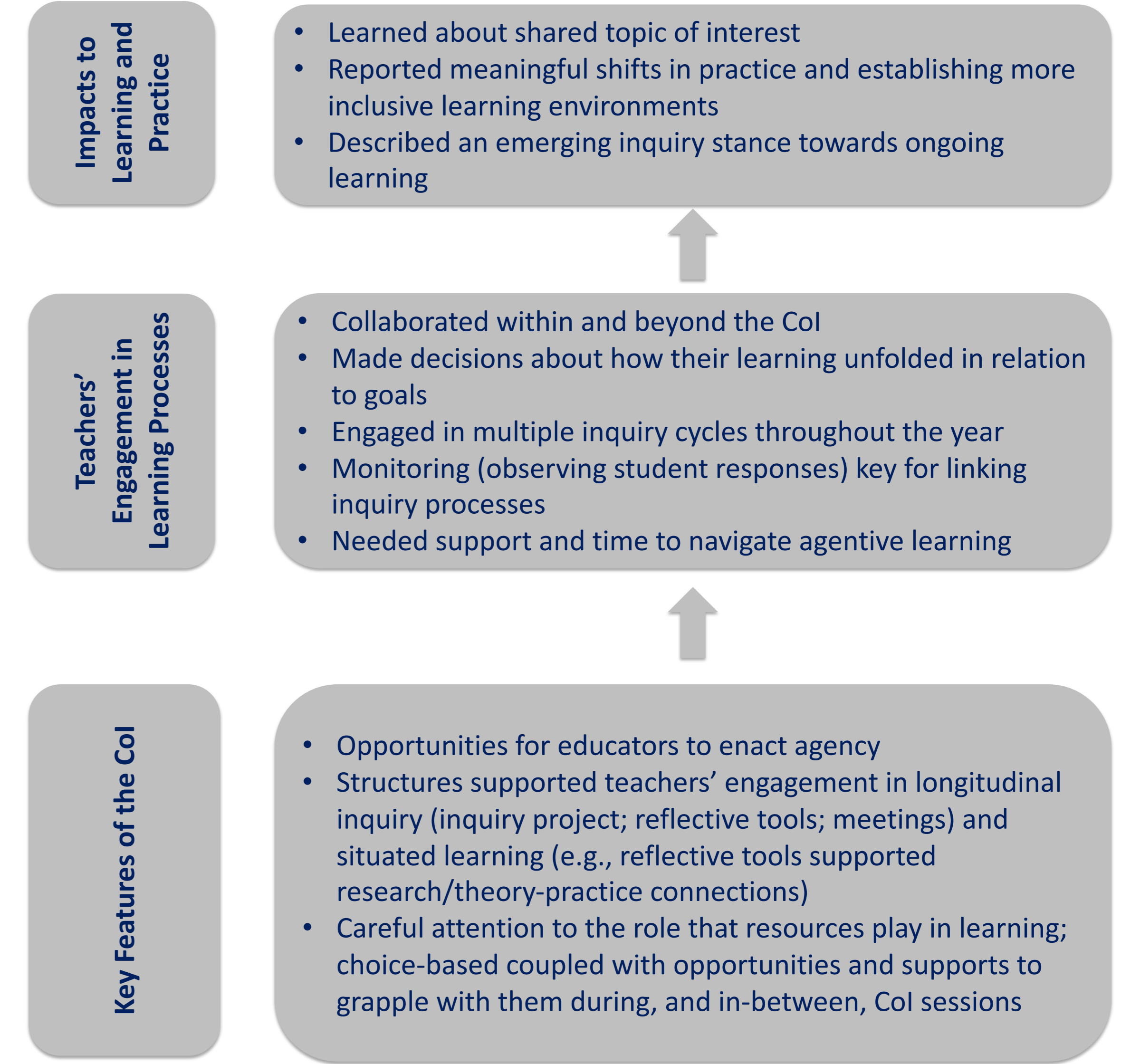
Case-study design (Butler & Cartier, 2018; Yin, 2018).

Thematic analysis using cyclical abductive coding of multiple forms of evidence to understand the learning context and individuals' learning, with, and from, one another (Miles et al., 2020)



Data sources

FINDINGS



The Col was designed to **balance** supports for CI processes with space and opportunities for educators to exercise agency.

CONCLUSION

This study addresses the need to better understand how to construct PD that recognizes the valuable expertise, opinions, and experiences of educators, with attention to the structures and supports needed to enhance professional learning processes.

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