

DISSERTATION

THE STORIES OF HOW TWO DIFFERENT STUDENT TEACHING MODELS IMPACTED
TEACHER IDENTITY: SIX NARRATIVES OF BEGINNING TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

THE STORIES OF HOW TWO DIFFERENT STUDENT TEACHING MODELS IMPACTED TEACHER IDENTITY: SIX NARRATIVES OF BEGINNING TEACHERS

This study looks beyond the student teaching experience into the world of six beginning teachers and how their capstone experience impacted their thinking, practice, and professional identity. Three of the teachers participated in a coteaching during student teaching model (CTDST) and the other three participated in a traditional student teaching placement (TST). A collective case study research design was used to gain an understanding of the complex process of constructing a professional identity. Within-case analysis and between-case analysis found that although the six research participants shared budding teacher identities, growth mindsets, and courage, there were differences between the TST participants and the CTDST participants. The two groups differed in the accuracy of their assessment of their classroom management skills and in the timing and placement of the first time they recognized themselves as teachers. Moreover, the experiences of participants in effective CTDST placements supported previous research findings that extensive collaboration with mentor teachers was beneficial for beginning teachers and strengthened their teacher identity.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my husband and life-long collaborator, to my sons and daughters-in-law, to my sis-tah, and to Penelope, Zahria, and Otis.

Mike Pike, from the moment I met you, you have encouraged me, supported me, and called forth the person God created me to be through your love. From the deepest realms of my heart, thank you.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

On April 26 and April 27, 2018, leaders of more than a dozen Colorado school districts had to cancel classes or send students home early due to teacher walk-outs, including 10 of the largest districts in the state; those districts alone comprised 30,000 teachers (Colorado Department of Education [CDE], 2017). Meltzer (2018) at *Chalkbeat.org* reported that thousands of educators marched to the state capital in Denver and demanded lawmakers make long-term commitments to increase funding for K-12 education. Just one week prior on April 20, 2018, teachers from Colorado's Pueblo School District 60 voted overwhelmingly to strike. Ethredge, president of the Pueblo Education Association, stated, "The message this sends to the district is that teachers are tired of being disrespected, of having to fight for minuscule increases" (Pompia, 2018, para. 5). The reality that over the past decade teacher salaries have decreased when adjusted for inflation is an example of the messages of disrespect sent to teachers through minuscule salary increases (Meltzer, 2018, para. 11). Discouragement and disenchantment grow when teacher pay cannot even keep pace with inflation. Furthermore, as teacher pay remains stagnant, teachers are responsible for meeting the needs of their students with a shrinking pool of resources. Meltzer (2018) interviewed a science teacher from Denver Public Schools who has 35 students in each of his classes, but does not have a proper whiteboard (para. 14). Adding to the salary woes of Colorado teachers, the gap between salaries earned by teachers and their similarly educated counterparts in other fields is "among the worst in the nation" (Meltzer, 2018, para. 15). Ethredge's sentiment reflects a growing dissatisfaction among educators throughout the United States (Goldring, Taie, & Riddles, 2014). Like educators in Colorado, teachers in West Virginia, Kentucky, Oklahoma, and Arizona have staged rallies and/or organized strikes

(Kilgore, 2018). Teachers are demanding changes in compensation and their working conditions by taking action. The changes teachers demand befall a public education system already stressed by the challenges of a national teacher shortage (Berry & Shields, 2017) and the ever-present challenge to effectively prepare individuals to successfully fill those job vacancies (Berry & Shields, 2017; Darling-Hammond, 2006).

Background of the Problem

Teacher shortages and the corresponding increase of inexperienced teachers leading classrooms have complicated the problem of providing K-12 students with teachers who are able to create classroom experiences that facilitate learning and growth.

Teacher Shortages

The demand for teachers is growing, yet teacher supply is shrinking (Berry & Shields, 2017; Cross, 2016). Among the major trends causing the current teacher shortage are the increased enrollment of K-12 students which has been attributed to higher birth rates and greater immigration numbers (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016), fewer individuals entering educator preparation programs (EPPs; Berry & Shields, 2017; Sutcher et al., 2016), and the pervasive, relatively high teacher attrition rate of eight percent (Berry & Shields, 2017). Attrition occurs when the field of education loses practitioners to other professions as teachers depart from their current teaching positions (Kelchtermans, 2017). An eight percent attrition rate is double the attrition rates of top performing nations (Sutcher et al., 2016). Over two-thirds of public-school educators depart from the profession before retirement age; most cite dissatisfaction with teaching conditions as the reason for their exit (Goldring, Taie, & Riddles, 2014; Sutcher et al., 2016). Six out of 10 teacher new-hires replace educators leaving before retirement (Learning Policy Institute [LPI], 2017). Nationally, teachers who voluntarily left the

field of public education after the 2011-2012 academic year cited a number of reasons for their exit which are grouped into the following nine most frequently given reasons: (a) quit for personal reasons (37%), among them child care and pregnancy; (b) left to pursue a job other than being a K-12 teacher (28%); (c) found school assessments and accountability measures on their teaching and curriculum too burdensome to remain (25%); (d) high levels of dissatisfaction with school administration (21%); (e) high levels of dissatisfaction with teaching as a career (21%); (f) high levels of dissatisfaction with the level of support provided to prepare students for standardized assessments (17%); (g) need for higher salaries (13%); (h) need for greater sway over school policies and practices (13%); and (i) need for more autonomy over their classrooms (13%; Podolsky, Kini, Bishop, & Darling-Hammond, 2016, p. 6). Locally, Colorado teachers left their jobs in higher proportions during the 2014–2015 academic year than in the last 15 years (CDE, 2017).

Attracting more aspiring teachers to enter the profession is important and changing the rate of attrition “would reduce the projected shortages more than any other single factor” (Sutcher et al., 2016, p. 2). Sutcher et al. (2016) identified four major influences affecting teacher recruitment and retention. First, teacher pay correlates to teacher retention. Unfortunately, teachers have been losing ground in this area since the 1990s with current pay at 70 % of what other college-educated workers earn (Sutcher et al., 2016). Second, the cost of preparing to be a teacher can be an obstacle to individuals choosing to enter and/or remain in the field of education. The greater the debt college students incur, the less likely they are to enter low-salary fields such as education (Sutcher et al., 2016). Furthermore, for those individuals who try to forego a costly college education and enter the profession through non-traditional means, retention is low for those who lack comprehensive preparation (Borman & Dowling, 2017).

Third, mentoring and induction play important roles in teacher retention. Effective mentoring involves matching beginning teachers with mentors in the same content areas with shared planning times, and regularly scheduled collaboration times (Britton, Paine, & Raizen, 2003; Brown, 2003). Beginning teachers who lack such supports leave the educational industry at high rates; in the first five years of their career, beginning teachers with poor preparation and weak induction support leave at rates between 19% and 30% (Sutcher et al., para. 30, 2016). The final influencer of teacher recruitment and retention is the quality of teaching conditions. Educators are more likely to stay in the classroom if they have adequate resources, supportive administrations, collegial opportunities, and a voice in decision-making (Sutcher et al., 2016).

The combination of low pay, expensive college preparation, ineffective mentoring, plus unsatisfactory teaching conditions causes significant problems in staffing American classrooms with capable teachers (Cross, 2016; Podolsky et al., 2016; Sutcher et al., 2016). The teacher shortages throughout the United States vary by region and content area but remain a pervasive issue for most American school districts (Cross, 2016). If current retention rates remain low, there remains widespread uncertainty about the teachers who are teaching our students (Goldrick et al., 2012).

Fewer Veteran Teachers Means More Beginning Teachers in the Classroom

As more veteran teachers leave the classroom, their years of experience, deep knowledge base, and hard-earned expertise leave a gap in the classroom. Evidence from a meta-analysis and narrative review suggested that attrition is not necessarily “healthy” turnover (Borman & Dowling, 2017, p. 396). The cost of teacher turnover is passed onto school districts to locate, hire, and train new teachers. For example, urban districts, on average, spend more than \$20,000 on every new hire, “including school and district expenses related to separation, recruitment,

hiring, and training” (LPI, 2017, para. 1). If these teachers leave within the first two years of being hired, research shows that the money invested in their hiring does not pay off (LPI, 2017). Other losses from teacher departures are incurred like the indirect costs of lost knowledge that must be recreated and the cost of decreased morale in classroom students and school faculty (Kelchtermans, 2017). Ronfeldt, Loeb, and Wyckoff (2013) conducted a longitudinal study that investigated the effects of teacher turnover on over 850,000 New York City fourth- and fifth-grade students over eight years which suggested that teacher turnover has a significant and negative impact on student achievement in both math and English language arts (ELA). Of further significance, researchers found that teacher turnover is particularly harmful to the achievement of students in schools with large populations of low-performing students (Ronfeldt et al., 2013). A lack of continuity among experienced faculty and school leadership impedes building a “culture of learning for students, as well as staff” (National Education Policy Center [NEPC], 2017, para. 1). In summary, teacher turnover depletes resources for the teachers and students remaining in the classroom. Their loss translates into cost for the wider community.

Leadership in school classrooms across the United States has undergone a significant shift over the past 30 years. Thirty years ago, the typical teacher instructing K-12 students had an average of 15 years of experience and many of their colleagues had over 10 years of experience. Ten years ago, the typical teacher possessed one to two years of experience, 25% had fewer than five years of teaching experience, and 50% of the remaining pool of educators had 11 or fewer years of experience (Carroll & Foster, 2010). Currently, beginning teachers are more common in American classrooms than in previous years (Ronfeldt et al., 2013). Reason and research suggest that beginning teachers are generally less effective than their more practiced counterparts, and

though experience alone cannot guarantee effectiveness, it may contribute to teacher quality and success (Ronfeldt et al., 2013).

Statement of the Problem

Communities throughout the United States need more teachers, but these challenging times require more than simply filling classroom space with willing individuals. Those who teach hold a place of great cultural influence:

[Educators] occupy positions in the public domain in America where it's still possible to effect change, to improve the lives of others. Education is transmittable capital; its value and power can pass from teachers to students. (Danielewicz, 2001, p. 3)

Therefore, it is vital that classrooms are populated with effective teachers who are committed to a long-term investment in the field of education. However, to be an effective educator,

[to] retain a vision of success and intellectual development for one's students in social climates not conducive to such endeavors, to persist despite the low regard our culture has for such work— . . . one must *be* a teacher, not just act like one. (Danielewicz, 2001, p. 3; emphasis added)

Learning to teach and to *become* a teacher—to develop the identity of a teacher—are complex processes that cannot be addressed simply through prescriptive programs (Britzman, 2003). *Becoming* a teacher requires that one sees oneself as a teacher, and furthermore, is seen by others as a teacher (Danielewicz, 2001). Teacher candidates (TC), individuals studying to become educators, must have programs of study available that offer opportunities to learn the skills and disciplinary content of teaching along with opportunities to develop satisfying professional identities that empower them to make the long-term investment necessary to become effective educators (Alsup, 2006). Strong professional identities empower educators to navigate the challenging social and political climate of education and remain committed to continuing to learn and grow with their students and colleagues (Britzman, 2003).

Teacher educators, higher education professionals whose central focus is the preparation of TCs in educator preparation programs (EPP), face the challenging problem of developing educational experiences that build the skills and knowledge necessary to teach, and also aid their TCs in constructing a teacher identity. Given the increased number of beginning teachers leading classrooms, addressing this problem is essential. Beginning teachers, as new professional educators, need to enter their classroom with a sense of *being*, a sense of their teacher identity. Possessing a functional teacher identity will enable beginning educators to weather the challenges inherent to all first-year teachers as well as the challenging social, economic, and political realities that are part of this profession. The subsequent research was an exploration of professional identity formation in individuals who had recently completed their EPP and were beginning teachers in the first months of their first professional teaching job.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this narrative inquiry was to explore the formation of professional identity in teacher candidates from a land grant university in the western region of the United States who completed their student teaching in a specific experience: coteaching during student teaching. Coteaching during student teaching (CTDST) may aid EPPs in strengthening the educational experiences that build the skills and knowledge necessary for individuals to learn to teach and therefore to enter their classrooms with greater likelihood of remaining in the profession. CTDST may also assist teacher candidates (TC) in constructing a teacher identity. Until recently, the traditional model for the culminating experience of teacher training followed a general pattern: The TC who has entered their student teaching placement observes their mentor teacher (MT), in-service teachers hosting TCs, in action for a few weeks and then assists the MT in teaching before taking charge of the classroom during the final weeks of student teaching (Meyer, 2016).

Recently, another version of student teaching has been introduced and implemented by a growing number of EPPs: CTDST (Baeten & Simons, 2014). This experience is characterized by “two teachers, a cooperating teacher [mentor teacher] and a teacher candidate, working together with groups of students; sharing the planning, organization, delivery and assessment of instruction, as well as the physical space” (Bacharach, Heck, & Dahlberry, 2010, p. 5). Because the coteaching experience serves as the capstone episode of educator training for TCs, this coteaching experience merited research to better understand how these beginning educators constructed a professional identity during their final phase of formal training.

This study aids in gaining a better understanding of how TCs form professional identities while CTDST for four reasons. First, as the practice of coteaching during student teaching grows in popularity, awareness of the process of identity construction during teacher education programs needs attention because the development of a professional identity does not automatically come with experience. Therefore, attention must be given to reflection and practice during teacher preparation in order to support the construction of professional identity (Flores & Day, 2006; Murphy & Martin, 2015). Furthermore, due to the lack of real-time feedback given to TCs in the traditional student teaching (TST) model, the quality of the student teaching experience has been identified as an area of concern by leaders in the field of education and teacher preparation (Clarke, Triggs, & Nielsen, 2014; Meyer, 2016). Third, although initial research on CTDST appeared promising (Bacharach & Heck, 2012; Bacharach et al., 2010; Crotty, 2015; Meyer, 2016), research on the influence of the experience of coteaching was relatively scarce and outcomes for all stakeholders (MTs, TCs, and classroom students) has remained unclear.

The fourth reason this study aids in gaining a better understanding of professional identity formation in TCs in a coteaching experience is the rich context of this learning event. As TCs “learn at the elbow” (Roth & Tobin, 2004, p.161) of more experienced teachers, the key characteristics of effective mentoring—matching beginning teachers with mentors in the same content areas with shared planning times, and regularly scheduled collaboration times (Britton et al., 2003; Brown, 2003)—are met. The mentoring experience is further strengthened as coteaching TCs collaboratively plan and deliver instruction, assess learning, and reflect upon daily practices with their MT (Bacharach et al., 2010). The dialogue between TCs and their MTs provide opportunity for teacher candidates to see themselves as having a teacher identity, and furthermore, for others to see that identity (Danielewicz, 2001). High-quality mentoring can accelerate the professional growth of beginning educators, “making them more effective faster” (Goldrick et al., 2012, p. v). Therefore, such regularly occurring mentoring experiences should aid in forming a strong professional identity, making the context of this study an appropriate site of investigation, increasing theoretical and practical knowledge for teacher educators.

Research Questions

The purpose of this narrative study was to explore the formation of professional identity in teacher candidates from a western land-grant university who completed their student teaching in a specific student teaching experience: CTDST. Therefore, the central research questions include the following:

1. What influence does a CTDST experience have on professional identity formation compared to a TST experience?
2. How do beginning teachers who participated in CTDST or TST placements describe the impact of that experience on their professional identities?

Figure 1.1 illustrates how each area of the study feeds into the central research questions.

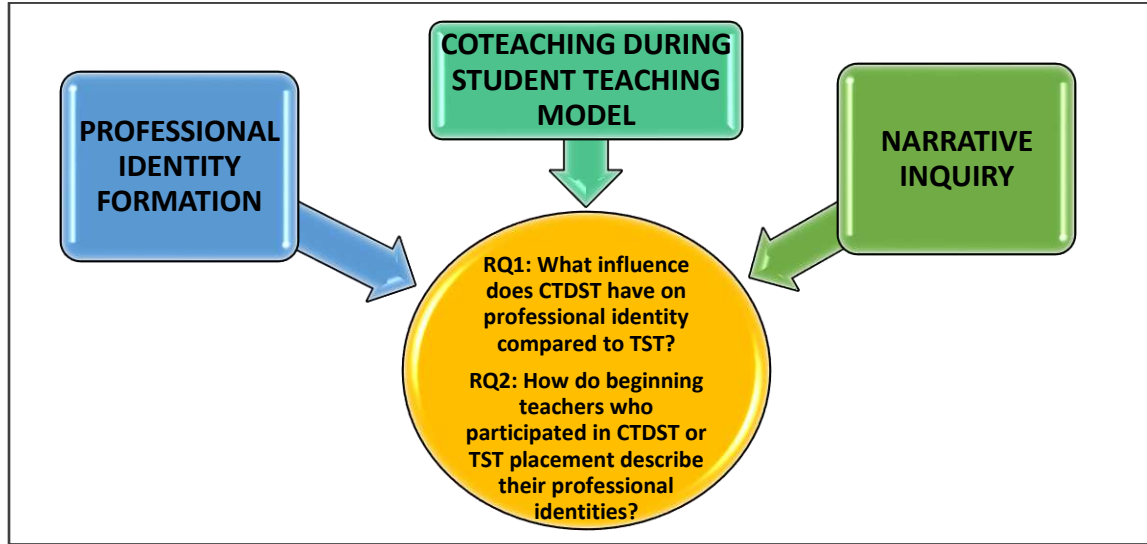


Figure 1.1. Central research questions. Three areas of interest inform the central research questions.

Definition of Terms

Definitions of terms relevant to this study are arranged alphabetically.

- *Beginning teacher*: a teacher in their first year of professional teaching (Rodgers & Scott, 2008).
- *Biography*: A form of narrative study in which the researcher writes and records the story of another person's experience. Researchers may use records, archives, interviews, photographs, and/or videos to construct biographies (Creswell, 2012).
- *Case study*: A research design focused on an "in-depth exploration of a bounded system" (Creswell, 2012, p. 465). The bounded system is set apart for research by time, place, or some physical limitations (Creswell, 2012).
- *Communities of practice (CoP)*: The social structures in which human endeavors are "defined as worth pursuing and [human] participation is recognizable as competence" (Wenger, 1998, p. 5). Communities of practice have three characteristics:

- *Mutual engagement*: social engagement organized around what community members are there to accomplish; “Being included in what matters is a requirement for being engaged in a community’s practice, just as engagement is what defines belonging” (Wenger, 1998, p. 74).
- *Joint enterprise*: the negotiated response of the community of practice members to their situation and mandates; “Because members produce a practice to deal with what they understand to be their enterprise, their practice as it unfolds belongs to their community in a fundamental sense” (Wenger, 1998, p. 80).
- *Shared repertoire*: the specific activities, symbols, and/or artifacts that belong to the practice of a community pursuing an enterprise and are resources for the negotiation of meaning. Elements of the repertoire can be heterogeneous and may include: “routines, words, tools, ways of doing things, stories, gestures, symbols, genres, actions, or concepts that the community has produced or adopted in the course of its existence, and which have become part of its practice” (Wenger, 1998, p. 83).
- *Constructivism*: The constructivist perspective posits that knowledge is not passively received from the world or from authoritative sources but is constructed “through discourse in the context of individual histories and social interaction” (Bazeley, 2014, p. 23).
- *Coteaching during student teaching experience (CTDST)*: In this research endeavor, the dynamics of coteaching during student teaching provides the context for exploring the formation of a teacher identity in fledgling educators. This experience of student teaching

involves “two or more teachers in some level of collaboration in the planning, delivery, and/or evaluation of a course” (Baeten & Simons, 2014, p. 93).

- *Identity*: Prior to defining professional identity, the basic concept of identity will be defined. “One’s sense of self” (Myers & Dewall, 2016, p. 153) serves as a deceptively simple yet widely accepted definition of identity. People possess an understanding of self comprised of “a set of distinguishing characteristics . . . that emerge from this sense of selfhood” (Alsup, 2006, p. 205). Identity allows individuals to answer the question, “Who am I?” yet identity is not singular or unchanging (Alsup, 2006), nor is it ever alone (Taylor, 1989). Because identity can shift over time and/or be recast depending on context, sociologist Taylor (1989) asserted that the “self can never be described without reference to those who surround it” (p. 10). Agreeing that identity includes how individuals know and name themselves, Danielewicz (2001) added that identity includes how individuals “are recognized and regarded by others” (p. 3). Consequently, identity allows individuals to answer the question, “Who am I and who do I think others say I am?”
- *Mentor teacher (MT)*: professional teachers who host teacher candidates during their student teaching placement. MTs share their classroom space and their students with the teacher candidate (Meyer, 2016).
- *Narrative*: Narrative provides the “fundamental scheme for linking individual human actions and events into interrelated aspects of an understandable composite” (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 13). The organizational scheme is expressed in story form and performs two vital functions. First, on the personal level, individuals construct a narrative of their own lives that aids them in determining what they are and where they are going.

Second, on the cultural level, social narratives serve to provide continuity to shared beliefs and to transmit norms and values (Bruner, 2002; Polkinghorne, 1988). Both personal narratives and social narratives are ever evolving, incorporating new information and experiences to an updated “understandable composite” (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 13).

- *Narrative analysis*: The objective of narrative analysis is the story told by individuals about consequential events. As human agency and imagination direct what is included and excluded in the story, the purpose of narrative analysis is to discern how interviewees “impose order on the flow of experience to make sense of events and actions in their lives” (Kohler Riessman, 1993, p. 2).
- *Personal narrative*: “Talk organized around consequential events” (Kohler Riessman, 1993, p. 3).
- *Professional identity*: Professional identity is a tool that individuals construct and use to make sense of themselves in professional contexts and is heavily impacted by the personal, cognitive, and social responses of individuals (Flores & Day, 2006). Identity should not be thought of as a stable characteristic of individuals but as a “contingent achievement of situated activity” (Roth et al., 2009, p. 65). Professional identity allows individuals to answer the question, “Who am I at this time and in this context?”
- *Social identity theory*: Social identity theory provides a framework through which to investigate how people make sense of themselves and others in social settings (Korte, 2007).
- *Social theory of learning*: According to Wenger’s (1998) social theory of learning, professional identity formation consists of a cycle of three phases: (a) participating in

social situations, (b) reflecting on that participation, and (c) reifying (making real, bringing into being) that participation. Wenger labels this process “negotiation of meaning” (p. 151).

- *Teacher candidate (TC)*: a student studying to become a teacher (Bacharach et al., 2010).
- *Teacher identity*: For the purpose of this study, teacher identity is synonymous with “professional identity.”
- *University coach (UC)*: individuals from EPPs that provide supervision of teacher candidates during their student teaching placement

Significance of the Study

The capstone experience of student teaching offers teacher candidates a realistic environment in which to connect university coursework with practical, hands-on experience. Coteaching during student teaching, an innovative practice growing in popularity, with its collaborative structure, continual feedback loop, and easy access to mentorship may offer fertile ground in which TCs (soon to be beginning classroom teachers) might construct a functional professional identity. The ability to answering the question, “*Who am I at this time and in this context?*” with some clarity in the midst of inherent uncertainties enables individuals to remember their purpose and identity. This self-knowledge of purpose and identity may empower beginning teachers to persist and persevere through difficulties that might otherwise dissuade them from staying in the profession and becoming effective veteran teachers; they will *be* a teacher, not simply act like one (Danielewicz, 2001). Increasing the number of effective veteran teachers aids in accomplishing the goal of boosting the retention rate of teachers, helping to address the teacher shortage problem (Sutcher et al., 2016).

Furthermore, if first-year teachers, having been continually mentored during their student teaching through coteaching, are more effective faster (Carroll & Foster, 2010), coteaching during student teaching should be further explored. Additionally, Rodgers and Scott (2008) found that the beginning teachers that cotaught during their student teaching view the ability to collaborate and ask for input as a part of *being* a teacher, lessening the burden of having to have all the answers and empowering them with skills necessary to build an effective support system when they enter their first year of teaching. A stronger teacher identity, fostered during the continual mentoring during CTDST, along with the ability to build an effective support system could aid in addressing the low teacher retention rates and increase the likelihood of K-12 students of occupying classrooms with more effective educators (Darling-Hammond, 2016; Ronfeldt et al., 2013).

This research focused on deepening the understanding of the learning opportunities afforded by CTDST by centering on professional identity formation and the experiences of teacher candidates who cotaught during student teaching. These subjects intersect to form a research problem for three reasons. First, more attention needs to be paid to raising awareness of the process of identity construction during educator preparation programs because the development of a professional identity does not automatically come with experience. Attention must be given to reflection and practice during teacher preparation in order to support the construction of professional identity (Flores & Day, 2006). Furthermore, due to the lack of real-time feedback given to teacher candidates in the traditional student teaching model, the quality of the student teaching experience has been identified as an area of concern by leaders in the field of education and teacher preparation (Clarke et al., 2014; Meyer, 2016). And finally, although initial research on CTDST appears promising (Bacharach & Heck, 2012; Bacharach et al., 2010;

Crotty, 2015; Meyer, 2016), research on the influence of this model is relatively scarce and outcomes for all stakeholders (MTs, TCs, and classroom students) remains unclear. Therefore, the central research question is the following: How will teacher candidates describe their professional identity after CTDST?

This study indicated that CTDST aids in the development of a strong professional identity and sense of purpose, therefore EPPs should be encouraged to implement this student teaching experience. Further research would aid in understanding how CTDST aids in the development of strong teacher identities and should be further researched.

Limitations and Delimitations

Three limitations and corresponding delimitations of this study are addressed.

Limitations

First, the study focused on teacher candidates from one EPP, limiting the ability to generalize to other locales. The second limitation laid in the voluntary nature of participant selection. When narratives were gathered only from individuals who volunteered to be interviewed, the story of professional identity formation was told from a limited point of view. The third and most critical limitation of this study was validation. Validation is “the process through which we make claims for the trustworthiness of our interpretations” (Kohler Riessman, 1993, p. 65).

Delimitations

First, the delimitation of basing this study on a few individuals from a specific EPP required transparency and discussion of the research methodology used. Additionally, as the sole researcher, I disclosed my personal positionality, providing readers with enough information to decide what and how the findings from this study applied to other locales.

Second, an acknowledgement of the delimitation of using volunteers as research participants in the discussion section of findings underscored that the data collected were biased due to the voluntary nature of participant selection. Although acknowledging this fact did not diminish the delimitation, it does enable the reader of the study to view the findings in light of the delimitation.

The key to the third delimitation, validation, was to remind the consumer of the research of the distinction between the concepts of trustworthiness and truth. “Trustworthiness” is not synonymous with “truth.” Truth assumes an object reality; trustworthiness is found in the processes of the social world. Trustworthiness of this study was increased in four ways. First, if the interpretation of the research was reasonable and convincing, with theoretical claims well supported by evidence from the collected narratives, readers will find the study plausible and persuasive. Furthermore, I offered the findings to the participants of the study to get their response. If participants found the reconstructions of their narratives as recognizable, then credibility was increased. Third, analyzing narratives for coherence (local, global, and themal) prevented the interpretation of data from being simply ad hoc. The coherence of the narratives were connected as much as possible to all three levels of coherence. Finally, I described how interpretations were produced, made visible the steps at each stage of the study, specified how successive transformations of data were made, and made primary data available to future researchers in order to guide the pragmatic use of narrative research (Kohler Riessman, 1993). In these ways, the limitation of validity was addressed.

Conclusion

The purpose of this narrative inquiry was to explore the formation of professional identity in teacher candidates enrolled in an EPP from a university in the western region of the United

States who completed their student teaching in a specific experience: CTDST. Success as a teacher is tied to constructing a professional identity that weaves together the intellectual, the emotional, and the physical components of the teacher's life, as well as interacting with the personal and social subjectivities of *teacher* (Britzman, 2003; Korte, 2007). This formation of professional identity implies the ability to combine "the core identity of personal beliefs and sense of self with a professional identity that in our culture is often very narrowly and rigidly defined. This transformative turn can be challenging for the pre-service teacher" (Alsup, 2006, p. 36). This narrative study systematically analyzed the narratives of teacher candidates as they made sense of the events and actions that occurred during their student teaching experiences.

CHAPTER TWO: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this narrative inquiry was to explore the formation of professional identity in teacher candidates enrolled in an EPP in a university located in the western United States who completed their student teaching placement in a specific experience of clinical practice: coteaching during student teaching.

Introduction

When individuals enter a post-secondary educator preparation program, they begin a journey of professional identity transformation. As they enter the program their professional identity is “student;” after completing coursework and a variety of field experiences, they leave the program and their primary role of student behind. “Beginning teacher” is now their professional identity. The journey of professional identity formation is significant during all phases of a career in education as teachers’ perceptions of their professional identity impact their effectiveness, competence, adaptability, and ability to innovate (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004; Flores & Day, 2006; Kelly, 2006). The ability for educators to name themselves as teacher, albeit a beginning one, as well as others calling them teacher at the end of their student teaching experience is crucial. Student teaching is the capstone experience and the professional launching point for teacher candidates, providing educators with foundational notions of their professional selves (Flores & Day, 2006; Thomas & Beauchamp, 2011).

Until recently, the majority of TCs in the United States were placed in TST experiences at the end of their teacher training programs (Meyer, 2016). Recently CTDST has been introduced and implemented by some post-secondary educator preparation programs (Bacharach et al., 2010). The goal of EPPs, regardless of the model, is to equip students to become high-

functioning, effective educators. Consequently, it is vital to understand the process through which teacher candidates construct a professional identity prior to launching their professional life to support more effective training and instruction by EPPs.

The coteaching during student teaching experience purports to move teacher candidates toward beginning teacher status along a different path than the traditional model of student teaching (Bacharach et al., 2010). The goal of equipping and supporting prospective educators to become effective, caring practitioners by meaningfully connecting university course work and field experiences (Darling-Hammond, 2006) is pursued in a distinct work environment. The central difference between the TST model and the CTDST experience is the level of support provided to teacher candidates. Rather than expecting TCs to learn the intricacies of teaching by being thrown into the deep end of the teaching swimming pool to either sink or swim by themselves, teacher candidates are continually involved in the preparing, modeling, and coaching they need to gain the skills and confidence required when they enter their own classrooms as beginning teachers (Bacharach & Heck, 2012; Kerin & Murphy, 2015).

A conceptual framework and literature review was created by exploring and analyzing the key theoretical constructs of constructivism, professional identity formation, the coteaching model of student teaching, and the observable features of teacher warmth and control of the classroom to explore the professional identity formation in teacher candidates who participated in a CTDST experience.

Constructivism

The constructivist perspective posits that knowledge is constructed “through discourse in the context of individual histories and social interaction” (Bazeley, 2014, p. 23); knowledge is not passively received from the world or from authoritative sources. Notably, instead of

researchers discovering objective, already existent meaning, meaning is socially constructed by individuals working among objects found in the world (Yilmaz, 2008). Constructivists describe knowledge as possessing four characteristics: (a) knowledge is temporary; (b) knowledge is nonobjective; (c) knowledge is internally constructed by individuals; and finally, (d) knowledge is developmentally, socially, and culturally mediated (Yilmaz, 2008). Individuals are assumed to construct their own meanings and understandings, and this process is believed to involve interplay between existing knowledge and beliefs (existing culture) and new knowledge and experiences (Bazeley, 2014; Crotty, 2015; Yilmaz, 2008). Constructivists construct concepts and theories “out of stories that are constructed by research participants who are trying to explain and make sense out of their experiences and/or lives, both to the researcher and themselves” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 10) while the researcher and participants are embedded in their culture. When research participants describe something, they are giving an account of how something is “seen and reacted to, and thereby meaningfully constructed, within a given community or set of communities” (Crotty, 2015, p. 64). The task of constructivist researchers is to probe the cultural and individual assumptions and means by which research participants make meaning of their particular experience (Creswell, 2012). Therefore, I sought to identify and describe concepts teacher candidates CTDST used in personal stories to explain and make sense of their professional selves as a result of their student teaching experience.

The purpose of this research was to understand how teacher candidates describe their professional identity after CTDST; therefore, an objectivist paradigm would not be fitting. Objectivists look for causation in order to make reasonable predictions based upon experiments and objective observations (Creswell, 2012; Glesne, 2011). The goal of this research study did not include predicting what caused teacher candidates to form a professional identity; instead, the

inquiry sought to understand how a specific social context influenced teacher candidates' beliefs about who they are in that context.

A critical theory approach situates the question of professional identity formation in a specific social context (Creswell, 2012; Crotty, 2015; Glesne, 2011). Critical theory researchers are primarily concerned with “power relationships within society” (Crotty, 2015, p. 157) and work to “advocate understanding from the perspective of the exploited and oppressed” (Glesne, 2011, p. 10) by focusing on commonly held social beliefs and cultural assumptions in particular social contexts. Likely power dynamics play a role in the working relationships between TCs and MTs, and those working relationships are embedded in the inherited cultural dynamics of a particular school and larger educational system. However, the primary focus of this research was not the issue of domination. The central goal of this research was to *understand* teacher candidates' experience of constructing a professional identity within that system of educator preparation, not to *emancipate* TCs from a particular cultural system. This inquiry sought to primarily highlight the “intersubjectivity, interaction, community and communication” (Crotty, 2015, p. 63) in which teacher candidates became beginning professionals; therefore, a constructivist paradigm best supported such an inquiry.

Identity Formation

Prior to discussing professional identity, the basic concept of identity will be explored. Symbolic interactionist Mead (2015) maintained that the sense of self arises as individuals pass through biological and psychological stages and interact with others (Beijaard et al., 2004; Myers & Dewall, 2016). Similarly, in 1968 psychologist Erikson focused on the dynamic nature of identity, defining it as “a subjective sense of invigorating sameness and continuity” (p. 19) and contended that identity develops during one's whole life through transactions with the

environment (Beijaard et al., 2004; Erikson, 1968; Myers & Dewall, 2016). Erikson's notion of the environment included the social context in which individuals find themselves. Consider a 13-year-old with an Instagram account featuring multiple selfies as an example of identity formation. Fallon (2014), a social media researcher, explained "that the selfie comprises one part of a dynamic, unfolding interactive narrative socially authored by the self and the wider world" (p. 55). Mead (2015) and Erikson (1968) heavily influenced definitions of self and identity used in social sciences (Myers & Dewall, 2016), and this study leaned on their foundational work.

Though definitions of self and identity promoted by both social science and philosophy vary semantically, they share four common assumptions: (a) identity is a relational phenomenon, not a static attribute; (b) identity formation is an ongoing process; (c) this process involves interpreting and (re)interpreting oneself as a certain kind of person as well as being recognized as that kind of person in specific contexts; and (d) based on the dynamic characteristics of identity formation, identity answers the question: *Who am I at this moment in this context?* (Beijaard et al., 2004; Erikson, 1968; Flores & Day, 2006; Korte, 2007; Mead, 2015; Stewart, Deal, Bowlby, Hubain, & Hunt, 2012–2013; Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Based upon the assumptions that significant aspects of identity formation are social and dynamic, will individuals ask themselves and others the question, "Who am I at this moment in this context?" in work settings to construct their professional identity?

Professional Identity Formation

Flores and Day (2006) defined identity as "an ongoing process which entails the making sense and (re)interpretation of one's own values and experiences" (p. 220), thus, aligning with the processional and iterative notion of knowledge construction outlined by educators and researchers. According to Flores and Day's definition, individuals build their professional

identity using their existing knowledge and beliefs and mixing them with new knowledge and experiences. Professional identity is not something people innately possess (i.e., a stable personality trait); rather, professional identity is a tool individuals use to make sense of themselves in professional contexts, which is shaped by the personal, cognitive, and social responses of individuals. Using the tool of identity, individuals construct answers to the question: Who am I at this time in this context?

Tierney (1997) extended the idea of professional identity as a tool for constructing meaning in social contexts by describing socialization as a meaning-making process wherein individuals use their unique backgrounds to gain an understanding of the culture of an organization. Professional identity formation as a tool for meaning-making between individuals and their social environments implies that both entities are impacted by their interaction. Individuals are constructing meaning as they interact with the organizational culture of their work environment, and in turn, this interaction affects the knowledge base of the organization; thus, the identities and understandings of the individual and the organization are both changed (Stewart et al., 2012; 2013).

Teacher candidates do not form ideas of their professional selves in isolated bubbles; thus, the constructivist paradigm applied to the exploration of professional identity formation in teacher candidates CTDST proved useful. TCs had the opportunity to construct their teacher identities “in and out of interaction with our society” (Yilmaz, 2008, p. 64). “Identities then are the result of dynamic interplay between discursive processes that are internal (to the individual) and external (involving everyone else)” (Danielewicz, 2001, p. 11). The candidates’ ideas of who they were as professionals was influenced by their interactions with university faculty, MTs,

classroom students, parents of those students, and administrators, staff, and faculty of the schools in which they were placed (Alsup, 2006; Britzman, 2003; Danielewicz, 2001).

Becoming teachers involves the construction of identity. One cannot effectively fulfill the purpose of teaching by simply filling a role (Britzman, 2003). Learning to become an educator requires individuals to form a teacher identity because “the process of teaching, at once so complicated and deep, involves the self” (Danielewicz, 2001, p. 9). Identity should not be thought of as a stable characteristic of individuals but as a “contingent achievement of situated activity” (Roth et al., 2009, p. 65). However, this “contingent achievement of situated activity” (Roth et al., 2009, p. 65) does not occur absent of tension and conflict. According to teacher educator and researcher Alsup (2006), identity development occurs “when an individual experiences discursive tension and cognitive dissonance leading to heightened understanding (meta-awareness) of the intersections among personal and professional subjectivities” (p. 205).

Discursive Tension

People construct the tool of professional identity (and all their other identities) through participating in discourse (Danielewicz, 2001). As individuals actively partake in various forms of written and spoken communication (discourse), they have agency to shape a unique professional self. However, though individuals have the autonomy to form a unique identity, the interactions in which they engage serve as influencers as well. In concrete terms, students in the field of education are making themselves into teachers by taking courses in education and participating in a variety of field experiences; at the same time, those same students are being made into teachers by virtue of the effect these courses and experiences have on them (Alsup, 2006; Britzman, 2003; Danielewicz, 2001). In a coteaching environment, identity shaping discourse takes place between TCs and their MTs, classroom students and their parents,

university instructors, and even between teacher candidates themselves and their internal ideations of being a teacher (Britzman, 2003; Danielewicz, 2001). “It is the interplay of internal and external forces in the midst of social interaction that allows for the construction of identities” (Danielewicz, 2001, p. 11). Wenger’s (1998) social theory of learning describes this interplay as a repeating three stage cycle: (a) participating in social workplace situations (the location of numerous external and internal discourses); (b) reflecting on that participation (internal discourse); and (c) then reifying (making real, bringing into being) that participation (also requiring internal and external discourses). Wenger labels this process “negotiation of meaning” (p. 151). Alsup (2006) tied together Danielewicz’s discursive processes and Wenger’s negotiation of meaning, thus, defining professional identity as “a subjectivity or situated identity relevant to an individual’s professional life and necessary for the successful meeting of her or his professional responsibilities” (p. 206).

Conflict and Cognitive Dissonance

Becoming teachers involves conflict (internal and external) and discourse (internal and external). “The practice of teaching, because it is concocted from relations with others and occurs in structures that are not of one’s own making is, first and foremost, an uncertain experience that one must learn to interpret and make significant” (Britzman, 2003, p. 3). *Oxford Dictionaries* (2019) list the following words as synonyms for “uncertain”: unsure, doubtful, dubious, undecided, unresolved, hesitant, wavering, hazy, vague, and unclear. Uncertain experiences inherently include room for confusion, conflict, and cognitive dissonance, all of which are daily experiences of beginning teachers. Herein lies a key paradox in learning to teach: “There can be no learning without conflict, but the conflict that animates learning threatens to derail the precarious efforts of trying to learn” (Britzman, 2003, p. 3). If beginning educators do

not expect inner conflict and possess some ability to resolve their cognitive dissonance, they may get derailed and leave the profession. All learning—and teaching *always* involves learning (Darling-Hammond, 2016)—even in supportive environments, involves challenge (Myers, 2002). Crises and struggles during student teaching may look different for coteaching teacher candidates than the sink or swim moments of their traditional model counterparts, but those challenging moments still occur (Kelly, 2006).

Social Learning Theories

Social learning theories build upon the foundation of constructivism by exploring learning nested in social contexts (Meyer, 2016). Teacher candidates who have participated in the CTDST experience focus on an exploration of the formation of professional identity learning nested in social contexts.

In 1969, psychologist Bandura (1969) posited that most human behavior is learned through continuous interaction with cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences. The interactive process of social learning has three characteristics: (a) a change in understanding must be demonstrated to have taken place in the individuals involved, (b) this change in understanding extends to and becomes situated within broader social units or communities of practice, and (c) the learning process occurs through interactions between individuals within a social network (Mercer & Howe, 2012; Vygotsky, 1997; Wenger, 1998). Numerous theories of social learning exist, but the characteristics of this type of learning create a useful lens to examine professional identity formation.

Social Identity Theory

Mead (2015) and Erikson (1968) defined self and identity from the perspective of the individual; whereas, social learning theorists, such as Vygotsky (1997) and Wenger (1998),

define self and identity from the perspective of the group—social context. These two perspectives are not mutually exclusive. Erikson described chronological psycho-social stages of getting to know oneself throughout individuals' entire lifespans (Erikson, 1968; Myers, 2002). Erikson's description implies a lifetime of learning through social experiences, corresponding with education theorist Kolb's (1984) working definition of learning as a process whereby knowledge is constructed "through the transformation of experience" (p. 38). Connections between self-concept, identity development, learning, and social interaction led to research and theory development focused on social identity formation.

The goal of developing social identity theory was to create a framework to investigate how people make sense of themselves and others in social settings (Korte, 2007). In the early 1970s, Tajfel (1974) first defined identity as individuals' knowledge that they belong to certain social groups. Three personal components comprise group identification: (a) cognitive (awareness of membership); (b) evaluative (membership awareness is tied to connotations of self); and (c) emotional investment in awareness and evaluations. Tajfel asserted that people understand their social world in terms of group identification (Myers, 2002; Tajfel, 1982).

Social identity researchers built upon Tajfel's (1982) ideas and continued to explore identity formation from the social point of view. They asserted that individuals have as many social identities as they have social groups and relationships to which they feel they belong (Hogg & Abrams, 2004). These social or peripheral identities are based in social contexts and vary in importance and value. For example, in a 1990 experiment conducted by Hogg, Turner, and Davidson, participants conformed their attitudes and behavior to what they thought was the norm of the group with which they identified, de-emphasizing their personal identities and placing more emphasis on their social or group identities in order to appear to belong to that

group (Abrams & Hogg, 1990; Hogg & Abrams, 2004). Individuals were constructing their identity using their existing knowledge and beliefs (about typical group members) and mixing them with new knowledge and experiences (acting the part of a group member) to form a new social identity.

Social identities telegraph to others who we are and who we are not. Through our social identities, we affiliate with certain social groups and distinguish ourselves from others (Myers, 2002). Furthermore, “in any given situation, only one identity is psychologically real. . . . Identities can change quickly in response to contextual changes; hence, social identity is context dependent” (Hogg & Abrams, 2004, p. 252). An individual may only operate out of one of his or her social identities at a time. The identity that comes to the foreground depends on the social environment; this flexibility of social identities enables one individual to interact in diverse social contexts (Korte, 2007; Wenger, 1998). For example, when an individual is at work, they usually interact from the social identity known as professional identity. When that same individual goes home, they may interact from a social identity of a roommate, parent, or friend, depending on the social situation. The flexibility of social/peripheral identities serves,

as a pivot point between the social and the individual, so that each can be talked about in terms of the other. . . . It does justice to the lived experience of identity while recognizing its social character—it is the social, the cultural, the historical with a human face. (Wenger, 1998, p. 145)

From the social identity perspective, the answers to the questions of identity exist on two levels: self-referential (personal) and relational (social; Korte, 2007). The self-referential answers point to personal traits and characteristics that form a core identity. Individuals’ core identities are less fluid and consist of traits such as gender identity, racial/ethnic identity, and personal history. No matter the social context, an individual’s core identity acts as a keel that allows them to navigate a variety of situations (see Figure 2.1).

The Two Levels of Identity

CORE IDENTITY= Less fluid personal traits (gender identity, racial/ethnic identity, personal history); generally remain the same in all social contexts

SOCIAL/PERIPHERAL IDENTITY = individuals have several social identities; provides a pivot point between the social environment and the individual; based in social contexts and vary in importance and value.

Figure 2.1. The two levels of identity. Individuals' core identities plus their social identities comprise their total identity.

As depicted in Figure 2.1, the second level of identity is relational (social). People have several relational identities which flow in and out of the foreground, depending upon the social context (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). These identities are referred to as peripheral identities, or social identities, and are components of one's total identity. Social identity theorists picture the concept of self as a collection of self-images "which vary in terms of the length of their establishment, complexity and richness of content" (Abrams & Hogg, 1990, p. 3). These various self-images fall along a continuum featuring, at one end, self-images heavily reliant on individuating characteristics (the personal extreme), and at the other end, self-images heavily reliant on social categorical characteristics (the social extreme). Situations in which social identity is most relevant, individuals act like group members. By contrast, people distinguish themselves from the group in situations that do not emphasize social identity (see Figure 2.2). As illustrated in Figure 2.2, individuals enrolled in a teacher preparation program might relate to others through their core identity depending upon the social context, such as their racial or ethnic identity. Conversely, they may relate to others through their social identity such as student, friend, employee, collaborator, or housemate. The social identity at the foreground depends upon the social dynamics of the situation (Abrams & Hogg, 1990; Kelly, 2006; Korte, 2007).

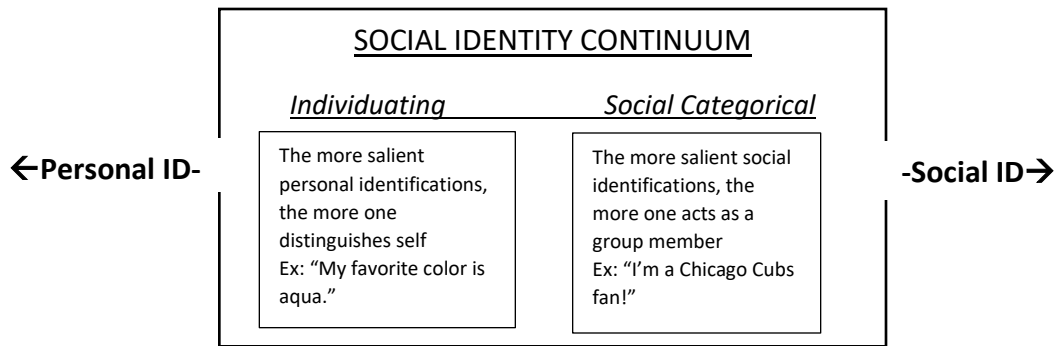


Figure 2.2. The social identity continuum. This determines which social identity is in the foreground in any given social situation.

Social identities are learned (Kolb, 1984), temporary (Kelly, 2006), dynamic in nature (Korte, 2007; Myers, 2002), and enable people to make sense of themselves and others in social settings (Tajfel, 1982). The professional identity of a person stands as one of the most prominent and developed social/peripheral identities due to the significant amount of time spent embedded in one's work and answering the question: *Who am I at this moment in this context?* (Korte, 2007; Wenger, 1998).

Social Theory of Learning

Wenger's (1998) social theory of learning, a postulation closely related to social identity theory, provided the means to connect the concepts of professional identity formation, coteaching, and student teaching. In 1991, socio-cultural theorists Lave and Wenger investigated how individuals learn and form a professional identity. They described the construction of a professional identity as a process in which a neophyte becomes an expert by moving from limited to unlimited participation in professional tasks with increasing accountability. As the individual progressed along the path to expert, he or she adopted different postures toward the activities in which he or she engaged. Each time the individuals' posture changed, so did the individuals' professional identities; this change in professional identity occurred because the

individuals related to their social environment differently (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Hence, professional identities are in a constant state of construction (Kelly, 2006; Rodgers & Scott, 2008; Wenger, 1998).

Wenger (1998) contended that professional identity formation consists of participating in social situations, reflecting on that participation, and then reifying that participation (making it real, bringing it into being; see Figure 2.3). Wenger's concept of negotiation of meaning fits within the constructivists' assumption that individuals construct their own meanings and understandings, and this process of identity formation involves interplay between individuals' existing knowledge and beliefs and their new knowledge and experiences (Bazeley, 2014; Crotty, 2015; Yilmaz, 2008). As previously stated, individuals cycle through three phases when negotiating meaning: participating, reflecting, and then reifying that participation (see Figure 2.3):

An identity, then, is a layering of events of participation and reification by which our experience and its social interpretation inform each other. As we encounter our effects on the world and develop our relationships with others, these layers build upon each other to produce our identity as a very complex interweaving of participative experience and reificative projections. Bringing the two together through the negotiation of meaning, we construct who we are. In the same way that meaning exists in its negotiation, identity exists—not as an object in and of itself—but in the constant work of negotiating the self. (Wenger, 1998, p. 151)

Notably, individuals repeatedly cycle through the three phases as they construct more fully developed professional identities and new thinking and beliefs become existing knowledge and beliefs.

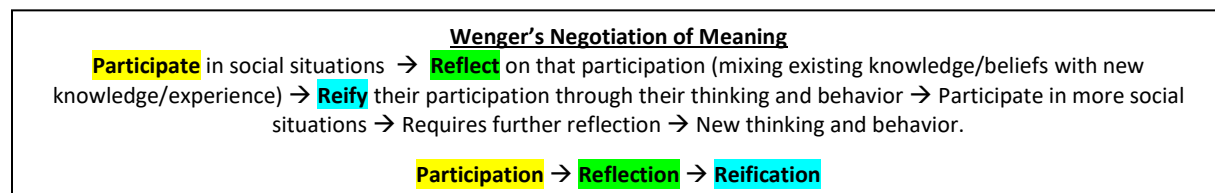


Figure 2.3. Wenger's negotiation of meaning (1998, p.151).

With TCs, candidates construct a professional identity as they interact with the teachers, students, and parents of the school and classroom to which they are assigned. They then reflect on their interactions (mixing their existing knowledge and beliefs with their new knowledge and experiences) and make the conclusions drawn from their reflection real by demonstrating the results of the interactions and reflection in their thinking and behavior.

The recurrent process of identity formation, as described by Wenger (1998), forms a large umbrella under which many conceptualizations of professional identity construction could be placed. Wenger's formative process of experience, reflection, and reification includes the dynamics of power and emotion tied to identity construction. By using the tools and insights offered by Wenger's negotiation of meaning process, individual teachers could find the means of agency and resist subjugation in the way they reify or make real their thinking and behavior based upon their experiences and reflections (Wenger, 1998). These various conceptualizations of social identity formation fit under the umbrella of Wenger's social theory of learning, thus, making the theory useful as a framework to support an investigation of the construction of professional identity by TCs while they are engaged in CTDST.

Narrative and Identity Formation

This study focused on the experience of student teaching in the social context of coteaching, and the research question centered on how those teacher candidates described their professional identity after such an experience. Because "individuals make sense of experience by casting it in narrative form" (Kohler Riessman, 1993, p. 4), employing narrative inquiry was useful to explore the formation of professional identity in teacher candidates from a land-grant university in the western United States who completed their practicum in a CTDST experience.

Individuals often rely on personal narratives when making meaning of experiences in their lives that include a conflict between ideal and real ideations of self and society (Bruner, 2002). According to a narrative theory of human existence, research inquiries should focus on “existence as it is lived, experienced, and interpreted” by the individuals in the study (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 125). Student teaching provides a context in which teacher candidates can practice and learn by employing various teaching strategies while working with classroom students and under the supervision of a certified MT (Bacharach et al., 2010; Meyer, 2016). Because student teachers are, by definition, largely inexperienced, it stands to reason that they will often experience conflict between their ideal notions of teaching and the reality of classroom experiences (Britzman, 2003). Wenger (1998) described the fluidity between ideal notions and real experiences as the process through which individuals create meaningfulness: “The meaningfulness of our engagement in the world is not a state of affairs, but a continual process of negotiation” (p. 54). As participants recounted narratives of their student teaching experiences, an examination of the language, imagery, and structures they used revealed their process of constructing a professional identity through continual negotiation (Alsup, 2006). Language as the construction of knowledge focuses on the structures of grammar, rhetoric, and narrative to impose form upon the subjects and objects that appear in human communication (Polkinghorne, 1988). “On the basis of this constructed experience, we understand ourselves and the world, and we make decisions and plans regarding how we will act” (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 158).

During their clinical practice, teacher candidates bring into the classroom their imagined and idealized notions of being the teacher of a group of students. Every day, and probably several times a day, they have to make sense of instances when the ideal experience they expected is abruptly replaced by an unexpected, but very real experience. They adjust their

expectations, based upon updated understandings, and make decisions about how they will interact with their colleagues and their students while facilitating the lessons they have planned. Undergirding those decisions and actions are the stories the TC adopts to make sense of the unexpected events. This study aimed at eliciting some of those stories of learning.

Student Teaching

Although EPPs vary in length of time and setting, they share a central focus: equip and support prospective educators in becoming effective, caring practitioners by meaningfully connecting university course work and field experiences (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

Participation in the student teaching experience is a vital aspect of teacher preparation and provides a context in which TCs can practice and learn by employing various teaching strategies while working with classroom students and under the supervision of a certified MT (Bacharach et al., 2010; Meyer, 2016).

As described earlier, when participating in a TST model, TCs quietly observe for the first weeks, and then gradually increase their participation in the classroom activities until they are completely in charge of the classroom for the last weeks of their student teaching experience (Meyer, 2016). Once TCs take over the responsibility for classroom activities, they are completely on their own. MTs supervise from a distance and generally are not present in the classroom (Bacharach et al., 2010; Meyer, 2016). Often the TCs find themselves unassisted in the classroom. Therefore, this solitary experience of learning to teach in isolation coupled with feedback which lacks immediacy impacts the quality of the student teaching experience (Heck & Bacharach, 2014). These factors have been identified as areas of concern regarding the TST model by leaders in the field of education and teacher preparation (Clarke et al., 2014; Meyer, 2016).

Development of Practice of Coteaching

Coteaching emerged as a popular response during the 1980s as school districts worked to mainstream students with special needs into inclusive classrooms in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA; Friend & Cook, 1993). In order to effectively meet the needs of students in inclusive classrooms, coteaching partnerships were formed between a general education teacher and a special education teacher (Friend & Cook, 2010).

Coteaching: Parity-based partnerships. Cook and Friend (1995) conceptualized coteaching as a professional marriage, emphasizing the vitality of this relationship characterized by strong personal, parity-based partnerships between two or more certified educators. Friend and Cook's (2010) conceptualized definition of co-teaching included the parity-based aspect of the coteaching model that excludes a partnership between a MT and a TC. Because of the characteristics of parity-based relationships, "other instructional models that place two or more adults in a classroom, such as those pairing teachers with paraprofessionals, volunteers, or student teachers, generally are not appropriate to call co-teaching" (Friend & Cook, 2010, p. 11).

According to Cook and Friend's (1995) perspective, coteaching relationships have four key components: (a) two (or more) certified educators whose purpose is to create an inclusive classroom culture by combining the two complementary (not identical) perspectives of the participating professionals; (b) both (or all) educators are actively involved in teaching students; (c) the group of students receiving instruction is composed of diverse learners, including those with disabilities; and (d) the coteachers share physical space. This model of coteaching brings the strengths of two (or more) educators with different expertise into one classroom. Cook and Friend (1995) identified six outcomes of coteaching: (a) student needs are better met, (b) students exhibit greater academic gains, (c) smaller student-teacher ratios exist, (d) demonstrated

increased student participation and engagement, (e) decreased stigma of students with special needs, and (f) increased educator support (Cook & Friend, 1995).

Coteaching and teacher candidates. Although the practice of coteaching, as defined by Friend and Cook (2010), continues to be successfully implemented, not all education professionals agree with Friend and Cook's more restrictive definition of coteaching. More liberal definitions expand the pool of participants to include TCs (individuals participating in EPPs; Bacharach et al., 2010). The more inclusive definitions share this common ground: coteaching involves "two or more teachers in some level of collaboration in the planning, delivery, and/or evaluation of a course" (Baeten & Simons, 2014, p. 93). The three central characteristic practices of this more expansive definition are the sharing of expertise during field experiences, the creation of a feedback loop, and the requirement that participating educators critically view their own teaching practices. Proponents of this expanded definition of coteaching believe that as a result, all participants learn to teach (Bacharach et al., 2010; Baeten & Simons, 2014). By learning and practicing together, TCs and MTs both consume and produce professional knowledge (Clarke et al., 2014; Kerin & Murphy, 2015).

CTDST experience. With the advent of the No Child Left Behind Act (2001), pairing TCs with MTs became an intriguing option for teacher preparation programs. Many states created regulations that linked student performance on standardized tests to annual teacher performance evaluations. Consequently, fewer teachers were willing to participate in a TST experience (Bacharach & Heck, 2012). By eliminating the requirement for MTs to completely turn their classrooms over to inexperienced teacher candidates for a significant amount of time, the CTDST model, as defined by the more liberal definition provided, gained popularity across the United States (Bacharach & Heck, 2012).

The CTDST experience is quite different than the traditional model of student teaching. Rather than expecting teacher candidates to learn the intricacies of the art and science of teaching in relative isolation and with limited immediate feedback, TCs are continually involved in the preparation, modeling, and coaching they need to gain the skills and confidence required when they enter their own classrooms. TCs are continually involved in the preparing, modeling, and coaching they need to gain the skills and confidence required when they enter into their own classrooms (Bacharach & Heck, 2012; Kerin & Murphy, 2015). The CTDST model furnishes social components within a setting that invites individuals to gain knowledge of themselves and how others regard them—two processes vital to identity formation (Danielewicz, 2001).

Coteaching facilitates learning between teachers before, during, and after the execution of a lesson plan. Although TCs and MTs are continually engaged in a collaborative effort, research indicates that both parties' capacity for independent action and individual learning (i.e., human agency) grows (Bacharach & Heck, 2012; Kerin & Murphy, 2015). "Coteaching expands [mentoring] teacher agency, and also student [TC] agency, particularly when teachers incorporate cogenerative dialogues into coteaching, thus improving confidence and performance for teachers and students" (Murphy, 2015, p. 286). Clarke et al. (2014) also found evidence for rich individual learning when collaborating partners reflect and deeply consider their practice. CTDST offers a rich context for professional learning, especially as the coteachers make their thinking visible to each other and then participate in reflexive practices.

The sociocultural environment of the CTDST model is unique. It consists of a MT and one or more TCs sharing a physical space and collaborating in "the planning, organization, delivery and assessment of instruction" to groups of students (Bacharach et al., 2010, p. 5). Coteaching promotes collaboration and affords the opportunity for on-going, reflective practice

(Murphy, Beggs, Carlisle, & Greenwood, 2004). TCs and MTs are continually involved in a cycle of negotiation of meaning as they experience and reflect upon planning, organizing, delivering, and assessing instruction in multiple zones of proximal development. During each cycle of negotiation of meaning, the educators are continuing to construct their professional identities (Wenger, 1998). Wenger's social theory of learning provides a useful theoretical framework through which to gain understanding of how CTDST affects the teacher candidates' construction of professional identity.

Teacher candidates and MTs are not the sole beneficiaries of CTDST. In a longitudinal investigation of CTDST, Bacharach et al. (2010) surveyed representatives of three stakeholder groups involved in this model of teacher training: TCs, MTs, and classroom students. Their research highlighted benefits reaped by all three groups. A survey of 249 TCs indicated that CTDST led to improved classroom management skills (92.4%), increased collaboration skills (92.0%), more teaching time (90.0%), deeper understanding of curriculum through co-planning (89.2%), more opportunities to receive feedback (88.6%), and increase confidence (88.4%). A survey of 279 MTs reported substantial benefits to their classroom students (94.5%), professional growth through co-planning (90.5%), more energy for teaching (89.0%), and appreciation of hosting a teacher candidate without having to give up their classroom (87.1%). Finally, Bacharach et al. (2010) surveyed 1,686 public school students to gather insight about their experiences in co-taught classrooms. Only 4% of students reported no benefits to being in a classroom with a teacher candidate and a classroom teacher. The findings of Bacharach et al. underline an important parallel to research conducted using Cook and Friend's (1995) more restrictive definition of coteaching that requires two or more certified educators to form a coteaching pair. Five of the six outcomes identified as beneficial by Cook and Friend (1995)

were also found in Bacharach et al.'s study (2010): (a) student needs better met, (b) greater academic gains, (c) smaller student-teacher ratios, (d) increased student participation and (e) increased support for educators.

Criticisms of CTDST

Although research demonstrates and a growing number of practitioners believe CTDST is a viable option for teacher preparation, not all scholars and practitioners agree. Concerns focus mainly on the transition from student teacher to beginning teacher. Critics offer three general objections to the practice as it pertains to this transition into professional practice. First, skeptics wonder if teacher candidates “who have cotaught will not be able to ‘go it alone’” (Murphy, Carlisle, & Beggs, 2009, p. 462). Second, TCs paired with less than effective teachers may adopt poor practices (Murphy et al., 2009). And finally, stress due to poor relationships between teacher candidates and MTs will adversely affect both the current and future classrooms of the coteaching pair (Murphy et al., 2009). In addition to these three concerns for beginning teachers, Gallo-Fox, Wassell, Scantlebury, and Juck (2009) identified a fourth limitation of the practice of CTDST: the effects on teacher training when the various stakeholders involved in the student teaching experience hold different interpretations of coteaching. The interpretations were based upon their various views of teaching and the learning process. Each of the suggested limitations of the CTDST model are addressed in the following paragraphs.

“Going it alone.” Coteaching and independent teaching are different experiences. Will coteaching TCs have sufficient experience and confidence to address classroom management issues when teaching solo? Having spent less time teaching independently in the CTDST model, beginning teachers may believe that less experience in solo teaching equals fewer tools for that context. Believing they have fewer tools available, “the newly independent teacher could feel

isolated and less confident to deal with management issues” (Murphy et al., 2009, p. 468). Though additional research needs to be conducted to explore the supposition that CTDST actually provides insufficient solo teaching experience, teacher educators can strengthen the experience of coteaching TCs in two ways. They can intentionally provide solo experiences for TCs by including requirements for independent teaching experiences alongside coteaching experiences during their student teaching term (Murphy et al., 2009). Furthermore, teacher educators, university coaches, and MTs can intentionally explore with and model for TCs how they might transfer the knowledge they have constructed through coteaching strategies. TCs could then employ these strategies in their future solo classroom when they have the opportunity to collaborate with other human resources. Potential future collaborators might include special educators, paraeducators, volunteers, and classroom students (Murphy et al., 2009).

Enculturation into poor teaching practices. Coteaching encourages the participating educators (TCs and MTs) to learn from each other through shared planning, teaching, and evaluating of lessons (Bacharach et al., 2010). Some criticize that the learning is not geared to best practices, but insufficient evidence exists to support or refute this criticism (Murphy et al., 2009). Other researchers found that TCs gained valuable experience by working with educators who held differing philosophies or clashing personalities because the candidates must examine and defend the methods and philosophies in which they believe (Gallo-Fox et al., 2006). As the coteaching model of student teaching gains popularity, EPPs can and should provide workshops and training in order to more carefully match teaching pairs in personality and practice (Bacharach & Heck, 2012; Baeten & Simons, 2014; Gallo-Fox et al., 2006).

Differing interpretations of coteaching result in poor teaching experience. A personality mismatch is seen as a limitation to the co-teaching model. The ways in which

collaborating educators relate to one another significantly influences the correlation between coteachers' relationships and program quality measures. In some cases, relationships can be strained to a point that jeopardizes the survival of the collaboration (Noonan, McCormick, & Heck, 2003), threatening to derail or interrupt the goals of the student teaching experience. An additional stressor to the coteaching relationship, and a possible limitation of the model of CTDST, occurs when the various invested stakeholders hold different interpretations of coteaching based upon their various views of the teaching and the learning process. Both issues, a mismatch of personalities between coteaching pairs and differing interpretations of coteaching implementation, point to the need to explore and develop best practices for creating and supporting coteaching partnerships. Current research asserts that perceived similarities in beliefs, personal characteristics and traits, and professional styles create good working relationships for coteachers (Gallo-Fox et al., 2006); yet, because this practice is relatively new, further investigation is important to establish best practices in pairing TCs and MTs. EPPs generally do provide some sort of relationship building opportunities utilizing various personality questionnaires or guides to support team development (Noonan et al., 2003), but there is a need for more research to effectively create and support coteaching teams.

After reviewing the limitations of the implementation of the CTDST model in this section, implementation of CTDST merits further investigation. As researchers explore each limitation, the resulting research may yield stronger EPPs and more effective practices for CTDST rather than the discontinuation of the coteaching model.

Observable Features of Teacher Warmth and Classroom Control

Teachers do not control several variables that effect classroom climate such as the number of classroom students or student personalities and learning capacities. However, teachers

do exercise agency over the level of affect and control they employ in the classroom (Soar & Soar, 1983; Borich, 2011). Classroom climate is closely associated with learning environment and it is seen as a major factor of classroom behavior and learning (Amatari, 2015; Djigic, & Stojiljkovic, 2011) so I chose to focus one hour of my observation tracking teacher behavior linked to the dimensions of teacher warmth and control.

Discussion

Investigating the professional identity formation of teacher candidates participating in a CTDST model was important for three reasons. Firstly, teachers' sense of self impacts their effectiveness as teachers so investigating the construction of professional identity is vital. The journey of professional identity formation for educators during all career phases is significant because teachers' perception of their professional identity impacts their effectiveness, competence, adaptability, and ability to innovate (Beijaard et al., 2004; Kelly, 2006). However, Thomas and Beauchamp (2011) pointed out that most current research on the development of teaching identities does not indicate how identity is constructed and/or how teacher educators might influence this construction. In a study of beginning teachers, Flores and Day (2006) found that induction processes need to focus upon the development of teachers' construction of identity in order to strengthen the influence of EPPs. In another study of beginning teachers transitioning into their professional roles, Thomas & Beauchamp (2011) found that new teachers would find it helpful if more time were spent during their EPPs on the development of a professional identity in order to further prepare for the tumultuous first years of teaching. More attention needs to be paid by EPPs to the process of identity construction during student teaching placements because the development of a professional identity does not automatically occur. The more teacher

educators learn about professional identity formation, the better support provided to future teachers.

Secondly, in addition to the need to better understand the construction of professional identity in teacher candidates, limitations have been identified in the TST model. Education policy established in the early 21st century requiring teacher performance evaluations be tied to standardized test scores created reluctance in certified teachers to host teacher candidates for student teaching (Bacharach & Heck, 2012). Furthermore, due to the lack of immediate, real-time feedback given to teacher candidates in the traditional setting, the quality of the student teaching experience has been identified as an area of concern by leaders in the field of education and educator preparation (Clarke et al., 2014; Meyer, 2016). CTDST offers a rich context for professional learning, especially as the coteachers make their thinking visible to each other and then participate in reflexive practices (Murphy et al., 2004). The CTDST model will continue to be among the solutions offered to address the concerns raised about the TST model.

Thirdly, the CTDST model has become the focus of research inquiries as more EPPs employ the practice of pairing TCs with credentialed MTs for their student teaching experience. Initial research on CTDST appears promising (Bacharach & Heck, 2012; Bacharach et al., 2010; Baeten & Simons, 2014; Meyer, 2016), but research on the influence of this model is relatively limited and outcomes for all participants (MTs, TCs, and classroom students) remains unclear. Hence, investigating the effects and constraints on the construction of professional identity in teacher candidates would help to address the need to understand and support CTDST more effectively.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Chapter two established the frameworks of constructivism and social identity theories undergirding this research, and Chapter three chapter describes the methodological choices used in this study to explore how coteaching and traditional models of student teaching influenced teacher identity in beginning teachers. First, I will provide the rationale for the research design. A description of the context of the study follows, which includes information about the EPP from which all the participants graduated. My role within the program and this research project is discussed. Next, I will outline the data collection and data analysis procedures. Lastly, the chapter ends with a discussion on the trustworthiness of the study as well as its limitations.

Narrative Inquiry Using a Collective Case Study Research Design

Narrative research focuses on the stories that individuals recount, analyzing them by various means to understand how experiences are meaningfully revealed in the structure of the stories (Merriam, 2002). The purpose of this study was to understand how the models of CTDST and TST influenced teacher identity in beginning teachers. To do so, I analyzed the stories of three beginning teachers who cotaught during their student teaching experience and three beginning teachers who student taught in a traditional model. Each group of three participants consisted of two elementary teachers and one secondary science teacher. A collective case study research design was used to gain an understanding of the complex process of constructing a professional identity.

Narrative Inquiry

The most critical element of narrative research is that the spoken or written account of connected events provided by research participants convey their unique understanding of the

events or experiences (Bazeley, 2014). Narratives reveal elements of identity of the storyteller (Polkinghorne, 1988); therefore, it was fitting for this study to use narrative methodologies to gather and analyze data. The central purpose of this study was to understand the personal stories beginning teachers tell about their student teaching experiences and the stories they tell of becoming a teacher within that specific work context.

Collective Case Study

Case studies offer an in-depth exploration of a bounded system (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019) and are appropriate when the goal of the study is to gain understanding of complex social phenomena while preserving the holistic and meaningful characteristics of everyday occurrences (Merriam, 2002). The phenomenon of interest in this study was the complex process of progressing from an identity of student teacher to a professional teacher identity. Furthermore, a primary goal of this study was to gain understanding how two different models of student teaching influenced those professional identities. Collective case studies offer researchers the opportunity to describe and compare multiple case studies in order to gain insight into an issue (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). Therefore, I used a collective case study to explore in-depth the experience of constructing a professional identity by six beginning teachers. Three of the teachers student taught in a coteaching model and three of the teachers student taught in a traditional model. Multiple forms of data were collected using interviews and observations; narrative analysis was employed within each case followed by cross-case analysis.

The central research questions guiding this study included the following:

1. What influence does a CTDST experience have on the professional identity of beginning teachers compared to the influence of a TST experience?

2. How do beginning teachers who participated in a cotaught or TST placement describe the impact of that experience on their professional identity?

Sampling Procedures

In order to obtain a description of the phenomenon under study, I recruited research participants from whom first-hand descriptions of CTDST and student teaching in a traditional model could be obtained. The beginning teachers' descriptions provided discursive means by which these experiences were examined and understood through narrative analysis, thus, revealing the participants' lived meanings of constructing a professional identity. A homogeneous sampling strategy used to describe "some subgroup in depth" (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019, p. 207) was employed because the participants were beginning teachers who shared similar experiences of either student teaching in a coteaching model or student teaching in a traditional model.

Participants were recent graduates from the EPP of a mid-sized land grant university in the western region of the United States. They were recruited from the group of individuals who completed their student teaching during the 2017-2018 academic year. Three of those recruited participated in a CTDST placement and three participated in a TST placement. Names of potential participants were accessed through university personnel. The participants were contacted and recruited via email. Refer to Appendix A for a detailed protocol on recruiting and interviewing participants.

Context

Wenger's (1998) social theory of learning provides the means to connect the concepts of professional identity formation, specifically teacher identity, and student teaching. Wenger and Lave (1991) described the construction of a professional identity as a process in which a

neophyte becomes an expert by moving from limited to unlimited participation with increasing accountability in professional tasks. Participation in those professional tasks necessarily take place in a professional context. There were three relevant social contexts in this study: the EPP in which all participants were enrolled, the specific student teaching placement for each participant, and the setting of each participant's first teaching job.

Educator Preparation Program

The participants in this study all earned their degree in education from a mid-size university just prior to participating in the study. The EPP from which they all graduated offers nine undergraduate program options in secondary education, four PreK-12 programs options in art, music, foreign language, and instructional technology, and one early childhood education (ECE) program option. Successful TCs earn an undergraduate licensure with a content area major by completing at least 33 credits of professional educator coursework and over 800 hours of field experience designed around state and national pedagogical standards. The coursework and field experiences take place via a four-phase system that allows candidates to gradually build upon their increasing knowledge of teaching and schools and successfully complete their capstone student teaching experience. University students are able to take the classes in the first phase to explore teaching as a career option. If they choose to continue in the licensure program, they must formally apply and be admitted to the EPP before they are allowed to register for classes in the second phase. Coursework differs for the ECE students in the second and third phases of the undergraduate program. Lastly, a semester of student teaching comprises the fourth phase for all teacher candidates.

Student Teaching Placement

Participation in the student teaching experience is a vital aspect of teacher preparation and provides a context in which TCs can practice and learn by employing various teaching strategies while working with classroom students and under the supervision of a certified MT (Bacharach et al., 2010; Meyer, 2016). The EPP coordinates student teacher placements. Generally, teacher candidates are placed in public schools from five surrounding school districts; the MT decides the model of student teaching used.

TST model. TCs participating in a TST model quietly observe for the first weeks of their placement. Then teacher candidates gradually increase their participation in the classroom activities until they are completely in charge of the classroom for the last weeks of their student teaching experience (Meyer, 2016). Once TCs take over the responsibility for classroom activities, they are completely on their own. MTs supervise from a distance and generally are not present in the classroom (Bacharach et al., 2010; Meyer, 2016). The EPP offers no formal training for the MTs and TCs implementing the TST model. They are, however, supported by experienced coaches from the university.

For this study, the specific school and classroom setting of each participant placed in a TST model will be described in the participant's narrative.

CTDST model. The CTDST model differs from the TST model as teacher candidates are immediately and continually involved in the preparation, delivery, and assessment of classroom lessons (Bacharach & Heck, 2012; Kerin & Murphy, 2015). The sociocultural environment of the coteaching model consists of a MT and one or more TCs sharing physical space and collaborating in “the planning, organization, delivery and assessment of instruction” to groups of students (Bacharach et al., 2010, p. 5). MTs and TCs have the option of attending a four-hour

training focused on coteaching strategies and team building hosted by the EPP. Participation in the training does not obligate the attendees to implement CTDST model. Student teacher coaches from the university are also invited to attend this training, so they may better support MTs and TCs implementing the coteaching model.

For this study, the specific school and classroom setting of each participant placed in a CTDST model will be described in the individual narratives. The specific school and classroom setting for each candidate will be described in the individual narratives.

Role of Researcher

Often referred to as building blocks, stories obtained through narrative inquiry serve to construct reality and meaning for both the individual research participants and the narrative researchers (Bazeley, 2014; Merriam, 2002; Wertz et al., 2011). My prior research and work experience influenced the approach of constructing the research and influenced the analysis of the data gathered.

Prior Research Experience

I studied both the TST and CTDST models of student teaching over a four-year period through my research assistantships and personal research. These experiences influenced my thinking about both models of student teaching and undoubtedly influenced the construction of the stories told as a result of this study.

Pilot study assistantship. In Spring 2016, I became a research assistant for the pilot study of a longitudinal project focused on the implementation of the CTDST model in the context of elementary schools and middle schools. Fifteen TCs and their MTs were interviewed about their experiences of CTDST. Those initial interviews first piqued my interest about the influence the coteaching model has on the professional identity of participating TCs: I wondered

if the TCs who were not solely responsible for a classroom of students for a protracted time thought of themselves as teachers at the end of their student teaching placement. Because the pilot study did not focus on teacher identity, the participants were not directly asked about any identity issues; however, one candidate volunteered that at the end of her CTDST semester she felt like a qualified teacher's aide, but not a teacher. This interview highlighted that student teaching is the capstone experience to prepare TCs to step into the role of a classroom teacher; however, they may not see themselves as a full-fledged teacher. If they do not see themselves as a teacher when they walk into their first classroom, they may have a difficult time.

Teacher identity pilot study. I conducted a pilot study subsequent to participating in the pilot study focused on CTDST in different contexts that focused on the formation of teacher identity during student teaching. Using an unstructured format, three beginning teachers were interviewed about their student teaching experience by asking each of them to simply describe their student teaching experience. Each of the three beginning teachers was in their first month of teaching and had been placed in a TST experience. All three participants graduated from different EPPs and were currently employed by different school districts, yet they all spoke of their “sink or swim” moment during student teaching: the moment when they *knew* they were a teacher. Universally using the phrase “sink or swim,” they each described a critical student teaching episode in which they had to take charge of the classroom at a new, elevated level of authority as they were solo teaching. Their ability to perform at that elevated level, even if they deemed their performance as imperfect, caused them to see themselves, and be seen by others, in a new light and to own the identity of teacher.

Reflecting on the shared experience of the teacher identity pilot study participants, I wondered if coteaching TCs were afforded the same opportunity of crisis to see themselves in a

new light and to own the identity of teacher. If they did not have a sink or swim moment, what did that mean? Were there other types of experiences that afforded coteaching TCs to see themselves, and be seen by others, in a new light and own the identity of teacher?

Longitudinal CTDST study assistantship. After the CTDST pilot study assistantship concluded, the opportunity to become a research assistant for a three-year longitudinal study focused on investigating the implementation of the CTDST model arose. During the ensuing six semesters, I talked with over 50 TCs, MTs, and university coaches (UCs) using a semi-structured interview format about their experiences working in the CTDST model. Although TCs were never directly asked about how, if, or when they thought of themselves as a teacher, I developed some questions and impressions about the influence of their student teaching experience and the construction of their professional identity. For instance, could coteaching TCs experience their own type of sink or swim crisis? How might they describe that crisis? Due to their familiarity with collaboration, do coteaching TCs have more skill and greater inclination to build a support system as a beginning teacher? Next, do traditionally-trained and coteaching-trained teachers view professional identity differently? Do coteaching folks view professional identity as being a member of a team; whereas, traditional folks hold a more individualistic notion of professional identity? Are CTDST participants better prepared as beginning teachers to manage the human capital in their classrooms? Finally, does the CTDST experience allow beginning teachers to more naturally engage in knowledge construction with students and colleagues (aligning a teacher identity with being a learner) compared to beginning teachers who experienced their student teaching largely teaching on their own (aligning a teacher identity with being an expert)?

Work Experience

Before entering a doctoral program, I was a mental health therapist for a number of years, and then taught high school English for twelve years. As a therapist, I witnessed how vital it was to see a story from the point of view of the storyteller and to trust the power of narrative to uncover individuals' thoughts and beliefs that motivate their behaviors. I entered the profession of teaching with an underdeveloped professional identity. My first year of teaching consisted of going from one episode of sink or swim to another. A sense of responsibility to my students and a deep desire to do a good job motivated me to stay the course. During my third year of teaching, I began to own a teacher identity.

As a doctoral student, I had the opportunity to be both a research assistant and a teaching assistant. As a teaching assistant I often taught a course in the first phase of the EPP designed to help university students explore teaching as a career. Reading their writing and dialoguing with them in class, I often saw their idealistic and underdeveloped notions of what it was like to be a teacher. This naivety was appropriate at the exploratory stage of learning; however, if their notions were not challenged through coursework and experiences, they would be unprepared to navigate the turbulent waters of teaching in their own classroom. My various work experiences led me to a commitment to explore avenues that best prepared beginning teachers for success. The avenue of study for my research focused on student teacher identity to contribute to a deeper understanding of the process through which beginning teachers construct professional identity.

Lastly, I met and taught some of the participants in this study through the EPP educator preparation program class I taught. I had a friendly, acquaintance-level relationship with former students but did not know any of the participants on a personal basis; therefore, it was not a conflict of interest for me to work with former students.

Researcher Bias

As a constructivist, I believe that the task of an investigator is to probe the cultural and individual assumptions and means by which research participants make meaning of their particular experience (Creswell, 2012). Therefore, when research participants describe something, a constructivist believes they are giving an account of how something is “seen and reacted to, and thereby meaningfully constructed, within a given community or set of communities” (Crotty, 2015, p. 64). Participants are describing the world as they have constructed it, yet these constructions are incomplete and merit critical examination. Every person is influenced by their sociocultural positionality and is biased to some degree.

As a white, middle-class, Euro-American, Christian, heterosexual person from the Rocky Mountain region of the United States, I recognize my position of privilege. However, as a female, I experience personal and systemic discrimination in U.S. culture. My positionality of both privilege and oppression informs my worldview and creates bias. I work hard as an individual and an educator to develop and expand my sociocultural consciousness and cultural competence through reading and experience. As a researcher, I endeavored to make my thinking transparent in order to guard against bias impacting my results and findings. Multiple sources of data ensured the analysis and development of narratives and themes were not limited to my own interests nor influenced by my biases.

Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected during four points throughout the participants’ transition into their initial teaching job. Two semi-structured interviews were the primary source of data supported by a classroom observation. Data recorded in a research memo notebook (RMN) supported the details obtained from the interviews and observation. Finally, member checking occurred with

each participant via email which provided participants an opportunity to comment on the interpretation of the data. The significance of using more than one method of data collection enhanced the validity of the findings (Merriam, 2002).

Interviews

Two one-on-one semi-structured interviews were conducted with each of the six participants. The timing of the first interviews varied due to difficulties encountered recruiting TST participants. The first interview for CTDST participants was audio recorded and took place during the first quarter of the academic year. The first interview for TST participants was audio recorded and took place during the second quarter of the academic year. The first interviews focused on questions regarding participants' student teaching experience. Because of the varied schedules of the first interviews, a minimum of four weeks separated the first and second interviews for all participants. The second interviews took place during the second quarter of the academic year and were also audio recorded. The purpose of the second interview centered on exploring how the participants' perceptions of teaching and their educator preparation had changed since the earlier interview. These questions focused more on ideas of professional identity, encouraging participants to answer the question, "Who am I at this moment in this context?" Refer to Appendix B for a list of questions for both interviews.

Observation

Observations offer a first-hand encounter with the phenomenon of interest by observing people and places at a research site (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Merriam, 2002). The phenomenon of interest in this study was professional identity in beginning teachers, so observations took place in the classrooms of the beginning teacher participants. With the exception of one observation, the observations occurred late in the second quarter of the

academic year and focused on the learning climate of the classroom. The outlier observation occurred early in the third quarter of the academic year because the administration of the high school where one participant taught went through a change; hence, there were delays in receiving permission to observe this participant. In spite of the delay in one case, at the time of the class observation, all of the beginning teachers had been teaching for nearly a full semester.

Observations lasted three to four consecutive hours. After being in the classroom and making initial notes about classroom layout and student population, I conducted a set of observations at 15-minute intervals over one hour to record teacher behaviors that indicated levels of warmth and control. Teacher warmth and control are two related but separate dimensions, and behavior on one dimension does not necessarily preclude behavior on the other, (Soar & Soar, 1983; Borich, 2011). Refer to Figure C.1 in Appendix C. The remaining observation time consisted of continuing to note the dynamics of the classroom in the RMN.

The results of the observations were used to triangulate emerging narratives and support the details and findings from the interviews (Merriam, 2002). A changing observational role was adopted where “researchers adapt their role to the situation” (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019, p. 215). Initially, I took the stance of a nonparticipant observer by looking around and recording notes. When appropriate, I participated in the activities of the classroom, thus, becoming a participant observer. The beginning teacher participants invited my participation only on a limited basis. Without prompting, all the participants explained to their students that I was from a university and would be observing them as teachers. Time was spent in each observation talking with each participant during their breaks or while walking through the hallways on their way to their next class.

Neither veteran nor beginning teachers can control several variables that effect classroom climate such as the number of students in the classroom, the personalities and learning capacities of those students, nor their socioeconomic background. However, teachers have agency over the level of affect and control they employ in the classroom (Soar & Soar, 1983; Borich, 2011), so I chose to focus one hour of my observation tracking teacher behavior linked to the dimensions of warmth and control. During the observation, I chose to focus on the learning climate of the classroom because “aspects of the learning climate can be established and maintained by the teacher’s efforts” (Borich, 2011, p. 55). According to Wenger’s (1998) social theory of learning, the observable practices in which individuals engage are the result of bringing into being the meanings, customs, conventions that have been negotiated in a social setting. Therefore, the learning climate of a classroom reflected the learning of the beginning teacher about the act of teaching and their professional identity. Refer to Appendix C for the observation protocol.

Research Memo Notebook

A RMN was created and maintained to provide an audit trail of each step of this study. In a qualitative study, an audit trail “describes in detail how data were collected, how categories were derived, and how decisions were made throughout the inquiry” (Merriam, 2002, p. 27). The RMN was divided into seven sections. The first section contained general research memos recording reflections, questions, and decisions on the problems, issues, ideas encountered while collecting, and data analysis. Personal thoughts and reflections were also recorded in this section. In addition to the first section, a separate section for each research participant was created to contain thoughts, impressions, reflections, and data specific to each participant. Refer to Appendix A for more details of the RMN.

Data Analysis Procedures

Narrative methodology dictates that the story remain the central focus through the use of interview transcripts, researcher field notes, and file memos comprising the data used to construct the final narrative (Bloom, 2002). After gathering data, the researcher's process of analysis from an inductive, reflexive stance begins and focuses on holistic aspects of the biographies of the participants (Wertz et al., 2011). The various approaches of narrative analysis offer strategies that rely "less on coding and more on seeing the connections within and across" each case (Bazeley, 2014, p. 201). The pliable nature of narrative analysis affords researchers the capacity to meld observation and theory in meaningful ways as knowledge is constructed. Building upon the assumption that the knowledge constructed is localized and perspective-dependent, narrative researchers posit that further knowledge construction occurs within the intersubjective relationships of researchers, participants, and consumers of the research (Wertz et al., 2011).

Two major spectrums guide the reading of narrative materials: content versus form and holistic versus categorical (Josselson, 2011). Reading for content focuses on *what* is told in the story, whereas, focusing on form examines *how* the story is recounted. The second spectrum moves from a holistic reading (i.e., taking a life story as a whole and then interpreting sections of it with respect to the other parts) to a categorical reading (i.e., summarizing sections or words which belong to a category, and then using coding strategies to compare these to similar texts from other narratives). Using narrative approaches to comb through narrative data for its various levels of meaning brings forth new understandings that benefit wider fields of scholarship (Bazeley, 2014; Josselson, 2011).

The research design of this study was a collective case study using narrative inquiry (Merriam, 2002). The analysis of data took place in two stages. The first stage encompassed within-case analysis that focused on understanding the experiences and constructing the narratives for each participant in light of the content (the *what*) that was relayed in each story (Josselson, 2011). Using a biographical approach, each story was analyzed in terms of “life events and turning point experiences and other persons in the participant’s life” (Merriam, 2002, p. 287). To understand the story of each participant’s transition from TC to beginning teacher the transcripts of the two face-to-face interviews, along with the notes and data collected during the classroom observation were analyzed then constructed into a narrative that followed a general outline. Each narrative includes episode one (the experience of student teaching), episode two (the experience of transitioning into their first year of professional teaching), and an epilogue (the analysis of the classroom observation). The within-case analysis answered the research questions about how beginning teachers describe the impact of CTDST or TST on their professional identity.

Within-Case Analysis

The data was analyzed using transcripts of the interviews, field notes, observation data, and research memos to construct narratives from the unique perspective of each participant. The spectrum of content versus form permitted questioning of *what* participants included in their story as well as *how* they recounted their experiences; therefore, data from each case were analyzed for what influence the student teaching model (CTDST or TST) had on the professional identity of beginning teachers (Bazeley, 2014). Transcripts were first read as a whole to understand *what* was included in the narratives of professional identity formation. For example, *what* language and/or imagery was included in the stories, *what* characters played which roles in

the story, *what* emotional responses were described, and to whom were they ascribed were all holistic lenses used to construct narratives from the data collected. As noted earlier, the language and imagery used by interviewees was significant because it imposed form onto their understanding of themselves and influenced their behaviors and actions (Polkinghorne, 1988). These understandings, behaviors, and actions were evidence of the reifying phase of Wenger's (1998) negotiation.

Cross-Case Analysis

The second stage utilized cross-case analysis of the constructed narratives and moved from a holistic reading to a categorical reading to summarize sections which belong to a category of each narrative and then used coding categories to compare each narrative (Josselson, 2011). The purpose of categorical analysis was to compare the influence of CTDST and TST on the teacher identity in two groups of beginning teachers. Data from each participant were analyzed categorically to offer generalizations and patterns that emerged across the experiences of the six participants. Categorical analysis took place in two stages. First, the narratives within the two groups of participants (TST and CTDST) were analyzed by comparing three categories of the narratives: interview findings, observation findings, and findings related to Wenger's social theory of learning. Next, the categorical analysis between the two groups (TST and CTDST) were analyzed by comparing the interview findings, observational findings, and findings related to Wenger's social theory of learning.

Using wholistic analyses and categorical analyses to construct narratives aided me in constructing truths unique to beginning teachers who were trained and recently graduated from the EPP linked to this study. The truths constructed were grounded in first-hand experiences in order to extend and enhance the conceptualization of the influence of student teaching models on

professional identities of beginning teachers and creatively convey the constructed findings to the scholarly community.

Trustworthiness of the Study

Three limitations and corresponding delimitations of this study are addressed in the following sections.

Limitations

First, the study focused on recent graduates from one EPP, thus, limiting the ability to generalize to other locales. The second limitation laid in the voluntary nature of participant selection. Narratives were gathered only from individuals who volunteered to be interviewed; therefore, the story of professional identity formation was told from a partial point of view. The third and most critical limitation of this study was validation. Validation is “the process through which we make claims for the trustworthiness of our interpretations” (Kohler Riessman, 1993, p. 65).

Delimitations

First, the delimitation of basing this study on a few individuals from a specific EPP required transparency and discussion of the research methodology. Additionally, I disclosed my personal positionality, providing readers with enough information to decide what and how the findings from this study applied to other locales. Furthermore, qualitative researchers work to “understand the perspectives of those involved, uncover the complexities of human behavior in context, and present a holistic interpretation of what is happening” (Merriam, 2002, p. 25). This study was based on the experience of a few individuals to meet this goal.

Second, using volunteers as research participants in the discussion section of findings underscored that the data collected were biased due to the voluntary nature of participant

selection. Although acknowledging this fact did not diminish the limitation, it does enable the reader of the study to view the findings in light of the delimitation.

The key to the third limitation, validation, was to remind the consumer of the research of the distinction between the concepts of trustworthiness and truth. “Trustworthiness” is not synonymous with “truth.” Truth assumes an object reality; trustworthiness is found in the processes of the social world. Trustworthiness of this study was increased in four ways. First, if the interpretation of the research was reasonable and convincing, with theoretical claims well supported by evidence from the collected narratives, readers will find the study plausible and persuasive. Furthermore, I offered the findings to the participants of the study to get their response. When the participants found the reconstructions of their narratives as recognizable, credibility was increased. Third, analyzing narratives for coherence (local, global, and themal) prevented the interpretation of data from being simply ad hoc. The coherence of the narratives was connected as much as possible to all three levels of coherence by conducting within-case analysis and between-case analysis. Finally, I described how interpretations were produced, made visible what steps were taken at each stage of the study, specified how successive transformations of data were made, and made primary data available to future researchers in order to guide the pragmatic use of narrative research (Kohler Riessman, 1993). In these ways, the limitation of validity was addressed.

CHAPTER FOUR: NARRATIVES AND ANALYSIS

Chapter three described the methodological choices used in this study to explore how two different student teaching models, traditional student teaching (TST) and coteaching during student teaching (CTDST), influence teacher identity in beginning teachers. Chapter four presents the narratives organized in two sections: the within-case analysis of the six individual narratives and the between-case analysis comparing the two models of student teaching and their impact on teacher identity. The chapter ends with a summary of findings.

The within-case analysis section, formatted in four parts, presents each narrative that relates the story of the participants' journey from TC to beginning teacher. Pseudonyms were assigned to the participants and each MT was assigned a random alphabetical letter (e.g., Teacher A, Teacher N, etc.) to retain their anonymity. The first part of each narrative, Episode 1, describes the participants' student teaching experience as recounted in the first interview. Episode 2 contains the story of the early experiences of the participants as beginning teachers. The structure of both Episode sections organizes the participants' narrative around the outline of a literary plotline: setting, characters, early action, major conflict, and lessons from the experience. Uniform headings were used in all six narratives to make between-case categorical comparison more accessible. The Epilogue, the third part of the within-case analysis section, details the data from the classroom observations I conducted and compares the words and perceptions of the beginning teacher with their behaviors in the classroom. Finally, the end of each narrative presents the within-case analysis.

The between case analysis compares and contrasts the data from the interviews and observations of the six participants. It is formatted in three sections: (a) a comparison of the

experiences of the three TST participants and relates interview findings, observation findings, and findings connected to Wenger's social theory of learning; (b) comparison of the experiences of the three CTDST participants and relates interview findings, observation findings, and findings connected to Wenger's social theory of learning; and (c) a comparison of all the experiences of the six participants and the three types of findings.

Within-Case Analysis of Six Narratives

Participants were beginning teachers who were recent graduates of an Educator Preparation Program from a land grant university west of the Mississippi River. During their final year in the EPP, participants completed a student teaching placement where the university EPP student teaching coordinator assigned teacher candidates to a student teaching placement. The student teaching coordinator asks principals from partner schools if they have teachers interested in mentoring a TC for the semester. TCs placed with non-partner schools require the EPP coordinator to work with district Human Resources (HR) department to identify potential mentor teachers. Often, TCs meet with the principals and MTs for an interview before the semester of student teaching begins. After finalizing student teaching assignments, the EPP invites MT/TC pairs to a training that introduces the CTDST model. This training also provides a personality assessment and time for the pairs to talk about the upcoming semester, so attending the training session benefits the attendees regardless of the student teaching model they implement. The choice to implement TST or CTDST rests with the MT. Three of the six participants experienced a TST placement, and three of the six experienced a CTDST placement. The EPP prepares its university coaches (UCs) to work with pairs using both models.

To facilitate the exploration of how the TST and CTDST models influence teacher identity in beginning teachers, I conducted two separate face-to-face interviews with six

beginning teachers and then conducted individual observations of the six teachers working with their classroom students. The interviews took place during the first semester of the first year of teaching for each participant. The first round of interviews took place during the first months of teaching (September through October) and focused primarily on recollections of their student teaching experience. The second interview took place during the second quarter of their first year of teaching (November through December) and focused on their experiences and perceptions as beginning teachers. The observations occurred after the second interview and mid-way in the academic year (late November through January). The observations centered on gathering data on the learning climate each teacher created in their classroom in order to compare their words and perceptions to their actions. Using the data gathered during the interviews and observation, I constructed a narrative for each participant that bridged their TC experiences with their experiences, perceptions, and practices as beginning teachers in an effort to explore the formation of their teacher identity.

Traditional Student Teaching Participants

Three of the beginning teachers interviewed for this research project experienced a TST model. Two of these participants, Sue and Hannah, taught in early elementary grades as TCs and beginning teachers. The remaining participant, Rose, taught secondary science classes both as a TC and as a beginning teacher.

Hannah's Story

“I come for the students. They are my purpose.”

Episode one: Student teaching. Hannah is a white female in her early twenties. When we first talked, she was beginning her first year as a professional educator, having just earned her Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education. The interview took place in October.

Setting. The location of Hannah's traditional student teaching experience was a second-grade classroom in an elementary school with a population of approximately 410 students, of whom 25.2% receive free or reduced priced lunches. To aid in understanding Hannah's perception of her specific student teaching experience, I asked her to generally describe her student teaching experience. She explained that her student teaching experience occurred during the spring semester, at the end of her teacher preparation program. Before her semester of student teaching, Hannah worked in Teacher A's classroom during fall semester in a practicum program for a few hours every week to assist with reading groups. She then began student teaching in that same classroom for the spring semester. Once Hannah and her MT, Teacher A, were teamed up, they attended a training focused on the CTDST model. Although they both liked the information presented at the training, at its conclusion, Teacher A believed following the TST model was a better fit for her class and students. Hannah responded, "I think she was a little hesitant of just trying things in different ways." Thus, Hannah found herself in a TST experience for the semester.

Because of her prior involvement with Teacher A's class, when Hannah began her student teaching placement she declared, "All right, let's go! Let's throw me into it!" For the first few days of student teaching, Hannah observed Teacher A teach all content areas. After that brief observational period, Hannah took over teaching math and writing immediately. At this point she also began to plan and assess student learning for math, writing, and reading. During the transitional first six weeks, Hannah continued to take over one content area at a time. Hannah and her MT occasionally cotaught their class of second graders, usually implementing the one teach/one assist strategy. Whoever was in the "assisting" role helped with differentiation of the lesson. By the end of the transitional six weeks, Hannah had sole responsibility for the whole

class, all day. At first, Teacher A remained in the classroom once Hannah took over, but that changed in April when she began leaving the room for long periods. Finally in May, Hannah assumed responsibility for teaching Teacher A's second grade class as the long-term substitute teacher when Teacher A left on maternity leave.

When asked to describe her student teaching experience, Hannah immediately responded, "Ideal." Hannah explained that having the opportunity to work with a class for an entire academic year exposed her to the various tasks and seasons that teachers and students navigate.

Characters and relationships. To access who played important roles in the initial stage of Hannah's professional story, I inquired why she pursued teaching as a profession and who/what had the most impact on her during her student teaching experience. She relayed two reasons that motivated her to pursue teaching as a vocation: early volunteer experiences working with elementary school age children and a desire to make a difference in people's lives. Hannah first met and participated in a practicum with Teacher A during the fall semester prior to student teaching; during her practicum, Hannah worked with reading groups three days a week. Hannah enjoyed working in this classroom so when she looked for student teaching placements, she asked Teacher A if she could work with her full time during the spring. Teacher A happily agreed and the two began preparations for the spring semester. Hannah and Teacher A took a few personality surveys prior to the beginning of the semester and found that they had similar personalities, a factor that Hannah believed allowed them to develop a productive, open, and honest relationship. "We had such a good relationship. We were able to be honest and talk about what the students' needs were, and we worked well together." Hannah valued the constructive, trustworthy feedback Teacher A provided and in turn, Teacher A viewed Hannah as reliable and committed to the student teaching process.

Early Action. To learn about Hannah's perceptions of significant events, I asked her to describe a difficult situation and a triumph she experienced during the early phase of student teaching. Hannah explained that early in her role as a student teacher, she had trouble finding her professional voice: "So it was a struggle for me to speak up when I noticed things." She felt uncertain when to share her opinion about students with Teacher A and other faculty; she questioned if that was part of her job as a TC. This uncertainty was re-enforced when Hannah would see staff she knew from her fall semester practicum and they would comment, "Oh, what are you doing here still?" Hannah felt insecure in her place outside Teacher A's classroom due to the uncertainty of what their comments meant. After talking with her MT about her feelings of insecurity, Hannah started interacting with the faculty and staff at the school in a more assertive manner. Hannah began finding her professional voice. By introducing herself and letting others know that she was stepping into the role of TC, Hannah opened herself to potential dialogues about educational issues with other professionals.

Beginning to think of self as teacher. To gain insight to Hannah's definition of teacher identity and how it forms, I asked her to describe the first time she thought of herself as a teacher. After reflecting, she stated she began to view herself as a teacher halfway into the semester, when Teacher A started stepping out of classroom and Hannah was left on her own. "I felt the burden of being a teacher," she said. Hannah explained that from that point in time, she gradually took on a teacher identity and each time she taught a successful lesson, she felt her professional identity grow.

Major conflict. I asked Hannah to describe the most difficult situation she faced and the greatest accomplishment she achieved during her student teaching placement. Hannah again described a sense of precariousness surrounding her teaching activities. Although Hannah's

teacher identity had begun forming, she was plagued by insecurity about the effectiveness of her teaching. “I was pretty self-doubting,” she recalled. Hannah wondered if others recognized her as a teacher. Feedback from four different sources helped her reduce some of the tension caused by her self-doubt. First, Hannah considered the feedback she had received from her UC and Teacher A. Hannah said that “getting some reassurance with people who have seen me teach, and people [who] believe in me” helped her believe in herself. Second, Hannah viewed a video of her teaching in the fall at the beginning of her practicum. She then viewed a video of her teaching toward the end of her student teaching experience. She realized how much she had grown and learned. Hannah’s own realization and the positive feedback she received from Teacher A and her UC increased her comfort level with the second-grade students and with her decision to become an educator. “I felt like it was something I was meant to do,” she explained. A third source of validation emerged as Hannah received requests for teaching positions interviews. She battled her feelings of doubt about defining herself as a teacher with the contrasting reality of interest shown in her as a potential employee from school administrators. Finally, when Hannah was handling the class on her own, she explained, “[I] really felt that pride, that this is me, I’m doing this; and that felt really good.”

Lessons of student teaching. Toward the end of the first interview that explored Hannah’s recollections of her student teaching experience, I asked her to explain how the conflict between her feelings of self-doubt compared to her accomplishments influenced the way she thought of herself as a teacher. In response, Hannah pinpointed the theme of her capstone experience: the realization of the constant opportunity and need for professional and personal growth. “There is so much to learn every day, and I like to honor that fact,” she shared. Hannah

owned the notion that the job of teaching always required maintaining the attitude of a learner and that being a learner was an important facet of her teacher identity.

Changing focus: From TC to beginning teacher. Upon completing her student teaching placement and graduating with a degree in Early Childhood Education, Hannah accepted a position as a third-grade teacher at an underperforming Title 1 school. At the conclusion of the first interview Hannah was asked to identify her fears and hopes for her first year of teaching. She feared her students would not perform well on state tests. “I feel like I’m doing as much as I can to support them, but there’s always this thought in the back of my mind of like, ‘Are they making growth? Am I doing what I’m supposed to do?’” Hannah explained. Counterbalancing her fears, she hoped that students experienced growth and that she ended the year with a new set of skills and experiences.

Episode two: First-year teacher. The second interview with Hannah occurred in early December, three and a half months into her first year of professional teaching. The questions asked during the second interview centered on Hannah’s early experiences and perceptions of her first year of professional teaching.

Setting. Hannah’s current place of employment, an elementary school with approximately 340 students and 69.7% of them receiving free and reduced lunches, was in a different school district than the one in which she student taught. I asked Hannah to describe the general context of her first year as a beginning teacher to provide a contrast to her student teaching experience. Because of the high percentage of Title 1 students, a number of qualifying students from Hannah’s classroom received academic support. Education specialists pulled students out of the classroom for support services rather than the specialists integrating themselves into the classroom. In contrast to the support from specialists, Hannah received no

parent volunteer support in the classroom. She did not think that other teachers at her school had many parent volunteers either.

Characters. To understand who participated in and influenced the culture and activities of Hannah's classroom, I inquired which adults regularly interacted with her and her students. Hannah explained that with no paraeducators or volunteers in her classroom, she and her classroom students played the central roles in the narrative of her first year of teaching. To understand how Hannah perceives herself as a teacher, I asked her to describe her teacher-self from two points of view: her own and that of her students. When asked to describe herself from the first point of view, Hannah chose four phrases: student-centered, thoughtful, loving mindset, and supportive. When asked how she imagined her students, the second point of view, would describe her as their teacher, she laughed and referred to the notes she had received from students. She kept them at her desk because she valued these communications. Based on the content of the notes, she believed her students would describe her as kind, caring, and supportive, and that she had "left an impression" on them.

Professional and personal acquaintances, friends, and students played supporting roles in Hannah's narrative. Professionally, she met with the school instructional coach and the head administrator. She perceived the feedback she receives from these administrators as a mixed bag: "It's interesting, because it's a mix of constructive criticism and criticism, so sometimes it's not all feel good. It doesn't make me feel better. I won't always turn to them." However, Hannah found the feedback offered in the weekly data meetings helpful as it aided her in identifying gaps in student learning. Hannah stated, "They'll give us input on how our data is looking and give us suggestions on what we could do to turn things around if there is a problem."

Another occasion of uneven professional support were Hannah's regular planning sessions with the instructional coach. The coach sat in on most of the planning sessions held by Hannah and the other third grade teacher. The coach was there to guide, but because their school implemented a scripted curriculum, Hannah did not feel like she was gaining additional skills in lesson planning. Hannah explained:

Our instructional coach happens to be our mentor and she sits in on most of the planning sessions. Good and bad to that, but she's been there to kind of help guide us of what they expect of us planning-wise, keeping us accountable and making sure we follow [the curriculum] exactly.

Hannah further shared:

Personally, I wanted to be able to get better at collaborating to plan, which is something we do every week at our school. But just based on how I've seen planning go and how curriculum has shown itself to us, it's hard to be able to plan when there's not much to plan.

Hence, Hannah did not foresee many opportunities to grow skills in lesson planning due to the prescribed uniformity of the curriculum.

Hannah found her fellow educators generous with their help and a more consistent source of encouragement and support than her instructional coach. In particular, Hannah and the other third grade teacher supported each other emotionally. Hannah explained:

It's good that both of us have each other, because we're both first year teachers and at schools we were both very shocked to be a part of. Glad to be part of it for the experience and stuff, but it's definitely a shock for both of us.

Outside of Hannah's professional relationships at school, her network of support consisted of Teacher A, her student teaching MT, and her parents. Hannah communicated with her former mentor a few times a month and Hannah's parents were always ready with encouragement and support.

Early perceptions and experiences. The bulk of the questions asked in the second face-to-face interview were designed to understand Hannah's early perceptions and experiences as a beginning teacher. Initially, I asked her what she enjoyed most about teaching and what she found most difficult. Follow-up questions focused on Hannah's ideas about what had gone as she expected, what had surprised her as a beginning teacher, her professional practices and goals, and how teaching in her own classroom differed from student teaching.

Hannah acknowledged that the paperwork and the planning were ever-present in her new job, but through all those activities, she stayed focused on the central reason she chose to become a teacher: "I come for the students. They are my purpose." Hannah shared aspects of her personal life with her students at the beginning of the year by, "just being open and honest about my expectations, who I was as a person, what I appreciated, and the things that I care about" in an effort to create connections with them. Her students were excited when she mentioned that she loves cats and owned one. Hannah found that making personal connections with students "strengthen[ed] those relationships." Her students asked about her cat daily.

As much as she enjoyed her students, Hannah explained that being involved in their lives can be difficult. As a TC, she anticipated that she would likely have to call Social Services about the well-being of some students; however, the difference between the anticipation of that action as a TC and having to actually make the call was more painful and stressful than she expected. "I've had to do that [make calls reporting child abuse] and that shocked me."

Hannah accurately foresaw some of the struggles of being professionally involved with the lives of her students, yet she did not expect to feel at odds with the curricular philosophy of her school. When she interviewed for her job she understood the school used a scripted

curriculum but did not realize the extent to which teachers had to adhere to the script. Hannah explained:

Going into it, I thought I'd have a little bit more control. The things that I did in my classroom, following the curriculum and how I taught it. I thought I would have more freedom to do that, which I don't. It's pretty prescribed and laid out for us of what they expect us to do.

Hannah felt philosophically at odds with this teaching method as there was little room for teacher innovation. Though she did not agree with this approach, she complied with the expectations of her administration. Hannah said, "So even if I had my own ideas [about instruction], I probably wouldn't venture too far, because if they were to walk in they'd potentially be upset that I'm not following their stuff."

As a beginning teacher, Hannah received regular input on her job performance from her students, administrators, fellow educators and parents of her students through formal and informal means. Although Hannah looked forward to receiving the statistical data that could indicate whether her students hit their first-semester academic goals she did not often intentionally decode all non-statistical input she received about her practice and professional growth. Typically at the end of her day, she did "just a catch up and go" meaning she checked her email, straightened her room and prepared for the next day. Her "catch up" did not include purposive reflecting on her practice. Hannah explained:

I have the time, it's a matter of remembering to do it [purposive reflection]. I haven't just cause I always feel like I am busy doing something else. But I think it's important. I think there is a lot of benefit to be able to identify what's happening positively and what could change and what didn't go well.

Thus, reflecting on her practice stood as one of Hannah's professional goals for her second semester of teaching.

Hannah found her current experience "different in so many ways" from her student teaching experience. Primarily, Hannah listed the diminished in-class support and the different

style and philosophy of the administration as the greatest contrasts between what she anticipated as a beginning teacher and her actual experience. She remained in the midst of navigating these differences and admitted to having some difficulty. Hannah did not expect such a dramatic difference, nor did she expect the challenge of adjusting to those differences; though she admitted that she knew having her own classroom would vary from student teaching. However, not all of the variances from her student teaching experience required difficult adjustments. For example, during student teaching, Hannah worked with middle- and upper-middle-class students. In contrast, currently the majority of her classroom students were on free and reduced lunch plans. Hannah found working with students in a Title 1 school rife with learning opportunities. She elaborated:

That's something that, I think has been great because I love different backgrounds and I love being able to learn new things about the students and how that impacts education. I think I have become a better teacher because of it [working with a Title 1 population]. Because, you know, I see these kids with the worst homelife come to school and I learn the things that I can say and what they react to positively.

Hannah stated that she will take that learning with her to every teaching job in her future.

Looking ahead. During the first interview in October, I asked Hannah why she decided to enter the teaching profession. She stated that she wanted to make a difference in the lives of people. By the second interview in early December, she had nearly completed teaching the first semester of third grade. The final question I put to Hannah aimed at checking for the effect of her experience as a novice educator on her main purpose for teaching. She answered with more detail and a story. Hannah's central purpose for teaching was to "help support the growth of students" academically and emotionally. Hannah saw encouraging her students to have a growth mindset (GMS) buttressed her purpose. A central idea of GMS proposes that individual characteristics such as personality, intelligence, and moral character can be cultivated and grown

through perseverance and resilience (Dweck, 2016). Though Hannah rarely taught her students about GMS during whole class instruction, she had referred to GMS strategies when she worked with students one-on-one. One day she noticed that a student was in tears as the class took a test. When Hannah quietly inquired about her tears, the girl stated “I just don’t understand. I don’t know how to do it.” Hannah recalled reassuring the student by telling her,

No test is worth crying for and you should know that whatever you put here is gonna tell me how we can fix things and what we can learn next time. So when you see this test at the end of the year, you can say, “I can do this.”

Hannah reinforced to her student the basic message of GMS (Dweck, 2016) by encouraging the student to believe that she can develop her intelligence over time. The student hugged Hannah at the end of the day and thanked her for the encouragement. Hannah believed the reassurance she provided benefitted her student. The student’s response to Hannah’s encouragement fortified her desire to positively impact the lives of others through her role as a teacher.

Epilogue: Classroom observation. I conducted a four hour observation of Hannah’s third grade class in early December. The day before my observation, all the bookshelves and cubbies were removed from the walls of the classroom to allow for the installation of new shelving and cubbies scheduled to occur in the next few days. With all the disruption in their learning environment, the students did not appear confused by the temporary state of their classroom. They knew where to place and retrieve their books and belongings. On the walls unaffected by the remodeling activities, Hannah had placed several posters featuring information about the writing process, GMS, class expectations, and math facts. For the first thirty minutes, I sat in the back of the classroom, noting the classroom setup, procedures, class management, and student-teacher interaction. The students left to eat lunch and go to lunch recess. At this time, Hannah talked about the state of her classroom. She explained that on the previous day she and

her students had rearranged the room so that they would know where to find their books and where to place their personal belongings.

When the students returned from recess, I conducted a set of observations at 15-minute intervals to record Hannah's behaviors that indicated levels of warmth and control (see Appendix C, Figure C.1). Thirty-three high warmth behaviors were noted, five low warmth behaviors, zero high control behaviors, and 30 low control behaviors. Plotting these totals on the warmth and control graph placed the learning climate of Hannah's classroom primarily in the upper-left portion of Quadrant C (see Appendix C, Figure C.2).

Behaviors recorded throughout the entire observation period that reflect Hannah's warmth toward her students include calling students "friends," using positive language to refocus student behavior, calling attention to appropriate behavior, and making frequent eye contact with her students. Although Hannah intentionally worked to create a high warmth learning climate, a lack of pacing reduced the effectiveness of her choices. Hannah loosely structured both her math and writing lessons. For both subjects, she provided four self-directed learning activities. Students were directed to complete each of the activities in the order of their choice. Providing time for independent work allowed Hannah to answer questions as students needed her attention. Hannah instructed her students to complete all four tasks in the 75 minutes allotted for the subject. She set up each activity with adequate explanation and students seemed familiar with how they should approach each activity. However, the lack of external pacing of the activities created unnecessary difficulties in classroom management as students did not sense any urgency to complete their tasks. The warmth of the learning environment decreased as Hannah repeatedly redirected students to stay on task. She often reminded students to use "level one voices" as the classroom noise increased. Students were allowed to help one another complete some tasks but

with little direction, so they often became distracted. During both math and writing, the learning environment became more unfocused the further into the allotted 75 minutes given to each subject.

Early in the second interview, Hannah chose the descriptors “student-centered, thoughtful, loving mindset, and supportive.” The behavior she displayed toward her students testified to the accuracy of her choices. The calmness in the tone of her voice and in her demeanor centered the classroom even in the more chaotic times. Believing that her students would describe her as “kind, caring, and supportive” seemed reasonable.

Hannah’s Within-Case Analysis

Professional identity is not automatically conferred on someone when they begin a new job, rather professional identity is a tool that individuals use to make sense of themselves in professional contexts and is heavily impacted by the personal, cognitive and social responses of individuals. Hannah’s teacher identity grew as she continued to gain experience as an educator. Identity is a relational phenomenon, not a static attribute (Korte, 2007); Hannah’s narrative evidenced this development. During her student teaching placement, Hannah pinpointed “finding her professional voice” as something she struggled with early in her learning curve as a TC. By the end of the second interview, nearing the close of her first semester as a beginning teacher, she recalled using her professional voice to reassure, refocus, and reengage a struggling student. Research suggests that as she participates in the ongoing process of relating to her students, their parents, and the faculty and staff at her current school, she will acquire greater understanding of her role and place as an educator and thus her teacher identity will continually develop (Korte, 2007).

From the beginning of her student teaching placement, Hannah has cycled through the necessary process of interpreting herself (or making sense of herself) one way, then after experience and reflection, reinterpreting herself in a revised way. Wenger (1998) contends that social identity formation consists of participating in social situations, reflecting on that participation (making sense of their role and their context), and then reifying that participation (making it real, bringing it into being). When focusing on the specific social identity of professional identity, Wenger (1998) defines the social situations as communities of practice (CoP). Three characteristics define a CoP: mutual engagement, a joint enterprise, and a shared repertoire. Hannah participated in one CoP during her practicum and student teaching placement; when she began her first year of teaching, she moved to a different professional context. Reflecting on her various roles and experiences in CoP had led Hannah to bring into being (reify) a procession of new professional identities.

Her first significant challenge to her professional identity came as she began to function as a TC yet the students and school faculty still viewed her in the role of a practicum student and questioned why she remained a part of their community. At the beginning of her story, Hannah viewed herself as an practicum student working with a MT; thus, the students and school faculty viewed her through that same lens. As Hannah gained experience and confidence in her new role, she began intentionally reintroducing herself to her students and fellow educators as a TC.

By taking the steps to redefine her role to others in her work environment, Hannah opened herself to potential validating experiences. For professional identity to continue to grow, it is vital that one both recognizes the change in identity and that their new identity is recognized and validated by others in the shared professional environment (Stewart et. al, 2012-2013). When this dual validation occurs, one can answer the question, “Who am I at this moment in this

context?” with greater clarity and confidence. Hannah identified struggling with this question as the most difficult aspect of her teacher candidacy. At the height of her self-doubt, the validation she received from her MT, her UC, reflecting on her growth, and her solo teaching experiences enabled her to push through the self-doubt and own her emerging teacher identity. That Hannah still went to Teacher A as a trusted source of information and feedback attests to the power of validation from fellow professionals.

With her MT and UC, Hannah constructed a CoP. They were mutually engaged. “Practice does not exist in the abstract. It exists because people are engaged in actions whose meanings they negotiate with one another” (Wenger, 1998, p. 73). Mutual engagement is a prerequisite to membership in a community of practice. “Being included in what matters is a requirement for being engaged in a community’s practice” (Wenger, 1998, p. 74). In her current setting as a first-year teacher, Hannah struggled to find place in a CoP. Trust was slow to grow between Hannah and her school mentors and administrators. She repeatedly mentioned the philosophical differences regarding curriculum and delivery of instruction between herself and the school administration. Feeling constrained in professional growth by the scripted curriculum, she cited this situation as the most difficult dynamic in her position as a new teacher. By the second interview that was well into the second quarter of the academic year, Hannah had not moved toward resolution of her current constraints, thus, impeding the development of her teacher identity.

The difference in philosophy placed obstacles in the process of the negotiation of meaning necessary to the construction of a CoP for Hannah. She was wary of her mentors and administrators as resources of professional growth because she did not perceive herself as included in defining what mattered to the community of practice. Therefore, she did not perceive

all of their feedback as constructive, leaving a vacuum of possible trusted sources of validation. Additionally, the philosophical difference impeded Hannah and her mentors from building a shared repertoire. Wenger (1998) defines shared repertoire as a community's set of shared resources such as routines, words, tools, and ways of doing things that the community has produced or adopted which have become part of its practice. Hannah entered a professional environment with a well-developed repertoire, but she did not value the established ways of doing things; thus, she was at a bit of an impasse as she decided how best to participate in this context.

The philosophical differences and a lack of validation sources both hampered Hannah's ability to make sense of herself in her current professional context, resulting in a weakened response to the question, "Who am I at this moment in this context?" However, Hannah realized that underutilizing the practice of regularly reflecting on her daily classroom experiences hampered her growth and practice as a teacher. Upon recognizing that she had omitted this practice, she resolved, "[I want to] reflect a little bit more and I think that would really help me grow a little bit in the profession." Reflecting on her practice could help to identify areas of professional growth. By engaging in the three-step process of negotiating meaning (experience → reflection → reification), Hannah was learning to work with a student population of high needs. Success and growth in this area caused positive growth in Hannah's teacher identity.

Conclusion

During her student teaching experience, Hannah grew from an unsure TC into a TC with a budding belief in her ability to effectively teach. As she transitioned into being a first-year educator, she ran into a major conflict between her expectations of sharing philosophical values with her administration; however, the actual practice and culture of her current site of

employment differed from her expectations. This unresolved conflict slowed her progress of professional growth. She lacked or could not locate a path which would lead her to participating in the negotiation of meaning and ways of doing things within her professional community. Adding to this frustration, she had yet to identify trusted sources of professional feedback and validation. This dynamic may be akin to her struggle to find her professional voice early in her student teacher placement. In spite of her struggles, her desire to make a positive impact in the lives of students remained her core purpose.

Sue's Story

“There's nothing you can do that will make me not want you here.”

Episode one: Student teaching. Sue is a white female in her early thirties. She worked in a third-grade class during her TST experience. When I first met with Sue, she was beginning her first year as a second-grade teacher after having just earned her master's degree in early childhood education.

Setting. The location of Sue's TST experience was a third-grade classroom in an elementary school with a population of approximately 410 students, 25.2 % receive free or reduced priced lunches. To gain understanding of the context of her student teaching experience, I asked Sue to generally describe her student teaching experience. She chose to describe the events that led her to step into the role of TC.

After earning her bachelor degree in child and family development, Sue worked for Early Head Start (EHS), a federal program designed to promote school readiness of low-income children age birth to five in the poorest county in the United States. She briefly co-taught a class of eight students but moved into a behavior management role for her school. Sue's new role required her to go into the field to gain background information about her caseload of EHS

students. “If there was a student who was having certain behaviors,” Sue explained, she would do a home assessment. Knowing the homelife of students provided essential information to the EHS teachers, empowering them to deliver meaningful help and instruction. Sue shared an example:

I would talk with teachers about if this student is going to a different place every day and is sleeping on couches and does not know where he’s going to be the next time he’s picked up from school, and he’s got his favorite red truck and you tell him to put that red truck away, he’s going to fight you tooth and nail, because he doesn’t know what’s coming next.

She instructed teachers to explicitly share their classroom schedules and to keep those schedules as predictable as possible for students who lived with such uncertainty.

Sue valued the role she played in supporting teachers and providing meaningful instruction to EHS students; however, she also found this job extremely stressful and eventually overwhelming. She had to report child abuse cases and testify in court regarding those cases. In one of the abuse cases, a parent of an EHS student shot a police officer in the face in front of some of Sue’s EHS preschoolers. On the night of the shooting, she found herself trying to comfort and console those children at the police station because they had to be separated from their parents while the police investigated the incident. One of those students was the child of the shooter. Sue described the aftermath of that experience, asserting that “it definitely left lasting scars.” She continued, “This child will never grow in the way that I wanted or I hoped.” Sue elaborated by discussing her own upbringing. “So coming from a very middle class family and then wanting to change the world and ending up in a situation that was a little bit over my head” left Sue overwhelmed and feeling ill-equipped to deal with so much trauma and vulnerability. Furthermore, Sue had to complete home visits on her own, without a partner. After the police officer was shot and killed, Sue realized, “I didn’t feel safe anymore.” She and her husband

decided to move to another state which allowed Sue to step away from her role at EHS and recoup. Looking back, she stated, “For every ten kids I had, nine were [from] fabulous families who wanted the best for their kids. The rest were not in a good position.”

Characters and relationships. To explore the major influences on her student teaching experience I asked Sue to describe her reasons for pursuing a teaching degree and to identify who/what had the most impact on her student teaching experience. In answering the questions, Sue explained that she eventually realized that her experience with EHS did not dampen her love of teaching. Sue missed teaching so she enrolled in a one-year Master’s program. The culmination of that program included a student teaching placement. During her placement, Sue worked with two teachers who team-taught a third-grade class. Teacher T worked Tuesdays and Fridays and Teacher M, worked Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Sue described Teacher T as very organized and Teacher M as energetic and animated. She expressed gratitude for the opportunity to work with both teachers as she believed she learned from both of their unique teaching styles. Prior to her student teaching experience, Sue worked in Teacher M’s classroom during fall semester as an practicum student for a few hours every week to assist with reading groups. When she began student teaching, Sue was already familiar with the class culture and the students.

Sue’s prior proximity with the third-grade class drove the decision by her MTs to move Sue into a central teaching role “rather quickly.” However, shortly after taking over the class, Sue’s eight-month-old son became gravely ill. His illness necessiated Sue taking a two-and-a-half-week break from student teaching. Being out of the classroom for that length of time left Sue with no dedicated time to simply observe her MTs before stepping into the role of teacher. Hence, upon returning to student teaching, Sue jumped back into the classroom and taught full

days of all subjects for five straight weeks. Teacher T and Teacher M stayed in the classroom and sometimes assisted her, but Sue was responsible for all planning, assessment, class management, and main instruction. While she largely carried the load of the third-grade class, the MTs generously provided feedback. Midway through student teaching after spring break, Sue became the substitute teacher for Teacher T who went on maternity leave. Even though she taught Tuesdays and Fridays without a MT present, Sue continued to be mentored by Teacher M.

As a result of working with Teacher M for an entire academic year (first through a reading practicum and then with student teaching), Sue grew to trust Teacher M as a source of valuable feedback and encouragement. Sue continued to appreciate the caring professionalism Teacher M brought to her vocation. Their relationship and the connection Sue established with her UC during her son's health crisis provided the two most influential relationships of Sue's student teaching placement.

Early action. To understand what Sue defined as impactful in her story of learning to become a professional teacher, she was asked to describe a difficult situation early in her student teaching experience and a triumph that occurred in the early stage of student teaching. Sue explained that her infant son's health emergency created the earliest and most significant crisis of her student teaching experience even though it did not take place in the classroom. With little prior experience in her roles of TC or first-time mom, Sue explained the tension, vulnerability, and uncertainty she experienced when her child suddenly became quite ill:

Well it was hard because I wanted to be reliable and then my son had a fever of 106° and I'm up all night and my husband has the doctor's appointment in the morning and I went to school, and I probably shouldn't have.

When Sue walked into the classroom that morning, Teacher M took one look at Sue and asked what was wrong. Sue explained, "I haven't slept, I think something's really wrong." Her fearful

declaration proved correct. Her son was hospitalized for four days. Sue tried to return to the classroom while her son was still hospitalized, but she was conflicted between her parental duties and her professional commitments. That was when those with more experience and objectivity, Teacher M, Teacher T, and Sue's UC, directed Sue to take some time and focus solely on her son.

Although focusing on her son and his recovery alleviated some tension, Sue felt vulnerable and embarrassed. "Oh my gosh," she thought, "I just created a situation" that required her MTs to contact the university. Sue worried that her mentors and coach, the individuals that would ultimately be assessing her student teaching placement as well as providing her with professional references, would not fully see evidence of her teaching skills and commitment. "I don't like my situation to be a burden to others," Sue commented. Sue believed her absence clearly caused others to change their plans. Finally, Sue was unsure if she could trust the messages she was receiving to put her son first. She decided to trust their words and support. When she returned to her TC position, she again followed their directive to "come back and get to work 'cause you have to finish your stuff," Sue explained.

After navigating the initial stages of her son's illness, Sue returned to the classroom and got to work, acknowledging that she still tried "hard to maintain balance" between worklife and homelife. She recalls an early triumph shortly after returning to her student teaching placement. In January, four of the students she worked with during her fall semester practicum earned standardized reading scores that allowed them to move to reading groups working at higher proficiency. One of those students demonstrated they had begun to read at grade level. Realizing she had helped four students hit important learning targets validated Sue's work. This early

experience reinforced Sue's belief that "all students can learn." Sue explained that it involved "meeting them where they are and helping them grow."

Beginning to think of self as teacher. To understand Sue's process of constructing a teacher identity, she was asked when she first thought of herself as a teacher. Although the reading scores of her four students validated Sue's desire to return to the vocation of teaching, this was not the first time Sue identified herself as a teacher. The first memory Sue had of thinking of herself as a teacher occurred while she worked with children in the EHS program. While working there, she had a set of twins in her class. One of the twins had cerebral palsy and the other twin suffered from severe autism. Unknown to the parents, Sue, or other EHS teachers at the time, the twin with cerebral palsy had full brain functionality; however, the child had no way to demonstrate what he was learning. Even though Sue had no suspicion that the child could participate in the learning activities in her class, she always included him when she taught. She did "tummy time" with him every day to increase his core strength and got him an adaptable chair, specialized utensils, and a computer tablet. With access to appropriate accommodations, one day the student surprised everyone: He used his tablet to answer a question about the book they were reading as a class. Until that moment, when Sue worked with the child, she did not realize that he was learning and keeping pace with the other students: "I had been teaching him," she said. "It was incredible and so awesome!" At that moment, in the midst of her astonishment, Sue saw herself as a teacher.

Major conflict. To understand how Sue defined adversity and success as a teacher, she was asked to describe the greatest difficulty and the greatest accomplishment of her teacher candidacy. Sue explained that two major conflicts arose when she switched roles from the practicum that regularly worked with one reading group in Teacher M and Teacher T's

classroom to the TC who taught all of the students: She had developed a close relationship with the reading group assigned to her during her practicum compared to the new student relationships while student teaching. One of those students expressed frustration at having to share “his” teacher with the whole class. The second conflict also grew out of Sue’s prior role during her practicum. In the first weeks of fall semester, Sue volunteered to help the third-grade class harvest a portion of the school garden. Sue explained that a misunderstanding between Sue and a third-grader occurred that caused that student to think “Sue didn’t know anything.” Sue did not work directly with this student during her practicum, so she could not repair that relationship. However, when she became a TC, Sue realized the need to establish a relationship that fostered learning with the student who loved gardens. By employing a two by ten technique, Sue and the student shared a two-minute conversation every day for ten days to establish a successful working connection. Negotiating this conflict and its resolution led Sue to realize that if she had taken a few minutes to find out the story and motivation behind the original problematic behavior with the student in the garden, she would have “totally avoided” the difficulty. The two conflicts connected to her earlier practicum both taught Sue about the complex dynamics that affect the teacher–student relationship.

Although Sue cited instances of relational discord when asked about difficulties during her teacher candidacy, when asked about triumphs or accomplishments during that semester, she turned her focus away from human dynamics and instead described a successful class project. Sue created a persuasive writing unit that required students to create a travel guide that persuaded potential travelers to journey to a destination of each student’s choosing. Sue taught them how to choose and research suitable vacation destinations. Students then had to compose, type, and illustrate the content of their travel guides. The project was so successful that Sue

published all the travel guides in a book. The outcome of the unit provided Sue with evidence that she could successfully lead a group of students through a challenging project.

Changing focus: From TC to beginning teacher. The purpose of the first interview was to encourage Sue to reflect on the whole of her student teaching experience. At the conclusion of the conversation, after reviewing her time as a TC, Sue highlighted the most meaningful lesson she learned: “If you want students to achieve their best,” Sue explained, “they have to respect you. So you have to have a relationship with them in order to most effectively teach them.”

Looking ahead to first year of teaching. At the conclusion of the first interview, the focus turned to Sue’s first year of teaching. Upon completing her student teaching and earning her master’s degree, Sue accepted a position as a second-grade teacher in a K12 charter school. Looking ahead, Sue’s greatest hope and greatest fear lay anchored in the degree of her effectiveness as a teacher. She feared her performance as a beginning teacher would keep students from making a year’s growth of learning. Yet at the same time, she hoped that she would effectively work with the students placed in her classroom, resulting in their personal and academic growth. Furthermore, Sue hoped to learn and grow with her students and within a school culture which she found philosophically different than the environments she worked in at EHS and during her student teaching placement.

Episode two: First-year teacher. The second interview with Sue occurred in mid-December, four months into her first year of teaching. At the time of the second interview, Sue had nearly completed her first semester as a beginning teacher.

Setting. To place Sue’s narrative in context, she was asked to describe the general setting of her experience as a beginning teacher. Sue explained that she taught a second-grade class in a K-12 public, charter school. There were 620 students in grades K-5 with a student-teacher ratio

of 19 to 1. According to state test scores, 58% of these K-5 students were at least proficient in math and 67% in reading. Her school district neighbored the district in which Sue student taught.

Sue saw a certain paradox in her current place of employment. Although the student body was populated with a high proportion of former public-school students with histories of behavior issues and/or who test below grade level, the culture and curriculum of the school was quite rigorous. Sue had 11 students who tested well below grade level for reading, yet the school administration did not modify its achievement expectations for these students. Additionally, the curriculum used by the school was somewhat scripted and relied a great deal on worksheets. Though Sue agreed with setting rigorous expectations, Sue preferred a more project-based curriculum supported by greater teacher autonomy.

Characters. I asked Sue to describe herself as a teacher from two points of view, her own perspective and her students' perspective, to provide insight into her perception of herself as a teacher. She was also asked to describe adults who regularly interact with her students and her support system. Sue led a learning community comprised of herself, 24 second-graders, several parent volunteers, and one part-time paraeducator. Charter school parents were asked to volunteer 35 hours per academic year per student which reduced teachers' burden of recruiting volunteers. Accordingly, parent volunteers made regular appearances in Sue's second grade class. In particular, the parents of students who were struggling volunteered on a regular basis in Sue's classroom. Sue worked hard to connect with parents by sending "brag emails" and making "brag phone calls." In fact, a one-minute "brag phone call" stood out as one of the

reinforcements Sue offered to students for engaged behavior. Students scheduled a time to call their parents during the school day to tell them about one of their classroom accomplishment.

With all the parental involvement, Sue set boundaries. For instance, she explained that she does not allow parent volunteers access to student grades, even on individual assignments. She held those confidentially. In addition to the parent volunteers, the second graders, and Sue, the only paraeducator involved with this second-grade community played a minimal role. The paraeducator pulled out two students with the lowest performance in reading and math for 30 to 40 minutes daily. Hence, Sue and her second-graders played the central characters in the narrative of Sue's first year of teaching, with parent volunteers and the paraeducator making up the supporting cast.

Sue was asked to list four words or phrases that described her as a teacher, Sue immediately indicated that she sees herself as "caring and warm." She chose "accountability" as her second response, explaining that she holds her students accountable to own their learning, to take care of their community environment, and to care for each other. For example, Sue recounted:

Every student is expected to do two things in my classroom. Number one is try, and number two is ask questions. So whenever I have a breakdown, I can say, 'Oh, did we try really hard?' And then they'd say yes or no; they, 90 percent of the time, say yes. And then I say, 'Oh, did you ask any questions?'

Sue reported that students usually admitted that they did not ask questions. When the child realized they did not ask questions, Sue prompted them by saying, "Is there something that you would like to ask or is there a certain area where you're not sure what's going on?" This strategy seemed to increase student ownership for their own learning. Similar strategies supported students learning to clean up their desks and work areas and to constructively respond to their fellow classmates. Next, Sue described herself as an "active listener." Finally, Sue chose the

word “active” to describe her teacher-self. She intentionally incorporated and encouraged movement and physical activity in her classroom.

Sue was then asked to list four words or phrases she believed her students would use to describe her as their teacher. Sue believed they would describe her as “kind, friendly, fun, and caring.” As she reflected on these perceptions held by her second-graders, she summarized, “I think that everyone in here [the classroom] really thinks that they are important.”

Influences outside the classroom also positively and negatively impact the story of Sue’s first year of teaching. She described a strong support system comprised of her former UC (who became a good friend and trusted provider of feedback), her husband, and several non-school friends as positive influences. However, challenges also come from outside the classroom. Sue pinpointed a few negative influences impacting her first-year experience. The most notable of these influences centered around school policies outlining specific expectations for in-class student behavior. These expectations also impacted the types of instructional strategies available to teachers. These policies and expectations described students sitting at their desks, feet flat on the floor, their eyes tracking the teacher for much of the day. In contrast, Sue’s classroom management strategies allowed for more freedom of movement. She explained, “‘Cause I think if the kid is standing and is engaged, then why am I going to stop his engagement to force him to sit down?” Complications arose when some individuals noticed students in Sue’s second grade class not sitting properly in their desks. They reported to the school administration that Sue’s class management needed to improve.

Subsequently, school administrators frequently visited Sue’s classroom to check her management style. Sue welcomed the visits but stated, “I do not feel very supported there [with administration] ‘cause it’s very negative.” Sue went on to explain the feedback she received:

“The reports [from administration visits] are like, ‘less than a quarter of students working,’ and like, I just don’t agree.” She refused to argue with administration, after initially attempting to dialogue about the reports and subsequently discovering the strength of the cultural norms surrounding appropriate student behavior during classroom instruction. Hence, Sue did not contradict the feedback she received and agreed to the suggested courses of action. The lack of support and the limited dialogue about student engagement and corresponding instructional strategies contrasted Sue’s student teaching experience. During her student teaching placement, her MTs and UC influenced, but did not prescribe, Sue’s approach to instruction through regular collaborative dialogue. As she considered her support system in her current teaching position, Sue concluded, “I’ve not connected very well with a lot of people [administrators and veteran teachers] at this school.”

Early perceptions and experiences. The majority of questions asked in the second face-to-face interview were designed to understand Sue’s early perceptions and experiences as a beginning teacher. She was asked what she enjoyed most about teaching and what she found most difficult. Sue was also questioned about her expectations, what had surprised her as a beginning teacher, her professional practices and goals, and how teaching in her own classroom differed from student teaching.

When she could set aside the difficulties surrounding conflicting ideas of effective class management and pedagogy, Sue found great joy when students took pride in their learning. “I like teaching cause I like seeing them grow,” she shared, “and seeing them be excited about things.” To further facilitate this dynamic, Sue planned to use student pre- and post-work during the Spring semester to illustrate to her second-graders the learning they had done. She looked

forward to pointing out to them what they had learned: “Remember when you were so upset about this,” she explained, “Look how far you’ve come.”

Sue looked forward to encouraging students about the academic progress they had made, but she admitted that the large proportion of her students performing below-grade level that entered her class presented challenges. Sue explained, “I was not prepared for how low my class would be. And then on the other extreme, how high the other kids would be I have almost no average [students].” Over half of Sue’s students performed at low proficiency, a quarter performed at a high level of proficiency, and the remaining students performed at grade-level. At the beginning of her first semester, Sue discovered that students found her lessons “super easy for some and super hard for the others.” In her previous experience, differentiating lessons meant that Sue focused on a large group of grade-level learners, while accommodating smaller clusters of students at both the high and low end of performance. The school provided only one special educator for 630 students. Consequently, Sue’s teaching workload grew as the responsibility of differentiation and modification of lessons, as well as the corresponding paperwork, fell solely on her. Furthermore, there were few veteran teachers to offer guidance. Of the five educators teaching second grade with Sue, only one teacher possessed previous experience teaching at this grade level at this specific charter school. Hence, the various levels of inexperience increased the amount of time spent on developing effective strategies for Sue and her team.

Despite the unanticipated difficulties, Sue remained determined to find ways to teach her diverse group of learners and adapt the curriculum so that it reflected both her teaching philosophy and the requirements of the charter school. For example, to facilitate differentiation of lessons and aid students in gauging their (and Sue’s) comprehension of lessons taught, Sue encouraged students to self-assess their learning by using a simple formative assessment

strategy. She asked students to rate their understanding of a lesson. If they did not understand the lesson they rated their comprehension as a “1”; if they understood some of the lesson but questions remained, they chose “2” as their comprehension level; finally, students who felt confident in their understanding of the lesson rated themselves at a “3.” While Sue retaught the level 1 learners, level 2 students wrote down two of their own questions, and level 3 students wrote a step-by-step description of the material covered. Sue then used the questions and written descriptions with the whole class to address their gaps in learning. Sue’s strategy promoted student ownership of their learning, aided her understanding of the level of comprehension among her diverse learners, and engaged students at various skill levels.

Another example of Sue adjusting to unanticipated difficulties in her first year of teaching centered around her adaptation of the curriculum to both reflect her teaching philosophy and meet the goals set by the school. Sue described the curriculum at the school as “worksheet heavy.” She avoided using worksheets too often as they focused on students’ ability to read the worksheet and therefore limited access of the subject to readers who struggled. This inherent limitation of worksheets proved especially problematic for her diverse group of learners; thus, Sue adapted the current unit on the human body to include more sensory approaches. Sue explained one approach: “I’m gonna do the journey of an apple, and like, bring an apple in and talk through it. Have them write about it, and really think about it, and do it in groups.” Students will slowly eat an apple, examining and recording each step necessary to eat and digest the fruit by asking questions such as, what did we do first? And what helped us to that? Sue believed this approach to the curriculum would “be more beneficial than labeling the digestive system over and over again” on worksheets. Finding strategies that incorporated both her approach to

instruction as well as movement toward the goals and learning objectives of the curriculum amplified Sue's professional teaching voice.

Looking ahead. During the conversation, Sue explained that when she walked into her classroom in the fall, she expected that her students would “all love me, and I knew that I could make them better people.” Sue shared a final story to illustrate the level of commitment she had to make her students better people. “I have one student who is very defiant, and has a hard time, and really hates school and wouldn't come [at the beginning of the school year], and like it was a fight.” Sue worked with the parents of the student and pledged that “I would never send him out of my room ever.” The student, being aware of Sue's pledge, would shove his desk around the room, and sometimes pull items out of his desk and throw them around. Sue responded to his defiance by explaining “Every time he was being crazy I'd go behind him and say, ‘There's nothing you can do that will make me not want you here.’” The most extreme defiant behavior occurred when the student flipped over his desk. Because this endangered other students, Sue asked someone to come into the classroom. When this occurred, Sue told the student, “I am not going to make you leave, but I have to ask someone else to come in.” That school official moved the student out of the classroom. Sue continued to consistently responded to his behavior by calmly setting boundaries; after two weeks, the student's behavior began to improve. Sue explained that now, he controlled his impulse to act out, he volunteered to help with class chores, and “he's a joy to be around.” Sue met with him weekly for tutoring. Sue described their present relationship, “He's excited about tutoring, he finishes all of his work. I mean he's still very low [performing], and I have to get onto him because he wants to be the first finished” but now he liked school and engaged in learning. Furthermore, Sue developed an effective partnership with

the boy's parents. Sue shared that his mother recently exclaimed, "I can't even believe the change [in his behavior and attitude toward school]; it's been really great!"

Purpose for teaching. Sue's personal belief that as a beginning teacher she would "make her students better people" strongly corresponded with what she defined as the purpose for teaching: "making better humans." Sue explained,

I do affirmations with them before we take a test. I do have quite a few students who are very fixed [believing they cannot learn] and they just get overwhelmed pretty easily. So I say, "I am amazing. I am incredible," and they repeat back, "I am amazing. I am incredible. I can achieve anything through hard work." We work a lot [through affirmations] on things that they want to be so they see those characteristics in themselves instead of can't, won't, don't.

Epilogue: Classroom observation. I observed Sue's class in mid-December. At the beginning of the observation, the students were engaged in learning about fact families in math. Sue worked on a Smart Board while students (15 boys and nine girls) followed along using markers on individual dry erase boards. After they worked as a whole group on some problems, Sue gave them problems to solve with a partner. She walked around offering hints and encouragement as she checked for comprehension and answered questions. Sue's classroom had 24 desks arranged in six groups of four. The desks bounded a large rug in front of the Smart Board that marked out a community area. Students, wearing school uniforms of khaki bottoms and polo shirts colored red or blue, sat on the rug for different purposes throughout the day. Numerous posters and bulletin boards populated the walls of the bright classroom.

After lunch recess, I conducted a set of observations at 15-minute intervals to record Sue's behaviors that indicated different levels of warmth and control (see Appendix C, Figure C.1). During the 60-minute period, the class focused on reading. Sue briefly outlined the activities every student had to complete during reading period, answered questions, and then released students to do their work. Students demonstrated little confusion and turned their

attention to the activities Sue provided, indicating that students were familiar and comfortable with this reading routine. They moved about the room occasionally and talked with other students at times. I recorded 27 high warmth behaviors, two low warmth behaviors, seven high control behaviors, and 17 low control behaviors. Plotting these behaviors on the warmth and control graph placed the learning climate of Sue's classroom largely in the upper left corner of quadrant C: low control, high warmth (see Appendix C, Figure C.2). Sue demonstrated behaviors that reflected her low control of student learning when she organized learning around student questions and problems, allowed students to progress through their required reading tasks according to their preferences, and made active engagement the center of student attention. At one point several students had questions about the word "encyclopedia." Using a whisper voice to maintain the tone of the classroom, Sue helped the students decode the pronunciation and definition of encyclopedia. Behaviors throughout the observation that reflected Sue's high warmth toward her students included frequent praise of student's strong efforts, productive thinking, and on-task behaviors. Sue stated her expectations of student learning and conduct in positive terms, and she reinforced those expectations by orally thanking students when they exhibited the desired ends. Because Sue circulated among her students throughout the 60 minutes, student behavior remained appropriate and generally on-task. Sue paced the reading activities by reminding students how much time had elapsed and how much time remained. These reminders came more frequently as the reading period drew to a close.

Early in the second interview, Sue listed four words/phrases that described her as a teacher: warm and caring, holding students accountable for their learning and actions, active listener, and active. The behavior and activities I noted during the observation time supported Sue's choices of descriptors. Throughout the observation period Sue monitored the engagement

of her students by listening to what they talked about, observing their actions, and redirecting their focus when necessary. She did not limit evidence of student engagement to students sitting at their desk quietly working on an activity which was at odds with the narrow definition of student engagement used by the school administration. Students did sit and work quietly at their desks, but Sue looked for additional demonstrations of student interest to indicate engagement. Consequently, her classroom was a hub of activity. Sue allowed students to move about the room if their movement did not distract from the learning goals of the lesson. When the class transitioned from math to the next subject, Sue said, “Everyone has to do five times three jumping jacks!” Sue used formative assessment techniques to measure student comprehension. For instance, at the end of the math lesson on fact families, students completed a three-part exit ticket: (a) What is a fact family? (b) Rate your understanding: 1- Never heard of it; 2- Got it, need practice; 3- Stack and solve this problem: $324 + 89$. All of these activities contributed to an overall picture of Sue as a warm and caring, attentive, active, student-centered teacher, thus, supporting her self-perception.

Sue’s Within-Case Analysis

Sue’s teacher identity began to form while she worked as a behavior specialist with Early Head Start (EHS). Referring to Wenger’s (1998) model of the cyclical process through which individuals construct professional identities, Sue’s teacher identity began to take shape as she would participate in social situations at school, reflected upon her participation and the responses she received while participating, and turned her reflection into action (reification) by adjusting her thinking and behavior based upon the conclusions arrived at through reflection. Wenger (1998) referred to his three-stage model of professional identity construction as negotiating meaning (see Figure 2.3 in Chapter 2). Sue received validation for her abilities and love of

teaching during her time at EHS. Sue's epiphany occurred when she realized her teaching efforts directed toward the boy with cerebral palsy resulted in him learning was pivotal in the initial formation of her teacher identity.

After that initial teacher identity formation, Sue took a break from working with children; however, her love of helping children learn and grow inspired her to pursue a master's degree in education. As Sue progressed through her EPP her fledgling teacher identity came out of hibernation. Each time she related to her MTs, UC, or her students during her practicum and subsequent student teaching placement, her teacher identity stood up, stretched, and grew stronger. Sue used these experiences and the feedback she received to answer the central question of identity: Who am I at this moment in this context? As a result, Sue's teacher identity grew from a fleeting idea or identification during her EHS career to a more fully developed picture of herself as a teacher.

During her practicum and teacher candidacy, Sue's MTs established the social context in which Sue constructed her teacher identity. Together they formed a supportive, creative teaching team in charge of the third-grade class where Sue worked as a TC. Their feedback influenced Sue's process of negotiating meaning (Wenger, 1998) and impacted her teacher identity formation in two aspects. First, though Sue and her MTs followed the timeline and process of a traditional student teaching model, Sue's student teaching experience also featured an unusual opportunity for Sue to work with two qualified, experienced, professional educators. Therefore, two teachers with different styles, strengths, and limitations provided Sue with distinct responses and critiques to all aspects of her teaching. In some situations, this dual feedback may have become confusing and/or contradictory for TCs, but for Sue, interacting with an effective team of two MTs provided richer analysis of her practice and provided material for deeper reflection.

Second, when Sue worked in their classroom as a reading practicum student during the fall semester, a mutual trust grew between the MTs and Sue. Their confidence in and familiarity with Sue's abilities propelled her into the central role of classroom teacher more quickly than a TC with no prior relationship with the students and teachers. Sue explained, "The students knew me, so there was not a period [during student teaching] of getting to know the classroom or the routines. I kind of just stepped right in." The rapid movement from reading practicum to the primary classroom instructor fit Sue's interpretation of her teacher-self as a confident learner at that moment in time due to the many iterations of learning as becoming Sue had already completed in that specific social context.

By the beginning of her student teaching placement, Sue, her two MTs, and her UC worked in the social context of a CoP. Wenger (1998) identified three required components for a functional CoP: mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoire. The conversations and actions necessary to move TC Sue into the role of primary classroom instructor within the first weeks of student teaching points to individuals "engaged in actions whose meanings they negotiate with one another" (i.e., mutual engagement; Wenger, 1998, p. 73). Furthermore, the new division of duties revolving around the joint enterprise of teaching their third-grade students suggested that the four stakeholders negotiated a specific response to their situation (i.e., joint enterprise; Wenger, 1998). Finally, through practice, feedback, and reflection each day, Sue and her mentors constructed a set of shared routines, vocabularies, stories, and concepts that informed their practice (i.e., shared repertoire; Wenger, 1998).

The early stability of Sue's CoP seemed to indicate that without an unusual challenge to the CoP, the construction of her teacher identity would follow a predictable trajectory of learning and growth. The validation Sue experienced as she worked to repair the teacher-student

relationship damaged during a misunderstanding in the school garden and her excitement when describing the experience of leading her third graders through a project-based unit through which they produced travel brochures supported this claim. But challenge arose, and more significantly, it arose from outside of Sue's CoP. The illness of her infant son, which occurred shortly after Sue stepped into the role of the main instructor of the third-grade class, perforated the membrane between Sue's personal and professional identities. That perforation challenged the stability of Sue's CoP and the trajectory of the construction of her teacher identity. Suddenly the question, Who am I at this moment in this context? grew more complex. As Sue struggled to answer this question, she had to develop strategies to determine which identity, parent or TC, should occupy the main focus of her attention and effort. This challenge forced Sue to establish criteria that enabled her to adjust the fulcrum around which she balanced her personal and professional obligations: (a) mutual engagement with her CoP, affirming their commitment to a joint enterprise; and (b) continued development of a shared repertoire of her CoP in conjunction with the learning and growth that occurred in her relationship with her co-parent. As she continued to grow in her ability to find a balance between her personal and professional life, Sue acknowledged, "I try hard to maintain balance." The knowledge and wisdom Sue gained through her involvement with her CoP during and following her son's health crisis influenced the formation of her professional identity. Wenger (1998) highlighted the significance of this type of learning, stating,

Learning is not just a mental process such as neurological memory, information processing in the brain, or mechanical habituation though mental processes are surely involved. Such learning has to do with the development of our practices and our ability to negotiate meaning. It is not just the acquisition of memories, habits, and skills, but the formation of an identity. Our experiences and our membership inform each other, pull each other, transform each other. We create ways of participating in a practice in the very process of contributing to making that practice what it is. (p. 96)

Interestingly, Sue's present professional context presented her with another dilemma of balancing competing identities. As a TC, she had to establish a balance between her personal and professional identities. Her dilemma required she find a balance between the professional identity she constructed with her MTs and UC through mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoire and the professional identity defined by her current administration. The professional learning environment of Sue's present job seemed limited in offerings of activities modified by adjectives such as "mutual", "joint", or "shared." The narrow definition of appropriate student behavior enforced by the school culture seemed to correspond with a narrowed definition of preferred teacher behavior and practice. Sue graduated from her EPP with a strong beginning teacher identity formed in a collaborative environment undergirded by constructive feedback, mutual trust, and a shared philosophy of instruction. The seemingly entrenched values and practices of Sue's current school pushed and pulled against her newly formed professional identity. By the end of her first semester of teaching, Sue found herself under administrative scrutiny due to her class management choices. Finding few opportunities for exchanges of ideas and opinions with her administration to flourish in her current professional environment would require Sue to significantly alter her idea of an effective teacher. Again, seeking to establish equilibrium, she hoped "to be myself, but also what they expect so it's a weird fine line."

The reflection stage exhibited the key difference between the negotiating meaning process Sue participated in as a TC and the negotiating meaning process she participated in as a beginning teacher. As a TC, Sue negotiated the validity of her beliefs and actions against and with fellow practitioners who held similar ideas of effective teaching. As a beginning teacher she did so against a backdrop of ideas and ideals significantly different than those she adopted

during student teaching. She was required to adjust or not adjust her professional beliefs and behaviors in the context of determining the balance between continued employment and adherence to a preferred pedagogy. This balance would impact Sue's continued formation of teacher identity. Regrettably, Sue did not belong to an effective CoP at her charter school that could aid her in this challenge as there existed few opportunities to engage in actions whose meanings members "negotiate with one another" (Wenger 1998, p. 73). From Sue's perspective, the cultural and political forces at the charter school worked toward maintaining the status quo of its organizational culture.

Rose's Story

"There's a lot of risk, but there's really high reward at the same time because of that."

Episode one: Student teaching. When I first met and interviewed Rose, a white female in her early 20s, she had just earned her bachelor's degree in science education, and her career as a professional educator was just beginning. The purpose of the interview focused on exploring Rose's student teaching capstone experience and its impact on the formation of her teacher identity.

Setting. When Rose was asked to describe her student teaching placement, Rose explained that she worked in a suburban high school with two MTs. Rose and her two MTs followed a modified three-stage traditional model of student teaching: (a) a short period of observing the MT; (b) the TC gradually taking over the responsibilities for planning lessons, delivering lessons, and assessing student learning; and (c) the TC phasing out of involvement with the class and the MT returning to the central role of class instructor. Rose's first MT, Teacher T, taught two subjects, biology and genetics, and had no prior experience of coaching a TC through their final semester of teacher preparation. Her second MT, Teacher E, taught

anatomy and had mentored several TCs throughout his career. As a TC, Rose worked with two sections of each class, resulting in a schedule of two planning periods and six teaching periods.

When Rose first met Teacher T, she expressed a desire to take “over the class a little bit faster than the traditional model.” Teacher T agreed. Consequently, Rose forwent the opportunity to observe Teacher T teach her classes and almost immediately found herself “100% taking over her biology and genetics classes.” “Taking over” meant the responsibility for planning, delivering, and assessing the material covered in each lesson fell solely on Rose. Teacher T remained in the biology and genetics classes quietly observing Rose and the classroom students. Rose explained, “Oftentimes she’d coach me through the class. ‘Okay, here’s some things that you can improve for the next time.’” Rose’s second MT, Teacher E, employed a slightly different approach to integrating Rose into the TC role. He did not immediately hand over all instructional responsibilities to her. Rose observed Teacher E teach two sections of anatomy for one week before she started to progressively take over planning, delivering, and assessing lessons.

Even though she assumed full responsibility for Teacher E’s anatomy classes more gradually than she did for Teacher T’s classes, by the beginning of the third week of the semester, Rose filled the role of instructor in all three classes. Teacher E continued to help Rose plan the anatomy lessons, but she taught the lessons and assessed student learning. Both Teacher E and Teacher T provided coaching and feedback throughout Rose’s student teaching placement but rarely directly participated in class instruction. At mid-semester, the work of preparing for and teaching three subjects for the first time overwhelmed Rose, prompting her to ask her MTs for help with lesson planning. They happily obliged, and Rose found her teaching load more manageable. Despite reaching a near-breaking point at mid-semester, Rose stood by her choice

during the interview to ask her MTs to allow her to take over their classes so early in the semester. Rose explained,

With three preps, it was wild, but it was awesome. I don't think I would have had it any other way because I got to teach three really awesome courses, got a lot of experiences but it was a lot.

Character and relationships. When I asked Rose about her reasons for pursuing a career in teaching and who/what was most impactful during her teacher candidacy, Rose explained that when she began her college career she intended to earn a degree in bio-medical science and enter the medical field. To her dismay, Rose said, “[I] didn’t really like the courses I was taking or the path I was going down.” In the midst of considering a variety of degree and career options, an opportunity to coach Science Olympiad for her former high school presented itself. She accepted, saying, “‘Cause I have problems with saying no.” As a Science Olympiad coach, Rose worked with students in ninth through 12th grade, teaching them anatomy and preparing them to compete in the Olympiad events. “I got into it and I just fell in love,” Rose shared. When the teams Rose worked with competed in regional meets, they won first, second, and third place. At that moment, Rose thought, “Okay, maybe teaching is what I want to do.” Rose was compelled by the personal and intellectual challenge of working with students who were driven to learn and excel. She returned to college and changed her major to science education.

Of the two MTs Rose worked with, she formed a deeper connection with Teacher T. who greatly influenced Rose’s thinking about classroom management. As a beginning TC, Rose confessed that she did not “have enough of a backbone” to Teacher T. Rose explained that the mentor responded, “I will toughen you up.” The ensuing toughening process created a bond of trust between the two. Rose described herself at the beginning of student teaching as “bright-eyed and bushy-tailed” and wanting to do everything without assistance. By mid-semester,

however, a less eager and more overwhelmed Rose felt frustrated that Teacher T seemed “too uninvolved” in the biology and genetics classes. When Rose communicated her frustration and need for support to her mentor, Teacher T happily reengaged, explaining that from her vantage point, Rose had displayed no sign of distress. Rose explained that this honest and productive conversation strengthened their relationship. In addition to preparing Rose to effectively manage her classrooms, Teacher T also helped her develop and prioritize assessment strategies. At the end of their mentoring relationship, Rose “almost cried because, I was like, ‘I’m going to miss you so much.’” At the time of the first interview, the two educators had remained in contact through texts and emails.

Teacher E, Rose’s other MT, implemented a more collaborative approach to working with Rose. Consequently, they developed a “more relaxed” relationship, with no high nor low points. Their collaboration played an important role in Rose’s student teaching experience, and Rose explained that they maintained a “pleasant but neutral” working relationship.

Early action. When Rose was asked to describe a difficult situation and a successful situation early in her teacher candidacy, Rose related a story about working with Teacher T. Teacher T used her classroom cell phone policy as an opportunity to strengthen Rose’s “teacher-backbone,” as they called it. As students entered Teacher T’s classroom, her policy required that they surrender their cell phones for the duration of class time; however, Rose did not like the policy. More accurately, Rose did not like to enforce the policy. So as a novice TC, she did not require students to turn in their phones. Instead, she decided to trust them to not use their phones during class. Rose explained that Teacher T “called her on her lack of enforcement” of the policy, pointing out that Rose’s acquiesce to student preferences compromised her ability to manage the classroom. Teacher T reminded Rose of her goal to grow in assertiveness and

required Rose to enforce the policy of no cell phones. Rose realized that to enforce the policy, she had to trust her MT and learn to deal with student resistance. When she more frequently enforced the policy, Rose saw evidence of increased student engagement. With that evidence, she began to believe in the benefits of the no cell phone policy. At the beginning of the semester, Rose felt angry and frustrated about enforcing the policy, but “by the end of the semester,” Rose said, “I’m like, ‘This was so worth it!’”

In the midst of learning to enforce the no cell phone policy, Rose experienced some early triumphs as a TC. She designed lessons that required students to move about the classroom and collaborate with others. The more she incorporated movement and required students to communicate with each other through writing and speech, the less resistance she sensed from students to learn about science. Rose related, “It was really awesome to actually get the kids talking.” Rose explained her satisfaction of hearing them “start talking about mitosis and all the different phases of it.” Seeing the positive results of intentionally incorporating movement and collaboration into her lesson plans helped Rose establish her preference for and belief in dialogical pedagogy.

Beginning to think of self as teacher. When Rose was asked to describe when she first thought of herself as a teacher, Rose explained that it was a gradual process. As Rose gained confidence in her approach to teaching and in her ability to manage the classroom, she began to think of herself as a teacher. After Spring Break (mid-semester), Rose explained she felt “like she hit her stride with her classes.” At that point, students consistently came to her first with their questions and concerns about class. Rose shared, “I started feeling like, okay, I guess this is my classroom, instead of my MT’s.”

Major conflict. For the growth of any new facet of one's social or personal identity to endure, it must undergo challenge. When Rose was asked to describe the greatest difficulty she faced and the greatest accomplishment of her student teaching experience, Rose described a situation that occurred via email. The challenge to Rose's budding teacher identity came in the form of a lengthy "e-missile" from a student accusing her of "being a terrible teacher." The student threatened to involve the school principal and counselors to "get Rose in line." Understandably upset, Rose consulted both Teacher T and Teacher E. They both provided Rose with logistical and emotional support, encouraging her to talk with the student in order to gain greater understanding of the impetus of the complaints. A few clarifying conversations about missing work and opportunities to make up that work resulted in resolution of the student's issues. From this conflict, Rose learned the importance of continually clarifying communication with students. She also resolved to act as what she called the "thermostat not the thermometer" in her interactions with students: "If the teacher sets the tone, students will follow." As a result, Rose understood that when she approached students, "despite whatever's going on outside," Rose explained, "you have to be calm, collected, and you have to be the level-headed one, no matter what." Rose also learned from her mentors and this experience that challenging situations would always arise in teaching and she felt that the thermostat versus thermometer approach provided a basis from which to respond to those challenges.

At the end of her student teaching placement, Rose received a few cards from students expressing their appreciation of the efforts she made as their teacher. Rose shared the messages: "You believed in me when I didn't," and "You made me love science and want to come to school every day." These sentiments opened Rose's eyes to the impact she made on some of her students. For Rose, these cards memorialized her greatest accomplishments as a TC.

Changing focus: From TC to beginning teacher. I asked Rose to explain how the difficulties and successes she experienced during student teaching influenced her as a beginning teacher. Rose shared that she concluded her student teaching experience with two truths about herself as a teacher:

I just kind of feel like, for lack of a better word, I have less of a BS tolerance and that I'm more willing to call out things that are detrimental to the learning environment, whether it is I see a cellphone or a kid says something that they shouldn't have said that could be insensitive to another kid.

In tandem to that truth, Rose also believed, "If you're not having difficulties, I don't think you're doing your best job." Employing a growth mindset, Rose believed that difficulties she may encounter as a teacher would drive her to do better. She planned to frame difficulties by admitting, "This wasn't the best but it doesn't mean it has to stay that way."

Looking ahead to first year of beginning teacher. As the first interview concluded, I asked Rose to identify her greatest fear and greatest hope for her first year of teaching. Rose explained that any situation in which her students felt unwanted or that they could not succeed in her classroom would greatly concern her: "If there's ever a case of students not feeling safe and comfortable in my class, that's something that deeply discomforts me." Correspondingly, Rose hoped that "kids feel comfortable, safe, and perhaps that, I kind of change their minds about science!"

Episode two: First year teacher.

The second interview with Rose occurred in mid-December, four months into her first year of professional teaching. The questions asked during the second interview centered on Rose's early experiences and perceptions of her first year of professional teaching.

Setting. The second interview was conducted near the conclusion of Rose's first semester of teaching high school chemistry and biology at a large urban high school. The school in which Rose teaches ranked among the top public college preparatory schools in the state.

Characters. To gain insight into the classroom interactions during Rose's first year of teaching, I asked Rose to describe herself from two perspectives, her own perspective and her students' perspective, and to list the involvement of any other individuals that may have joined Rose and her students throughout the day. Rose provided four words or phrases that she used to describe herself as a teacher. First, she believed she was compassionate and giving, explaining that she worked hard to provide as much support as possible to her students. Next, Rose described her teacher self as "very patient, whether it's with trying to explain something and it's like the fifth time through" or waiting for the class to quiet down: she explained that she chooses patience over frustration. Third, she reiterated the thermostat metaphor when she described herself as calm. "I learned to be the thermostat, not the thermometer," Rose explained. "You should always approach the classroom in a calm manner. There's really no reason to be angry. They're kids." Finally, Rose chose "teaching in a way that is fun, exciting, it's relatable. I want to be the teacher that kids feel like they are getting something out of this class." Rose intentionally included skills and content that related to the world of her students: "writing and presenting. Those are lifelong skills that they're gonna need no matter what career they're doing."

When asked during the interview to change the focus from self-reflection to viewing herself through the eyes of her students, Rose thought back to student feedback and found four words or phrases they might have used to describe her:

Based on what students have told me, being calm, being patient, being kind and considerate. . . . Just being open to just listening. I'm not super by the book. I have a lot of flexibility. Hopefully they're describing me as fun.

The descriptors Rose hoped students used to portray her closely related to the elements of her jobs she most enjoyed. Witnessing students succeed, achieve, and apply their learning to real-life situations delighted Rose. She shared,

It's just really cool to see them learning and enjoying, having fun. I love this line of work because it's a challenge every day. You never know what's going to come, and even class period to class period you never know.

In all of Rose's science classes, she partnered with students in each class period to work together to learn biology and life skills. Once a day, an additional educator joined one of the classes. During her second period, an English language tutor worked with English as a second language (ESL) students to understand the course material, to stay motivated, and to turn in their work. Rose did not co-plan with the ESL tutor, nor did they coteach any lessons; however, Rose viewed the tutor as a valuable ally. "She's a support because those students don't have a lot of confidence in their science skills, so she really helps."

Early perceptions and experiences. The bulk of the questions asked during the second interview were designed to understand Rose's early perceptions and experiences as a beginning teacher. I asked what she enjoyed most about teaching and what she found the most challenging. Additionally, I queried Rose about her expectations, what surprised her, her professional practices and goals, and how student teaching differed from teaching in her own classroom.

As a beginning teacher, Rose reflected that "no matter all the experiences that I've had student teaching, [they] still haven't even prepared me for all the things I've seen this first semester." Rose used many of the ideas, techniques, and strategies she learned as a TC, but she found the most difficult aspect of her job was having to make split-second decisions about class

management and the nuanced enforcement of classroom policies. She cited a recent classroom incident to elucidate her point:

Today I had a student who came in to take the quiz. She's like, 'I took it, I took it, I took this already. You have this. You must have lost it.' I'm like, 'I'll look for it, but...' In the moment, very quickly, I have to make decisions and turn around and give students answers.

Rose felt the tension between balancing student needs and desires and her leadership role in the classroom. She related that it “goes back to students and making sure they're being taken care of [and] they're treated fairly, but you're also maintaining your professional stakehold and maintaining that position of power and respect. Because you can't just be their friend.” Rose felt the turmoil of rapidly searching for this middle ground of fair treatment of students while maintaining her position as a professional educator in the context of student witnesses. As a student teacher, she could rely on her MTs and their established policies to inform her split-second decisions. As a beginning teacher with limited experience, she stood alone in implementing and/or defending policies about situations she likely did not fully anticipate. This inexperience left room for discomfort and doubt.

Though Rose's inexperience left only discomfort and doubt, she knew she would enjoy creating her own classroom organization and practices. As a TC, Rose thought about and planned how she would organize her classroom and which pedagogical practices she would employ. As a beginning teacher near the end of her first semester of teaching, she believed that the plans she constructed during her student teaching experience paralleled her reality of her classroom. She taught in a classroom designed for the study of biology, featuring lab tables and necessary equipment. On a regular basis, her students worked in groups engaging in hands-on learning just as she envisioned. However, in the mix of her organized classroom and collaborative lessons, the byproducts of inexperience once again emerged. She did not imagine the difficulty of handling

so many new layers: managing new students in new situations under a variety of unforeseen circumstances while developing and teaching new units. Rose shared, “In so many ways I feel like it’s so much different than I would’ve ever expected, and then it’s also just new. It’s my first go ‘round on some of this stuff, so it’s kind of crazy.” Yet, not all things unexpected lead to vexation. Rose found herself pleasantly surprised by and grateful for an unexpected wealth of quality collaboration in her department. Rose identified the attitude of the department as, “Let’s make it awesome together versus let’s make it awesome separately.” She added, “I’m super, super grateful that everyone in my department is behind me, supporting me, and we’re really making the learning the best we can for kids.”

End of the day. At the end of a typical day of teaching, Rose went back to her office and continued to work. She made herself available to students hoping, “that students feel like they can come contact me if they need to.” Additionally, she prepared for the next day by making copies and finalizing lesson plans. Then she focused on, “thinking about, okay, this was awesome. I’m going to do this next year, make some notes in my planner, or let’s think about doing something different next year.” Usually on Thursday evenings, Rose would put her lesson planner away and perused recipes in order to bake something to take to her colleagues on Friday morning, illustrating that sometimes collegiality tastes delicious.

Support system. Rose found support as a beginning teacher from four sources. First, her “amazing colleagues” in her high school STEM department who generously shared their ideas, inclusion, and encouragement. Additionally, she belonged to a cohort of 17 new teachers in her district to understand and process the unique qualities of the first year of teaching. These developing friendships provided Rose opportunities for fun. Rose explained that added benefit, “I have a lot of people outside my department that I can talk to” about the challenges of this

stage of their careers. Third, Rose maintained contact with a few mentors who did not teach at her school who she was, “also able to talk to and get advice from.” Finally, Rose talked with her mom daily, “I can vent to her, I can tell her about these awesome things.” Having identified the undergirding around her, Rose stated, “I feel really supported in many different ways from many different people in many different ways”

Professional goals. Bolstered by her support system, Rose chose differentiation in instruction as her primary professional goal for three reasons:

I really wanted to, [first], make that my focus because I don’t think you can ever differentiate too much, and you’re always going to have students who need it. Two, that’s kind of a focus of the school. And three, that’s something I’m really passionate about is trying to make learning, especially in a STEM discipline, accessible to everyone, and make kids feel successful in something they may not have always felt success in in the past.

Toward this goal, Rose taught a lesson on the cell cycle using differentiated readings about cancer. She had students rate their ideas of their own reading levels and divided them into groups accordingly. Each group read a differentiated text about cancer research, worked together to summarize the reading, then presented the summary of their research article to their classmates. Rose said, “This is actually the first time I asked them to rank themselves on the reading, but this is the second time we’ve done a leveled reading with the bio books, summarize, share, so on so forth.” Rose’s choice to allow students to rank their own reading ability stemmed from, “I like giving them a voice, and I like giving them choice.” This self-assessment also provided Rose with insight into how her students thought about themselves as learners.

Difference between student teaching and first year of teaching. The concluding portion of the second interview with Rose focused on final reflections about her new position as a beginning teacher:

I just feel a lot more (*pause*). What's the word? I want to say gravity because it just feels like so much more important. I remember that very first day sitting in the classroom at the front. As my students were coming in, I'm like, 'oh my god. I'm the only person here. I'm responsible for this. I'm going to be driving this car for the semester. There's a lot of risk, but there's really high reward at the same time because of that.

In addition to the weight of responsibility, Rose sensed,

Although it's really scary, at the same time it's also really powerful because it feels like you can do the things that you really want to do when maybe your MT might have been like, 'Oh, I don't know about. . . .'

Rose's sense of power came from the absence of two battles she fought as a TC: the aforementioned limitations placed on her by MTs and the freedom from not fighting to convince students of her teacher identity. "It was established from day one: I am the teacher."

Rose did not inhabit the role of teacher casually. She understood the responsibility of effectively teaching new content. Although she constantly dealt with new material and new situations, she found it helpful to connect with her past experience. She explained, "This semester I'm really finding my way of building off what I started to get from student teaching. It felt like a lot of building on a foundation versus kind of starting from scratch." During the upcoming second semester of her first year, Rose planned to continually work toward improving her practice:

I definitely want to re-norm a couple of things with class management. I felt really overwhelmed with grading this semester, so that's something I want to start thinking about—how to reduce grading. And I feel like I'm really getting that collaboration mindset implanted in my students, so it's going to be really just making sure that that's continuing to be reinforced through next semester.

Purpose in teaching. The desire to teach in such a way that students feel successful in science stood as the central purpose of all Rose's efforts in the classroom and toward students. She stated,

My purpose [as a teacher] is for them to be open to science, for them to have a science mindset of love and logic, and not being afraid to fail. . . . I just want them to feel

successful. I want them maybe to learn something that is valuable to them in the future outside of the classroom.

Epilogue: Classroom observation. On a cold December day, I observed four of Rose's classes. During high school chemistry, the first class of the day, this researcher sat unobtrusively to watch and listen to Rose interact with her students. At the end of the chemistry class, Rose moved to a different classroom to teach three sections of biology. Again, this researcher sat in the back of the classroom, recording notations focused on lesson structure, class management, and teacher-student interaction.

In all of the classes Rose taught that day, she divided students into small groups to explore and dialogue about the lessons of the day. As Rose and I walked from her chemistry class to the room where she taught biology, Rose revealed that she developed her strong belief in breaking students into small, interactive groups when she worked with middle school students during summer science camp. During that summer experience, she found that campers wanted to talk and move around when learning about science, not just sit and listen. Based on her experiences and observations as a camp counselor, she decided (well before her student teaching experience) that she would incorporate small group discussion in her own classes on a regular basis.

During one of Rose's three sections of biology, I conducted a set of observations at 15-minute intervals to record Rose's behaviors, paying specific attention to behaviors that indicated different levels of warmth and control (see Appendix C, Figure C.1). I recorded 22 high warmth behaviors, four low warmth behaviors, two high control behaviors, and 46 low control behaviors. Plotting these behaviors on the warmth and control graph placed the learning climate of Rose's classroom largely in the left half of quadrant C: low control, high warmth (see Appendix C, Figure C.2). Examples of Rose's low control behaviors included making a wide range of

information available to students. Students used video material, differentiated scientific articles, and classmates as sources of information for a lesson about the life cycle of a cancer cell. Rose provided differentiated instruction by coordinating the reading level of the scientific articles assigned to each group to the results of a student survey. On the survey, Rose asked students to rank their ability to read and understand scientific information. Based on student survey responses, Rose grouped the students according to their perceived reading levels, and then provided each group with a scientific article written at their reading level. Although the articles used by the class varied in reading difficulty, all the articles focused on the same topic: life cycle of a cancer cell. Rose allowed each group of students to manage the time it took to accomplish the task (i.e., summarize the article and how the information related to the life cycle of a cancer cell) which was another example of Rose's low control classroom behavior. Many groups accomplished their tasks and had 20 minutes of unstructured time. One group of students used their unstructured time to discuss their English and Spanish classes. During the last ten minutes of class, representatives from each group shared what they learned from their group reading. Examples of Rose's high warmth behavior included her use of student ideas in presenting lessons, she also mingled with the student work groups and dialogued with them about their readings. Additionally, she frequently nodded and used body language to communicate her approval. Rose was rarely the center of attention during this period of observation. By facilitating student-led learning activities rather than acting as the sole source of information, Rose provided a low control, high warmth learning environment for her science students. Furthermore, the results of the four-hour observation indicated that Rose worked to create a classroom environment which matched her hope "that my kids feel comfortable, safe." Beyond students feeling comfortable and safe, Rose stated in her interviews that she wanted to make science more

accessible, relevant, and less daunting to her students. Watching students engage in the differentiated, interactive lessons Rose facilitated, revealed that she intentionally pursued that goal.

During the four-hour observation, this researcher noted two instances when Rose struggled with making split-second decisions about class management and the nuanced enforcement of classroom policies. Although she identified such situation as her greatest challenge as a beginning teacher in her second interview, this contrasted with the level of confidence Rose possessed in her class management skills during her first interview. When initially interviewed, Rose believed that as a result of her student teaching experience, “I just kind of feel like, for lack of a better word, I have less of a BS tolerance and that I’m more willing to call out things that are detrimental to the learning environment.” However, twice during the observation period, Rose allowed two different students, each members of earlier classes, to interrupt two separate sections of her biology classes. The time Rose spent with each student interfered with the focus and pacing of each class. Biology students disengaged while Rose interacted with the intruding students and began conversations about things other than science. Rose seemed to want to attend to both types of students: the students she was actively instructing and the students who interrupted her class asking for individual assistance. She seemed to understand she was not effectively helping either type of student and like her classroom students, she lost focus on the purpose and pacing of her instruction.

Rose’s Within Case Analysis

Rose entered her student teaching placement with confidence. Her request to take “over the class a little bit faster than the traditional model” evidenced that Rose believed she had sufficient experience and knowledge to bypass observing the methods and strategies of her MTs.

On the first day of her teacher candidacy, she already held a deep belief that collaborative learning experiences offered the most effective method to teach science. When permitted, she plunged into the experience of teaching focused on continuing to develop her expertise as she had in the past—largely on her own. Rose began working in the classroom with a self-assured answer to the identity question, “Who am I at this moment in this context?”

Perhaps due to her early success with the Science Olympiad teams and her obvious competence, Rose initially overestimated her skills and readiness as a TC and underestimated the requirements of the job. Significantly, when Rose confessed to Teacher T that she did not “have enough of a backbone” she acknowledged that she had things to learn from her MTs, especially about how to establish authority in the classroom. However, Rose’s approach to student teaching indicated that she minimized her inexperience and gaps in knowledge and relied heavily upon the strength of her already constructed expertise. With her eyes on the classroom students and aware of all she wanted to offer them, she failed to recognize how acknowledging her own knowledge gaps could work in tandem with the expertise of others to effectively equip her so she might then equip her students. When Rose felt overwhelmed at mid-semester, she expressed a *need* for the expertise of her mentors. At this point, Rose began to shed the limits of her own expertise and embraced the identity of learner-teacher.

As previously discussed, according to Wenger’s (1998) social theory of learning, professional identity formation consists of a cycle of three phases: (a) participation in social situations, (b) reflection on that social experience, and finally, (c) reification through which they adjust their thinking about and behavior during the next social situations. Wenger (1998) labeled the three phases as the negotiating meaning process. At mid-semester when Rose asked for help, she began to reflect more deeply about her participation as a TC. Rose participated in the

negotiation of meaning process when she realized the limits of her expertise and subsequently requested assistance (Wenger, 1998). She could no longer confidently answer the identity question because her negotiating meaning process revealed that the requirements of the job extended beyond her knowledge and experience. The result of Rose's initial request to accelerate her student teaching experience created an unforeseen consequence of limiting the input of more experienced educators during the participation, reflection, and reification phases of her professional identity formation.

Once Rose understood the value of accessing the experience of her MTs, she readily broadened the parameters of her definition of a successful teacher, de-emphasizing a need to go her own way and more fully embracing the role of learner. Leaning into the discomfort of enforcing the no cellphone policy of her MT and following both of her mentors' advice when responding to the threatening student email opened Rose to a more flexible assessment of her teacher identity. As she reflected upon her participation in the social situation of teaching, she no longer compared her performance to a professional who never doubted or struggled. Instead, her definition of an effective educator included one who faced uncertainty and conflict. Rose, realizing that struggles would occur as she engaged in teaching, stated, "If you're not having difficulties, I don't think you're doing your best job."

During her teacher candidacy, Rose changed her beliefs about embracing the discomfort and tension of learner-teacher (reification) which equipped Rose to more productively reflect on her current difficulties of struggling to make split-second policy decisions as a necessary stage of negotiating meaning. The discrepancy between her early confidence in her class management skills expressed in her first interview (i.e., "less tolerance for BS") and her candid admittance of struggling in this area during her second interview (confirmed during my classroom observation)

showed a more fully developed professional identity. She no longer believed that struggles belied some flaw in her teacher identity. Instead, she realized that learning to find a balance between “making sure they’re [students] being taken care of, they’re treated fairly” and “maintaining your professional stakehold and maintaining that position of power and respect” would strengthen her teacher identity. On her first day as a beginning teacher, the sense of power and gravity Rose felt as she declared to herself, “I am the teacher,” emanated from her personal process of negotiating meaning. Her embrace and gratitude for the level of professional support and validation she received from her department colleagues and beginning teacher cohort revealed the maturing of her professional identity. Experience will aid Rose in making choices about where how to manage the conflicting demands for her time and focus.

The Coteaching During Student Teaching Participants

Three of the beginning teachers interviewed for this research project experienced a CTDST model. Two of these participants, Sam and Linda, taught in early elementary grades as TCs and beginning teachers. The remaining participant, Keith, taught secondary science classes both as a TC and as a beginning teacher.

Sam’s Story

“I’m not funny at all, but to first graders I’m probably hilarious.”

Episode one: Student teaching. Sam, a white female in her early 20s and a beginning first grade teacher, participated in the first of two interviews in mid-October after completing the first quarter of the academic year.

Setting. Sam completed her CTDST placement in a highly ranked elementary school populated by 413 students in grades PK – 5. Among the students, at least 57% of them were proficient in math and 62% were proficient in reading. When Sam was asked to describe her

student teaching experience, she explained that early in her life, she realized she wanted to help people. She expounded, “I always look for positives in everything in my circumstances, in anything where I can find positive. That’s how I was raised.” As a young person, Sam looked for situations into which she could bring her positivity. She volunteered to help others by babysitting and assisting in her church’s Sunday School. As she helped others, she realized the difference she could make in a person’s life—specifically a child’s life by spending time with them. This desire to help people coupled with her affinity for children led her to choose teaching as a profession. She saw teaching as her purpose and “calling.”

As a TC, Sam participated in a split student teaching placement. For the first eight weeks she worked with a kindergarten teacher and then moved to a second-grade classroom for the final eight weeks of student teaching. To smoothly facilitate her placement, both the kindergarten and second grade classes existed in the same school. Moreover, both MTs wanted to implement the CTDST model while they worked with Sam. Sam expressed gratitude for the structure of her student teaching experience:

Since I currently teach first grade, I feel very blessed to have taught kindergarten which allowed me to see where my first-graders just came from and then teaching second grade allowed me to understand where my first-graders need to be at the end of the year.

Sam was given a breadth of experience by working with two different MTs and two different groups of students.

Characters and relationships. During the interview, I asked Sam why she pursued teaching as a career and who/what played the most impactful role in her teacher candidacy. Sam explained that she student taught in two different settings, and she developed favorable relationships with both her MTs. During her first placement, Sam found the kindergarten teacher, Teacher K, more structured and specific in her expectations. As the two of them worked together

to plan, deliver, and assess lessons for their students, Teacher K played a more directive role, especially during the coplanning stage. After eight weeks in a more structured environment, Sam cotaught with a second-grade teacher, Teacher S, who encouraged Sam's creativity and urged her to take more risks in her teaching. Furthermore, Teacher S allowed Sam a greater voice in the planning and implementation of the lessons. Illustrative of this point, Sam relayed that "Teacher S would sometimes spontaneously turn the lesson over to me or encourage me to *do something* with this" (emphasis added). Teacher S meant that she wanted Sam to take a new, fresh, creative approach to the planning, delivery, and/or assessment of the lessons for their students. Grateful for the sequencing of her two student teaching placements, Sam believed that working first with Teacher K in the kindergarten classroom allowed her to adjust to the job and context of teaching. Moving from Teacher K to Teacher S allowed Sam, "[I began] to find my teaching style and take risks by doing things my own way," she explained.

Sam and each MT intentionally built their relationship on a commitment to clear communication. From the beginning, Sam, Teacher K, and Teacher S discussed how they would work together. Their agreement to give direct feedback and to not let things remain unsaid when dealing with disagreements or tensions worked well. They all provided truthful feedback and immediately worked to resolve any disputes. Mutual trust resulted and provided the foundation for a successful professional collaboration.

In addition to Teacher K and Teacher S, Sam worked closely with her UC, Teacher U. In fact, Sam pinpointed Teacher U as the having the greatest impact during her student teaching experience. Specifically, Teacher U helped Sam identify the gaps in her lesson planning. When she worked on lesson plans, Sam targeted the learners at- and below-grade level but not the students above-grade level. "She helped me with differentiating my lessons and opening my eyes

to all my students,” Sam shared. Sam communicated that she and Teacher U still emailed back and forth periodically.

Early action. I asked Sam to describe a difficulty and a success that she experienced early in her student teaching experience. Soon after Sam joined Teacher S’s second grade class, a challenging situation arose: One of their students began to manifest disruptive behavior. According to Sam, “He just kept having meltdowns in class.” Sam and her MT knew the student’s family faced some difficult circumstances, yet they could not identify what triggered the student’s behavior. Even though she had to absorb some of the boy’s emotional outbursts, Sam did not take any of his behavior personally, and instead she kept trying to understand the reason behind the outbursts. Sam believed that “children behave in a logical way if you understand their reality.” One day the student began to have another meltdown just before his class transitioned to a specials class (e.g., art, music, or PE). The MT took the second graders to their specials class while Sam stayed with the student as he continued to emote. Giving him ample space, Sam just quietly sat on the floor with him. As he calmed down, she asked him to describe what caused him so much distress. The child relayed details about his homelife of which neither Sam nor Teacher S knew. Sam related the new information to Teacher S and they came up with a plan. The student would go on a walk with one of his teachers at the beginning of the day, giving him time to calmly change focus from home life to school life. Sometimes he and the teacher would talk, and sometimes they would walk in silence. The strategy seemed to work and the student’s behavior became less erratic. Although Sam understood the value of developing trusting relationships with her students before doing her student teaching, the events surrounding this student and his behavior underscored what she explained as “the value of becoming familiar with each student’s story.”

After relating the story of an early difficulty during student teaching, Sam described her triumph during the early days of student teaching as, “Just showing up! I feel like I always knew I wanted to be a teacher, but I didn't think about what would happen when I did become a teacher.” Before walking into Teacher K’s kindergarten class, Sam feared she would discover that either she could not successfully do the job and/or that the profession of teaching did not fit with her personality, but she determined to get up every day, to show up, and to face her fears. By “just showing up”, she found she loved teaching. Sam learned, “[I can] do more than I thought I could.”

Beginning to think of self as teacher. I asked Sam to describe when she first thought of herself as a teacher. Sam explained that as she continued to grow as a TC, she noticed how little time she was spending on the campus of her university. Even though she lived close by and her roommate still went to campus every day, Sam realized she no longer lived as a college student but had transitioned to living as a professional. “I’m doing it! I’m living this [teaching] life and enjoying it,” she shared. Sam no longer spent her time learning about teaching in a classroom, instead she saw herself as a teacher focused on and learning to educate a group of students. This transition of identity prompted Sam to return to the site of her student teaching placement to spend time with both her kindergarten and second-grade students even after she graduated in early May and before their school term ended in late May.

Major conflict. When Sam was asked to describe the most difficult and the most successful experience she had while student teaching. Sam reflected on the whole of her student teaching experience, and divulged that finding a balance between teaching duties and personal time stood out as her greatest struggle as a TC. She believed, “All teachers struggle with this, and at the beginning of student teaching, I kind of lost on track of myself because of the pressures of

everything I had to do.” Sam realized that to deal with the stress, she needed to exercise, get regular sleep, and eat healthy meals. To increase her commitment to her personal health, Sam decided to train for a half marathon which required her to get regular exercise. As a beginning teacher, Sam continued to intentionally spend time developing both her professional life and her personal life.

While identifying the struggle of finding balance in her life as the major conflict of student teaching, Sam also highlighted forming relationships with all her students as her greatest accomplishment as a TC. By the end of her time as a TC, Sam could tell that she had connected with several students and felt deeply satisfied by that reality. Having begun the semester afraid of the challenge ahead, Sam saw evidence that she met the challenge and impacted the lives of students. She felt proud of herself for the job she did in both classrooms.

Changing focus: From TC to beginning teacher. The focus of the interview turned from Sam’s past experience as a TC to her present, unfolding experience as a beginning teacher. When Sam was asked to identify her greatest fear and greatest hope for her first year, Sam disclosed that “demonstrating that each student shows a year’s worth of academic growth” stood as her greatest fear. While naming this fear, she also acknowledged that “I am working my butt off to meet this goal.” Thus far, she felt confident in the learning accomplishments of her students.

Making meaningful connections with her students lie at the heart of Sam’s most ardent hopes for her first-graders. She recently conducted her first series of parent-teacher conferences. After meeting with the parents of her students, Sam realized she also hopes to construct positive links with her student’s parents. Before the conferences, Sam reasoned that parents would discount her due to her inexperience; instead, they exuded enthusiasm and support for her teaching.

Coteaching and teacher identity. When I asked Sam to describe how CTDST influenced her teacher identity she explained that the culture of her current school encouraged frequent, casual observations from administrators and fellow teachers. Sam felt a high level of comfort toward the flow of individuals passing through her classroom and attributed her attitude directly to her experience of coteaching during student teaching. Sam became accustomed to engaging in an ongoing conversation about the process of teaching throughout the day while coteaching with her MTs; therefore, Sam welcomed the observations from her new colleagues as she knew she would learn from their feedback.

Episode two: First-year teacher. The second interview took place in late November, three and one-half months into Sam's first year of teaching.

Setting. Sam worked with a collaborative team of first-grade educators in a suburban elementary school that fell within the boundaries of the school district in which she student taught. The years of teaching experience possessed by her colleagues ranged from one year to 10 years. This spectrum of expertise encouraged all the team members to exchange ideas with and give support to each other.

Characters. Sam was asked to describe her teacher-self from two points of view, her own and her students'. Sam chose four words or phrases to describe herself as a teacher: positive, energetic, creative, and intentional. Sam elucidated, "I always look for positives in everything my kids do in the classroom." Sam believed first graders need energy to thrive, so "when they see that you're interested and excited" about teaching them, they engage. To enhance their level of engagement, Sam tapped into her creativity to do more than just teach her students from the teacher edition of the textbook. To illustrate her fourth descriptor choice, Sam stated, "I think that every word I try to say to my students, every action, every positive re-enforcement, I try to

make sure I have a lot of intention behind it.” When asked how her students might describe their teacher in four words or phrases, Sam laughed and mentioned that some researchers from the local university recently visited and asked her students to tell them about their teacher. According to their feedback, her first-graders saw her as funny, nice, fun, and caring. Sam shrugged, stating, “I’m not funny at all, but to first graders I’m probably hilarious.” She emphasized, “I want them to know that I care about them, and I think that they seem to reflect that to me. So, they know that they can trust me and that's the most important thing you would ever want.”

I asked Sam to identify any adults who regularly assist in her classroom. In addition to Sam and the 21 students that populated her classroom, a number of volunteers comprise the story of Sam’s first year of teaching. Sam recruited volunteers during a back-to-school night at the beginning of school year. “I just kind of sent out a little, ‘if you’re interested let me know,’ and I got a lot of responses.” Three volunteers came in weekly to help in the classroom while others assisted occasionally with tasks that included preparing materials for lessons or assisting with class celebrations. Sam enjoyed including others in the work she did with students, explaining, “From my experience coteaching during student teaching, I feel really comfortable with being able to share responsibilities and let other people into my classroom.”

Early perceptions and experiences. The bulk of the questions asked during the second interview were designed to understand Sam’s early perceptions and experiences as a beginning teacher. I asked her what she enjoyed most about teaching and what she found the most challenging. Additionally, Sam was asked about her expectations, what surprised her, her

professional practices and goals, and how student teaching differed from teaching in her own classroom.

Sam identified developing meaningful relationships with students as her greatest accomplishment as a TC. As a beginning teacher, Sam continued to find students at the center of what she enjoyed most about teaching: “I just love the excitement that they have for learning and it doesn't matter what it is because anything can be fun if you teach it in the right way.” Sam admitted she dealt with demanding perfection from herself as a teacher, but realizing how generously her students and their parents extended forgiveness to her, she now placed fewer demands on herself. “It [teaching] can be messy but there's still so much fun that happens in this job, and I am thankful for that.” Sam had just received a supportive note from a parent expressing gratitude for the way Sam taught, stating that their son “is so happy to go to school every day.” The note would end up in a frame to remind Sam of her purpose and focus.

Notes of gratitude provided a source of validation, but Sam found the feedback she received from her principal as the most difficult part of her job thus far. She realized her struggle stemmed from the manner in which the principal delivered her observations. At different points during informal observations of Sam’s classroom, the principal interrupted Sam to correct a point of content or direct students to behave in a manner which differed from Sam’s expectations. The first few times this occurred, Sam felt fearful and insecure, saying inwardly, “I'm doing a terrible job. She [principal] felt like she needed to correct me and I'm terrible at this job and she's going to fire me.” Sam recognized that hearing the input of her administrator from a place of fear and defensiveness “keeps us stagnant,” so she consciously reframed the feedback so she can use the information to grow.

After taking stock of the past few months, Sam commented that she expected to work long hours and experience difficult days. Her experience proved her expectation. In a like manner, her expectation prepared her to intentionally pursue taking care of herself by doing things that kept her happy and healthy. In contrast, Sam did not foresee the emotional strain of the job. “I don’t think I knew how much of an emotional investment I would have in my classroom, in my students [and] in the circumstances that they find themselves in,” she explained. Nor did Sam foresee the support provided by parents as their support eased some of the difficulty of her job.

End of the day. Typically, when Sam dismissed her students for the day, she goes went to her computer and returned emails, and then planned for the next day or two. “I’m not really at a point where I’m planning full weeks in advance,” she said. She admitted that lesson planning “does keep me at school longer than it should, or I take it home and I end up doing it at home.” As a beginning teacher, Sam worked to construct detailed and differentiated lesson plans. Because she could not yet draw on experiences from teaching the curriculum before, she had to think through details:

Is the video that the curriculum shows, is that a good video or should I kind of take it on my own for the instruction? Small groups. What small groups? What work am I going to have them do after they're done for my above-grade-level kiddos? What kind of work am I going to have to do for some intervention? So, all of that.

After working through “all of that” for the next day, Sam took little time to formally reflect on her practice. She briefly thought about what went well and what could benefit from change, but did not record her thinking. During the interview, Sam realized she could not allow her valuable thinking to slip away. In the future she planned to take time to record her reflections.

Support system. Though Sam had not recorded her reflections on practice, she did not lose all of her thinking and learning. As a beginning teacher, she met regularly with a district-assigned mentor who also taught first grade. Once a week, Sam met with her mentor, additionally, the pair interacted during the twice-weekly meetings of the first-grade team. At the beginning of the year, Sam and her mentor chose an area of professional growth as their focus. Throughout the year, her mentor observed Sam teach and provided feedback related to the highlighted area. Sam also observed her mentor teach. At the end of the year, they would reflect on Sam's growth and how her mentor supported that growth to inform Sam's second year of induction. The pair would stay together through the three-year induction process that would end with Sam giving a presentation of her learning. Sam found her mentor helpful and supportive. Additional support for Sam came from all the staff at her school as they periodically checked in with her to offer encouragement or answer questions. Her school district also sponsored regular events to connect beginning teachers from throughout the district. Yet, with all the professional support in Sam's life, her family remained her "number one support system."

Notwithstanding the existence of formally provided support systems, Sam acknowledged that those systems worked best when beginning teachers leaned into and contributed to the proffered underpinning. Sam explained,

I think for, I would say my first month, it was kind of that survival piece of just trying to live day to day and teach exactly how I needed to in order to get through it. And so, I would say probably after that first month I felt like I could breathe. I could use them [mentor and first-grade team] as support because that's what they were there for, but I definitely didn't feel that right away, even though they were completely kind and also made me feel supported. It takes a while to feel like you can utilize that [professional support system], but by mid-September I started to feel more like I could be creative and introduce my point of view as well.

Sam viewed and valued professional support as collaborative activity. Her value for the support from other professionals grew as she became more comfortable in her role as a beginning

teacher. Moreover, contributing to (not simply receiving from) the work of other educators as a colleague allowed Sam to more fully utilize her professional support system and to take more creative risks.

Professional goals. During the first weeks of Sam's beginning teacher induction program, Sam and her mentor wrote about Sam's strengths and growth areas. "I'm like," Sam said, "I don't even know what my strengths are yet." However, near the end of her first semester of teaching, Sam related,

I'm getting to know who I am as a teacher, but I'm so into my day-to-day right now, I can't think reflectively of what I'm doing really well or not. I feel like I'm just kind of running. Trying to do as best as I can in all aspects so. It's, yeah, getting to know that first year as a teacher.

Sam and her mentor chose to focus on growth in the area of classroom management for Sam's first year of induction. Sam explained that after meeting together for the past several months, she and her mentor would observe each other teaching. The observations would provide specific data they would use to refine the professional growth goals they set for her inaugural year of teaching. Sam explained:

December is when I'm going to go observe my mentor and she's going to observe me, so we can kind of think reflectively on next steps for improving my classroom management. 'Cause I can think of my own classroom and the behaviors that I'm seeing that I didn't anticipate and knowing that I need to think critically about the importance of my classroom management strategies.

Sam looked forward to benefitting from the additional information she would gain from the observation conducted by her more objective and experienced mentor.

Difference between student teaching and beginning teaching. Sam found three major differences between student teaching and the realities of her job during the first year of teaching. First, as a TC, Sam learned to operate in someone else's space. She did not realize the impact

occupying her own space would make. As Sam explained, instructing students in her own classroom differed from student teaching:

Because it's my own and I keep having to remind myself of that. Like this is my class, no one else's. This is my class and this is my classroom space. This is my area—it's my classroom library, it's all mine, and it's a funny feeling because it's part of my identity now.

Through the choices she made about how the organization and decoration of her teaching space, Sam used her classroom to telegraph her teacher identity to others.

The second major difference between student teaching and first-year teaching Sam noted was that as a beginning teacher she held an even deeper attachment to her students than the students she worked with as a TC. Just as the space in her classroom was her own to organize and utilize as she believed best, she also bore the sole responsibility for her first-grade students which provided the opportunity to form a different type of bond than she could with students from another teacher's classroom.

The third difference centered around one of the foundational constructions of CTDST. While a TC, Sam always taught with another professional educator and did not experience the full load of solo teaching. Coteaching with two MTs during her student teaching placement allowed Sam to work in two different classrooms. Furthermore, she developed and delivered lessons implementing various ideas, strategies, and types of instruction. In short, Sam believed her student teaching experience provided her with “a foundation of great ideas.” In contrast, she did not experience many “full take-over days” and wished she had more experience planning full days of lessons in detail. Yet after pointing to possible gaps in her student teaching experience, Sam conceded, “It [student teaching] can set you up and it can give you really great ideas and great experiences, but there's no way that you can feel totally ready.”

Purpose in teaching. Helping every student feel loved, capable, and important motivated Sam every day and lay at the center of her purpose for teaching. Sam relayed a story to illustrate her passion about her core purpose:

When I was in elementary school, I got really frustrated with math. I got so discouraged that it dissuaded me from taking hard classes in college for math. I felt like I just couldn't do math, so I took the bare minimum of math that I had to take. And I see these kids who are feeling like this already and they're six, and I just, oh, I hate it! So, I did a whole growth mindset lesson where we read this book called *Beautiful Oops*. And so what I did is I took a bunch of paper and I constructed this big picture of a brain, and I showed the black and white side of the brain as this 'fixed mindset.' It's that part that tells us that we can't do it we'll never be able to do it, we're stuck and it doesn't help you to grow. But then there's this rainbow side of your brain and the rainbow side of your brain says that you can do it and you can do anything and that's the side that has to grow and helps you be able to do it. So I'm all, 'Color the rainbow brain!' That was the first step, and then I have them all write a sentence (*pause*) a growth mindset sentence that they could tell themselves after we gave some examples. So I had them work on writing 'I can do it', 'I can do anything', or 'I can try again', or 'I'll keep working on it.' So they really loved it. We're going to put it [the big rainbow-colored brain] up on the bulletin board because I'm so proud of it.

By empowering her students with growth mindset (GMS) thinking, Sam believed she provided important emotional support for them. The GMS sentences her students constructed (e.g., "I can try again" or "I'll keep working on it") began to replace fixed mindset thoughts (e.g., "I can't do this" or "I'm not smart enough"), which, in turn, led to students who experienced feelings of hope about learning instead of feelings of defeat. Sam believed equipping students with GMS thoughts fostered their belief in their own capacity for learning.

Epilogue: Classroom observation. I conducted a three-hour observation of Sam's first grade class on a January morning. Twelve boys and nine girls populated the class. Sam introduced me to her first-graders as someone from the local university that came to watch their class. Students and researchers from the university commonly visited classrooms in Sam's school, so students seemed unbothered by the presence of a visitor. I sat to the side of the classroom to watch, listen, and take down impressions as Sam interacted with her students.

During the three-hour observation, I conducted a set of observations at 15-minute intervals over the span of 60-minutes to record Sam's behaviors, paying specific attention to behaviors that indicated different levels of warmth and control (see Appendix C, Figure C.1). I recorded 64 high warmth behaviors, one low warmth behavior, eight high control behaviors, and 99 low control behaviors. Plotting these behaviors on the warmth and control graph placed the learning climate of Sam's classroom almost entirely in quadrant C: low control, high warmth (see Appendix C, Figure C.2). Examples of Sam's behaviors that resulted in a warm learning environment included her frequent praise of student behavioral choices. She noticed a student concentrating on their work and said, "I appreciate how focused Joe is on his work." Even when students made less than productive behavior choices, Sam did not criticize the student or their behavior. Rather, she asked for suggestions for alternative choices, "What can you do when you are distracted?" For the majority of this 60-minute observation time, students were engaged in group activities focused on English language arts (ELA). The high number of Sam's low control behaviors were the result of her successfully teaching her students to conduct themselves appropriately when they worked individually or in small groups. These results confirmed that Sam worked to create a classroom environment that matched her central purpose of helping every student feel loved, capable, and important.

During the second interview Sam chose the words positive, energetic, creative, and intentional to describe her teacher self. Confirmation of those characteristics emerged as Sam facilitated the business of learning among the first-grade students. I began my observation at the beginning of the school day. As students arrived, they put their belongings away and commenced constructing sentences that incorporated the "Word of the Day." They talked quietly with their friends while writing. After the final bell rang, Sam turned overhead lights off and on to gain the

attention of the classroom. They then quickly attended to the daily tasks of cleaning out their seat pockets and making their lunch selection. The first graders knew the protocol for each activity and how to appropriately respond to Sam's various, creative methods of gaining their attention, providing evidence of Sam's consistency in norming positive, effective classroom behaviors. For example, Sam told her class, "You have one minute to wrap up and get to the rug." She then set a timer and commented positively when a student demonstrated the desired behavior. Sam challenged students to make appropriate behavior choices with comments such as, "I'm looking for Susie to show greatness by . . ." Stating her expectations in an positive, attainable framework illustrated Sam's desire to empower students to succeed.

Sam employed a strategy entitled "the daily five" to engage students in learning ELA skills. Her facilitation of the daily five attested to her positive, energetic, creative, and intentional approach to teaching. As a testament to Sam's belief that first-graders needed energy to thrive, she directed students to, "Stand. Swing your arms two times to get your brains ready for language arts." Five learning stations existed throughout the classroom: read to self, computer time, audio books, self-directed writing, and meet with teacher. Students systematically moved among the five learning stations every 20 minutes. However, before the movement commenced, Sam reminded the energized first-graders of her three expectations of their behavior. First, they had one minute to transition between learning stations. She would time them. Every time they met their one-minute goal, they earned a puzzle piece. (By the intensity of their reaction, they clearly understood the significance of earning a puzzle piece.) Second, anytime students heard the timer go off, they should, "Freeze. Put your eyes on the teacher. Listen for the teacher to give directions." Third, students should look at the graphic projected on the white board, find their name and directions to their next learning station. During meet with teacher time, Sam worked

daily with each of her students in small groups. She taught each group a mini lesson, allowed them to practice what they just learned or reviewed, gave them feedback, and finally, they practiced the skill again. Each group worked on a different language arts skill linked to their learning needs, such as handwriting, creating contractions, or reading. Sam utilized meet with teacher time to facilitate differentiated instruction.

Witnessing Sam's students navigate the complexities of the daily five substantiated the high degree of trust and caring cooperation that existed between teacher and students. The first graders clearly wanted to cooperate with their teacher. Sam's language, tone, and demeanor communicated that she saw and honored the dignity of each person she taught.

Sam's Within Case Analysis

Sam entered Teacher K's kindergarten class wondering how she would answer the identity question (i.e., Who am I at this moment in this context?) by the end of her student teaching placement. As an undergraduate student, Sam invested her time, energy, and money preparing for a career in education but before student teaching, she did not insist that she *must become* a teacher. First, she wanted to participate in the social environments of teaching and then evaluate her participation before she would formulate her answer. Hence, her fear was that through her participation, she may discover that she could not successfully educate children or that her personality and the teaching profession would not fit well together. Rather than viewing student teaching as a proving ground, Sam understood her role in constructing her answer to the identity question., Sam viewed student teaching as an opportunity for gathering data about herself and the profession.

As previously discussed, Wenger (1998) described the process of constructing an answer to the identity question as negotiating meaning. His model consists of a cycle of three phases:

participation, reflection, and reification. Through this process, individuals interpret and re-interpret themselves as they construct their identity. In Sam's negotiating meaning process, her participation in early volunteering experiences, student teaching placements, interactions with students, parents, and her current community of practitioners provided data gathering opportunities as she constructed her professional identity. As Sam processed her newly gathered data, any data that were not interlocked with Sam's core belief in helping others provoked practical conflict. Although Sam described struggles and conflicts while she was a TC and a beginning teacher, those conflicts had not interfered with her goal of helping others. As a TC, when she encountered the second grader exhibiting disruptive behavior, she and her MT sought more information in order to better help the student manage his behavior. Likewise, when Sam realized that the imbalance between teaching duties and her personal life compromised her ability to help her students, she modified her behavior and incorporated healthful practices. Lastly, when her current principal delivered professional feedback in a manner that caused confusion, Sam sifted through the feedback and its delivery to find the core content of the feedback, and she chose to focus and learn from that rather than allow the method of delivery to distract her from helping her students successfully complete first grade.

During her student teaching placement, Sam participated in a learning community characterized by collaboration, immediate feedback and clear, honest communication. The learning community she belonged to as a beginning teacher was also marked by collaboration with the first-grade team in her school. Their collaboration was not as close as the collaboration during her student teaching experience, but Sam contributed to the learning and direction of her team. As a beginning teacher, she had a different, more distant relationship with her administrator than she did with her MTs; therefore the insecurity that arose when Sam received

critical feedback from her administrator may have been due to the greater difference in power as well as the greater social and physical distance between the Sam and her administrator. In spite of her initial reaction of fear and insecurity, Sam decided to disengage from the fear and insecurity tied to her response to the tone of the communication from her administrator and focus on the content of the administrator's message. By changing what part of the difficult communication she focused on, Sam incorporated the administrator's feedback into the reflection stage of her negotiating meaning process and then made beneficial changes during the reification stage of that cycle of the identity developing process. Just as she had at the beginning of her student teaching experience, Sam understood her role in constructing her answer to the identity question. By the time Sam received the pointedly delivered feedback from her administrator, beginning-teacher-Sam had gathered enough data about herself and the profession of teaching that she knew that as an effective, caring teacher she would fulfill her goal of helping others.

Linda's Story

"I see that one teacher, one classroom has an impact on the bigger picture on that next generation on society outside the four walls of school."

Episode one: Student teaching. Linda, a white female in her early 20s and a beginning first grade teacher, participated in the first of two interviews in mid-September, after completing her first month as a beginning teacher. Linda and I previously met when she participated in another research-project focused on exploring the experience of TCs in a CTDST program.

Setting. When I asked Linda to describe her student teaching experience, she explained that she chose to enter the teaching profession as she progressed through a series of experiences during her teen years. After volunteering as a child care worker, Linda found jobs at summer camps, workshops, and after-school programs. Thinking through her job history, she realized,

“I’m clearly following along this path of working with children and working alongside other teachers.” Linda further explained, “I realized after my freshman year that I want to work with kids and that I want to be that person that can influence them.” Traveling to Kenya on a community service trip solidified Linda’s thinking. Linda witnessed the impact teachers made on the lives of individuals and their communities during this experience in a completely unfamiliar setting.

Linda participated in an open concept school during her student teaching placement. The school setting had no walls between the two first-grade classrooms and had fluid exchanges between the teachers of those classrooms. During Linda’s placement, both first-grade teachers mentored a TC which translated into what Linda called, “four people, four brains” working closely every day to educate two lively groups of first graders. Linda explained that these four people frequently discussed “new ideas and why they [MTs] did things a certain way.” The context of her student teaching placement offered Linda a rich learning experience.

Characters and relationships. When Linda was asked who/what impacted her the most during her teacher candidacy, Linda explained, that although collaboration with the other first-grade team of MT and TC occurred frequently, Linda worked most closely with one MT, Teacher P. Teacher P supported and challenged Linda, answered her questions, and took the necessary time to teach her the skills required to successfully work with students. Linda explained, “We were both big planners, both organized. We both like to have that schedule, and in the classroom we approach things in a calm way.” Their compatible personalities opened doors to frank conversations, willingness to collaborate, and readiness to try new approaches in the classroom. Linda entered student teaching thinking, “This is going to be a learning experience, whether it’s good or bad, whether I trust them [MTs] or not. You have to trust the

process [of student teaching].” By the end of her placement, the trusting relationship between Linda and Teacher P engendered a full partnership in which they equally shared the lesson planning, instruction, and assessment for their students.

The school principal also played an important role in Linda’s student teaching experience. He observed Linda and her fellow TC teach, and he made certain to talk with them a few times each week. Linda explained that the level of support proffered by both the principal and Teacher P provided her with a “place where, not only did I get this amazing experience but it was a place that I felt comfortable and I felt welcome.”

Early action. When I asked Linda to describe a difficulty and a success she experienced early in her student teaching placement, Linda explained that as a beginning TC, Linda found it difficult keeping up with lesson planning, learning the schedule, sharing students, and grouping the two first-grade classes. Linda had mastered managing her time and priorities as a college student, but the time commitment for TCs paralleled the time commitment of full-time teachers. Consequently, she made adjustments in her thinking and planning and found a “really nice planner.” Additionally, Linda explained that she sat with Teacher P to go over the plan for their class. She said, “So that you know your role, you know what’s expected, you know what’s coming soon, what’s coming next and being prepared. Being able to know when to be prepared for those things.” Although Linda found entering and adapting to someone else’s space stressful, she gained a deeper understanding that, as she explained, individuals “do things differently than I do”, and an appreciation for her capacity to thrive in those situations.

When Linda joined Teacher P’s first-grade class, the coteachers provided clear expectations for Linda’s role in the classroom. Linda also had an opportunity to talk with students about her expectations of them. Afterward, Linda led and participated in a getting-to-

know-you activity which enabled her to quickly build relationships with the first graders. Linda reflected by sharing, “I felt part of the classroom instead of just an outsider who’s there to help out with stuff. I felt good about being able to accomplish that early on.” Using prior knowledge and skills to build those teacher-student relationships right away boosted Linda’s confidence.

Beginning to think of self as teacher. After I asked Linda to describe when she first thought of herself as a teacher, Linda explained that as her participation in classroom activities increased and her relationships grew stronger, she gradually realized how happy she felt while in the classroom teaching and planning:

That was my defining moment, realizing ‘you’re happy doing this and you’re not even thinking about the fact that you’re not getting paid. You’re just happy to go in there and to plan and to teach and to be with the kids.

With this realization, Linda identified herself as a teacher and set about planning for her future classroom.

Major conflict. When asked to describe the most difficult situation and the most successful situation she faced as a TC, Linda explained that as much as she enjoyed teaching, Linda encountered stress and conflict during her student teaching placement. On a personal level, working fulltime for five months with no income created stress. She willingly paid that cost, but found it trying. Moreover, as a TC, learning to deal with difficult behaviors from students proved challenging. Linda and Teacher P had one student with especially distressing behavior issues in their class that effected both of them. Linda shared, “It was hard coming up with new strategies because the ones that we have used in the past just weren’t working.” As the two teachers repeatedly tried to find workable solutions to help the student with their behavior, Linda remembered thinking,

Oh my god, if this is me in my own classroom without a MT, how do I deal with this? How can I take what we're doing here and learn from it, so I will be able to do it by myself?

Linda and the MT did not succeed in helping the student change behavior, but Linda explained,

Our strategies for dealing with those behaviors got a little more efficient. We learned a lot from that, dealing with behaviors one way for one kid does not work for another one sometimes. Just, it takes a long time, but you just have to kind of learn what works and what doesn't and how you can best implement that, I guess.

As a beginning teacher, Linda carried those lessons with her and knew that in the future, she may need to use other adults from her building to help effectively respond to disruptive student behavior.

Counterbalancing the stress and struggles, Linda felt success in the relationships she developed with Teacher P and with the students. "Building those relationships is probably my biggest accomplishment and what I feel most proud of," she shared. When her placement ended, Linda's sadness illustrated to her that she did invest in her students and Teacher P and truly cared for them.

Changing focus: From TC to beginning teacher. When asked how the difficulties and successes of her teacher candidacy influence the way she thought of herself as a teacher, Linda explained that as she considered the difficulties plus the triumphs of her student teaching placement, she realized she completed her teacher candidacy with a deeper confidence in herself. She shared:

The fact that at the end I felt accomplished with myself is, I guess, just helps me to keep that courage that though things do get really hard, I can still push through and learn from my mistakes and get through these hard things.

Understanding that "you're going to make mistakes – and you'll learn from them and move forward" provided Linda with the insight that risk taking and continual learning went hand-in-hand with effective teaching.

Looking ahead to first year as beginning teacher. As we concluded the first interview, the focus of the questions turned from Linda's student teaching experience to her present experience as a beginning teacher. Linda was one month into her new job with her own classroom full of first graders, and she could identify her fears and hopes for the year. She feared her students would not make as much academic and social progress as she hoped. Linda shared, "I'm sure that's every teacher's fear." Additionally, she held concerns about her working relationships with her new first-grade team. As a professional colleague, she had to learn to collaborate with her team from a slightly different place compared to being a college student learning to teach. Linda elaborated on her concern by explaining, "I'm a new teacher but I'm still held accountable for all the same things, and I don't have somebody there to help me out along the way and stuff." She carried all of the responsibility on her own shoulders, yet she hoped her students would make the progress she wanted them to and that the experiences she brought to her new team would benefit everyone's practice.

Coteaching and teacher identity. Linda gained a firmer grasp of the value of collaborating with other teachers by coteaching during student teaching. Coteaching with a MT required Linda to implement strategies she may not have considered trying while it also provided a safe place to take risks and try out her own ideas. Linda said,

Not only do you learn from this person [MT], their methods and their ways and why they do things and stuff like that, but you get to learn why hearing those different perspectives can be beneficial to you. Whether you agree with them or not, it is beneficial for you to hear that and even try those things—try new ways of doing things.

This model of student teaching also expanded Linda's capacity to evaluate the methods and approach of other teachers. As a result of the extensive collaboration involved in coteaching, when Linda heard of or saw a different method, she did not feel insecure about her own methods; rather, she realized that other teachers may take different approaches to accomplish a similar

learning objective. Linda would ask herself, ““Do I want to take this with me? Or do I just want to understand that she’s doing it differently?”” Linda believed she would carry two enduring results from her coteaching experience: a strong willingness to collaborate and the capacity to evaluate different perspectives.

Episode two: First-year teacher. During the second interview, I asked Linda questions about her first experiences as a beginning teacher.

Setting. The context of Linda’s first year of teaching contained some interesting dynamics. She taught in a suburban public elementary school of approximately 500 students. The school opened nine years prior to Linda’s employment. Each grade level consisted of three classes where three classroom teachers actively collaborated and cotaught all grade-level students, grades kindergarten to grade 5. The teachers mingled their students at least once a day to teach different subjects. The team of first-grade teachers Linda joined were part of the original team of educators that built the first-grade culture and curriculum since the first day the school opened. As the first non-original team member, Linda could not access the historical knowledge so easily available to her colleagues. Hence, she contended with insider language and established procedures that caused frustration for all parties: Linda because she wanted to contribute and for her teammates because they had to slow down and use more language to explain and/or describe processes that came second-nature to them.

Characters. When asked to describe her teacher-self from two points of view, hers and her students’, and to identify any adults that regularly visit her classroom, Linda began by choosing four words to describe her teacher self: organized, fun, collaborative, and willing to learn. “I like to make it fun and keep it fun, especially for first graders.” When asked what words her first graders might use to describe their teacher, she speculated they would choose silly,

loving, flexible, and fun. She believes they would choose those descriptors because she intentionally took the time to check in with them, gave daily hugs and high fives, and kept her lessons interesting and engaging for them. “It’s important to think about how they think of you and what they’re going home and telling their parents,” she shared, in order to get an honest picture of how you’re doing as a teacher – what changes you may need to make.

In addition to Linda and the 23 students that populated her classroom, a few classroom volunteers visited weekly to either help with non-student tasks (preparing materials for future lessons) or to work with one or two students on reading and math skills. In the open-school setting of Linda’s student teaching placement, several adults would be present throughout the day, so Linda noticed the relatively lower number of adults in her classroom. She expressed gratitude for the build-in coteaching segment of each day and the opportunity it afforded to provide needed instructional differentiation. No paraeducators assisted the first-grade teachers.

Early perceptions and experiences. The bulk of the questions I asked during the second interview were designed to understand Linda’s early perceptions and experiences as a beginning teacher. I asked what she enjoyed most about teaching and what she found the most challenging. Additionally, Linda was asked about her expectations, what surprised her, her professional practices and goals, and how student teaching differed from teaching in her own classroom.

As a beginning teacher at the end of the first semester of her first year of teaching, Linda found joy in spending time with her students. She smiled and explained how much joy she had in learning about her students:

Seeing them all-day, every day, hearing about their lives and their families and their stories outside of school and being with them every day is so much fun. All of them are so different and I think that’s something that probably a lot of teachers realize their first year is how amazing it is to get to know all these little kids that you’re spending your time with.

She valued creating relationships with each of her students. Through these relationships, she understood that she would impact the next generation in her community and the world outside her classroom.

Linda shared that time management stood out as one of the challenges she faced as a beginning teacher as relating to and teaching 23 children took time. Likewise, teaching in a new school and new school district added to the matter. As Linda learned to manage all the necessary planning, instruction, and assessing activities, she also juggled learning “all the programs that you have to use and learn how to use and learn how to log into and keeping track of that.” Linda communicated that her many tasks vied for her time.

The dynamics of learning to work with new colleagues was an added challenge coupled with learning to manage her time. As the only new, non-original member of the first-grade team of three, she stood out. Linda reflected,

Through this first semester, there’s been ups and downs about how they feel with me and how I feel with them. Learning how they work and how I work and trying to navigate through that is difficult but amazing at the same time.

During the initial part of this interview, Linda described herself as a learner. Her attitude toward this team dynamic illustrated her point:

You just don’t realize how much you learn. Going through the stress and the planning and the timing with new teachers and different teachers that you haven’t worked with before. . . . I think that it’s both a struggle and a good thing. We definitely all bring different things to the table and learning how to use that to your advantage is hard, but it’s so beneficial once you do.

In spite of the challenge of working on a new team, many things Linda anticipated about her first year of teaching came to fruition. The plan Linda developed to establish class culture by teaching routines and expectations to her students worked successfully. Likewise, Linda came into the year with “a lot of knowledge of how to work with parents and communicate with

parents,” and she acknowledged that it had “gone well and as I was expecting it to go.” Her relationship with her students clearly exceeded her expectations. She said, “I didn’t know how amazing they were going to be.”

In contrast, her expectations of an easy transition into a new coteaching team ran into some obstacles. “I was just expecting it to fall into place,” she admitted. It seemed that the other members of the team held similar expectations. Linda shared her experience:

I don’t think that they realized until a couple of weeks into school that I’m a completely different person over here, and I have different ways of doing things. It kinda rocked their world. They really didn’t know how much things would change when someone else is brought in. We’ve learned to adapt and change our ways a little bit to function well working with each other. It’s definitely not what I was expecting and not in a bad way, not in a great way, but it’s different and it’s challenging. But I’ve learned a lot.

Aside from finding challenge in the team dynamic where she expected smooth operations with her colleagues, the responsibility of playing a significant role in her students’ lives unexpectedly took Linda aback. After placing a call to Child Protective Services on behalf of one of her first graders, the gravity of the place she held in their lives landed heavily. Linda shared,

I’m their safe person, and I’m supposed to be a good person for them to come to every single day where they spend the majority of their time at this point in their life I take the stress of that little girl with me home, and I think that’s something that you don’t realize until you have your own class.

Linda did not foresee the full weight and some of the consequences of caring for students nor did she foresee the frustration she experienced each time she realized that her role had boundaries. Although Linda learned she had influence over the care her students received at school, she had no influence over their care after they left the school grounds each day. Knowing of the difficult times some of her students experienced outside the boundaries of the school campus caused Linda frustration and heartache.

End of the day. At the end of her full days, Linda checked her email, adjusted her to-do list by prioritizing what needs to be done, and left her classroom to visit with four other teachers. Linda, her first-grade teammates, and a kindergarten teacher new to the school, conducted, “little therapy sessions.” They reflect on what went well and what did not and how to do it differently. Linda said, “Even S who’s been teaching for 34 years, she loves hearing what we have to say and our ideas and asking us questions about should I have said this or what can I do differently?” Linda found those conversations helpful as they provided feedback and ideas. She further explained the sessions importance:

It’s very helpful for us to sit and just reflect on the day because so many things happen in seven hours. I do go home stressed out a lot. But I think it would be a lot worse if I didn’t have that time to sit and think about the day and just vent about things that happen with people who are experiencing it at the same time.

For Linda, reflecting with a group alleviated a sense of isolation and provided an outlet to process the activity of the day.

Support system. Linda identified the group of four teachers that meet nearly each day after school as her current primary support system and that creating a support system remains vital for Linda as a beginning teacher. They shored each other up both personally and professionally. The principal of the school did not “check in as much” as Linda expected, but she shared, “that’s not a bad thing, since I do get so much support from my team and I think she knows that.” Moreover, Linda made no mention of a district assigned mentor nor a district induction program. She did remain connected to her university cohort members through frequent texts. Finally, Linda received support from her boyfriend and her mom. As a former teacher, Linda explained that her mom “offers the best advice and keeps me on track.”

Professional goals. Linda's overall professional goals for her first year of teaching included developing a greater knowledge of the curriculum, support technology, and practices used at her school. Linda explained,

I'm learning as I go and it's stressful. I have just been keeping my head barely above water with all these things that I'm learning and doing. I hope at the end of the year I'm able to confidently give an assessment, receive the results, and understand what I need to do with them and how I need to move forward.

In addition to her personally determined professional goals, setting goals for her evaluation was to take place in the next week. Her focus remained on expanding her knowledge and dexterity of the curriculum.

Difference between student teaching and beginning teaching. When asked how she thought CTDST influenced her teacher identity, Linda explained that she found three major differences between student teaching and life as a beginning teacher. First, having sole responsibility to develop and nurture her students academically and personally topped her list of differences. She had to manage the classroom and plan and deliver the lessons without the constant feedback she grew accustomed to during student teaching. Second, the site of Linda's student teaching placement utilized a host of volunteers, paraeducators, coteachers, and tutors to provide differentiated lessons for their students. Linda currently struggled to sufficiently differentiate her lessons due to fewer available resources. Finally, Linda found a significant difference between relating to colleagues as a TC and relating to them as a professional teacher. Even though she enjoyed a collegial relationship with her MT, an implied hierarchy of expert and learner still persisted. As a first-year teacher, although her colleagues supported her, there existed an expectation that Linda possessed sufficient knowledge and experience to do her job without their intervention or supervision. Although she successfully fulfilled the requirements of her job, she felt the weight of it.

For Linda, coteaching during student teaching worked well. She flourished as part of a coteaching team of four. If she had the opportunity to do her student teaching over, she would have still chosen the same situation, but she would do one thing differently. She would step back and ask what specifically made the lessons and differentiation beneficial and useful. Linda further explained, “What was it that was making an impact on the kids and how might that look and how can I tie those aspects into my own classroom?” She wanted to look at tasks successfully carried out with coteaching strategies, analyze the dynamics, and then envision how to gain the same benefits when she only has herself as a resource.

Purpose in teaching. Linda was asked to describe her main purpose for teaching, she explained that her daily motivation was to positively impact the academic and personal lives of her students which lay at the center of her purpose for teaching. Linda shared,

Everyone I work with every day, the impact I have on them is just very meaningful. Even though they don’t realize it or might not be able to express it, they’ll remember me for the rest of their lives. Their time in first grade is going to set them up for what’s coming academically and socially and everything in between.

Setting her students up to succeed stood out as Linda’s main purpose for teaching and motivated her to do all the learning and work necessary to do her job well.

Epilogue: Classroom observation. I conducted a four-hour observation of Linda’s first grade class in mid-December, a few days before the beginning of Winter Break. Linda introduced me to her first-graders as someone from the local university who came to watch their class. They quickly became engrossed in their morning routine, leaving me to sit at the side of the classroom to watch, listen, and take down impressions as Linda interacted with her students. The organization of the classroom allowed for easy movement between individual work, large group work, and small group work. Attractive bulletin boards reminded students of ideas and

content with colorful graphics always set on a black background. The room possessed a fun, inviting, and organized air.

For one hour during the observation period, I conducted a set of observations at 15-minute intervals to record Linda's behaviors that indicate levels of warmth and control (see Appendix C, Figure C.1). I recorded 62 high warmth behaviors, five low warmth behaviors, 11 high control behaviors, and 25 low control behaviors. Plotting these totals on the warmth and control graph placed the learning climate of Linda's classroom high on the warmth continuum and mid-range on the control continuum (see Appendix C, Figure C.2.)

Linda's behaviors recorded throughout the entire observation period that reflected warmth toward her students included calling students "friends," dialoguing with students as she read aloud, encouraging them to explore their ideas and predictions, and using fun verbal cues to gain their attention (e.g., Linda: "Waterfall," students: "Ssshhhhhh;" Linda hums theme music, students: "Batman!" Linda: "Kapeesh," students: "Kaposh"). When she directed individual student behavior, Linda reminded them of her expectations rather than criticizing their behavior (e.g., "If you're reading to yourself, I should not hear your voices"). Clearly, Linda spent time earlier in the year establishing routines and expected norms of behavior which later in the year allowed students to engage in a variety of self-directed tasks with minimal directions from their teacher. For example, students came inside from recess, hung their coats up, retrieved their snack, then sat at their desk. Linda started playing an illustrated audio book and without her orchestrating each movement, the students quietly ate their snack, went to the bathroom, and got a drink all while looking at the illustrations and listening quietly to the story. The same cooperative behavior was observed as students moved through five different learning stations for

their English language arts curriculum. The pacing of the learning activities seemed appropriate, with few stragglers, and students generally engaged in appropriate tasks.

Early in the second interview, Linda chose the descriptors of “organized, fun, collaborative, and willing to learn” to depict her teacher self. The organization of her classroom and her behavior toward her students testified to the accuracy of her choices. The numerous hugs, conversations, songs, stuffed animal reading buddies, and engaging lessons verified that her students may indeed describe Linda as “silly, loving, flexible, and fun.”

Linda’s Within Case Analysis

Linda began her student teaching placement viewing the profession of teaching as a means to positively impact the lives of others. Linda reflected, “I realized after my freshman year that I want to work with kids and that I want to be that person that can influence them.” She approached her teacher candidacy with a willingness to learn as much as she could in order to become an influential teacher.

As discussed earlier, Wenger (1998) describes a process of constructing a professional identity that consists of a cycle of three phases: participation, reflection, and reification. Through this process, individuals interpret and re-interpret themselves as they construct their professional identity. Each cycle adds more dimension and complexity to the constructed identity. The sociocultural environment of Linda’s student teaching placement invited participation in numerous job-related social situations. Linda cotaught with Teacher P for the entire semester, additionally she and Teacher P joined another TC and MT to create a dynamic, innovative group of four coteachers working with two classrooms of first grade students. Every time they collaborated to plan lessons, deliver instruction, or assess student learning, Linda continued to develop her professional identity. Likewise, as Linda participated in the CoP as a beginning

teacher she further developed her professional identity, The complex dynamics of the coteaching team during her first year of teaching caused Linda to answer the identity question who am I at this moment, in this setting? only after deep reflection because she experienced a lower level of support from those on her team than she expected.

Linda has been part of two effective CoPs. They have facilitated her identity growth through mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoire.

Keith's Story

“I knew that I couldn't teach these kids until I built a relationship with them.”

Episode one: Student teaching. When I first interviewed Keith, a white male in his late twenties, he was at the beginning of his career as a professional educator. Keith earned his bachelor's degree in science education, substitute taught for one semester, and then accepted his first teaching position with an urban school as a secondary science teacher.

Setting. Keith completed his CTDST placement in a suburban high school that ranked above average when compared to high schools in the nation. There were 1,209 students in attendance and a 22 to 1 student to teacher ratio. At least 17% of the high school population was proficient in math and at least 33% of the students tested as proficient in reading on the state tests.

Keith chose to pursue teaching as his vocation for two reasons. First, as he neared the completion of his bachelor degree in chemistry, he realized he would not find lab work fulfilling. He started looking for other career options. Second, commencing his search for other options, Keith reflected on the teaching opportunities he enjoyed while in the Reserved Officers Training Corp (ROTC), so he enrolled in a few education classes. After completing a middle school education practicum, he realized, “I gotta do this!” He loved working with the students.

For his student teaching experience, Keith was paired with a high school science teacher, Teacher N, in a suburban high school. Teacher N implemented the CTDST model, so Keith acted as a classroom coteacher from the first day of class. Teacher N ran a flipped classroom where activities normally conducted in the classroom, like delivery of instructional content, took place outside the classroom; enrichment and homework activities took place in the classroom, after students had listened to or viewed the instructional content. Such a classroom model allows students to readily access teachers for help. Keith and Teacher N spent the first portion of class time reviewing the instructional content, then they facilitated enrichment and homework type activities.

Characters and relationships. To explore the major influences on his student teaching experience, I asked Keith to describe his reasons for pursuing a teaching degree and to identify who/what had the most impact on his student teaching experience. Keith explained that he experienced ups and downs with his MT. Keith explained, “For networking and if I really needed some info, he’s great. As a mentor, not so much.” Keith saw himself as more invested in the student teaching experience than Teacher N. Although officially using the CTDST, they did little coplanning together. Teacher N wanted to teach the units and individual lessons the same way he had in the past. At the beginning of the semester, Keith worked to plan units based on Teacher N’s past plans but incorporated some of his own ideas, however, Teacher N rarely approved those plans. Keith shared, “After the second or third unit, when I noticed the trend [of non-approval], I literally would copy his stuff and . . . he’d pass it.” Ultimately, students watched the same videos with the same worksheets Teacher N had used the past few years in his flipped classroom.

In addition to a lack of coplanning, the pair rarely cotaught lessons. In light of the lack of opportunity to coplan units or co-deliver instruction, Keith exercised his creativity when presenting the 10 to 15-minute review at the beginning of the class period. He wanted to try out different teaching strategies and take some risks as an instructor in order to receive feedback. Keith explained, “I would do it [the lesson review] any way that I wanted. That was really the length of my creativity at the time.”

The difficulty came when Teacher N would contradict Keith in front of students as he moved the class through the lesson review. Keith explained,

I would be in the middle of talking and he would get up and take over for five or 10 minutes, and then he would go back and sit down and do his thing. I’m like, ‘Okay. Let me get back my train of thought here.’

Teacher N’s behavior even caused some students to choose which of the two teachers they liked better instead of learning to trust one teaching team. When asked about the level of trust between he and Teacher N, Keith replied, “He would trust me with little things. I don’t think he would necessarily trust me with big things, like when we were talking about big concepts” [in chemistry]. Keith went to explain, “There were some days I felt more like a secretary” doing exactly what the boss directed. Notably, Keith attended the CTDST training offered by the EPP but Teacher N did not which may explain the different notions each held about the implementation of the coteaching during student teaching model.

Although Keith was happy that he gained experience with the flipped classroom strategy, Keith believed the flipped classroom format limited the number of coteaching opportunities because delivering the instructional content occurred online, not in the classroom. Keith acknowledged that he did find his MT, Teacher N, influential. He “kind of taught me some things not to do,” Keith shared. In order to fill some of the gaps in his student teaching

experience, Keith ended up building relationship with the science teacher next door, Teacher H, who also taught chemistry. “I collaborated more with her than I did [Teacher N],” Keith shared. Keith and Teacher H created lessons, quizzes, and discussed the learning related to the lessons and assessments. Even though Keith grew discouraged about teaching as a result of the dynamics with Teacher N, he found inspiration in the relationships he formed with students. Keith shared, “The kids are the only reason why I got through student teaching. . . . [I] got up to see those kids, to be with them, to talk with them. . . . That’s what drives me today.” Keith graduated at the end of fall semester so he used the spring semester to substitute teach, often in Teacher N’s classroom, to continue to gain teaching experience with fewer frustrating dynamics than he had as a TC.

Early action. About two weeks into his student teaching experience, a conflict arose between Keith and a student who pulled out their phone in class. Earlier in the class period, Teacher N had left the room, placing Keith in charge of classroom management. When Keith saw the phone, he asked the student to put the phone away, but the student openly resisted. Outwardly, Keith stood his ground and insisted that the phone go back in the student’s backpack; inwardly Keith wondered, “Okay, do I really do this or not?” The student finally complied and the behavior never reoccurred because, Keith recalled, “I seemed to handle it well. They [the students] respected me after. I never had another problem with that kid except for refocusing.” This episode caused Keith to consider how he would approach teaching and discipline. He decided a position of flexibility and honesty would best serve his personality and values. He employed this approach with the students in Teacher N’s class while still following the classroom norms set by Teacher N.

To create a foundation for his policy of flexibility and honesty, Keith put a great deal of effort into getting to know students on a personal basis and worked to incorporate what they found meaningful into his classroom instruction. For example, Keith rarely ate lunch with the faculty members; rather, he shared,

I would spend lunchtime with the kids that I had personal connections with because they just either wanted to hang out or they wanted to practice [Chemistry] problems. I stayed after school for them because he [Teacher N] couldn't stay. . . . I knew that I couldn't teach these kids until I built a relationship with them. I tried to spend time with the kids that struggled the most. . . . Because the kids who were really struggling, I knew if I could get through to them on a personal level, they would actually come and get additional help.

As a result of his investment of time, students trusted Keith which allowed him to employ more flexibility in his approaches to motivate them to learn and to regulate their classroom behavior.

In the middle of Keith's student teaching placement, his UC told him, "You're really good. You just don't know how good you are. You just gotta take risks and be okay with that." Keith took this feedback seriously and acted on it whenever his situation allowed. As testament to his decision to risk rejection and build relationship with students, one day Keith related the periodic table to the movie *The Knight's Tale*, explaining that in the movie, peasants behaved in unexpected ways. After teaching the lesson, he doubted if the analogy would prove helpful to any student but at the end of his student teaching placement, a student gave him a plaque that read, "Peasants don't BASE jump. 2018." Very moved by this gesture, Keith still looked at the plaque as a reminder that "my nerdiness has some application in teaching, and just go with my gut. Stop doubting myself," he said. The plaque and feedback from his UC combined to validate the impact of Keith's actions and style of teaching. He started to trust his teacher-self, reflect on his teaching, make notes and adjustments to the lesson, and to reteach the lesson if students needed clarification.

Beginning to think of self as teacher. One day as a TC, Keith made a mistake during instruction. Students called it to his attention. Keith welcomed their feedback, assuring students he knew chemistry. Keith explained, “It clicked with me. Go with the flow. You messed up. Just acknowledge it and reteach it real quick. It’s a simple thing.” Keith’s students were learning chemistry; likewise, Keith was learning to teach. “I thought of myself as a teacher for the first time by reteaching myself how to teach,” he said. Building on the feedback from his UC, Keith decided that day to adopt, “It’s not your mistakes that define you. It’s what you do with those mistakes that make you who you are,” as the basis on which he judges his teaching activities. He emphasized this attitude toward learning with his students as well.

Major conflict. The limited collaboration Keith experienced with Teacher N stood as the most difficult thing about Keith’s student teaching placement; however, the restrictions placed on what he could contribute to the planning and delivery of lessons caused him to focus on learning to build relationships with students. During parent-teacher conferences mid-way through Keith’s student teaching placement, Keith faced a difficult situation that turned into a positive experience. Teacher N completely turned over the responsibility of meeting with parents and students to Keith even though Teacher N provided no modeling. Keith had never conducted such meetings, so he was nervous, but every student and parent team that stopped in told Keith, ““We’ve heard a lot of good things about you.”” Keith learned to put aside assumptions about parent-teacher conferences, and he also learned to ask parents and students, ““How do you think you are doing?”” After they shared their perspective, Keith used their answer as a springboard to give his feedback. As a beginning teacher, Keith used this approach to partner with students to create a plan for improving their learning.

Lessons from student teaching. In light of the difficulties Keith experienced in his student teaching placement, he chose to redefine those challenges into a life lesson. “Challenges are here for a reason, to not only motivate you, but to teach you persistence and to teach you to always get back up,” Keith shared during the interview. He did not believe ideal teaching situations or ideal students existed. He believed that learning from circumstances that you cannot change offered life lessons and produced grit. By holding this truth and by consequently modeling congruent behavior, Keith believed that he taught his students to thrive regardless of the circumstances of their lives.

In addition to the life lessons gained from student teaching with Teacher N, Keith learned from Teacher N to keep a log of his daily teaching activities in a composition book. On one side, Keith wrote the date/time of each class period and basic tasks addressed in each class, and then on the other side he wrote notes about the experience. Currently, as a beginning teacher, Keith still referred to his daily reflection logs as he gleaned resources and ideas from his time as a TC.

Looking ahead to life as a beginning teacher. Keith’s new job as a beginning teacher offered a new set of challenging circumstances, which again provided the opportunity to learn persistence and develop grit. One of the challenges, teaching in a different classroom for each of his five classes throughout the day, gave rise to his concern for not teaching students what they needed to learn during the academic year. Initially, the school scheduled Keith to teach in one classroom for all his classes, but the room proved problematic. “They were expecting me to teach IB (International Baccalaureate) chem, regular chem, and physics in a non-lab room.” After pointing out the impossibility of his situation, the administration made changes. The school administration scheduled him to teach in classrooms with science laboratories but he had to move from one classroom to another for each of his classes, which made the preparation time for

labs and lectures challenging. In spite of the chaos of his schedule, Keith hoped that his students would achieve the academic growth they needed, that his IB students would do well on their end-of-year assessments, and that he would keep his job.

Coteaching and teacher identity. When Keith was asked how his experience with CTDST affected his teacher identity, he replied, “It’s important to be open to help but not to rely on someone.” He clarified by explaining that because his MT did not provide some of the basic experiences linked to CTDST, Keith now waited for action to accompany the offer of help before he counted on any assistance. Moreover, Keith underscored his desire to collaborate with others, and not just take help and walk away. Interestingly, though his answer described the type of work relationships he desired, he did not address the interface between CTDST and his teacher identity.

Episode two: First year teacher. Keith and I met for a second interview near the conclusion of his first semester of teaching high school physics, chemistry, and IB chemistry at a large urban high school.

Setting. As a beginning teacher, Keith taught in a low-performing school. The state-wide ranking of the urban school in which Keith taught fell in the past few years. For the 2015-2016 academic year, it earned the rank of 213th, and by 2018-2019, it had fallen to the rank of 353rd in the state. Corresponding with the low state ranking, students earned a 15% proficiency rate in reading and a 13% proficiency score in math on state standard assessments in the 2018-2019 academic year.

Keith taught without an established curriculum, adding to the challenges of raising the level of learning in a low-performing school. New state-wide academic standards were introduced in 2018 but the adoption of those standards was not required until 2020. Keith’s

school decided to go along with the 2020 standards without having curriculum aligned with those new standards in place; hence, Keith and his colleagues were creating curriculum as they taught. Of further concern, teachers' evaluations corresponded to the newly adopted standards, which left Keith and his colleagues at a disadvantage.

Characters. To gain insight into the classroom interactions during Keith's first year of teaching, I asked Keith to describe himself from two perspectives and to list the involvement of any other individuals who may have joined him and his students throughout the day. From his perspective, Keith described himself as compassionate, loyal, hardworking, and open-minded. On the other hand, Keith believed his students would describe him as out-going, hardworking, thoughtful, and confused. The confusion students may attribute to Keith related to his having to move classrooms so often. As he adapted to each new environment under the watchful eyes of his students, he feared his behaviors looked scattered and confused as he remembered and re-oriented himself to the layout of each classroom. Keith mentioned one individual that joined him and his students in the classroom. Daily a paraeducator joined one of the classes Keith taught. Unfortunately, the paraeducator stayed disengaged from the students and contributed little to the class narrative.

Early perceptions and experiences. Keith greatly enjoyed the students he taught, explaining that many come from "rough backgrounds." The background of his students created two avenues of connections for Keith. First, he grew up in a strong family but their living situation did not always remain stable. This backdrop gave him empathy with his students that experience homelessness and other types of insecurity. Keith explained:

Establishing this norm of being honest with my students and them being honest with me, especially with students that come from very, I don't want to say terrible backgrounds, but challenging backgrounds, I've definitely set up a culture in my classroom, where if there's an issue, we can talk about it.

His familiarity with homelessness informed Keith's second connection to the struggles of his students. As he taught science, he also included lessons about developing life skills. He wanted to equip them to navigate their lives successfully.

In contrast to the joy and sense of purpose he derived from connecting with students, Keith found the reality of no curriculum to be a burden and hindered his efforts to teach and connect with his students. Not only did the lack of curriculum cause difficulty in Keith's ability to plan lessons, but without an agreed upon plan, some of the science teachers used an inquiry-based approach to teach the same material as Keith. However, Keith found a more traditional approach worked best because he believed his students did not possess sufficient scientific background knowledge to guide loosely structured inquiry-based approach. Keith wondered if differing approaches to the same material would cause discrepancies in student assessments and teacher evaluations. Adding to Keith's frustration, he described the communication from the school administration and school district as inconsistent and poor. The principal acknowledged that communications must improve, but the acknowledgment fell short. Keith explained, "A lot of our initiatives are schoolwide but the connections to make that schoolwide initiative happen are not there."

Keith accurately anticipated two things about his first year of teaching. First, he felt satisfied with his ability to build relationships with his students. He shared, "I'm able to confidently go and speak one on one with students or with a group of students and kind of get them to see my perspective while I'm seeing theirs." One of the school counselors told Keith that while many of his students with affective needs skipped most of their classes, those students made an effort to attend his science classes. They felt supported in Keith's classes. Secondly, after interviewing at the school and meeting the science department faculty, Keith expected to

get support from his fellow science teachers. “My department chair, he comes and checks in with me all the time.” That same faculty member also followed up and did what he could to get support for Keith. This stood in stark contrast to Keith’s experience with the school administration and district level administration.

On the other hand, during his first year of teaching, Keith did not expect that he would have to move between classrooms so frequently. Not inhabiting his own classroom caused chaos and disruption in classroom management and created organizational and preparation issues when conducting laboratory experiments. Furthermore, the chemistry team employed two different approaches to the course content (inquiry-based and traditional lecture/lab), complicating the coordination of available lab time. This meant that “half of us need the equipment at some point and half of us don’t. And we don’t communicate our needs and schedules well enough,” Keith explained. As a beginning teacher, Keith often felt he was battling chaotic situations not of his making.

End of the day. At the end of a typical day of teaching, Keith tidied up the final classroom he occupied and then headed to his office space. He then met with students, administered make-up tests, and attended faculty meetings. Before he left for home, he employed the most helpful strategy he learned from Teacher N: recording and reflecting upon his activities of the day in a composition book. He used this series of questions to guide his reflection: How did each lesson go? Why or why not? Did I do my best today? Why or why not? What do I need to reteach? Do differently? How can I create more differentiation? After reflecting on his teaching practices, he went home and decompressed.

Support system. As a part of the district induction program, Keith met with a teaching coach. They began meeting at the end of the first quarter of the academic year; the district

induction program required the teaching coach to connect with the beginning teacher for a minimum of six hours. Near the end of Keith's first semester of teaching, his coach had conducted two informal observations, each lasting about 20 minutes. Keith and his coach debriefed for about 30 minutes following each observation.

Given the limited interaction between Keith and his teaching coach, most of his mentoring came from interacting with his professional learning teams (PLT). "I get a lot of mentoring from my PLTs. . . . There's collaboration; we kind of pep each other up." Keith's class schedule precluded him from meeting regularly with his physics PLT, but his schedule allowed him to meet with the chemistry PLT. Keith explained,

We're science teachers so we like to be on task, you know? We like to look at the data and stuff like that. We don't spend a lot of time deliberating. We're like, 'Here are the facts, what do we need to do here?'

In contrast to the lack of collaboration Keith experienced during his student teaching placement, Keith found the colleagues at his first teaching job collaborative and supportive.

Professional goals. Keith wanted to improve his classroom management by revisiting, reestablishing, and recreating classroom norms and expectations after winter break. He believed he better understood the dynamics and impact of switching classrooms, so he believed he knew of more effective procedures to use with his students. As part of recreating the norms of his classroom, he planned to pursue the professional goal he and his teaching coach set: to improve the pacing of his class. Keith explained:

What I mean by pacing is making sure that students understand the direction and stuff. Because I get caught up with all the students coming to talk to me about their individual issues and I get distracted and then I look at the clock. And so I just rush right through it [the lesson].

To the same end, his department chair told Keith, "To go fast, sometimes you need to start slow." Keith did not fully comprehend how his department chair wanted him to use this axiom to

change his behavior. After noticing a lack of change in Keith's behavior, for a couple days in a row, his chairperson met Keith outside one of his classrooms. Just as Keith attempted to put the key in the door handle to unlock the classroom and let the students in, his chairperson would say, "Stop. Take a breath, breathe. How are you doing?" Initially, this interruption annoyed Keith because he felt the pressure of the students standing in the hallway and the pressure of getting the classroom arranged. But then, he asked himself, "Why is he making me do this?" At that point, his department chair again explained, "Sometimes if you want to go fast, you have to start slow." Keith understood. He stated,

I realized that their [student] behavior is reflective of mine. So if I'm running around like a chicken with its head cut off, so are they. Now I take a breath and slow down. Some of them [students] may find it a little annoying, but they will adjust to it. Because like anything else in this world, everything wants to be at a low energy state as much as possible.

Difference between student teaching and first year of teaching. Classroom structure stood out as the greatest difference between Keith's student teaching experience and his first year of teaching. During his student teaching experience, Keith taught only in flipped classroom structure. Students watched a lecture video at home and then used class time to obtain clarification and to apply the knowledge they learned from the video lecture. As a beginning teacher, Keith used a traditional structure for his classroom. He conducted lectures during class time and then assigned homework to provide opportunities for students to apply the knowledge they learned during the classroom lecture. Both classroom structures, flipped and traditional, required different approaches to lesson planning and content delivery. As a TC, Keith taught more honors students who possessed a broader base of scientific knowledge than he did as a beginning teacher, affecting planning lessons, delivering instruction, and managing the classroom. As a TC he did not have to differentiate his lessons a great deal, as students in a

flipped classroom had control over the speed at which they interacted with the lecture. In contrast, as a beginning teacher, Keith worked with a student population who required more differentiated lessons and possessed a less developed scientific knowledge base. Hence, Keith had to consider issues of greater complexity as a beginning teacher when planning and delivering lessons. Paradoxically, even though Keith participated in a CTDST placement, he engaged in more collaborative activity as a beginning teacher through his PLTs than he did as a coteacher.

The lack of those collaborative activities during student teaching, especially in the areas of unit planning and lesson planning, stood as the areas in which Keith felt least prepared as a beginning teacher. He said, “I did learn a couple of organizational skills as well as reflective skills during student teaching. But still, the things I have trouble with are lesson and unit planning.” The absence of an adopted curriculum aligned with state standards in his current teaching position compounded his discomfort with planning. On the other hand, during his student teaching placement, Keith believed he learned how to create connections with students. He believed his students trusted him and could talk with him about issues outside the classroom.

Keith shared that if he could do anything differently during his student teaching placement, he would advocate for more learning and collaborative opportunities. Keith explained:

There is a stereotype where like you come in, it is their [MT's] classroom, it is their environment, stuff like that. Which I get. But ... at the same time, when [the MT is] restricting creativity, there's no learning [for the TC]. And when I reflect back on that, it's like if I was able to have been more creative and failed and fell on my face if I needed to, I would have felt more competent and prepared for my first year of teaching.

In short, Keith would have pushed harder to participate in more opportunities through which he could have learned about lesson planning and instructional delivery in a traditionally structured classroom.

Purpose in teaching. Keith's central purpose that influenced his efforts in the classroom was the desire to "change people for the better." Keith explained:

What we learned through all our studies at college is that the most formative years of any person's life is in high school and middle school. That's when you can really truly make a difference. Not every kid's going to love science. So teaching them good life skills, teaching them to be good people, I think, is my purpose for teaching. I want them to reflect back whether they're about to make a good decision or a bad decision.

By broadening his purpose for teaching beyond his content area, Keith hoped to make a lasting impact on his students.

Epilogue: Classroom observation. I had difficulty gaining permission to observe Keith teaching in a classroom because prior to winter break, the school district fired the principal of Keith's high school and a new interim administration needed to approve the observation. This event underscored the difficulties with school administration Keith referred to during his interviews.

Finally, an observation of three of Keith's classes occurred in early February, three weeks into the Keith's second semester of his first year of teaching. During the first class, IB chemistry, I sat unobtrusively to watch, listen, and take notes while Keith instructed and interacted with his students. I also accompanied Keith as he moved through the hallways, making his way to the locations of his various classrooms.

During Keith's next class, Freshman physics, I conducted a set of observations at 15-minute intervals to record Keith's behaviors indicative of different levels of teacher warmth and control (see Appendix C, Figure C.1.) I recorded 45 high warmth behaviors, 16 low warmth behaviors, 17 high control behaviors, and 35 low control behaviors. Plotting these totals on the warmth and control graph placed the learning climate of Keith's classroom higher in warmth,

and lower in control, placing his classroom environment in the upper right portion of quadrant C (see Appendix C, Figure C.2).

Behaviors recorded throughout the entire observation period that reflect Keith's high warmth toward his students included Keith walking among students and answering their questions while they worked on problems, asking students to share their learning with other students, stating his expectations of their learning, dialoguing between teacher and student to guide thinking, encouraging when student answers approximated the correct solution, and whispering to a sleeping student to reengage them. Behaviors recorded throughout the entire observation period that reflect Keith's low control of the classroom environment included allowing students to get off task in a variety of ways while they were supposed to work on problems. As the only strategy to refocus student behavior, Keith issued the warning five times: "These problems are due at the end of class or its homework." Overall, the focus of the classroom remained on completing the assigned problems in spite of Keith's limited refocusing strategies. Keith's did not adhere to a strict pacing of classroom activities. He told students that they had five minutes to complete a task, but that five minutes actually totaled almost 15 minutes as he reissued the five-minute deadline a few times. Keith's loosely defined pacing of the lesson failed to create a sense of urgency.

Early in the second interview, Keith chose the descriptors "compassionate, loyal, hardworking, and open-minded" to depict his teacher self. He also proposed that his students might describe him as "out-going, hardworking, thoughtful, and confused." During the observation period, Keith's behaviors provided evidence of all of those except "confused." Keith's sincere effort to connect with students by providing interesting instruction was evident through a portion of his day. He knew each student by name and talked with many of them about

interests they had outside of class. Keith reported that many of his affective-needs students came to his science classes even though they did not go to many of their other classes. Keith believed their attendance was the result of his effort to form personal relationships with them. His determination to provide challenging lessons for his students, even though he had to change classrooms for each class he taught, reinforced his loyalty to his students.

Keith's Within Case Analysis

Although Keith signed up for a CTDST experience, he participated in a hybrid of a TST experience and a CTDST experience. Keith's student teaching placement resembled a TST placement due to the minimal co-planning, co-delivery of instruction, and co-assessment of lessons. His student teaching placement resembled CTDST because his MT stayed in the classroom almost every day of Keith's placement. Keith and his MT most commonly used the one-teach, one-observe coteaching strategy (Bacharach, et al., 2010) during their daily review of the material that the students should have read or watched the previous evening. Then both Keith and his MT would interact with students as they performed labs and engaged in activities related to the lesson. Keith did not benefit from the positive aspects of either model of student teaching placements. Unlike students in a typical TST placement, Keith did not have the opportunity to solo teach classes for consecutive weeks and try out his ideas for lesson planning and instruction. And unlike TCs in a typical CTDST placement, Keith did not benefit from the collaboration, modeling, and feedback that occurred when MTs and TCs co-plan, co-deliver, and co-assess lessons using a variety of coteaching strategies. Keith's statement, "There were some days I felt more like a secretary than a student teacher," summed up Keith's student teaching experience. He acted as his MT's assistant and was afforded little time or feedback to risk, learn, and gain experience as a teacher.

During Keith's student teaching placement, his social participation was marked by limitations in mutual engagement. He had little chance of "being included in what matters" (Wenger, 1998, p. 74) when negotiating the meaning of his student teaching experience. Keith largely adopted the repertoire for teaching used by his MT because dialogue focused on their joint enterprise was limited. Keith was involved in the joint enterprise of student teaching, but he was anchored in the CoP he formed with his students, his UC, and education professors rather than in a CoP comprised of himself, his MT, and their shared students. As a result of these limitations, Keith received little affirmation of his professional identity from his MT. Students, however, were a source of validation through their cooperation during class and the time they spent learning and forming relationships with Keith. The plaque Keith received from a student at the end of his student teaching was a tangible artifact of the shared repertoire formed by Keith and the classroom students. The feedback Keith received from his UC also affirmed his teacher identity.

As a beginning teacher, Keith found membership in a CoP with his PLTs. The head of his chemistry department took time to observe and coach Keith and worked with him to slow down, set the tone of each class period, and pace the delivery of his lessons. Keith collaborated with his chemistry and physics colleagues, coplanning lessons and co-assessing some lessons. These interactions provided the teachers opportunities to negotiate the meaning of fulfilling the school district's mandate to teach the students in their science classes even though they were not provided a curriculum.

Keith viewed the development of his professional identity as his responsibility to pursue. When he perceived gaps in his student teaching experience, he taught as a substitute teacher for a

semester to strengthen his teaching experience. Keith pursued social experiences to augment his process of negotiating meaning.

Summary

The narratives of all the participants tell the stories of six individuals who have transitioned from an identity of TC to an identity of beginning teacher. The life events, turning point experiences, and role of important people involved in the formation of their teacher identity were included in the analysis of each case study. Additionally, the quality of their CoP memberships were evaluated by looking at the degree of mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoire each participant experienced.

Between-Case Analysis

The between case analysis is comprised of three sections: (a) a comparison of the experiences of the three TST participants that relates findings from the two face-to-face interviews, the classroom observations, and findings connected to Wenger's (1998) social theory of learning; (b) a comparison of the experiences of the three CTDST participants that relates findings from the two face-to-face interviews, the classroom observations, and findings connected to Wenger's social theory of learning; and (c) a comparison of the experiences of all six participants' interviews, observations, and subsequent connections to Wenger's social theory of learning.

The TST Participants

The three participants who experienced TST placements were all young females. Two of them were elementary teachers and one was a high school science teacher.

Interview findings. Before the two elementary TCs, Hannah and Sue, began their student teaching placement, they had prior relationships with their MTs and classroom students. During their university course work they were both assigned a practicum placement and tasked with supporting that teacher and their reading program. After completing their reading practicums, both elementary-level participants requested to do their student teaching placement in the same classroom as their practicum. Both MTs agreed. Thus, the TST elementary TCs were familiar with the students and classroom routines when they began their student teaching placement at the beginning of spring semester. In contrast, the secondary science TC, Rose, had no prior relationship with her MTs or with the classroom students she eventually worked with throughout her student teaching placement.

All three of the TST participants were anxious to begin teaching and working directly with students at the beginning of their student teaching placement. The typical structure of a TST placement requires the TC to observe the MT and their classroom routines for the first weeks of their placement before they begin assisting in any teaching activity. However, two of the participants directly asked to skip the observation stage. Hannah, one of the elementary TCs, said to her MT, “Let’s throw me into it! Like I’m the teacher now.” Her MT complied to a limited extent. Hannah immediately assumed full teaching responsibilities for math and writing but observed and assisted her MT in other content areas. Hannah was in full charge of the classroom after the first six weeks. One of the reasons her MT agreed to an accelerated timeline was due to the openness and trust in their relationship. Hannah explained, “We had such a good relationship; we were able to be honest and talk about what the student needs were, and we worked well together.”

The other elementary-level TC, Sue, spent only a few days observing her MTs before she began to take over the responsibility for lesson planning, delivery of instruction, and learning assessment. Sue explained that because of her prior experience in her placement classroom, she “moved into student teaching and took over rather quickly.” But a crisis in her personal life interrupted that plan. After taking a two-and-a-half-week break to attend to pressing family matters, she had to come back to her placement and immediately take over. When she returned to her TST placement, she spent little time observing. Sue explained that upon returning from her break, “I took over, and I ended up teaching the full day, from the second the students got in until the end of the day for over five weeks.”

Rose, the secondary science TC, also directly asked to forego the typical observation period of her TST placement. When she first met the MT who taught biology and genetics, Rose said, “I’ve had quite a few experiences. I feel more comfortable taking over the class a little bit faster than the traditional model [of student teaching].” The MT agreed and Rose immediately took over teaching those classes which meant Rose did all the lesson planning, delivery of instruction, and assessment of learning for biology and genetics. Rose made the same request of the MT who taught anatomy, but that MT required Rose to observe for two weeks before she began assisting with the teaching. By the third week of her student teaching placement, Rose was planning, delivering, and assessing the lessons for two sections of three different classes: biology, genetics, and anatomy. Mid-way through the semester, Rose told her MTs, “I’m starting to feel really overwhelmed.” They were not surprised because Rose had taken on so much responsibility so early in her placement. Each MT began helping Rose with some of her responsibilities. Rose’s MTs sustained this level of support until the end of her student teaching placement.

All three TST participants felt confident enough in their ability to teach that they spent minimal time observing their MTs and quickly began teaching duties. Rose, the secondary TC, had the most difficulty with rapidly assuming the duties of teaching. She also had less experience in the classrooms with her MTs than the other two TST participants.

The three TST participants described similar experiences surrounding their greatest accomplishments during student teaching and the first time they thought of themselves as teachers. When asked to name the greatest accomplishment of their student teaching experience, all three participants mentioned specific experiences with students: handling the responsibility of the class all day, receiving thank you cards at the end of the semester, and a learning project that went particularly well. Thus, interpersonal events, when they received validation from classroom students, were significant to all three. Similarly, all three TST participants first thought of themselves as a teacher while interacting with students in their classroom. Hannah felt “the burden of being a teacher” when she was the only teacher interacting with students for an entire day. Sue witnessed a student with significant learning impairment demonstrate knowledge acquisition as a result of her interaction with him, and from this she thought of herself as a teacher. Rose recognized herself as a teacher when she realized students came to her with questions and concerns rather than the MT. Again, interpersonal interactions served as the impetus for teacher identity formation—the first time the TST TCs thought of themselves as teachers.

Observation findings. After observing the TST participants in their first-year classroom, I noted that all three of the beginning teachers demonstrated behaviors that correspond with a high-warmth, low-control classroom atmosphere (see Appendix C, Figure C.2). Although they established a warm atmosphere, during the observations there were periods of time in all three

classrooms when the behavior of their students was unfocused and chaotic. In Hannah's case, she used only one strategy to refocus her students, a call and response she taught her students at the beginning of the year. The students responded to her call out, but their response was rote four months into the school year and only momentarily reconnected them to their learning activity. She did not use a clock or timer to help the students manage their time during group work or transitions. During the time planned for both math and English language arts (which included both reading and writing learning activities), Hannah's students wandered from one student-selected learning activity to the next without a sense of urgency. Consequently, a similar pattern emerged during the two lessons: The longer the loosely structured learning times lasted, the noisier the students became, and consequently, the more frequently Hannah repeated her minimally effective call-out to refocus their attention. Hannah tried to assist individual students during both lessons, but many students waited a long time for her attention, stalling their learning. The structure and loose pacing of the math and language arts lessons left students increasingly disengaged as the lesson progressed.

Sue's students were physically active throughout the observation period. They were not unruly, but transition times took longer than the time Sue allotted her students and with no consequences for the delay. Unlike Hannah, Sue employed a more structured lesson and management style that incorporated a mini-lesson followed by releasing all students to engage in the same learning activity in small groups. For example, all of the students did reading activities after Sue led them through decoding the word "encyclopedia." After reading, all students transitioned to simultaneous writing activities. Even though Sue's lesson was more focused than Hannah's, a number of students were not focused on the assigned learning activity.

Rose's students lost focus in two different instances. First, she assigned readings and corresponding written responses to small groups in an effort to differentiate the biology lesson. Her plan was workable, but she told the groups they had "five more minutes to finish" three different times even though students did not indicate they needed more time to complete the activity; she ended up giving them 15 minutes instead of five. The result was that her students lost focus after the first five minutes because they had successfully worked to complete the task. The remaining ten minutes were filled with action unrelated to the learning task. The second instance of losing focus occurred during two of Rose's classes when she had two different groups of students vying for her attention: students who belonged in the class Rose was actively teaching and students from class periods she had previously taught that day. Students from the previous classes came in with questions, and Rose turned her attention to them. When she did this, the students she was actively teaching, stopped working on the activity Rose had assigned them. When Rose was distracted, so too were her students.

Findings related to Wenger's social theory of learning (1998). All three TST participants engaged in activities with their MTs that formed CoPs through mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoire. Wenger (1998) explained that engagement fosters identity:

Engagement in practice is a double source of identification: we invest ourselves in what we do and at the same time we invest ourselves in our relations with other people. As we build communities of practice through this process, we work out our relations with each other and with the world, and we gain a lived sense of who we are. (p. 192)

Through the CoP constructed with their MTs, the three participants gained a sense of who they were as teachers.

Hannah and her MT constructed an effective CoP. Even though Hannah worked with her MT through the fall semester as a reading practicum, it was when they took the personality

assessment during a MT and TC training in December that they discovered that they had similar personalities. Hannah explained, “We went to a seminar [at Hannah’s university], and we took personality tests, and we ended up getting pretty similar scores.” Hannah continued, “We felt we were going to work well together.” With their similar personalities, they mutually engaged in teaching their group of second-graders. Their unique response to the externally assigned task of teaching their group of students and creating opportunities for Hannah to learn to become an elementary teacher defined their joint enterprise. They started to develop a shared repertoire through Hannah’s reading practicum and then continued to build their repertoire through shared histories and common language and the use of artifacts in common ways.

Sue credited participating in a practicum with her two MTs during the fall semester before beginning as a TC as a significant reason for the effective CoP that the three of them established. Sue explained:

I had a guided reading group that I did every day for two months [during the fall semester], so I was already in that room. And then I did my whole [master’s] thesis with that class. I had a really great dynamic with the two teachers and they said that they’d love to have me stay on as a student teacher.”

By inviting Sue to stay on as their student teacher, the MTs were inviting her into mutual engagement (i.e., a relationship organized around teaching a third-grade class; Wenger, 1998).

As they mutually engaged in teaching their students, they negotiated their unique response to the mandate to teach their students. When Sue had to take off two-and-a-half weeks for personal reasons, they negotiated how their CoP would meet their goal of teaching third-graders while providing training opportunities for a TC. Their response strengthened their joint enterprise as they addressed the need to teach their students and accommodate what was happening in Sue’s life. As the two MTs and Sue moved through the spring semester, they relied on the shared

repertoire (language, routines, artifacts; Wenger, 1998) they created during the fall semester. They continued to build their shared repertoire until the end of Sue's teacher candidacy.

Rose's experience of participating in a CoP was slightly different than her counterparts' elementary grade level student teaching. Rose and each of her MTs created separate but overlapping CoPs. Separately, Rose and her biology/genetics MT and Rose and her anatomy MT mutually engaged in teaching their different groups of students the corresponding subjects. Rose also formed unique joint enterprises with each MT, as their mandate differed slightly from one another. Consequently, Rose and each MT shared and developed unique histories, language, routines, uses of various artifacts, and distinctive divisions of labor. Together Rose and both of her MTs comprised a CoP with three members that focused on providing Rose with opportunities to negotiate meaning and develop a teacher identity.

Each of the TST participants formed strong CoPs during their student teaching placements. However, their experience of forming CoPs during their first year of teaching varied. At the time of their second interviews late in the first semester of their first year of teaching, both Hannah and Sue were having difficulty finding their place in a CoP. Both felt alienated by the unfamiliar, heavily scripted curriculums used in their respective schools. Wenger (1998) proposed that when individuals encounter unfamiliar practices, they are in unfamiliar CoP territory and the boundaries of their participation and membership become blurred. "Our non-membership shapes our identities through our confrontation with the unfamiliar" (Wenger, 1998, p. 153). When last interviewed, Hannah and Sue's identities were connected to their non-membership. In contrast, Rose, as a beginning teacher, found meaningful engagement with her "amazing colleagues" who taught science at her high school. Rose was also part of a supportive beginning-teacher cohort organized by her school district to on-board teachers new to their

organization. Her habit of bringing home-baked goods for her colleagues every Friday indicated her desire to contribute to nurturing the CoP.

The CTDST Participants

Two females and one male comprised the group of three participants who experienced CTDST placements. Like the group of TST participants, two of them were elementary teachers and one was a high school science teacher.

Interview findings. None of the three CTDST participants had prior relationships with their MTs or the classroom students they worked with during their student teaching placement. This was one of the few shared characteristics of their CTDST placement. The experience of the three CTDST participants differed greatly between the elementary teachers, Sam and Linda, and the secondary teacher, Keith, due to one factor: the way each MT interpreted the CTDST experience. Although all three participants went to a seminar focused on training MTs and TCs strategies for CTDST, only Sam's and Linda's MTs attended the seminar. Keith's MT did not attend. Consequently, Sam and Linda, the two elementary participants, had strong CTDST experiences, and described their relationships with their MTs as "good," "strong," and characterized by the development of mutual trust. Keith, the secondary teacher did not have a strong CTDST experience and described his relationship with his MT as a source of frustration and discouragement. Keith was uncertain if his MT trusted him and often felt "more like a secretary than a student teacher." This difference of experience illustrates that the MT's definition and perception of the CTDST experience is vital to the quality of the CTDST experience.

In spite of the difference in the quality of their relationships with their MTs and consequently, their student teaching experiences, Sam, Linda and Keith all described their

greatest accomplishment during their student teaching placement as building relationship with their students. By the end of her teacher candidacy, Sam could tell she had connected with several of her students and felt “satisfied by this accomplishment.” Likewise, Linda found that building relationships with her students and her MT was her “biggest accomplishment” and what she was “most proud of.” Determined to make the most of his student teaching placement, Keith dealt with his frustrations with his MT by focusing on learning teacher-student relationship building skills. Keith explained, “The kids are the only reason why I got through student teaching. I got up to see those kids, to be with them, to talk with them.” Just as the three CTDST participants focused on building relationships with their students as TCs, they maintained their focus on students when asked what they enjoyed most about their jobs as beginning teachers. They all talked about the joy they found in getting to know their students and investing in their lives.

Although all three CTDST participants focused on building relationships with students as the purpose and the joy of teaching, their experiences of when they first thought of themselves as teachers differed. Sam and Linda described a gradual experience, but Keith described a moment in the classroom. Sam realized she was a teacher when she noticed how little time she spent on the campus of her university. Upon recognizing the change in her behavior, Sam recalled saying, “I’m doing it! I’m living this [teacher] life and enjoying it!” Similarly, Linda explained, “Toward the end [of student teaching], once I was wrapping up, it dawned on me that I was just happy to be there every day. So happy doing what I’m doing.” In contrast, Keith described a moment in the classroom when he wrote something incorrect on the whiteboard and students called his attention to his error. Instead of panicking, Keith explained, “It clicked with me. Go with the flow. You messed up. Just acknowledge it and reteach it real quick.” Keith saw himself as a

teacher in that moment as he discarded the naïve notion of infallible expertise as the definition of an effective educator, and he embraced the understanding that an effective teacher models how to learn, which includes making mistakes.

The CTDST participants' description of the influence of the coteaching model on their teacher identity corresponded with the quality of their experience. Both Sam and Linda mentioned their comfort and willingness with and preference for collaborating with others. Their discussion of collaboration included receiving and giving feedback that focused on improving their practice. During her first year of teaching, Sam attributed her ability to push through the discomfort of “less than glowing feedback” from her administrator and to focus instead on what she learned from such feedback during her coteaching experience. Similarly, Linda described her ability to “just listen and understand why people do things a certain way” to the hours she spent with her coteaching team listening to and learning from their varied approaches to teaching. Linda did not feel like she had to copy her more experienced colleagues but if she listened and learned from them, she realized she would grow stronger as an educator. Keith, on the other hand, believed that CTDST caused him to refrain from trusting the words of other educators, preferring to base his trust of others on their actions. During his first semester of teaching, the professional learning teams made up of the other science teachers in his building, demonstrated their trustworthiness through their actions of support and collaboration. Keith was encouraged by their actions.

Observation findings. After observing the CTDST participants in their first-year classroom, all three of the beginning teachers demonstrated behaviors that corresponded with a high-warmth, low-control classroom atmosphere (see Appendix C, Figure C.2). Although they

established a warm atmosphere, there was a difference in the pacing and class management between the elementary teachers and the secondary teacher.

Both Sam and Linda experienced CTDST with supportive and effective MTs. Interestingly, they both managed their classrooms with minimal unfocused student behavior, using pacing to support student engagement. As an example, Sam verbally validated on-task students and asked students to describe how they should conduct themselves during the next learning activity to foster a smooth transition between subjects. She also reviewed strategies students might employ if they found that they were distracted. Sam said, “If you’re having trouble [focusing] you might use headphones or a privacy cubbie.” After Sam reminded students of these self-regulating strategies, a few students used them during the next learning activity. Both Sam and Linda used the timer to help students move through transitions with minimum distractions. Students and teachers congratulated themselves when they completed the transition within the allotted time. When students did not complete the transition before the timer went off, they were not penalized but a group goal they were working toward was deferred. Any disappointment was addressed when the students were reminded that they would have another opportunity to earn their way to their goal throughout the day. During Linda’s class observation, she left the classroom for five minutes but her students stayed on task. Linda used a variety of verbal cues to reengage her students when they started to lose focus. For example, she would call out “waterfall” and her students replied, “shhhhhhhhhhhh;” in the same vein, Linda would sing the notes of the Batman theme then pause as her students called out “Batman!” Both activities engaged and reenergized the students.

In contrast, the students in Keith’s class were not as engaged and he employed only limited strategies to refocus his students. At the beginning of each of his classes, Keith taught a

mini-lesson to introduce or remind students of the material they were focusing on for that day. After the mini-lesson, Keith would lead them through two practice problems to illustrate the principles in the lesson. Keith used dialogue with students to guide problem solving and students demonstrated their understanding as they answered questions, but he struggled to keep them engaged. After leading the students through example problems, they had time to work on the problems that they had to turn in the next day. In each of Keith's classes, about one-half to two-thirds of his students engaged in finishing the homework but the remainder were distracted and distracting to others. Keith repeatedly said, "Do it [the set of problems] now or its homework," but this entreaty had little motivating effect. Keith did not use a timer or any strategy to add a sense of urgency for his students to complete their assignment during the class period.

During observations of their classrooms, the elementary CTDST participants more effectively used strategies and provided structure that supported the engagement of their students than the CTDST participant who taught secondary students.

Findings related to Wenger's social theory of learning (1998). During their teacher candidacy, two of the three CTDST participants, Sam and Linda, constructed a CoP with their MTs that provided daily experiences of mutually engaging in collaboration to teach their classroom students. From their first day of student teaching, Sam and Linda were called and acted as coteachers of their respective classrooms. They immediately worked with their MTs to plan, deliver, and assess the classroom lessons. They observed their MTs as they taught alongside them. The TCs received and learned to give immediate feedback as they taught throughout the semester. They had to learn to pace and coordinate their lessons to facilitate the planned input from each coteacher and the engagement of their students. The coordination and collaboration resulted in membership in a CoP and in the growth of teacher identity in the TCs.

Wenger (1998) described how individuals working together negotiate their roles, experiences, communication to accomplish an assigned goal and end up constructing identities in the middle of all the activity. Wenger explained:

Membership in a community of practice translates into an identity as a form of competence. An identity in this sense is relating to the world as a particular mix of the familiar and the foreign, the obvious and the mysterious, the transparent and the opaque. We experience and manifest our selves by what we recognize and what we don't, what we grasp and what alienates us, what we can press into service and what we can't use, what we can negotiate and what remains out of reach. In practice we know who we are by what is familiar, understandable, usable, negotiable; we know who we are not by what is foreign, opaque, unwieldy, unproductive. (p. 153)

Both Sam and Linda's MTs validated their competence as individuals learning to teach which led both TCs to gradually recognize and own that they were teachers. Their recognition occurred as a result of months of interacting and negotiating meaning with their MTs and with their students, but interestingly, it was during intrapersonal reflection that they acknowledged their teacher identity.

On the other hand, Keith experienced scarce validation from his MT of his competence as a contributing member of a CoP. The limited validation equaled restricted membership and a less developed teacher identity at the end of Keith's student teaching placement. Keith could mostly negotiate meaning with the classroom students because his MT reserved for himself the power to make most of the decisions about how he and Keith would accomplish their assigned task of teaching science classes. Because Keith negotiated the meaning of teaching science with his students, Keith first thought of himself as a teacher while he was teaching those students.

The Six Participants

Through the negotiating of meaning, it is the interplay of participation and reification that makes people and things what they are. In this interplay [of participation and reification], our experience and our world shape each other through a reciprocal relation that goes to the very essence of who we are. (Wenger, 1998, pp. 70-71)

All six research participants experienced two significant episodes of negotiation of meaning that shaped who they were as beginning teachers: their student teaching experience and their early experiences during the first semester of the beginning of their teaching career. This portion of the between case analysis compares and contrasts the findings from the interviews, observations, and makes connections to Wenger's (1998) social theory of learning.

Interview findings. The six study participants shared several commonalities. All participants entered teacher training because they wanted to help people. Before entering an EPP, all six taught or coached individuals and those experiences caused the participants to consider the vocation of teaching. When asked about the person that had the most impact upon them during their student teaching placement, all of them named their MT as that person. Significantly, five of the participants described the positive impact of their MT; one participant described the negative impact he experienced from working with his MT. As beginning teachers, all six participants feared their students would not make sufficient academic growth; and conversely, all six participants hoped their students would demonstrate sufficient academic growth.

Two interesting points of distinction stood out while analyzing the interviews of the six participants. The first distinction divides the six individuals into two equal groups. When asked to describe their greatest accomplishment during their student teaching placement, the TST participants referred to teacher activities: managing a classroom on their own, leading students through a successful learning project, and receiving affirming cards from students. By contrast, when asked to describe their greatest accomplishment, the three CTDST participants all talked about successfully building relationships with students. The second distinction divides the six participants into groups of four and two and centers on their descriptions of the moment they first thought of themselves as teachers. Four teachers, Hannah, Sue, Rose, and Keith, all described

occurrences in the classroom that led to the first time they recognized themselves as a teacher. On the other hand, Sam and Linda, the participants who had the most experience coteaching during their student teaching placement, experienced a gradual awareness of their teacher identity. Toward the end of their teacher candidacy, they both realized how much time they were investing in the activities associated with teaching and how much they were enjoying themselves. It was while they reflected on the time and enjoyment tied to teaching that they realized they thought of themselves as teachers.

Observation findings. Three findings of interest arose through the analysis of the classroom observations of the six research participants during the fall semester of their first year of teaching. First, all six participants had established high warmth, low control learning environments. This correlated to the stated desire of all participants to nurture the academic and emotional growth in their students.

The second finding from the analysis of the classroom observations highlights differences that occurred between the participants and the amount of time they spent collaborating with their MTs. Two participants collaborated throughout the day on a daily basis with their MTs which correlated with the strongest class management observed and the most effective use of pacing to support student engagement. Sam and Linda collaborated and cotaught with their MTs every day of their student teaching placement. Because they regularly worked closely with their MTs, Sam and Linda received continual feedback on their class management strategies which provided them opportunities to continually observe, try, and refine strategies used by other teachers. Sam and Linda also paced their class activities effectively, allowing less time for students to be disengaged from learning activities. Perhaps the daily experience of coordinating and maintaining schedules that allowed two individuals to work effectively in the same classroom to

deliver daily lesson plans made Sam and Linda more efficient in transitions between activities. They used various techniques, such as timers, different call and response refocusing strategies, and behavior coaching techniques, to move their students from one activity to another. Sue also used many of these strategies but more of her students meandered to the new learning activity which caused delays for the whole class. Keith's student teaching placement was labeled by his university as CTDST, but in practice Keith had few opportunities to coplan or coteach with his MT. During the observation of his class, his management techniques and pacing more closely resembled the TST participants. Hannah, Sue, Rose, and Keith all spent less time collaborating with their MTs than Sam and Linda.

The third finding from the analysis of the classroom observations centers on the way the participants described their level of confidence in themselves as classroom managers. When Hannah, Sue, and Rose, the three TST participants, were asked about their professional goals for the semester, none of them mentioned becoming better at classroom management. They all discussed the growth they wanted to pursue in lesson planning and delivery (i.e., increased collaboration, pre/post documentation of lesson effectiveness, and differentiation). On the other hand, Sam, Linda, and Keith, the three CTDST participants, all discussed growth in classroom management as one of their professional growth goals. Based on their responses, this researcher was struck by the differences in class management between the two groups.

During the observations, the beginning teachers who struggled the most with class management were Hannah, Rose, and Keith. Their classrooms all had noticeable lags in student engagement and they repeatedly used the same strategy when attempting to refocus their students. Keith had mentioned that he wanted to become more effective as a class manager, so observing student disengagement during his classes was not surprising. However, observing the

level of student disengagement in Hannah's and Rose's classrooms was surprising because they did not mention struggling in this area when they described their initial experiences as beginning teachers. In contrast, Sam and Linda managed their classrooms in ways that sustained student engagement and wasted little time during transitions from one learning activity to another. They also effectively used multiple refocusing strategies. However, because they both mentioned their desire to become better at classroom management, this researcher expected to witness them struggling in that area but did not. Sue was a confident classroom manager, but she chose to allow more meandering from her students than Sam and Linda.

Findings related to Wenger's social theory of learning (1998). One finding stands out when making connections to Wenger's social theory of learning: The participants who cotaught during their teacher candidacy, Sam and Linda, had greater opportunities to develop and benefit from mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoires with their MTs. As a result of daily coplanning, co-delivering, and co-assessing lessons taught during their student teaching placement, Sam and Linda were "included in what matters" (Wenger, 1998, p. 74) at several points throughout their workday. That mutual engagement defined their membership in a CoP. In turn, their mutual engagement gave them place when their respective CoPs negotiated the fulfillment of the mandate given to them from their school administration (i.e., joint enterprise). Finally, the on-going conversations throughout each day of coteaching during student teaching fostered the formation of complex shared repertoires. Wenger (1998) describes the significant role of shared repertoire in the formation of identity:

Sustained engagement in practice yields an ability to interpret and make use of the repertoire of that practice. We recognize the history of a practice in the artifacts, actions, and language of the community. We can make use of that history because we have been part of it and it is now part of us; we do this through a personal history of participation. As an identity, this translates into a personal set of events, references, memories, and

experiences that create individual relations of negotiability with respect to the repertoire of a practice. (p. 153)

Therefore, Sam and Linda possessed a more populated “personal set of events, references, memories, and experiences” (Wenger, 1998, p. 153) to draw on during their forthcoming years of teaching than do their four counterparts. The other four research participants also formed CoPs with their respective MTs, but the CoPs Sam and Linda participated in were stronger. Although Keith was identified as a CTDST participant by the EPP, as previously discussed, his MT’s definition of CTDST weakened Keith’s student teaching experience and his CoP. Hannah, Sue, and Rose all developed trustworthy working relationships with their MTs, but the level of engagement in practice they were afforded was less due to fewer hours spent working in the presence of their MTs. The TST model requires MTs to leave the classroom often so TCs can teach and manage the classroom on their own. Hence, the TST participants had fewer events, references, memories, and experiences with their MTs to inform their practice as beginning teachers.

Conclusion

A summary of the findings of the within case analysis and the between case analysis of the narratives of the six research participants was compiled in three categories: interview findings, observation findings, and findings related to Wenger’s (1998) social theory of learning.

An analysis of the six interviews led to four main findings. First, all six participants entered the education profession for the purpose of helping people. Prior personal experiences led the participants to believe that teaching was the best avenue for them to fulfill their purpose. Next, the MT played a vital role in constructing a quality student teaching experience in both TST and CTDST models. One of the participants, Keith, had a MT that treated him more like a teacher assistant than a teacher candidate; hence, Keith had fewer opportunities to grow in lesson

planning, delivery of instruction, and learning assessment than the other five participants. Third, TST and CTDST participants experienced their first recognition of themselves as teachers in different ways. The TST participants first recognized themselves as teachers during a moment in the classroom while interacting with students. The CTDST participants gradually recognized themselves as teachers after reflecting on changes in their lifestyle. In other words, when they recognized most of their time and energy was focused on activities related to teaching, they realized they were teachers. Finally, Wenger's (1998) social theory of learning provides an efficacious paradigm for exploring the formation of teacher identity in teacher candidates and beginning teachers.

An analysis of the six observations led to three main findings. First, all six beginning teachers established classroom environments characterized by high levels of warmth and low levels of control. Second, the greater the amount of time spent collaborating with their MTs in a classroom setting, the more effective and the more numerous the classroom management strategies the participants employed. Similar to the second finding, the third finding also related to the amount of time spent collaborating with their MTs. The greater the amount of time spent in collaboration with an MT, the more accurately the participant described their classroom management skills.

Lastly, an analysis of the six narratives led to one main finding related to Wenger's (1998) social theory of learning. The more time spent collaborating with MTs resulted in a higher degree of mutual engagement, a stronger joint enterprise, and a more complex shared repertoire in their respective CoPs. The participants with the strongest CoPs (both CTDST participants) possessed a more populated "personal set of events, references, memories, and

experiences” (Wenger, 1998, p. 153) to draw on during their forthcoming years of teaching, providing them with rich opportunities for teacher identity formation.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

Chapter four presented the narratives organized in two sections: the within-case analysis of the six individual narratives and the between-case analysis of the narratives that compared the two models of student teaching and their impact on teacher identity. The chapter ended with a summary of findings. Chapter five presents a discussion of the findings in two sections: (a) the research questions and the answers provided by the research findings, and (b) the implications for EPPs and future research.

Research Questions, Answers, and Implications

A discussion of the two primary research questions follows. Although all six participants constructed professional identities during their student teaching placement, the model of the placement they experienced did result in differences in the formation of their teacher identities.

Research Question One

Research question one asked: What influence does a CTDST experience have on professional identity formation compared to a TST experience? All six participants progressed through the two processes vital to identity formation: gaining knowledge of themselves and gaining knowledge of how others regarded them (Flores & Day, 2006; Korte, 2007). No matter which model of student teaching the participants experienced, the professional identities they developed through those processes became a means that they used to make sense of themselves in professional contexts, and thus, to answer the question, “Who am I at this time and in this context?” All six participants entered their first year of teaching with a teacher identity sufficiently developed to provide a skeleton answer to the identity question.

Although all participants formed a teacher identity during their student teaching experience, three differences between the influence CTDST and TST had on the formation of teacher identity merit discussion: (a) CTDST participants assessed their teaching skills more accurately than TST participants, (b) CTDST participants initially recognized their teacher identity differently than the TST participants, and (c) none of the possible negative influences of CTDST identified by critics occurred.

The participants with the richest CTDST experience and most robust CoPs, Sam and Linda, assessed their teaching skills more realistically than the TST participants, Hannah, Sue, and Rose. Sam and Linda readily admitted that they wanted/needed to grow in their classroom management skills, yet they demonstrated the strongest management skills of the six participants. Keith, the participant who had a nominal CTDST experience, also gave a realistic assessment of his classroom management skills. He identified classroom management as an area in need of immediate growth. Because he had to move classrooms so frequently each day, Keith explained, “Classroom management is kind of a nightmare because I have to adapt to different situations [throughout the day].” On the other hand, none of the three TST participants mentioned that they needed to grow in classroom management skills; yet, based on data collected during the observations of their classrooms, they did need to work at becoming more effective classroom managers. The difference between the two groups may be that the CTDST models allows for CoPs to more fully develop because participants spend more time in mutual engagement working on a joint enterprise by developing a complex shared repertoire. Sam and Linda both described sharing at least one student who exhibited difficult behaviors with their MTs. As they dialogued with their MTs about how to address the situation, Sam and Linda each saw that their more experienced colleagues were still learning and implementing new classroom management

strategies. For Sam and Linda, admitting a need to grow in this area was seen as part of being an effective, caring teacher. Hannah, Sue, and Rose also described difficult situations with students but after talking with their MTs, they had to implement the management strategies on their own instead of as a team. The feedback they received from their MTs was removed from the immediate situation of classroom management. The limited mutual engagement in problem solving may have contributed to the TCs' perception of their MTs as effective, caring teachers who had answers to classroom management difficulties and who acted as advisors rather than fellow learners. Hence, Hannah, Sue, and Rose may have been less forthcoming about the need to grow in classroom management. "The narrator [who owns the story being told] has a personal investment in how she represents herself" (Merriam, 2002, p. 311) to the researcher. Hannah, Sue, and Rose may not have wanted to represent themselves as needing to grow in class management skills during their interviews.

The second difference between the influence of CTDST and the influence of TST on the formation of teacher identity was the manner in which participants initially recognized themselves as teachers. There appeared to be a difference in how teacher identity was recognized between the two groups: a gradual dawning of awareness that one has adopted a teacher identity versus a memorable classroom moment of recognition. The groupings fell between Sam and Linda, the participants who had richer CTDST experiences, and Hannah, Sue, Rose, the TST participants, and Keith. For the purpose of this discussion, Keith is grouped with the TST group because of the limited nature of his mentoring experience. Sam and Linda both gradually recognized themselves as teachers after they spent time every day "learning at the elbow" (Roth & Tobin, 2004, p. 161) of their MTs. Infused in their daily professional experience were continuous opportunities to gain knowledge of themselves as teachers and to gain knowledge of

how they were regarded by experienced MTs. The feedback from their MTs provided a ready source of immediate, continual validation for their teacher identities. In contrast, Hannah, Sue, Rose, and Keith, whose ready source of immediate, continual validation was student feedback, all first recognized themselves as teachers during an event in their classroom. The four also had numerous opportunities to gain knowledge of themselves as teachers, but the knowledge they gained about how others regarded them came primarily from their students rather than their MTs.

The first two differences discussed relate to Wenger's (1998) description of the shared viewpoint developed in CoPs:

As we invest ourselves in an enterprise, the forms of accountability through which we are able to contribute to that enterprise make us look at the world in certain ways. It moves us to understand certain conditions and to consider certain possibilities. As an identity, this translates into a perspective. It does not mean that all members of a community look at the world in the same ways. Nonetheless, an identity in this sense manifests as a tendency to come up with certain interpretations, to engage in certain actions, to make certain choices, to value certain experiences – all by virtue of participating in certain enterprises. (Wenger, 1998, pp. 153-154)

The similar natures of their mentoring experiences influenced Sam and Linda to more realistically assess their teaching skills and swayed the manner of recognition of their teacher identity. Likewise, the similar mentoring experiences of Hannah, Sue, Rose, and Keith influenced their assessment of teaching skills and the manner in which they recognized their teacher identity. CoPs which develop during CTDST experiences characterized by shared lesson planning, lesson delivery, and student assessment, foster greater resilience and stronger professional identities in teacher candidates.

The final findings of the first research question centers on the predictions made by critics of the CTDST experience. Murphy et al. (2009) described three objections: TCs who cotaught during their student teaching placement would not have the ability to “go it alone” (p. 462); TCs with less effective MTs would adopt poor practices; and, stress created by poor TC/MT

relationships would adversely affect the cotaught classroom as well as the future classrooms of the TC. Gallo-Fox et al. (2009) identified a fourth limitation to the implementation of CTDST: the effects on teacher training when TCs and MTs hold different interpretations of CTDST. The findings of this research study demonstrated that the participants who had effective (Sam and Linda) and less effective (Keith) CTDST experiences were able to function and thrive when teaching in their own classrooms. Keith's determination to seek out experiences that strengthened his teaching skills counterpointed the prediction of TCs adopting poor practices. Moreover, although the behavior of Keith's MT caused some students to choose sides between the two teachers, Keith downplayed the competition and focused on developing relationship building skills. However, the limitation identified by Gallo-Fox et al. (2009) was realized in Keith's experience. His teacher training was limited by his MT's interpretation of the CTDST model. As a beginning teacher, Keith worked hard to gain the knowledge and experience his MT did not impart to him. In summary, the findings of this study indicate that TCs that participate in CTDST will be at least as prepared for their first professional placement as their TST colleagues.

Research Question Two

Research question two asked: How do beginning teachers who participated in TST or CTDST describe the impact of that experience on their professional identities? All six research participants indicated that the challenges of student teaching taught them to see themselves as life-long learners. They understood that the complex nature of the job of teaching required a growth mindset to develop the skills necessary to teach effectively and courage to invest in the lives of students. The three participants who experienced CTDST placement were asked how their CTDST experience influenced their teacher identity. Sam and Linda both described benefits they gained from extensive collaboration. Sam was comfortable with people flowing in and out

of her classroom and equated being a teacher with sharing knowledge with others. Similarly, Linda also defined being a teacher as someone who shared and developed knowledge with others. She credited CTDST as the source of her willingness to find opportunities for collaboration and her ability to appreciate different approaches to similar situations. In contrast, Keith defined himself in a more isolated way, describing the sobering experience of finding that he no longer automatically trusted other colleagues after working with his MT. He explained that he put trust in the actions of others but not in their words alone.

Wenger (1998) provides an explanation for the difference in the answers of Sam and Linda compared with that of Keith:

In a community of practice, we learn certain ways of engaging in action with other people. We develop certain expectations about how to interact, how people treat each other, and how to work together. We become who we are by being able to play a part in the relations of engagement that constitute our community. Our competence gains its value through its very partiality. As an identity, this translates into a form of individuality defined with respect to a community. It is a certain way of being part of a whole through mutual engagement. (Wenger, 1998, p. 152)

Implications for EPPs

The discussion of implications for educator preparation programs will center on (a) the influential role of the mentor teacher, (b) the difference in the way the beginning teachers described themselves as teachers, and (c) suggestions for program improvements from the CTDST participants.

Role of the Mentor Teacher

As I analyzed the data gathered through interviews and observations, I debated whether to include the data from Keith, the secondary science teacher who cotaught during his student teaching placement. Although both Keith and his mentor teacher labeled his student teaching placement as CTDST, Keith had a nominal coteaching experience because he rarely co-planned,

co-delivered, co-assessed, or co-reflected upon the lessons presented during his placement. The findings from Keith's case study complicated the analysis of the CTDST findings. The study and data analysis could have focused solely on the two groups of elementary teachers which would have offered a clear comparison of the two models of student teaching and addressed the research questions. The data gathered from Rose, the TST secondary science teacher, paralleled the data from the elementary TST teachers, so those findings would have only changed in degree rather than substance. However, including the data and analysis from Keith's case study highlighted the centrality and influence of the mentor teacher in the student teaching experience and expanded the answers to the research questions to include the experiences of beginning secondary teachers as well as beginning elementary teachers.

The key difference between Sam and Linda's CTDST experience and Keith's was the way the MTs defined the CTDST model. Keith's MT did not attend the coteaching training offered by the university. Sam and Linda's MTs did attend. Sam, Linda, and Keith all attended the training. Thus, as a student teaching pair, Keith and his MT began their working relationship without the necessary foundation to develop the complex shared repertoire needed for a strong CoP. The mentor teacher clearly held the most power in the relationship, so his/her ideas of coteaching during student teaching were the ideas enacted in the classroom. The EPP did not require either teacher candidates or mentor teachers to attend the CTDST training. If EPPs want to avoid the type of student teaching placement that Keith experienced, they should consider two actions: (a) create a policy that requires both mentor teachers and teacher candidates to attend a student teaching training session, and/or (b) empower TCs to request supplemental student teaching experiences.

Creating a policy that requires mentor teachers and teacher candidates to attend a training session that provides the opportunity for MT/TC pairs to discuss and begin to negotiate their unique working relationship would benefit those participating in either CTDST or TST placements. Wenger (1998) explains the need to begin this negotiation:

When we come into contact with new practices, we venture into unfamiliar territory. . . . We do not quite know how to engage with others. We do not understand the subtleties of the enterprise as the community has defined it. We lack the shared references that participants use. Our non-membership shapes our identities through our confrontation with the unfamiliar. (Wenger, 1998, p. 153)

Attending a training session provides opportunities for structured conversations between the members of a newly formed community of practice which would enable their CoP to be characterized by a high degree of mutual engagement, a strong joint enterprise, and a complex shared repertoire.

Empowering TCs to request supplemental student teaching experiences is discussed in the “Suggestions for EPPs from Coteaching Participants” section that follows.

Difference in Self-Description

Participants who cotaught during their student teaching placement described their teacher identity differently than their TST counterparts in two ways: (a) they recognized themselves as teachers at different points and places during their placement, and (b) they had a more accurate assessment of their classroom management skills than their TST counterparts. In light of the first finding, EPPs should intentionally provide a variety of examples of when and how TCs develop and recognize their teacher-identity throughout their teacher training program. Intentionally supporting TCs in constructing an identity of teacher candidate versus a more generalized identity of college student during their required coursework and field experiences would prepare TCs to recognize and participate in the construction of their teacher identity during their final

field experience of student teaching. Directing EPP students to recognize Wenger's (1998) process of the negotiation of meaning (participate → reflect → reify) would clarify the means of professional identity formation.

In light of the second finding, that CTDST participants more accurately assessed their classroom management skills, educator preparation programs should equip all their TCs, those in both models of student teaching placements, how to process and engage in feedback from formal observations. The advantage that CTDST participants have over their TST counterparts is that their MT is the primary source of feedback while planning, delivering, and assessing lessons as they teach side-by-side throughout their placement which allows them to view MTs as fellow learners. Classroom students are the primary source of continuous feedback for TST participants which limits the quantity and fullness of feedback they receive from a professional educator viewpoint. Understanding the inequality in professional feedback experienced by TST teacher candidates, EPP should augment feedback opportunities for TST TCs.

Suggestions for EPP From Coteaching Participants

This study supports the implementation of CTDST as a valid model of student teacher training. Coteaching during student teaching can aid EPPs in strengthening the educational experiences that build the skills and knowledge necessary for individuals to learn to teach. Furthermore, the CTDST model provides teacher candidates with rich opportunities to construct their teacher identity and growth mindset. Given these findings, the CTDST participants offered suggestions for the implementation of this model of student teaching.

When asked how their coteaching experiences influenced their teacher identity, three beneficial influences were identified: (a) greater comfort with a variety of adults in the classroom, (b) greater comfort with the feedback provided by observers and colleagues, and (c) a

willingness to collaborate. To further deepen these organic benefits of the CTDST model, educator preparation programs should provide TCs continual instruction in processing and responding to feedback throughout the required coursework and field experiences of their program. Additionally, TCs should receive instruction in collaboration skills that teach them effective collaborative language and the different characteristics of effective and ineffective collaboration. Therefore, when TCs enter their student teaching placement, they are prepared to recognize and participate in the construction of a rich community of practice.

Toward the end of the second face-to-face interview, the CTDST participants, Sam, Linda, and Keith, were asked what they would do differently during their student teaching experience. Sam and Linda both identified spending time intentionally thinking through how to adapt elements of their coteaching experience to a solo-teaching setting; Keith said he would advocate for himself more directly. In light of their responses, EPPs implementing CTDST should coach TCs and MTs to engage in activities that focus on transitioning experiences in a cotaught classroom to activities in a solo-taught classroom. Such activities could include planning full days of lesson plans in detail from a solo-teacher point of view and reflection activities that include translating coteaching experiences into solo-teaching experiences. Assisting coteaching TCs to begin to see with the eyes of a solo-teacher will help them to conceptualize and plan for their future jobs while taking full advantage of their CTDST experience. In response to Keith's desire to advocate for himself more effectively, EPPs should teach TCs to ask their university coaches to provide supplemental experiences for those TCs who find they are working with MTs who are limiting their opportunities to learn to teach. Supplemental experiences could include additional observation opportunities with more effective MTs and/or limited (e.g., three-day) collaborative experiences with more effective MTs.

Future Research

Upon reflecting on the implementation and findings of this investigation, three areas for future research emerge.

First, the investigation was structured to conduct both face-to-face interviews before observing the participants in the classroom. That structure limited my opportunity to ask participants about their choices and interpretations of the activities that took place in their classroom. Further research looking at possible differences in skill levels between participants of CTDST and TST models is merited to more fully understand the possible connections between the type of student teaching training and the professional behaviors and decisions of beginning teachers.

Second, the impact of the role of the MT in the CTDST model merits more research. A study of an EPP that provides supplemental student teaching experiences for TCs in limited/ineffective student teaching placements would provide data that would minimize the influence of a nominal MT on teacher training.

Third, the difference in the way the two groups of participants assessed their classroom management skills merits further research. Considering the initial problem of teacher shortages cited at the beginning of this study, if beginning teachers hold an unrealistic impression of their classroom management skills and/or are reluctant to acknowledge their struggles in this area, their likelihood for teacher burn-out may increase. Teacher burn-out is a major contributor to individuals leaving the field of education (Podolsky et al., 2016).

Conclusion

All six participants in this research study entered their first year of teaching in their own classroom with a budding teacher identity. They all understood the value and necessity of

developing a growth mindset to learn the complex skills and master the art and science of teaching. Furthermore, they acknowledged the courage required to invest in the lives of their students.

Although the six beginning teachers shared budding teacher identities, growth mindsets, and courage, there were differences between the TST participants and the CTDST participants. The two groups differed in the accuracy of their assessment of their classroom management skills and in the timing and placement of the first time they recognized themselves as teachers. Keith's experience of a less-effective CTDST placement served to counterpoint the possible negative impacts of the coteaching model. An analysis of Sam and Linda's experiences of effective CTDST placements supported that extensive collaboration with mentor teachers is beneficial for beginning teachers and strengthened their teacher identity.

The implications for future practice and research center around the vital role of the mentor teacher, the need to intentionally coach teacher candidates in the construction of teacher identity, and the need to provide strategies of adapting coteaching learning activities to solo-teaching learning activities for CTDST teacher candidates, mentor teachers, and university coaches.

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APPENDIX A: RECRUITING AND INTERVIEWING PROTOCOL

Recruiting Protocol

- Obtain list of potential participants from administrative office of educator preparation program. Contact all potential participants via email by October 31, 2018.
 - If no response, recontact four days later.
 - If I have too few participants, contact all potential participants a third time.
 - If I still have too few, meet with Ann and make an alternative plan. Contact committee members for input. Amend IRB if necessary.
- Individuals agreeing to participate must sign letter of consent via email or at the beginning of the first interview.
- Set up meeting time and place for first interview that is most convenient to participant. Offer to use video call software if that works best for them.
- Create and maintain Research Memo Notebook (RMN) to provide an audit trail of each step of this study, including the decision and thinking involved with recruiting participants.
 - RMN will be divided into five sections
 - Section 1:
 - general research memos recording reflections, questions, and decisions on the problems, issues, ideas encountered while collecting and analyzing the data
 - record personal thoughts and reflections about myself as a researcher

- Sections 2 – 5:
 - separate section for each research participant
 - contain my thoughts, impressions, reflections, and data specific to each participant

Interviewing Protocol

- Before conducting any interviews, determine what I will take note of (RMN) during the interviews.
 - Example: nervous laughter, non-verbal signs of confusion, level of comfort, environmental distractions
- Bring list of interview questions, blank IRB letter of consent forms, phone and phone charger, thank you note, and RMN.
- Greet participant.
 - Remind them:
 - To sign IRB letter of consent, if necessary
 - The purpose of this study
 - Of projected length of interview (30-60 minutes)
 - That interview will be recorded
 - That their identity will be anonymous; ask them to choose a pseudonym; record in RMN
 - That the identity of their MT will be anonymous
 - That we will meet for a second interview later in the semester
- Record interview using Recorder App on my iPhone.

- Conclude interview by asking if participant has any questions or comments. DON'T turn off recorder until participant leaves.
- Arrange time for next interview/observation and time that I might volunteer in their classroom (reciprocal payment for their participation).
- Label recorded interview with appropriate pseudonym and transfer from phone to Google Drive.
- Record thoughts and impressions of interview in RMN.
- Transcribe interviews
 - Before transcription, determine what to include. Example: description of environment, pauses, laughter, tears, ums, ahs, interviewer's minor encouragement ("I see").
 - Record decisions and supporting reasons in RMN.

Sample Recruiting Email

Hello _____,

My name is Liz Pike. I am a doctoral candidate in the School of Education conducting research for my dissertation. Dr. Ann Sebald is my advisor.

Invitation to participate: My research focuses on the influence of models of student teaching (coteaching or traditional) on teacher identity in beginning teachers. I am interested in talking with you about your student teaching and early teaching experiences. Participating in this study would entail:

- two one-on-one interviews (one during the first quarter of the semester, the second in late November through early January)
- one classroom observation after the completion of the second interview

- a final meeting to share my analysis of our meetings – face-to-face or via email
- an assurance of anonymity – all interview and observation data would be attached ONLY to a pseudonym; I am the only one who will ever know the identity of the participants in this study.

Benefits of participation: In return for your help with my study, I would like to volunteer in your classroom. I am available to grade papers, organize your room, brainstorm/develop lesson plans, assist you in the classroom, or do whatever you would find helpful. Additionally, talking with me about your student teaching and early teaching experiences will provide you with dedicated reflection time and an overarching perspective of your teacher training.

If you are interested in participating, please let me know via email at egpikcsu@gmail.com or text me at 303-870-4517 and we can set up a time to meet.

Thanks for considering my request. I hope we'll be working together this fall!

Kind regards,

Liz Pike

Sample Letter of Consent

SUBJECT CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS IN RESEARCH

Project Title: Influence of Student Teaching Model on Beginning Teacher Professional Identity

Lead Researcher(s): Elizabeth G. Pike, Ph.D. Candidate, CSU

Ann M. Sebald, Ed.D.- Co-Chair, Center for Educator Preparation, CSU

We are conducting a research project to better understand the influence of student teaching models on beginning teachers' professional identity. We are asking you to participate in our study by participating in two one-on-one interviews, a classroom observation, and a member-check consultation.

If you agree to participate this study, no part your school day(s) will be missed. Rather, you will be asked to participate in two 60 minute interviews (one in August and the second in late September/early October) at times and in a format convenient to you, a classroom observation coordinated with your schedule, and lastly, a consultation between you and the researcher to give you an opportunity to comment on the analysis done on the data you shared. Results will aid the researcher and the faculty at the Center for Educator Preparation (CEP) at CSU in understanding the influence of the models of student teaching (coteaching or traditional) on the professional identities of graduates of CEP.

Information learned from this study will be kept confidential. By this we mean that no one but myself and Dr. Sebald will be aware of information shared. All information collected will be kept under supervision or locked in our office. All recordings will be erased three years after the study is completed. Information will be shared with you during the member-check consultation in December.

Information gathered will be based on responses from four participants collected during the fall semester of 2018. Our hope for doing this study is to gain insight into how to better support teacher candidates who participate in both the co-teaching during student teaching experience and the traditional student teaching experience. In addition, I hope to use findings from this study to inform teacher educators at both the bachelor and master degree levels. Finally, findings from this study will be published and will also help guide future research in this area.

Participation is voluntary. You may decide not to participate in this study and if you begin participation you may still decide to stop and withdraw at any time. Your decision will be respected and will not result in loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Having read the above and having had an opportunity to ask any questions, if you would like to participate in this research project, please sign one copy of this consent form and give it to Elizabeth Pike. Please retain one copy for your records. If you have any concerns about your selection or

treatment as a research participant, please contact the Research Integrity & Compliance Review Office (RICRO), 601 South Howes Street, Suite 208, Colorado State University, CO 80521; 970-491-1553.

Research Participant Signature

Date

Researcher's Signature

Date

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview One – Early in first semester of first professional teaching job

This interview focuses mostly on their student teaching experience

1. Why did you go into teaching? (WANT TO KNOW – WTK – relates to their purpose)
2. Tell me a little bit about your student teaching experience. (WTK – the context of their specific experience) (Notable – the first thing they talk about when responding to this prompt)
3. Who or what had the most impact on you during your student teaching experience?
(WTK – who / what was important to their story)
 - a. What was their impact on you?
 - b. Have you stayed in touch with them? (if applicable)
4. Can you describe a difficult situation early in student teaching? (WTK – their perceptions of early conflict)
 - a. How did it make you feel?
 - b. How was it resolved?
 - c. What did you learn?
5. Can you describe a triumph early in student teaching? (WTK – how they define triumph; relates to motivation, learning, purpose)
 - a. How did it make you feel?
 - b. What did you learn?
6. Describe your relationship with your mentor teacher. (WTK – qualities of this important relationship)

- a. How did your relationship change from the beginning of the semester to the end of the semester?
 - b. What did each of you do to build or invest in your relationship?
 - c. Describe the level of trust between you. Does it go both ways? How do you know?
7. When was the first time you thought of yourself as a teacher? (WTK – the catalyst for this; highlights how they define a teacher identity)
8. Describe the most difficult situation you encountered during student teaching? (WTK – highest point of conflict; type of conflict; who/what is the adversary)
 - a. How did it make you feel?
 - b. Was it resolved? (How? Or, why do you think it didn't get resolved?)
9. Describe your greatest accomplishment during student teaching. (WTK – highest point of success; how they define success & teacher identity; motivation & purpose)
10. How do these two things (difficulty & accomplishment) influence the way you think of yourself as a teacher? (WTK – possible difference between models of student teaching; purpose, identity, motivation)
11. What are your greatest hopes and fears for your first year of teaching? (WTK – identity, feelings about preparedness; possible differences between models of student teaching)
12. (COTEACHING ONLY) How do you think CTDST influences your teacher identity? (WTK – if they link their teacher identity to any coteaching practices)

Interview Two – Near the end of their first semester of professional teaching

WTK – How their perceptions have changed since the first interview; these questions more focused on identity

1. List four words that describe you as a teacher. (WTK – their perceptions of self as teacher)
2. List four words that your students would use to describe you. (WTK – their perception of their students' thinking regarding teacher identity)
3. What do you enjoy most about teaching? (WTK – purpose, motivation, identity)
4. What are the most difficult parts about teaching for you? (WTK – purpose, motivation, identity)
5. After being in the classroom for four weeks, what things have gone just as you expected?
What hasn't gone as expected? (WTK – possible differences in expectations due to model of student teaching; preparedness; purpose, motivation, identity)
6. Do you have classroom volunteers or paraprofessionals working in your classroom?
(WTK – difference in student teaching models)
 - a. Tell me about them and what they do.
 - b. Do you like including others in the work you do with students?
7. What do you do after the students leave at the end of the day? (WTK – type, if any, of reflection &/or preparation)
 - a. Do you ever think about things you could have done differently?
 - b. What questions do you ask yourself?
8. Describe your support system. (WTK – possible differences in student teaching models)
 - a. Do you have a mentor? Was this person assigned to you?

- b. How did you get connected with that person/group/organization?
- 9. What are your professional goals for this semester? For the year? (WTK – their perceptions of themselves and the profession)
- 10. How is your experience different than student teaching? (WTK – differences between models of student teaching)
 - a. Did you feel prepared?
 - b. What would you do differently during student teaching to prepare for teaching your own classroom?
- 11. How would you describe your main purpose for teaching? (WTK – has there been any changes in purpose since first interview)

APPENDIX C: OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

Time: Observations will occur after the second interview. The beginning teacher will have been teaching for at least three months.

Duration: Three to four hours.

Role of observer: Changing observational role. Initially, I will look around and record notes (RMN), taking the stance of a *nonparticipant observer*. Then, if appropriate, I will take part in the activities of the classroom, becoming a *participant observer*.

WTK: Compare their words and perceptions about themselves and teaching with their behaviors and actions. Focus will be on the learning climate of the classroom because teacher efforts establish and maintain much of this climate. More specifically, I will look for:

- Quality of interactions between teacher and students, teacher and other adults, teacher and self.
- Physical environment
- What difficulties occur and how they are addressed.
- Do the actions and choices made by the beginning teachers support their stated purpose for teaching?

NONPARTICIPANT OBSERVER ACTIVITIES

The activities and information outlined for the nonparticipant portion of the observation are based on information developed by Gary D. Borich (2011) in *Observation Skills for Effective Teaching*, 6th Edition.

- Observe and take notes in RMN on general aspects of the classroom:
 - *Learning climate* – physical & emotional environment

- *Classroom management* – how the teacher has organized the classroom for efficient learning; how the teacher anticipates and responds to student behavior
- *Lesson clarity* – ability of the teacher to speak clearly & directly; organization & structure of lesson coincides with students' current level of understanding
- *Instructional variety* – use of different modes of learning (i.e., visual, oral, tactile) to arouse and maintain student interest and attention
- *Task orientation* – effective teaching practices that help the teacher maintain instructional focus (i.e., methods of managing classroom activities, handling misbehavior with minimum disruption, maximizing time devoted to content coverage, transitions)

Student engagement – use of exercises, problem sets, & activities that allow students to act on & practice what they've learned (i.e., activities for guided practice, frequent feedback & correctives, individualized/self-directed learning activities, checking & monitoring classroom assignments)

- Focus on learning climate more specifically by:
 - Conducting a set of observations at 15-minute intervals over one hour to record teacher behaviors that indicate levels of warmth and control. Teacher warmth and control are two related but separate dimensions, and behavior on one dimension does not necessarily preclude behavior on the other. Refer to Figure C.1.

LIST OF TEACHER BEHAVIORS TO OBSERVE

15-MINUTE INTERVALS TEACHER BEHAVIOR INDICATING LEARNING CLIMATE

1	2	3	4	HIGH WARMTH
				1. Teacher (T) praises or rewards Student's (S) behavior
				2. T uses S ideas in presenting lessons
				3. T responds to S expression of need
				4. T nods or gestures approvingly
				5. T provides clue or hint to S to find right answer
				6. T gives encouragement to S after wrong answer
				7. T agrees with S or accepts S's feelings

1	2	3	4	LOW WARMTH
				8. T criticizes, scolds, or admonishes
				9. T cuts off or interrupts S
				10. T calls class's attention to S's deficiencies
				11. T ignores S request to speak
				12. T glares or frowns at S
				13. T orders or commands S to do something
				14. T criticizes wrong answer without giving reason

1	2	3	4	HIGH CONTROL
				15. T accepts only one answer as correct
				16. T occupies center of attention
				17. T expects S to come up with the answer T has in mind

Figure C.1. List of observations focused on teacher warmth and control. Researcher will note the occurrence of any activity with a hashmark every 15 minutes.

- Plot the results of these observations on a graph with an x y axis; the x axis is a continuum of low warmth to high warmth behaviors; the y axis is a continuum of low control to high control behaviors. Refer to Figure C.2. Going clockwise, quadrants are labeled A (high control, low warmth), B (high control, high warmth), C (low control, high warmth), and D (low control, low warmth).

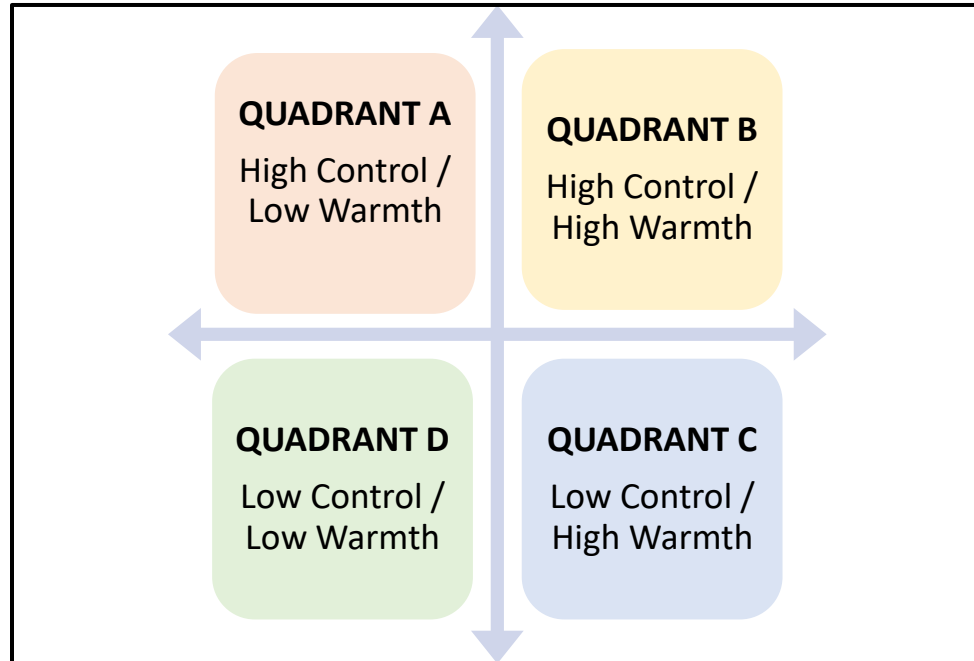


Figure C.2. Warmth and control graph. Teacher behavior places the classroom learning environment in one of the four quadrants.

- ***Quadrant A*** – High control, low warmth
 - High task orientation
 - Frequent use of punishment or humiliation
 - Lack of praise, reward, or reinforcement
 - High amount of time given to teacher talk
- ***Quadrant B*** – High control, high warmth
 - Clearly identified & frequent use of rewards for desirable behavior

- Unsolicited student responses discouraged
- High task orientation
- Mostly teacher-initiated interchanges
- High amount of time given to teacher talk
- *Quadrant C* – Low control, high warmth
 - Frequent use of praise & rewards
 - Informal classroom rules
 - Students have voice in establishing limits on own behaviors
 - Student spontaneity & risk-taking behavior allowed
 - Teacher acts as facilitator or participant
- *Quadrant D* – Low control, low warmth
 - Frequent scolding & criticisms
 - Few classroom rules
 - Students frequently call out
 - Teacher talk focuses on dealing with misbehaviors
 - Classroom lacks task orientation
 - Frequent delays for classroom management & reprimands

PARTICIPANT OBSERVER ACTIVITIES

Participate with students according to direction of teacher. After observation is completed, record thoughts and impressions in RMN.