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The Narratives of Teacher Candidates in Clinical Practice Within a Teacher Residency: The Shaping of Professional Teacher Identities

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**THE NARRATIVES OF TEACHER CANDIDATES IN CLINICAL PRACTICE WITHIN
A TEACHER RESIDENCY: THE SHAPING OF PROFESSIONAL TEACHER
IDENTITIES**

by

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ABSTRACT

THE NARRATIVES OF TEACHER CANDIDATES IN CLINICAL PRACTICE WITHIN A TEACHER RESIDENCY: THE SHAPING OF PROFESSIONAL TEACHER IDENTITIES

Lauren Marie Laughlin
Old Dominion University, 2022
Director: Dr. Jori Beck

Clinical practice within teacher residencies offers contextually based experiences that are influential in the development of professional teacher identities. Additionally, the stories told by teacher candidates about these experiences are instrumental to this development as narratives and identity are intertwined (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Consequently, this study employs narrative inquiry to explore the three-dimensional space of time, place, and sociality that teacher candidates encountered for the first part of their clinical practice within a teacher residency. Additionally, I explore tensions each participant faced. Data collection included interviews, observations, and artifacts as each piece of data informed the other. Then, thinking with theory was employed as each participant's story was told (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). Specifically, Anzaldúa's (1987) identity theories were used as a lens to make meaning. Using this lens resulted in bringing to the forefront borders, borderlands, and bridges that each participant faced as they were becoming someone new. These borders and bridges were influential to the shaping of participants' professional identities, and they manifested in aspects of the people, places, and time associated with the stakeholders of the teacher residency. Hybrid spaces and roles were also beneficial for identity development. Subsequently, there is need for continued pursuit of co-construction amongst stakeholders as well as intentional borderland discourses that support teacher candidates in negotiating their professional teacher identities.

Keywords: Clinical practice, teacher residency, professional identity, teacher candidates,
narrative inquiry, Anzaldúa

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To all those who have crossed or are crossing borders
and embracing the ambivalence of something new.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Becoming a teacher, like any other identity, is a process with past, present, and future experiences, and it is within these experiences that a professional identity¹ takes shape as stories are told and retold. In other words, we become the narratives that we tell (Bruner, 1986; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Gee, 2011). Therefore, these stories are of importance to observe, listen to, become a part of, and explore, because they exude who people were, who people are, and who people will become. This process of becoming and, even more specifically, becoming a teacher is one which I have undergone myself over the years, and it is what has brought me to the current place I find myself.

This current place is one of reflection and curiosity. The reflection includes remembering my own time as a teacher candidate and my own student-to-teacher journey. However, my thoughts do not stop with me. Due to my experiences, and perhaps joys and frustrations, I find myself wondering about the stories of others and pondering how their professional teacher identities take shape within clinical practice today. What borders do they need to cross? Where did these borders come from? How do they negotiate tensions and make it through the borderland? Are there bridges to help with this crossing? From this, I then find myself questioning what steps teacher education as a field can take to better shape the identities of future educators for their specific contexts.

It is within the wondering and questioning that time, place, and sociality collide and intertwine within these experiences and narratives (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). When

¹ According to Alsup (2006), professional identity is defined 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).

considering the past, I think about how teacher candidates come to the university with their individual stories that include their own personal histories and biographies, and I wonder how that has shaped them thus far (Bullough, 1997; Knowles, 1992; Mayer, 1999). These personal histories and biographies are followed with various experiences provided through their teacher preparation programs, which often concludes with clinical practice at a local school (AACTE, 2010). It is within this space that I question how teacher candidates work through the tensions of identity growth as they potentially face contradictions, power, and change within their stories. Finally, experiences that shape teachers will not stop because a person becomes an in-service teacher. In fact, I argue that they never stop “becoming” a teacher. Their stories do not end. This shaping of a professional teacher identity is both fluid and ongoing, and experiences are integral to that identity development even into the future (Anzaldúa, 2015; Haddix, 2015; Lowenstein, 2015). So it is here that I stop and think once again about how important these stories of teacher candidates are, because they are shaping who they will become.

In addition to the continuity of time, the experiences and professional identities of teacher candidates take shape within spaces with others, which points to culture and context (Bruner, 1990; 2004; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Therefore, it is important where and with whom these experiences occur because there is a relational aspect to identity development that cannot be denied. Their stories happen and are further shaped within community. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance to have structures in place to facilitate and encourage this identity development. This can look like intentional opportunities to reflect and interpret both individually and collaboratively (Alsup, 2006; Eriksson, 2013; Luehmann, 2007). Related to these ideas of culture, context, and community, I wonder how these experiences with others influence teacher candidates, their stories, and their identities as they interact relationally with

others but also reflect and interpret individually. And I wonder how power is expressed or shared within these spaces. With these wonderings and questions in mind, I will shape the argument for a study by reflecting on my own story along with the research at large. I will look backward and forward as I further mold this case through demonstrating the importance of how narratives and identity simultaneously take shape within experiences that are relational and require reflection and interpretation.

Identity Takes Shape Within Experience

The stories and identities of teacher candidates are influenced by their past and present experiences. Regarding past experiences, Knowles (1992) wrote,

Student teachers and subsequently beginning teachers, do not enter pre-service education programmes like empty vessels waiting to be filled with the skills, aptitudes and experiences appropriate for a first year teacher. Neither do they begin full-time teaching with only the experience of student teaching and the university. Rather, they have been subjected to a lifetime of 'teacher education.' Many come to university classrooms, early school placements and student teaching, not only with their own agenda, but with definite views as to the knowledge and experience which they will accept as valuable for them as future classroom teachers. (p. 126)

The past informs the present. As Knowles (1992) indicated, teacher candidates do not come to the present with no knowledge of teaching and no story already in process related to a professional teacher identity. Instead, they already have biographies and perhaps norms they have come to expect and accept regarding what it means to be a teacher. For example, maybe they experienced teachers lecturing, having students sit in rows, and providing opportunities to regurgitate information. As a result, they *do* believe that they are the holder of all knowledge and

therefore must simply pass this onto their students in similar ways. Or maybe they are in a school of students much different than themselves, and they are only aware of how to teach in ways that are not culturally relevant. Due to this, they rarely consider the sociocultural aspects of their students and their students' learning. These examples specifically point to how past experiences can become norms. A norm is produced by the culture, and then those participants within the culture are socialized into that norm (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017). But what if the norm and the experiences associated with that norm are not what is needed? These norms may need to be intentionally interrogated and challenged within present experiences.

Clinical Practice Experiences

Likewise, as I consider my own biography and clinical practice experiences, the norms, or borders, of clinical practice within teacher education are also coming into focus. Looking back on my personal clinical practice experience, it appeared beneficial and traditional. I watched. I took over. I gave the class back to the teacher. My supervisor visited a few times. My mentor teacher and I made sure the lessons were ideal for his visits. His visits were fairly short, and I had great feedback. I also attended supervision meetings where I and other teacher candidates talked about our experiences, and we discussed portfolio assignments. My mentor teacher was very supportive. She modeled. I watched and took on those qualities. After all, it was her classroom. At the end of the semester, it was December, so I attended the holiday party. The kids gave me a sweet plaque and lots of cards telling me how great I was and how much I would be missed. Overall, it felt like a good experience that prepared me to have my own classroom. Right? At the time, I felt like it was. I believed my mentor teacher and supervisor provided what I needed to be ready for my own classroom. The university provided the theory. The school provided the practical reality. My mentor teacher guided and helped shape me within the actual

classroom. My university supervisor visited and gave feedback during supervision meetings. This is how it was. This was the norm.

Now I would say that this is a norm that needed to be challenged, because it revealed a “consciousness of duality” (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 37). This consciousness of duality separated reality into two opposing spaces: the rational or physical and then a spiritual world of sorts. In the instance above, the university represented the rational that sees objectively. *Do this. Do that. Check. Check. Learn theory. Now go and apply it.* Whereas the school represented the spiritual that is more in touch with the practical and the people. *Now that you have learned a bunch of theory, here is how you actually survive.* Meanwhile, I wonder where or how these can better overlap, and I wonder where the connection to the teacher candidates’ biographies and the community exists within these experiences. It also appears that teacher candidates are stuck in the middle between the various entities with power, and the result is a disconnect and the demand to somehow figure it all out and live within this middle, the borderland. Anzaldúa (1987) wrote, “Thus people who inhabit both realities are forced to live in the interface between the two, forced to become adept at switching modes” (p. 37). This results in an identity crisis of sorts where the different identities related to the university, school, community, and self seem at odds rather than transforming into a new professional teacher identity where these pieces are intermingled, negotiated, and working together and alongside one another.

Clinical Practice Experiences within Partnerships

Since the 1980s, there have been calls to reform teacher education to resolve issues associated with the disconnection between theory and practice as well as the lack of stakeholders working together in clinical practice experiences. These calls had the potential to be influential in the shaping of professional teacher identities as pieces would be put in place to help with the

clashing of different identities related to the university, school, community, and self. Specifically, there were calls for schools and universities to intentionally work hand-in-hand as they crossed each other's borders within school-university partnerships (AACTE, 2018; Goodlad, 1990; NCATE, 2010; The Holmes Group, 1986). However, the experiences within teacher preparation and partnerships can seem full of contradictions regarding this identity development, even as stakeholders try to deliberately negotiate and provide spaces where power is redistributed and tensions are permitted, reflected upon, and resolved. For example, in Britzman's (2003) *Practice Makes Practice*, teacher candidates struggled to reconcile their expectations with the realities they encountered in the school system. They did not and could not have all the answers, and they were in the midst of structures pulling them in different directions. Likewise, I also had expectations within my own experiences of becoming a teacher. Expectations of resources, active learning, and changing the world one child at a time. However, these expectations made no room for the complexities and difficulties of becoming a teacher. The result was that I did not consider the borders related to power and social context, whether considering myself or others (Britzman, 2003). Additionally, my expectations and experiences did not allow for the exploration of *how* to deal with these contradictions and unmet expectations, especially within a specific context.

Looking back, the contradictions and split between realities is clearer now. I see how different stories were being told and enforced. These powerful borders were put in place by different institutions and ideas, and it seemed like I had to figure out how to be in two places at once by myself. While I had a mentor teacher and a supervisor, these worlds rarely overlapped and spoke to one another. The result was that I had to determine how to make the transfer from

student to teacher and reconcile the divide myself when tensions arose. In other words, I felt like I had to understand the borders, and then I had to find a solution. *But is this how it should be?*

Contextualized Experiences and Negotiating Tensions

How things should be and how they are brings tensions, such as those related to power, to the forefront, but these tensions are not necessarily unhealthy. Instead, tension should be considered healthy as it can lead to change or innovation. As the ideas of school-university partnerships have evolved over time, two models have come to the forefront regarding clinical practice within partnerships that have the potential to aid in negotiating the tensions of duality and power within partnerships and promote the need for contextually specific experiences in relation to professional teacher identities. These two models are professional development schools (PDSs) and teacher residencies (TRs). The philosophies of both address the need for intentional collaboration, working alongside multiple stakeholders, and negotiating identities (Berry et al., 2008; NAPDS, 2021). However, TRs also focus on high needs districts and the needs defined by the districts. Then, teacher candidates participate in clinical practice within those districts to prepare for specific contexts and promote retention (Hammerness et al., 2016). Therefore, TRs have the potential to provide an ideal experience for identity development as they allow tensions to occur and then be negotiated within specific contextual experiences that hold special regard for the needs of the districts they serve.

Additionally, these ideas of acknowledging contradictions and tensions within clinical practice are essential to identity development (Anzaldúa, 1987). Without tension, we do not have the opportunities to grow and change (Alsup, 2006; Luehmann, 2007). Rather we stay the same. However, to grow and change, it is not enough to simply say tensions exist. It is one thing to recognize them, and it is another thing to be intentional about addressing them and providing the

means to move toward negotiation (Alsup, 2006; Clarke, 2009; Luehmann, 2007). However, this should not be done alone, because identity is relational (Anzaldúa, 2015). Therefore, clinical practice within partnerships, especially those that promote negotiating tensions within contextual experiences, is ideal for working toward resolutions, fostering intentional sharing of power, and connecting the knowledge of various stakeholders through experience. However, the question begs to be asked, *is this being done in clinically rich teacher education?*

Identity is Relational

I would suggest that there are school-university partnerships pursuing clinically rich teacher education that include co-constructing experiences that share power and then connect and foster the knowledge of various stakeholders. Their stories reflect an identity in which these ideals are being told and retold. This is exemplified in the frameworks being used and the actions that are occurring regarding the partnership at large. For example, Harkavy and colleagues (2009) stressed how a university-school-community partnership in Philadelphia was intentional about working *with* the community rather than *on* or *in* the community. Likewise, Hopson and colleagues (2016) and Miller and Hafner (2008) discussed partnerships that were strategic in pursuing mutual and trusting relationships with all stakeholders. Additionally, the Newark Montclair Urban Teacher Residency used a framework that promoted co-construction, inquiry, and reflection amongst all stakeholders, and it did not disregard the tensions that come along with the collaborative opportunities (Klein et al., 2013). They also came alongside a district in need, and the partnership was aware of and fostered contextual understanding of the community, its needs, and its assets.

However, I would also suggest that the above examples may be outliers. There are other stories being told by partnerships that may not be working toward co-construction or are lacking

in collaboration. Regarding community voices, Zeichner (2017) argued that communities' expertise and inclusion in partnerships and clinical practice has had little influence in teacher education. He also wrote that when community-based experiences do exist, they can be isolated experiences that are disconnected from theory and practice. The borders remain in place, and there is a lack of border crossing, which inhibits the shaping of the teacher candidates' professional identities in relation to community knowledge (Zeichner et al., 2015). In addition, teacher candidates continue to struggle to remove border fences regarding power between university and school experiences that hinder border crossing associated with theory and practice (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2014). Darling-Hammond (2014) is one expert in the field who has repeatedly voiced this concern. She advocated for more practice *in practice* that intentionally integrates university coursework and clinical practice.

While there have been moves towards more practice *in practice* within partnership work, it is still lacking as some partnerships have not gotten to this level of integrated partnership work. Within these partnerships, universities have narratives of power in which taking or borrowing from schools rather than intentionally collaborating and integrating experiences is the norm (Burroughs et al., 2020). Bullough and colleagues (2004) reinforced this point when they described the separatist model where there is a preservation of separate realities and status systems rather than integration, collaboration, and the creation of something new that would encourage the formation of teacher candidates' professional identities. In addition to school-university partnerships lacking practice *in practice*, other school-university partnerships can be in various places within the process of negotiation and co-construction. In other words, they are on a spectrum that is fluid and possibly on multiple levels at one time depending on the circumstances being faced by the university and the school (Burroughs et al., 2020). For

example, the level of integration and collaboration can change from year to year depending on personnel changes. Partnerships may also look different from school to school based on the trust and relationships formed over time.

One of the privileges of working in the university during my doctoral coursework has been the opportunity to observe and be involved in partnership work with local schools to varying levels. As a result, I have seen the importance of relationships to identity (Anzaldúa, 1987; 2015). Being involved as a teacher educator has allowed me to work alongside teacher candidates and mentor teachers in clinical practice. I have been able to work through lessons with teacher candidates, watch them enact them, and then provide feedback while also communicating with mentor teachers. However, as I reflect on these recent experiences, I begin to wonder if anything has changed from when I was a teacher candidate, or am I replicating the same processes and procedures that I am questioning?

Specifically, I recall an experience in a classroom that I really enjoyed visiting. I could tell that the mentor teacher had a wonderful rapport with her students. There was a culture of mutual respect. I could tell that she also required this same respect for the teacher candidates when they were in the room. The result was an experience where the students, teacher candidates, and the mentor teacher were able to interact and reciprocally co-construct knowledge together. However, I was merely an observer within that room, and the mentor teacher had little influence within the university space. We were replicating a partnership that lacked true collaboration or co-construction and failed to question the power struggles at hand (Burroughs et al., 2020; Bullough et al., 2004). Thinking back now, I acknowledge that an opportunity was missed to foster a more clinically rich experience where all stakeholders worked together and alongside one another in relationship to produce a new story and a new identity. It strikes me as

strange now that the mentor teacher and I filled out separate feedback forms. Why did we not do it together? And why was the teacher candidate not involved in this conversation? While relationships were being fostered and borders were being crossed on some levels, there was a lack of this intent on behalf of the teacher candidate. These relationships and purposeful reflections with others are essential to identity development. I already knew this needed to exist within clinically rich teacher education, but it is so easy to slip into the way things are and not undergo my own identity development as well. Likewise, it is so easy to just fill out a form, check a box, and move on. Working with others, getting in the mess, and crossing borders is hard work (Anzaldúa, 1987; 2015).

For clinical practice within partnerships to support this relational aspect essential for the formation of a professional teacher identity within teacher candidates, there must be more co-construction between realities. These relationships are crucial to the story being told and the identities taking shape. If stakeholders would consistently and intentionally come together in support of teacher candidates, then there would be more opportunities to participate in helping one another traverse and resolve the uncertain, and sometimes confusing, borderlands of identity development within teacher education. Additionally, this would promote reflection within oneself and others, which is also essential in this process of identity growth and change (Alsup, 2006; Eriksson, 2013; Geisjel & Meijers, 2005). Therefore, I now turn to the importance of professional identity growth through reflection and interpretation.

Identity Grows Through Interpretation

I remember the first university course I taught as a doctoral student. I was excited and nervous. I mean, did I even know anything to teach these future teachers? Imposter syndrome can be suffocating. But, on the other hand, I really missed teaching and being in the classroom. I

knew it would be energizing to me, and I was looking forward to giving teacher candidates opportunities to synthesize theory and practice. If I could not completely immerse my students in clinically rich teacher education within partnerships like those encouraged by Darling-Hammond (2014) and Zeichner (2010), then I would do my best to replicate it within my university classroom. I wanted my pedagogy to be heavily steeped in the melding of the two, and I wanted this to result in a professional identity for my teacher candidates that reflected this.

Since we did not have the opportunity to go into actual classrooms, I tried to bring it to them or have them act like they were in the classroom themselves as much as possible. We watched videos of other teachers. I would give them a picture book and ask them based on what we had learned what they could do with the book in their classroom. We did mini lessons in small groups where they had to teach one another. I continually tried to give them opportunities to connect what they were learning to actual practice. At one point, I remember asking a student a question about what the class had just done related to practice. She answered, and then I asked a follow up question—a why question. Her initial response was, “Did I say something wrong?” In that moment and after some of my own reflection, I realized that teacher candidates need more opportunities and safe spaces to process what they are doing and why they are doing what they do (Alsup, 2006; Clarke, 2009). I assured her that it was not that she said something wrong. I was just extremely interested in what she was thinking and why. I told the class that we do not want to just know what our students are thinking but why and how they got there.

I believe that too often our students are told what to think instead of how to think. This is reminiscent of Freire’s (1970) idea of the banking model of education in which knowledge is given by those in power to those not in power rather than being co-constructed. Crossing borders, embracing tensions, and ultimately identity growth requires that our students reflect in

order to change. It is not necessarily about if our teacher candidates are doing it “right,” but rather about them entering the processes, even when they are uncomfortable (Anzaldúa, 1987). I also think it is important that teacher educators, mentor teachers, etc. give them the space and relational support to do so in order for their story and identities to develop (Eriksson, 2013; Geijssels & Meijers, 2005; Hamel & Ryken, 2010).

This story pushes the desire deeper within my soul to come alongside teacher candidates as they engage and reflect on their own growing process as their stories develop. It reminds me of Anzaldúa (1987) once again. In relation to identity she wrote,

Why does she have to go and try to make "sense" of it all? Every time she makes "sense" of something, she has to "cross over," kicking a hole out of the old boundaries of the self and slipping under or over, dragging the old skin along, stumbling over it. It hampers her movement in the new territory, dragging the ghost of the past with her... It is only when she is on the other side and the shell cracks open and the lid from her eyes lifts that she sees things in a different perspective. It is only then that she makes the connections, formulates the insights. It is only then that her consciousness expands a tiny notch, another rattle appears on the rattlesnake tail and the added growth slightly alters the sounds she makes. (p. 49)

This illustrates how crossing borders is uncomfortable because the space between the old and the new is transformational. At times, it requires waiting. At other times, it requires pain. There are two choices. One is to stay the same. The other is to undergo the process of change and come out on the other side different. Anzaldúa (1987) points out that this crossing requires action, and that action may not necessarily be easy. Reflection is a pertinent action step needed for teacher candidates' professional identity development (Clarke, 2009; Luehmann, 2007). As teacher

candidates move within these uncertain spaces of tension, intentional reflection, or making “sense” of it all, must occur both individually and within community for their professional teacher identities to develop (Alsup, 2006; Eriksson, 2013; Geisjel & Meijers, 2005).

However, one of the concerns I have related to clinical practice within partnerships is the absence of the genuine inclusion of teacher candidates in their own identity development. For example, Martin and colleagues (2011) suggested that “it may be more effective to envision student teachers as legitimate peripheral participants in communities of practice” (p. 308). This lack of inclusion disregards the importance of their being involved in the co-construction of knowledge, and ultimately their teacher identity. It also disregards them as a part of the clinical practice within the partnership, and it underestimates the importance of their participation as they undergo their own personal processes and shifts of transformation. Therefore, there is a need to consider how power can be better shared and distributed to teacher candidates within partnerships to promote this.

For teacher candidates to further the construction of teacher identities, they must encounter opportunities to be active, reflective, and interpretive stakeholders. Teacher residencies are one such opportunity, because they provide contextually specific experiences within partnerships where co-construction and reflection are encouraged (Klein et al., 2013; Matsko & Hammerness, 2014). They also provide opportunities for what Alsup (2006) called *borderland discourse*. Borderland discourse includes critical thinking and reflection, and it also includes engaging in dissonance, tension, and conflict that results in a transformative resolution in which something new develops through a merging of various discourses. The result is a professional identity that is further developed and then shared through the stories, or narratives,

that people tell, because these stories directly reflect identity (Bruner, 1986; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Gee, 2011).

Looking Forward

The tensions and reflections of identity work are both tiring and rewarding. I know because I have done it and continue to do it every day. In a way, my experiences as a teacher candidate have come full circle because now I find myself becoming a teacher educator. This gives me the greatest honor as I have the opportunity to walk alongside future teachers as they engage with their own identity development processes. As I watch them, I recognize the borders, and then, like them, I continue to straddle the borders trying to negotiate the different parts, using my power to generate positive change. Trying to be a part of a space that is working toward co-construction rather than duality. Working toward a new consciousness where all the pieces that have been a part of me—the student, the teacher, and the teacher educator—must come together, and instead of keeping these pieces separate, they are turned into something new (Anzaldúa, 1987). This something new is a place where I can recognize the strengths that each part of me provides, give them voice, and tell my story.

However, this voice is not just for me. It is for all those contemplating crossing the border themselves. I am here because I have crossed those borders, and I want teacher candidates to thrive as their stories and identities continue to take shape. Something within me wants to walk alongside them because I have been there. I know the borders and the wandering of the borderland well. But I also know how I made my way through, how I have to continue making my way through, and what can be on the other side if the process is embraced. I do not want to give teacher candidates a false hope of paradise, but I do want them to know that it is worth it. It is worth embracing the tension to see all the beautiful pieces come together and shape a

professional identity in which they are prepared for our schools, our communities, and our students.

Purpose

With my own story and the above points in mind, the purpose of my study finds its place. Stories are essential to professional identity (Bruner, 1986; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Gee, 2011). Additionally, if identity is fluid and shaped by experiences, then clinical practice within partnerships is vital to the formation of teacher candidates' professional identities (Anzaldúa, 2015; Haddix, 2015; Lowenstein, 2015). It is essential that these experiences be within specific contexts to further influence and encourage professional identities that are compatible for specific schools and communities, especially those that are in high need. Teacher residencies provide these types of experiences within collaborative partnerships for teacher candidates (Hammerness et al., 2016). As teacher candidates are embedded within these teacher residencies and the associated discourses of this type of partnership, their professional identities evolve. I use the word "evolve" because this identity has already been in process. Elements related to personal history, time, place, and other social pieces have already been in place (Bullough, 1997; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Knowles, 1992; Mayer, 1999). To continue the process, grow, and develop the professional identity, Alsup (2006) stressed the importance of borderland discourse. This type of discourse is pertinent to identity transformation, which is then communicated through the narratives that are shared. Therefore, the purpose of my study is to explore the stories of teacher candidates within a TR to investigate how their identities take shape through their experiences within this contextually specific clinical practice within a partnership. Specifically, I am interested in how their narratives are sustained or changed as they face various tensions. I chose the following research questions to achieve this purpose:

1. How do teacher residency experiences shape the professional identity stories of teacher candidates?
2. How do teacher candidates navigate the borderlands (tensions, ambiguities, etc.) in a teacher residency experience?

Structure of Dissertation

In Chapter 1, I presented the argument that professional identity development for teacher candidates is needed to prepare them for the classroom. While my interest and consequently my argument is fueled by my own experiences, I also demonstrated the need for this research by addressing the larger field of clinically rich teacher education research as well. First, experiences are necessary for identity development, and there is value in these experiences being contextually specific. As teacher candidates engage in these experiences, tensions will occur. These tensions are important for identity growth, and they must be embraced. Therefore, teacher candidates must be encouraged to be actively involved. Thus, this embracing should include reflection and interpretation both individually and with other stakeholders that leads to a negotiation of sorts if growth is going to occur. Finally, it is within this process and the telling of this process that teacher candidates' voices are heard, and their identities take shape.

In Chapter 2, I delve deeper into the literature related to each piece of my research. I start with a broad view of clinical practice within partnerships, and then I shift to looking at the literature related to professional identity and narrative. This is because the individual is, or maybe should be, distinctively embedded within clinical practice and partnerships. Initially I look at clinical practice. I explore how it is defined, its role, and its history. This leads into the history of clinical practice, which reveals how calls for reform in teacher education specifically related to clinical practice have resulted in the prioritization of experiences that entwine the

theoretical and the practical. In particular, I show how these reforms along with the creation of standards by accrediting bodies have led to the further implementation of clinical practice *within* partnerships. PDSs and TRs have been a direct result of this as they have emerged as desirable models. Due to these innovations, I provide a glimpse into how various PDSs and TRs have constructed, designed, and implemented clinical practice within partnerships. This in turn reveals ideal elements of clinical practice that can occur within partnerships, such as structure, collaboration, reflection, and context, which also support identity development. Of particular interest to me is TRs, as they focus on the specific needs of schools, reflection, and the preparation of teachers for these distinct contexts.

Taking my cue from the literature of clinical practice within partnerships, I transition within Chapter 2 to the identity of an individual, which in this case is teacher candidates. I do this by first introducing Anzaldúa (1987) and her framework for identity, and then I review professional identity and clinical practice because the identity of teacher candidates is shaped within these unique experiences. This brings me to the importance of tension within clinical practice, which leads to negotiation and identity growth. However, there must be intentional reflection individually and collaboratively. Finally, I explore narrative inquiry because it is essential and reflective of identity. In fact, the two are inextricably entwined. I do all of this with the intent of investigating the applicable literature and demonstrating that my study is both unique and essential in how I piece these different aspects together. If individual identity is embedded and shaped within collaborative experiences, then paying special attention to clinical practice within partnerships is pertinent. Then it is necessary to explore how individual identities are shaped within clinically rich and contextually specific practice within partnerships, particularly those identities of teacher candidates. Therefore, there is a need to understand the

narratives of these individuals and further discover how their individual identities are shaped for specific contexts.

In Chapter 3, I shift into my research positionality and design. First, I delve into my positionality as a researcher. This positionality is integral to my study because it influences every choice I have made thus far. My experiences of being a teacher candidate, in-service teacher, and now a teacher educator have shaped who I am and what I am studying as well as how I have designed my study. For my research design, I used a qualitative design rooted in narrative inquiry that employs thinking with theory. My research questions were focused on the experiences of teacher candidates in a TR related to the development of professional identities as experienced in clinical practice within a partnership, and my data collection included interviews, artifacts, and field notes related to the observations to explore these questions. For the analysis, I thought with theory using Anzaldúa's (1987) ideas related to identity development in order to massage the data for meaning. Finally, verisimilitude was pursued through attention to detail and metaphor.

Chapter 4 contains the stories of my study. Within this chapter I invite the reader into the professional identity stories of each of my three participants as the interviews, observations, and artifacts inform one another. Through narrative writing within a three-dimensional space, I introduce each of my participants and the contexts in which they found themselves. As each story is told, I weave Anzaldúa's (1987) identity theories throughout. This in turn brings to light the borders, borderlands, tensions, and bridges that each participant encountered. As they bumped up against borders and entered borderlands, they felt the friction between who they were and who they might become increase. Sometimes, people, places, and time became bridges. Other times, I suggest, that they became additional borders. But regardless, my participants were

becoming something new. They were not the same people they were before this experience occurred.

Finally, in Chapter 5 I discuss the findings as well as the implications for the shaping of professional teacher identities within the clinical practice of teacher residencies. The discussion delves further into how people, places, and time became both borders and bridges for my participants. Specifically, in reference to my conceptual framework, I discuss how teacher identities were shaped through the borders and bridges of schools, universities, communities, and the teacher candidates themselves. I also consider the hybrid spaces in which the formation of identities can occur. This is followed by implications for practice and research. Regarding practice, I advocate for ways in which co-construction can be continually pursued regarding various stakeholders, and I suggest more intentional borderland discourses for negotiating identities. Regarding research, I propose ideas such as expanding the narratives collected and examining data through other lenses. Finally, I make concluding remarks concerning my research.

CHAPTER 2

FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

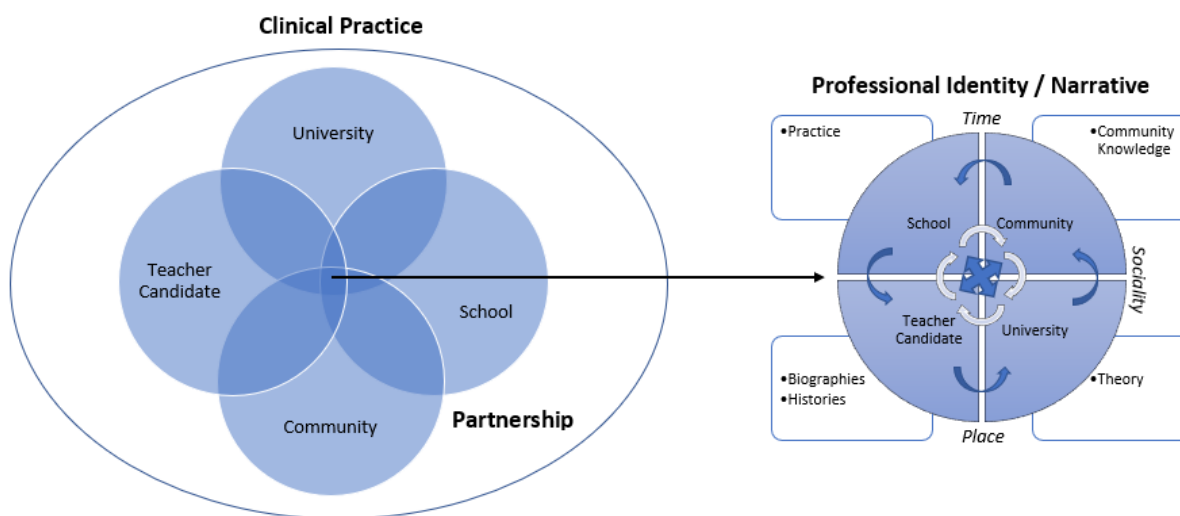
As identity takes shape in contextually specific clinical practice within partnerships, teacher candidates must simultaneously engage and negotiate tensions. It is within these tensions that professional identities grow and change. However, identity development must be intentionally pursued through experiences, relationships, and reflection. Therefore, the purpose of my study is to explore the stories of teacher candidates within a teacher residency to investigate how their identities take shape through their experiences within this contextually specific clinical practice within a partnership. Specifically, I am interested in how their narratives are sustained or changed as they face various tensions.

In this chapter, I will explain and unpack each piece of the framework associated with my study. The pieces of my conceptual framework include clinical practice, partnerships, professional identity, and narrative inquiry (see Figure 1 for a visual representation of my conceptual framework). This figure illustrates that teacher candidates are embedded in experiences of clinically rich teacher preparation within partnerships as their professional identity takes shape. As individuals, teacher candidates must negotiate their professional identity, which includes identities associated with the university, school, community, and themselves. Teacher candidates must also cross borders, embrace tensions, and build bridges as they negotiate their identity. In addition, this professional identity occurs within a narrative that consists of time, place, and sociality, and these two—professional identity and narrative—are ultimately intertwined and shape the discourses of teacher candidates' lives. It is with this in mind that I will utilize this chapter to address the literature associated with the various pieces of

my conceptual framework. Subsequently, my exploration of literature will also demonstrate the need for this study and its potential to contribute to the field.

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework



Clinical Practice

Darling-Hammond (2006) verbalized the complexity of being an effective teacher in the world today when she wrote,

...effective teaching is much different: successful teachers link what students already know and understand to new information, correcting misimpressions, guiding learners' understanding through a variety of activities, providing opportunities for application of knowledge, giving useful feedback that shapes performance, and individualizing for students' distinctive learning needs. They do all this while juggling the social and academic needs of the group and of individuals, the cognitive and motivational consequences of their moment-to-moment teaching decisions, the cultural and community context within which they teach, and much more. (p. 8)

This seems impossible in and of itself. How does one do this? But then, there are additional questions about teacher education, because teacher educators have a responsibility to prepare effective teachers for the multiple and diverse settings they will enter. So, one must ask, how are these opportunities provided for teacher candidates that aid in shaping them into effective teachers? How are their identities developed? What should teacher education look like to accomplish this goal?

In the past, teacher education looked like coursework related to educational psychology, content methods, and pedagogy being completed before a student teaching experience (AACTE, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2014). This experience occurred as a culmination and opportunity to apply what had been learned within university courses. However, little connection was made to courses during student teaching. Mentor teachers were not selected carefully. Also, experiences were not consistent across the board. Theory and practice were divided, and teaching became more reflective of a teacher candidate's own past experiences or that of their mentor teacher (AACTE, 2010). Therefore, there was little practice *in* practice, as Darling-Hammond (2014) would say. This type of teacher education is no longer sufficient when we need the type of effective teachers mentioned above, and I would question if it ever was adequate. Instead, there is a necessity for teacher candidates to learn how to be adaptive and responsive for the specific contexts they will enter, and they need clinical practice that can and will foster this identity.

For the past three decades, this need for clinical practice to change and meet the needs of prospective teachers and their diverse future classes has been continually discussed, addressed, and debated. There have also been many calls and moves to change clinical practice from a disconnected experience to one where theory and practice are intertwined as multiple stakeholders work together in partnership rather in silos that reflect historical power differentials

(Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation [CAEP], 2013; Goodlad, 1990; National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education [NCATE], 2010; The Holmes Group, 1986).

In addition, the move away from disconnected coursework and clinical practice has led accrediting bodies to further push for clinical practice to have a more central place within teacher education (AACTE, 2018; NCATE, 2010). The need to prepare teachers for high needs schools through contextually specific clinical practice has also become a priority (Berry et al., 2008; Hammerness et al., 2016). Therefore, clinical practice should be more than an element of teacher preparation. Rather, it should be the focus and where theory, pedagogy, practice, and reflection can come together and inform one another. This, in turn, will aid in the construction of the teacher candidate's professional identity, which will lead to the more effective teachers we need today who are prepared for the schools and communities they will enter.

Connelly and Clandinin (1999) furthered this idea of professional identity being shaped within clinical practice through narrative. To them, these “stories to live by” (p. 4) are equivalent to identity. Therefore, narrative and identity are entwined (Bruner, 1986; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Gee, 2011). As individual teacher candidates are embedded within the larger partnership and its clinical practice, they engage in identity development and formation through experiences and context. This includes elements related to time, place, and sociality (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Of special importance are the tensions that occur within these specific experiences and contexts that help further their professional identity (Alsup, 2006). It is within these different pieces that teacher candidates then share who they are or who they are becoming via the stories they tell. Therefore, the identities of teacher candidates take shape through their experiences within contextually specific clinical practice within partnerships.

Due to the importance of embedding teacher candidates within clinical practice as their identity takes shape via narratives, I will first define and further explain the role of clinical practice. Then, I will trace its history from 1986 to the present to show its evolution into becoming more of a priority in teacher preparation, which will point to its importance in the shaping of teacher candidates' professional identities. I will subsequently review how clinical practice within partnerships has most recently been implemented, designed, and constructed by schools and colleges of education. This will include professional development schools (PDSs) and teacher residencies (TRs) because they are the two prominent models. Then, I will turn to the individual teacher candidates and provide an overview of the importance of professional identity development within clinical practice. Since identity and narrative are entwined, I will then address literature concerning narrative inquiry and its three dimensions. Finally, I will summarize how the various pieces inform my research and will contribute to the proposed study.

Defining Clinical Practice and Its Role

In 2018, the AACTE published a report concerning clinical practice and its lexicon. They defined clinical practice as:

Teacher candidates' work in authentic educational settings and engagement in pedagogical work of the profession of teaching, closely integrated with educator preparation course work and supported by a formal school-university partnership.

Clinical practice is a specific form of what is traditionally known as field work. (p. 11)

According to this definition, clinical practice should be embedded within the school's culture to support situated practice, and coursework and clinical practice should also be tightly woven together and inform one another. Korthagen and Kessels (1999) encouraged this connecting of theory and practice through reflection that starts with experience. This flips the paradigm from

one of theory to practice to one of practice to theory as it challenges where and how power resides and is shared within clinical practice. For example, teacher candidates should be working alongside experts within classrooms and simultaneously implementing and reflecting upon theory, practice, and pedagogy with a collaborative group that includes those from the university, school, and community. Grossman and colleagues (2009) also recommended this paradigm shift, but they insisted that core practices be at the center rather than solely experience. In addition, there must be a focus on inquiry, reflection, and coaching by teacher educators and mentor teachers to foster this alternative conversation between practice and theory (Gelfuso et al., 2015; Grossman et al., 2009; Korthagen & Kessels, 1999; McDonald et al., 2013).

The AACTE's (2018) definition also pointed to the necessity of teacher educators from the university and mentor teachers from the schools being knowledgeable experts who work alongside teacher candidates in the co-construction of knowledge. Darling-Hammond and Baratz-Snowden (2007) slightly extended this definition with their definition of the characteristics of successful clinical training experiences. These characteristics included (a) clear goals regarding the development of performances and practices, (b) modeling of practice by expert teachers, (c) repeated practice that includes feedback and coaching, (d) connecting theory and practice regularly, (e) gradual responsibility of classroom teaching, and (f) reflection on practice and improvement. They emphasized and focused on the importance of collaboration, and the need for all stakeholders to foster a mutual relationship when planning, implementing, and reflecting on the clinical practice of teacher candidates. Cochran-Smith (1991) called this *collaborative resonance*, and she emphasized collaborative inquiry, critical reflection, the sharing of power, and socially constructed knowledge. Additionally, she took the idea of clinical practice one extra step forward by encouraging the formation of agents of change, researchers,

and participants in school renewal. This promoted clinical practice as an avenue that intentionally advances equity within education.

Lastly, all these elements concerning clinical practice should be supported within a partnership between the school and university (AACTE, 2018; 2010). Partnerships are essential to clinical practice because they provide the support needed as teacher educators, mentor teachers, and teacher candidates work together in the various collaborative ways stated above. All of this is done with the intent of preparing “high-quality educators with and through a pedagogical skill set that provides articulated benefits for every participant, while being fully embedded in the PK-12 setting” (AACTE, 2018, p. 6). This is clinical practice’s role, and accrediting bodies and other scholars within teacher education have insisted that it not simply play a role but that it be prioritized within teacher education (CAEP, 2013; Darling-Hammond, 2014; NCATE, 2010). For the purposes of this study, clinical practice is thus defined as a contextualized experience within an authentic educational environment where teacher candidates’ professional identities are negotiated within themselves and alongside other stakeholders via a partnership that supports identity development.

History of Clinical Practice

Over time, the importance of clinical practice within teacher preparation has been highlighted. In addition, scholars eventually encouraged that it become the focus of teacher preparation. Therefore, I will use this section to show the progression of clinical practice starting with the late 1980s. I will begin with two germinal works. First, I will address The Holmes Group (1986) and how they ignited a movement towards richer clinical practice and the reform of teacher education. Then, I will discuss the work of John Goodlad in 1990. Finally, I will continue to trace the evolution of clinical practice through three decades up until today.

The Holmes Group

In 1986, The Holmes Group issued a report concerning the reform of teacher education and the teaching profession. Within this report, the idea of professional development schools first surfaced as their answer to the problems within teacher education. They likened PDSs to the medical field and their teaching hospitals, and they expected the university and the school to work together in collaborative ways that were modeled after teaching hospitals. The focus of PDSs was to “seek to professionalize the teacher, developing a culture of academic expertise” (Boyle-Baise & McIntyre, 2008, p. 313). In clinical practice, The Holmes Group envisioned university teacher educators, mentor teachers, and teacher candidates working together, sharing power, and focusing on practice that bridged theory and school experiences. The result would be teacher candidates practicing techniques related to pedagogy within a community of practice from the university and the school (The Holmes Group, 1986).

John Goodlad

In 1990, John Goodlad continued the call for reform in teacher education via clinical practice and PDSs. In his book, *Teachers for Our Nation's Schools*, he also proposed changes in teacher education to better prepare teachers for local schools. These changes were conceptualized within nineteen presuppositions. Goodlad encouraged partnerships between the university and schools, and this included intentional partnerships within clinical practice. Specifically, the plan encouraged exemplary practice settings, which would require collaboration in selection, maintenance, and development between entities. This type of clinical practice would allow theory and practice to coexist and inform one another. It would also require special attention to the schools and mentor teachers chosen. Overall, clinical practice would need to foster collaboration from the beginning and throughout, resulting in a more authentic experience

for students that bridged theory and practice. To make this happen, Goodlad proposed collaborative agreements regarding clinical practice, allocating state funds to support partnerships, and honoring faculty members for their work in schools (e.g., teaching load, promotion system). He also recommended that cohorts of teacher candidates be assigned to select partner schools rather than spreading them throughout many schools. Additionally, the National Network for Educational Renewal (NNER) was established by Goodlad to encourage his ideas related to PDSs and simultaneous renewal between teacher education and schools (Whitford & Villaume, 2014).

Qualified Teachers: The Late 1990s

In 1996, the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) published *What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future*. Within this report, NCTAF (1996) considered systemic issues related to the recruitment, preparation, and support of exceptional teachers, because teachers are “the most important influence on what students learn” (p. 16). Their resounding message was the necessity of qualified teachers. Regarding preparation and clinical practice, the commission also encouraged longer internships that lasted a year and were held in PDSs to aid in preparation of prospective teachers. This meant extended programs, such as five-year models. This also meant teacher candidates would be in less isolated and disconnected experiences to encourage the connection of theory to practice. There was also a focus on preparing and supporting mentor teachers to aid in strong clinical training. Finally, the commission called for many more PDSs to continue this work to support this level of training for all teachers (NCTAF, 1996).

Doing What Matters Most: Investing in Quality Teaching was the report that followed *What Matters Most* in 1997 (Darling-Hammond, 1997). In this report, Darling-Hammond (1997)

showed the progress of “high-quality teaching in every classroom in every community” (p. v). She expressed the concern that there were still too many teachers who entered the field without being qualified, not being adequately prepared, and receiving poor professional development. This was especially impacting low-income schools. The commission recognized that some teacher education programs were making progress related to clinical practice by establishing longer time frames and purposefully integrating coursework through well-defined standards and relationships between schools and universities. However, the authors of the report stressed that while states were making changes, institutions were still concerned about the lack of systemic support via state governments. On the other hand, federal funds were being made available to increase school-university partnerships and improve teacher education (Darling-Hammond, 1997).

This push toward more qualified teachers simultaneously pressed for more clinical practice within school-university partnerships and PDSs. If teachers were the most important element to student learning, then institutions needed to better prepare them. To better prepare prospective teachers, clinical practice was essential (NCTAF, 1996). It was also during this time that there seemed to be an increased interest by the states and the federal government in standards and funding regarding teacher education (Darling-Hammond, 1997). Therefore, there was progress in recognizing and encouraging the importance of clinical practice and the partnerships and PDSs to support it. The ideals of The Holmes Group (1986) and Goodlad (1990) seemed to have gone from ideas to some sort of implementation.

Is Teacher Education Broken?: The 2000s

In 2001, the Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy (2001) issued a report about key issues in teacher preparation. The driving question regarding clinical practice was, “What kinds,

timing, and amount of clinical training (‘student teaching’) best equip prospective teachers for classroom practice?” (Center for the Study of Teaching & Policy, 2001, p. ii). They found that teacher candidates thought clinical experiences were the most powerful component of teacher preparation. However, the quality of experiences was where concerns surfaced. These concerns related to the disconnect between theory and practice, the lack of alignment between coursework and clinical practice, and reversion to traditional ways of teaching. Sounds quite familiar and reflective of powerful borders long established between universities and schools. However, some positives included that clinical experiences could lead to more significant learning when focused and well-structured activities are included. Additionally, they mentioned how mentor teachers were extremely influential. They concluded that there was a need for more research on collaboration within PDSs. Following this, NCATE released their *Standards of Professional Development Schools* further solidifying the accrediting body’s support of clinical practice and PDSs in teacher education (Teitel, 2004).

However, by 2002, teacher education was being challenged. The U.S. Secretary of Education, Rod Paige, said that the teacher certification system was broken, and he diminished the importance of teacher education in exchange for alternative certification programs (Darling-Hammond & Youngs, 2002). Darling-Hammond and Youngs countered this statement with a strong reply in support of teacher education. They claimed that there was a correlation between teacher education and teacher effectiveness as well as significant relationships between teacher education, certification measures, and student performance. In addition, they provided details that brought into question if alternative programs, especially those poorly designed, really produced more successful teachers. Therefore, they argued for the necessity of teacher education, especially clinical practice. However, by 2004, the No Child Left Behind Act allowed for

alternative certification of teachers. This meant that (a) teacher candidates could teach while they were earning state certification requirements or (b) states could create alternative paths to certification (U.S. Department of Education & Office of the Deputy Secretary, 2004).

While the fight for teacher education continued, NCATE published their 2008 standards. Through these standards, they continued to standardize partnerships and clinical practice. For example, to meet Standard 3, universities and schools would have to work together to “design, implement, and evaluate” clinical practice (NCATE, 2008, p. 29). The standard was also written with the intent to encourage teacher candidates to apply and reflect on what they had learned through clinical practice. Additionally, the federal government, through President Obama’s Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008, made money available for teacher quality enhancement. One of the items under this policy was teacher residency programs, and Teacher Quality Partnership grants would help finance these residencies. These teacher residencies² trained teachers for high-needs districts, and they included partnerships and clinical practice. The result has been many residencies in which universities and schools partner together to prepare teachers for particular districts (Hammerness et al., 2016).

During this decade, teacher education came under fire. The result was alternative programs, and these were then supported by policy (U.S. Department of Education & Office of the Deputy Secretary, 2004). However, scholars of teacher education continued to assert that teacher education was needed and valuable as it provided the knowledge and practice to prepare qualified teachers. These scholars as well as NCATE maintained that teacher education needed to continue the movement towards clinical practice and partnerships (Darling-Hammond &

² At their inception, teacher residencies were called urban teacher residencies. However, in 2015 the national organization, Urban Teacher Residencies United, changed its name to the National Center for Teacher Residencies. Therefore, it became more common to call them teacher residencies rather than urban teacher residencies (NCTR, 2015).

Youngs, 2002; NCATE, 2008). Federal monies were also made available to push this forward in high-needs schools through TRs (Higher Education Opportunity Act, 2008). Therefore, teacher education was undergoing instances of both stagnancy and forward movement during this time. On one hand, the same conversations were being repeated over and over, and then alternative paths to teacher education made it even more convoluted. However, on the other hand, the introduction of TRs encouraged teacher education providers to pay more attention to high-needs districts and the importance of context.

Here We Go Again In the Year of 2010

In 2010, NCATE published *The Blue Ribbon Panel Report* addressing clinical preparation. Within this report, the call made by those such as Goodlad (1990) and The Holmes Group (1986) seemed to be restated decades later. NCATE (2010) noted there was a need for “programs that are fully grounded in clinical practice and interwoven with academic content and professional courses” (p. ii). Once again, it was strongly encouraged that theory can be intentionally connected through experiences within practice. This would include content and pedagogy. Essentially, teacher education would be flipped on its head so that clinical practice was at the center rather than coursework. Their recommendations for strengthening candidate selection and placements, revamping curricula, and incentives for those within the partnership were reminiscent of Goodlad (1990). Additionally, they called for more rigorous accountability and expanding the knowledge base through research to identify what works and support ongoing improvement. Likewise, they insisted on partnerships to make this happen, and these partnerships would share the responsibility of teacher preparation with clinical practice at the center (NCATE, 2010).

In the same year that *The Blue Ribbon Report* was published, two well-known scholars in teacher education, Darling-Hammond (2010) and Zeichner (2010), added to the discussion. Darling-Hammond (2010) continued to call for the connection of coursework more directly to practice through exemplary clinical practice, preferably in PDSs. She recommended working alongside expert teachers while simultaneously learning in courses resulting in practice *in* practice. Having these high quality PDSs in underserved communities was also necessary. She continued to caution against alternative programs that diminished the importance of teacher education and the clinical experiences associated with it. She insisted that teacher education with clinical practice increased preparation and retention. In addition, Darling-Hammond was concerned about alternative programs related to policy, lack of professional licensing processes, and voluntary accreditation of programs.

Meanwhile, Zeichner (2010) pointed out that hybrid spaces and boundary spanning roles were essential to connecting coursework and clinical practice while encouraging teacher education to take it one step further via an epistemology that recognized the university, schools, and community: Third Space (Bhabha, 1994). He also continued to state the concern about the disconnect between courses and practice that had been repeated for decades. He encouraged challenging the power dynamics and removing the divide by bringing P-12 teachers and their knowledge into field experiences, visiting and engaging in P-12 classrooms, and facilitating other experiences to bridge knowledge. He also emphasized the necessity of university faculty being rewarded and the need for further funding within teacher education, especially to encourage hybrid roles and co-construction within clinical practice. He verbalized the need for teacher education to progress and change for fear that it may be replaced by alternatives in time if change did not occur.

In 2010, many important discussions were happening, and there seemed to be a resurfacing of the necessity for change if teacher education was going to be deemed viable and necessary. Continued movement towards clinical practice emphasized how practice should speak to theory and vice versa (NCATE, 2010). Additionally, concerns regarding those who were underserved and the knowledge of the community began to surface (Darling-Hammond, 2010). Therefore, it appeared that teacher education was becoming a little more alert, and the idea of clinical practice was evolving. The necessity of all partners working together also was becoming slightly more conceptualized as the necessity for interdependency through collaboration and co-construction of knowledge was encouraged more, and in some ways demanded, if change was going to truly occur (Zeichner, 2010).

The Last Decade: The 2010s

In 2013, two major accrediting bodies, NCATE and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council, merged (Whitford & Villaume, 2014). The new accrediting body became the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). Their 2013 standards addressed clinical practice, specifically in Standard 2, which considered clinical partnerships and practice. This standard recommended that universities, schools, and others work together in the preparation of prospective teachers through collaborative partnerships. Clinical practice was deemed essential, and the stakeholders were to play a vital part in sharing power and bridging theory and practice as they mutually shared the responsibility of preparation. The importance of the stakeholders as clinical educators was also stated as critical, which further pointed to the need for co-construction and reciprocal professional development.

To further NCATE's call from 2010, the AACTE (2018) developed a report to further conceptualize the centrality of clinical practice through defining it and operationalizing its terms

to create a common language amongst partners. The authors of the report specifically mentioned being inspired by Goodlad (1990), and they also applauded the work of PDSs and TRs in furthering clinical practice within teacher education. The result of their report was a conceptual model for high-quality teacher preparation, a lexicon of practice, and ten proclamations concerning clinical practice. As a result, the conversation about clinical practice, partnerships, and preparation was continued, and stakeholders were given a common language.

While 2010 seemed to be a monumental year, teacher education has moved ever so slightly towards robust clinical practice in the last decade. However, as I have mentioned before, the conversation seems to continue to cycle around and around with little real change and movement. For example, organizations and scholars have called for increased clinical practice, the prioritization of clinical practice, and the need for partnerships over and over (AACTE, 2018; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Goodlad, 1990; NCATE, 2010). The overall complexity and lack of consistency across the nation is also concerning. Our nation's universities and schools are at different levels of integration, implementation, and/or sustainability. The government has tried to boost partnerships and clinical practice through funding (Higher Education Opportunity Act, 2008). Accrediting bodies have tried to support this via standards (CAEP, 2013; NCATE, 2008; 2010). However, not every teacher preparation institution applies or receives funds, nor must they be accredited. Therefore, this results in varying levels of implementation of partnerships and clinical practice—if one is involved at all in this progression.

Models of Clinical Practice

While progression towards the prioritization of clinical practice has been slow and, in many ways, seems more idealistic than realistic, there has been movement. As schools and colleges of education have moved towards implementation of robust clinical practice, two

models have come to the forefront: PDSs and TRs. In the following section, I will provide an overview of the construction, design, and implementation of these two models. Then, I will look at specific PDSs and TRs to give a closer glimpse of particular elements. My first intent is to show how the university and those outside of the university have been moving toward a kind of teacher education that prioritizes clinical practice. My second intent is to explore how these differences may bring to light how clinical practice within partnerships can continue to move forward, especially regarding the shaping of teacher candidates and their professional identities.

Professional Development Schools

According to Teitel (2004), PDSs have gained momentum since the initial report of The Holmes Group (1986). Some states adopted and required teacher candidates to be prepared in PDSs, and federal and state governments have also supported PDSs via grants. Additionally, NCATE, and now CAEP, have supported the PDS movement and have created standards linked with accreditation, which was an additional push forward (Teitel, 2004). While PDSs have been defined throughout the years starting with The Holmes Group (1986), they were operationalized in 2021 by the National Association of Professional Development Schools (NAPDS) via their *Nine Essentials*, as seen in Table 1 (NAPDS, 2021).

Regarding clinical practice, the *Nine Essentials* “focus on the comprehensive integration of teacher candidates into all aspects of the school” (Van Scoy & Eldridge, 2012, p. 9). Therefore, a PDS is where teacher candidates become fully embedded within the school and its culture as their professional identities take shape. Additionally, PDSs support clinical practice through partnerships. Teacher educators, mentor teachers, and teacher candidates work together and alongside one another as teacher candidates apply content and pedagogy in practice (Boyle-Baise & McIntyre, 2008). Teacher candidates also participate in coursework at the same time

they are in clinical practice allowing them to integrate and connect the theory and practice (Castle et al., 2006). Relatedly, Castle and colleagues found that teacher candidates in PDSs were more competent in areas associated with instruction, management, and assessment as compared to non-PDS candidates. They were also more student focused and reflective on their own teaching and the teaching of others.

Table 1

The NAPDS Nine Essentials (2nd Edition)

Essential 1: A Comprehensive Mission

- A professional development school (PDS) is a learning community guided by a comprehensive, articulated mission that is broader than the goals of any single partner, and that aims to advance equity, antiracism, and social justice within and among schools, college/universities, and their respective community and professional partners.

Essential 2: Clinical Preparation

- A PDS embraces the preparation of educators through clinical practice.

Essential 3: Professional Learning and Leading

- A PDS is a context for continuous professional learning and leading for all participants, guided by need and a spirit and practice of inquiry.

Essential 4: Reflection and Innovation

- A PDS is a shared commitment to reflective practice, responsive innovation, and generative knowledge.

Essential 5: Research and Results

- A PDS is a community that engages in collaborative research and participates in the public sharing of results in a variety of outlets.

Essential 6: Articulated Agreements

- A PDS requires intentionally evolving written articulated agreement(s) that delineate the commitments, expectations, roles, and responsibilities of all involved.

Essential 7: Shared Governance Structures

- A PDS is built upon shared, sustainable, governance structures that promote collaboration, foster reflection, and honor and value all participants' voices.

Essential 8: Boundary-Spanning Roles

- A PDS creates space for, advocates for, and supports college/university and P-12 faculty to operate in well-defined, boundary-spanning roles that transcend institutional settings.

Essential 9: Resources and Recognition

- A PDS provides dedicated and shared resources and establishes traditions to recognize, enhance, celebrate, and sustain the work of partners and the partnership.
-

Teacher Residencies

While PDSs have pushed to increase clinical practice in teacher education through collaborative partnerships, a need to reach high-needs districts started to come to the forefront around 2008. This need generated the origin of TRs which came onto the scene in the early 2000s because urban districts needed to retain high-quality teachers. The Higher Education Opportunity Act (2008) helped further push this agenda forward. Berry and colleagues (2008) have provided characteristics of TRs, and these characteristics demonstrate how TRs are like PDSs but also how TRs are unique in their mission. Table 2 provides a comparison between the qualities of these different models according to Berry and colleagues (2008) and the NAPDS (2021) *Nine Essentials*.

Table 2

Compare and Contrast of PDS and TR Qualities

| PDS | Both | TR |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reciprocal professional development - Engagement and sharing of deliberate investigations of practice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comprehensive mission related to the education profession as well as equity within schools and community - School-university culture that weaves together theory and practice and encourages engagement in school community - Reflective practices - Clear roles and responsibilities - Learning alongside experienced stakeholders - Collaboration among stakeholders - University and P-12 faculty in formal roles across institutional settings - Shared resources - Structures for recognition | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher candidates are in cohorts to cultivate professional learning communities - Recruiting and training teachers to meet specific district needs - Support residents once they are in-service teachers - Support career goals of experienced teachers |

In addition to the characteristics above, TRs include partnerships with universities in which teacher candidates complete graduate level work to receive a master's degree. Therefore, TRs are particularly intentional in preparing teachers through clinical practice for a year alongside course work for a *specific need* and context (Hammerness et al., 2016). The major difference from PDSs is that TRs are focused on high needs districts, and they aim to meet those needs as defined by the district. Additionally, clinical practice is located within these districts with the intention that this will result in better teacher preparation for these specific school systems (Hammerness et al., 2016). Thus far, linkages have been found between context-specific teacher education and retention (Tamir, 2010). However, Silva and colleagues (2014) also found that retention was not significantly different for those who did not participate in TRs. Therefore, the question of correlation between retention and context-specific clinical practice needs to be explored further.

A Closer Glimpse

Perhaps the best way to “see” the construction, design, and implementation of clinical practice in a PDS or a TR is to examine how specific partnerships have done this so far. Therefore, I will describe several examples to illustrate these elements and how they may look different or the same. Elements of structure, collaboration, reflection, and context will surface. Additionally, I will look at a TR using Third Space as an ideal to show how this encompasses all the elements needed.

George Mason University PDS Program: Structure. George Mason has been implementing PDSs since 1991, and clinical practice is seen as essential in the sites to foster theory to practice transfer for teacher candidates. For this university, I will look at the uniqueness

of different pathways and the importance of flexibility, which led to “joint and mutually beneficial goals” (Parker et al., 2016, p. 43) between the university and its school partners. The university has three different PDS pathways to best accommodate their partner schools. However, there are commonalities between all partner schools. First, they have a school-based point of contact who acts as a liaison and organizes placements with the university. In addition, they have a clinical faculty course that trains mentor teachers who will work with teacher candidates. Lastly, they have a university facilitator who is connected to a school and spends one day a week there. Within the PDS program, there are three pathways, and they include (a) partner sites, (b) clinical practice schools, and (c) collaborative inquiry sites. Partner sites are only invested in early field experiences. Clinical practice schools host at least five teacher candidates for their clinical practice at the end of their program, and the sites rotate in hosting from year to year. Collaborative inquiry sites also host teacher candidates for their clinical practice at the end of their program. However, there is also more involvement with shared professional development and research opportunities, as a full-time faculty member is assigned there once a week. While not every PDS must have this specific structure, this example emphasizes that there needs to be some sort of structure in which roles, responsibilities, goals, etc. are made clear.

Kansas State University PDS Partnership: Collaboration. The Kansas State University PDS formed their partnership around language arts (Heller et al., 2007). A summer institute was important to the collaborative process because the group spent time together and got to know one another making it a more solid foundation for the partnership. They carefully considered how various courses and clinical practice connected, ensuring that there was a transfer of theory to practice. For example, content from a literature course, methods course, and

clinical experience provided repeated exposure to content and pedagogical knowledge. Then, clinical practice provided the opportunity to combine it all into action. Therefore, aspects of teacher preparation occurring within the university and school reinforced one another. However, I think the key is the collaboration between the school and university that facilitated and encouraged coursework and practice to speak to one another within that framework. Their PDS model also encouraged reflection. Not only did the collaboration make connections for teacher candidates, but connections were also made for mentor teachers involved in the PDS. For example, someone within the school faculty said, “I can now help my colleagues and students that I supervise see the connections between what is done in college and in the elementary classroom” (p. 231). Therefore, collaboration is essential for the preparation of teacher candidates, but it is also mutually beneficial for other stakeholders as power is shared. Collaboration fosters interdependency and co-construction of knowledge and identity within clinical practice.

Valley Road PDS: Inquiry and Reflection. Teacher candidates in the Valley Road PDS participated in a yearlong clinical placement while taking courses concurrently, and mentor teachers and teacher educators co-planned methods courses (Mule, 2006). University-based teacher educators taught the courses, liaisons, and supervisors. There were also two other supervisors, and all supervisors would spend entire days at the sites. Specific to this PDS and clinical practice was the incorporation of an inquiry project to aid in the construction of a quality field experience. By incorporating an inquiry project, teacher candidates were involved in research and reflection that focused on aspects of teaching and learning. It also encouraged collaboration with mentor teachers and others. The inquiry project was purposeful in that it encouraged research and reflection on a specific student or classroom practice. It also contributed

to the knowledge of teaching. Moreover, I would suggest that it created an environment where teacher candidates could intentionally connect theory and practice and reflect on professional identity development. Additionally, the partnership provided an opportunity for inquiry to occur within a collaborative environment. This resulted in a collaborative learning community with increased opportunities for communication, shared vision, and co-construction of knowledge. Lastly, it was a tool for reflection, which encourages lifelong learning necessary for shaping identity. Structure and collaboration were essential in this PDS, showing that these should be intricately woven together in these programs. Collaboration can be supported by structures, and collaboration and structures can support inquiry and reflection. The elements of inquiry and reflection are essential in fostering the weaving of theory and practice together as teacher candidates also consider identity.

University of Chicago Urban Teacher Education Program: Contextual Content. The University of Chicago's Urban Teacher Education Program (UChicago UTEP) began in 2003 to prepare teachers for high needs schools in Chicago. It is a five-year program that results in a master's degree, state license, and support through the first three years of teaching for graduates. The first year consists of "tutoring, guided fieldwork, academic and methods coursework, and an introspective 'soul' strand" (Matsko & Hammerness, 2014, p. 131). This is followed by participation in summer school, and then teacher candidates participate in a year of clinical practice. Finally, the summer before becoming the teacher of record, teacher candidates participate in a course to help with transitioning into their own classroom. Within UChicago UTEP there is a context-specific focus. This begins with federal and state policy and is followed by the public-school context. Next, the local geographical and socio-cultural contexts are considered. This is then followed by the district, classroom, and student context. There is a focus

on social justice and teaching for equity. This encourages teacher candidates to be aware of policies and politics, with the hopes of teachers becoming agents of change. Deficit views, privilege, and oppression are explored. Specific attention is given to how to apply this knowledge of context to content. For example, teacher candidates learn about the community and students within a classroom. They even visit students' homes. They also learn about high leverage practices through courses, observations, and practice. The result is the weaving together of context with content, pedagogy, and theory, which is necessary to reach all students. Therefore, more attention should be given to context and contextual content in clinical practice as professional identities take shape.

Newark Montclair Urban Teacher Residency: Third Space. The Newark Montclair Urban Teacher Residency (NMUTR) serves a high-needs school district in Newark, New Jersey (Klein et al., 2013). To meet the needs of this district and foster a collaborative partnership, stakeholders in the residency have pursued a third space partnership in which they strive to bridge the knowledge of the university, schools, community, and teacher candidates through distributing power, negotiating, and co-constructing. This co-construction includes developing roles and responsibilities, goals, and assessments. Additionally, the NMUTR intentionally includes teacher candidates in the creation of knowledge through coursework that is tightly connected to practice. They pursue an inquiry model where the curriculum is emergent and based more on teacher candidate experiences. This is then mediated by the experts they work alongside, who are mentor teachers and teacher educators. Stakeholders also are regularly involved in collaborative meetings that encourage reflection and change. As these stakeholders work together, they must learn how to enter hybrid spaces and cross borders. Finally, the community is included through clinical experiences within community-based organizations. To

me, this residency brings all the elements together that are necessary for developing a teacher candidate's professional identity. Through a third space framework, the residency creates a structure that promotes co-construction, inquiry, and reflection amongst all stakeholders that does not neglect the tensions along with the opportunities. Additionally, this is done alongside a district in need, and the partnership is aware of and fostering contextual understanding of the community, its needs, and its assets (Klein et al., 2013).

Summary

From the various PDSs and TRs, there are similar foundational elements even though there are contextual differences. First, structure came to light. Structure does not mean partnerships and clinical practice are not flexible, but rather that there is a structure that fosters shared visions, missions, and goals amongst all stakeholders (Parker et al., 2016). There are also roles and responsibilities, but these roles and responsibilities are implemented in a way that is mutual and reciprocal and mitigates power dynamics (Klein et al., 2013). It should be a genuinely collaborative partnership. When earnest collaboration occurs, this promotes and fosters the transfer of theory to practice and vice versa, because theory and practice can talk to one another as stakeholders collaborate (Heller et al., 2007). Additionally, stakeholders engage in reflection, which furthers the conversation between theory and practice. When teacher candidates and others are intentionally thinking about connections between coursework and clinical practice and participating in inquiry, the preparation of teacher candidates is furthered (Mule, 2006). Specifically, this fosters an experience that encourages professional identity development. In addition, schools, universities, and their stakeholders are also influenced in beneficial ways.

TRs, in particular, provide a space that more clearly includes the community aspect lacking in PDSs. For example, TRs reveal the potential of context-specific content. They also

provide a picture of how to make clinical practice more centralized. They cause us to complicate how theory and practice speak to one another by including community knowledge within the shaping of identity. TRs also help conceptualize how to take important pedagogical content and practices and apply them in specific contextual settings. One of the concerns with this emphasis on context is that it is too nuanced. However, I appreciated when Matsko and Hammerness (2014) expressed that learning how context influences students does have the potential to go beyond a certain site. They wrote,

...aspiring teachers are also learning what it means to use knowledge about the environment affecting the child to tailor instruction—an important teaching tool for any setting. Our contention is that a context-specific approach to teacher preparation may better enable new teachers to access knowledge about a broad spectrum of context, which in the long term will sharpen and fine tune their teaching. (Matsko & Hammerness, 2014, p. 138)

These skills will be important and applicable wherever a teacher candidate finds themselves in the future because they will have the tools and know how to discover these elements on their own because learning as well as identity development will continue beyond their time as a teacher candidate.

Finally, I suggested a third space framework would be beneficial to both PDSs and TRs as this framework encompassed all pertinent elements into one. This framework encourages transformation through mutual and reciprocal collaboration within clinical practice. Stakeholders must come together and co-construct knowledge and identities. They also must be willing to enter this new space that is transformative as new identities and cultures are shaped alongside tensions that insist on negotiation. However, transformation is a process, and while it has

difficulties, it is also purposeful. Specifically, this transformational process is essential to the shaping of a teacher candidate's professional identity. With this in mind, I will now shift the conversation to identity as I consider teacher candidate identity and how the shaping of this professional identity takes place within clinical practice, partnerships, and a transformative space that encourages development.

Identity

According to Schwartz and colleagues (2011), identity encompasses “who you think you are” as well as “who you act as being” (p.2). However, while these statements may seem simple on the surface, they are rather complex. There are many moving and conflicting pieces beneath the surface of these claims. For example, do you come to think about who you are on your own or is this influenced by others? In other words, do you construct your own identity or is it socially constructed? There are also questions about a single identity vs. multiple identities, stable vs. fluid identity, and personal vs. collective identity. These pertinent questions and places of divergence are rooted in paradigmatic differences. For instance, Erikson (1968) is considered an influential scholar in the field of identity, so some may root their frameworks and theories of identity in his work. While he does acknowledge that context is an important aspect of identity development, he holds that the formation of identity is a process that occurs within the individual (Schwartz et al., 2011). Therefore, it is a personal process. Whereas there are others who hold that the formation of identity occurs outside of the individual. In this case, it is more that the identity is being acted upon and formed by outside forces. For example, Tajfel and Turner (1986) address the influence of group identity, and Lyotard (1984) focuses on the importance of discourse.

Amongst the many lenses that can be utilized, it is pertinent to note that there are significant epistemological differences in the various theorists and the paradigms they hold. Therefore, it is appropriate to recognize these variances and clearly define which lens one is using. With this in mind, I will be using a lens that is rooted in more postmodern and poststructural ways of thinking about identity. This lens recognizes that identities are shaped through a process over time. Additionally, it recognizes that people have multiple identities, and these identities are shaped by others as individuals interact with others in specific contexts and discourses. In the next section, I will define professional identity and the importance of discourse to the shaping of this identity. Then, I will develop the lens further by introducing Anzaldúa's (1987) work related to identity as well as the tensions that are necessary as identities take shape.

Professional Identity and Clinical Practice

According to Alsup (2006), professional identity is defined 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). This identity begins to take shape in teacher candidates as they pursue the negotiation and merging of their personal selves with their professional selves through discourse, which includes tensions and uncertainties (Alsup, 2006; Clarke, 2009). According to Gee (2011), this idea of discourse³ includes “combining and integrating language, actions, interactions, ways of thinking, believing, valuing, and using various symbols, tools, and objects to enact a particular sort of socially recognizable identity” (p. 201). This definition brings to light that discourse is bigger and more complex than language. It stresses the idea that these influential discourses on identity include non-language aspects as well. Therefore, in addition to language related to dialogue, it is important to consider broader

³ Gee's (2011) definition of discourse has a capital “D” in his text. However, while I am using his definition, I will not be capitalizing it in my transcript.

contextual aspects, such as those of time, place, and sociality and how these are all a part of and influence the discourses of teacher candidates' professional identity within clinical practice (Bruner, 1990; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Clarke, 2009).

Like Gee (2011), Anzaldúa (1987) recognized the complexity of identity development. She defined the process with terms such as *border*, *borderland*, *Coatlicue state*, *bridges*, and *mestiza consciousness*. These terms provide a framework for understanding and explaining identity development. Consequently, next I will define these terms and then connect them to teacher candidates within clinical practice and partnerships.

Anzaldúa and Identity

According to Anzaldúa (1987), “Borders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish us from them. A border is a dividing line, a narrow strip along a steep edge” (p. 3). Within clinical practice and partnerships, there is potential for many borders. Teacher candidates, whether they realize it or not, are defined by these borders. These borders have been constructed over time and are constantly shifting. They dictate who has pertinent knowledge and who does not. They influence who is a part of the conversation and who should solely comply. Borders reveal who has power. While these borders are apparent within the partnership at large, teacher candidates also experience borders within their individual lives. Some of these borders are due to their past experiences. Some of them are a result of being embedded within a profession that requires navigating multiple stakeholders. And some of these borders may result from their own personal differences. However, the borders exist, and teacher candidates must learn to navigate these borders for their identity to further take shape.

As teacher candidates engage in experiences and collaborate with various stakeholders during clinical practice, the borders are crossed, and borderlands are entered. Borderlands are

places that are “vague and undetermined” (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 3). This is where various identities collide, making it a space that is ambiguous and full of ruptures, blocks, and tensions. Anzaldúa (1987) called this process the *Coatlicue* state, and it is defined by its suffering, uncertainty, and contradictions. However, it is also purposeful, transformative, and always leading to something else. It is a part of the changing process. Therefore, embracing the tension even when difficulties present themselves is paramount. This becomes vital for teacher candidates to move from a student to teacher identity.

One way in which these borderlands can be crossed is by building bridges. A bridge is a mediator, and a mediator can look like a person, object, experience, etc. (Anzaldúa, 1987). These bridges aid in the formation of something new—what Anzaldúa (1987) called the *mestiza* consciousness. This new consciousness is ideal in that it lacks duality. An identity is also formed that recognizes every piece of the person, or in this case, every piece of knowledge that makes a teacher. The personal, theoretical, practical, and community knowledge are all recognized (Darling-Hammond, 2014). For a teacher candidate, this would mean a new identity that has been able to reconcile the various pieces of oneself and the resulting tensions into something new. Anzaldúa (1987) wrote,

The new *mestiza* copes by developing a tolerance for contradictions, a tolerance for ambiguity. She learns to be an Indian in Mexican culture, to be Mexican from an Anglo point of view. She learns to juggle cultures. She has a plural personality, she operates in a pluralistic mode—nothing is thrust out, the good the bad and the ugly, nothing rejected, nothing abandoned. Not only does she sustain contradictions, she turns the ambivalence into something else. (p. 79)

This may look different for each teacher candidate depending on the pieces they come with to their teacher preparation. However, the literature points to the necessity of tension and the resolution of this tension for the development of professional identity to occur. This is what I will explore in the next section.

Tensions: Embracing and Resolving

Various tensions can arise as identity is being shaped within clinical practice, and it is within this tension that transformative identity work can occur through growth or change (Alsup, 2006; Luehmann, 2007). The tensions can take multiple forms. For example, time may be a way tension manifests. As each person comes to the classroom with their own personalized and contextualized biography and history, which includes their apprenticeship of observation, they may have to interrogate past school experiences in relation to current school experiences (Bullough, 1997; Knowles, 1992; Mayer 1999). There also may be tensions related to theory versus practice or personal versus professional ideologies. For instance, in an ethnographic case study by He and Lin (2013), this manifested in a teacher candidate feeling the tension between the theories of the university and the realities of the school classroom.

Power

Resolving tensions can be challenging both personally and interpersonally, because as much as embracing tension is needed, it is also simultaneously difficult and uncomfortable due to issues of power. As teacher candidates enter the borderland between the university and schools, they are bumping up against the historical borders of power that have been hard pressed to transform (AACTE, 2018; Goodlad, 1990; NCATE, 2010; The Holmes Group, 1986). Specifically, this includes issues related to knowledge and whose knowledge is most pertinent in teacher education (Zeichner et al., 2015). The result is issues of power regularly influencing the

development of professional teacher identities as teacher candidates try to resolve tensions such as meeting university requirements, interrogating their own experiences, and taking up space within mentor teachers' classrooms. For example, as teacher candidates enter the classrooms of mentor teachers, power struggles may arise between mentor teachers and teacher candidates associated with pedagogy, classroom management, etc. In Mutton and colleagues' (2008) study this looked like teacher candidates feeling as if they had to teach a certain way. To resist this, Mule (2006) stressed that mentor teachers stay aware of the power and developmental differences between themselves and teacher candidates to promote collaboration and shared power. Therefore, resolving tensions can be challenging both personally and interpersonally, because as much as embracing the tension is needed, it is also simultaneously difficult and uncomfortable due to the borders and issues of power. However, it is of the utmost importance that teacher candidates push into these tensions, reflect upon the various discourses, and critique them both on their own and within a community in order to move toward transformation (Alsup, 2006; Clarke, 2009).

Boundary Experiences

When teacher candidates engage with tensions within their clinical experiences, Geijsel and Meijers (2005) referred to this as a *boundary experience*. Within a boundary experience, there are two types of discourses that must occur for identity learning. The first is one within community, and the second one is personal. When considering the community, teacher candidates can engage in this type of discourse with others via mentoring relationships. Anzaldúa (2015) argued,

Identity is relational. Who and what we are depends on those surrounding us, a mix of our interactions with our alrededores/environments, with new and old narratives. Identity

is multilayered, stretching in all directions, from past to present, vertically and horizontally, chronologically and spatially. (p. 69)

Therefore, mentoring environments can encourage conversations in which tensions and reflections occur alongside others allowing for identity to change and develop (Eriksson, 2013). For example, there are opportunities for theory and practice to be discussed and issues of tension to be reflected upon and resolved. Partnerships are ideal for this because collaborative relationships should already be integral to them (Hamel & Ryken, 2010; Mule, 2005). Hamel and Ryken (2010) exemplified this when they wrote about partnership meetings where multiple voices participate in the discourse. These meetings also provide the opportunity for teacher candidates to practice their professional identity and “negotiate who they are and might become as teachers” (p. 347). Additionally, discourse within a community promotes collective identity and efficacy, which Olitsky (2015) claimed aids in change when tensions occur. Therefore, mentoring relationships between the university, school, and teacher candidates are a beneficial social element when considering the development of a professional identity for teacher candidates.

When considering the more personal identity tensions, Alsup (2006) examined these types of tensions via borderland discourse. Borderland discourse is when a person must reconcile the personal and professional when in conflict, and it requires critical thinking, reflection, and discourse about identity. The reflection part is purposeful in that it provides the opportunity for teacher candidates’ professional identity to evolve through investigating their own beliefs and assumptions in relation to those experiences within the university or schools (Mayer, 1999). When teacher candidates enter these types of discourses, there is the opportunity for growth and transformation. Ultimately, there is the opportunity for a “new” identity of sorts to come to the

forefront. However, the person must be willing to engage in the borderland discourse for transformation to occur, because experience is needed but not sufficient (Mutton et al., 2010).

Anzaldúa wrote (1987),

Our greatest disappointments and painful experiences—if we can make meaning out of them—can lead us toward becoming more of who we are. Or they can remain meaningless. The *Coatlicue* state can be a way station or it can be a way of life. (p. 135)

This means reflection must be intentional (Clarke, 2009). Luehmann (2007) noted, “participation in the professional Discourse is required, but it is in the interpretation or recognition of that participation, by self or others, that identities are formed” (p. 827). Therefore, these discourses are a part of the process of becoming that requires experiences, community, and interpretation for professional identity to take shape.

Narrative Inquiry

To explore these discourses related to professional identity, narratives are both beneficial and essential (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) because identity can be expressed via narrative and vice versa (Bruner, 1986; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Gee, 2011). Additionally, narrative attends to elements like time, place, and sociality, which help in addressing the complexity of discourse and, as a result, identity. Therefore, the narratives that proceed out of the lives of teacher candidates give essential glimpses into their identity formation (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). For this reason, I will now consider narrative inquiry. First, I will look at narrative inquiry through a historical lens as I show the turn toward narrative inquiry within qualitative research. This suggests the importance of other ways of knowing and being that are related to experiences and the stories that people tell, which in my case would be related to teacher candidates and the shaping of their professional identities. Finally, I will

discuss the three dimensions of narrative inquiry. Not only are these dimensions pertinent to the methodology, but they are also pertinent to the shaping of identity. Therefore, narrative inquiry is ideal for exploring and discovering more about teacher candidates and how their professional identity is formed.

Turning Toward Narrative Inquiry

Qualitative inquiry found its beginnings in fields such as anthropology and sociology with studies done using ethnography (Erickson, 2018). These ethnographies began from a realist perspective, or positivist or post-positivist paradigm, where participants were observed while their actions were recorded. There was no involvement by the observer with participants, and the viewpoint of participants was not actively obtained or considered. Additionally, the realist perspective tried to make social facts objects that could be observed and then generalizable (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007). The result was that people, culture, actions, and other social elements were seen as knowable and independent of time, context, and social interaction with others. Over time, ethnography changed shape as critical theories and post structural theories emerged, giving voice to the marginalized and questioning elements of structure and discourse. This led ethnographies to examine social structures, power, and knowledge systems. Additionally, participants and observers began to participate with one another in the inquiry, and other forms of ethnography that recognized the arts began to surface. Therefore, over time, qualitative inquiry embraced other paradigms and modes of thought as it moved away from realism (Erickson, 2018).

As qualitative inquiry shifted and transformed, there was movement toward narrative inquiry and narrative ways of thinking. Kim (2016) specifically noted that the narrative turn occurred in the beginning of the 1980s when narrative ways of researching appeared within

various sciences. In addition, the turn toward narrative could be seen in ethnography as the importance of storytelling came to the forefront (Erickson, 2018). Additionally, Bruner (1986) was instrumental in describing the importance of language to experience, which exemplified the narrative turn. He argued that there were two modes of thought concerning the construction of knowledge, but that they complemented one another. The first mode of thought he called paradigmatic, which directly aligned with the realist perspective. This mode sought causality, truth, and use of the scientific method. The other mode of thought he called narrative. This seemed to be almost the complete antithesis of paradigmatic because it recognized stories, experience, and humanness. It was this idea of a narrative mode of thinking that aided in the recognition of narrative inquiry as a way of knowing within the social sciences (Kim, 2016).

Pinnegar and Daynes (2007) put this movement toward narrative into four turns that questioned and moved away from the realist perspective that was dominant in the social sciences. The turns included (a) a change in the relationship between the researcher and the researched, (b) using words rather than numbers as data, (c) moving from the universal to the specific, and (d) the acceptance of alternative ways of knowing (p. 7). Regarding roles, the roles of those who were being researched and those of the researcher were blurred. Also, the audience broadened, and the participants began to have a pertinent place within the research as more than being observed (Erickson, 2018). The movement from number to word data recognized the importance of the human experience and the importance of nuance to meaning. Additionally, the stories of the marginalized and oppressed furthered the movement towards understanding the stories and experiences related to the particular (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007). Finally, multiple perspectives and ways of knowing the human experience were recognized. Therefore, as qualitative inquiry evolved, narrative inquiry became more respected as certain lines blurred and

changed. Reliability, objectivity, generalizability, and validity related to the realist perspective were called into question. Instead, aspects related to language, discourse, and understanding the particulars of the human world came to the forefront (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007). Therefore, narrative inquiry became more desirable and respected.

As narrative inquiry gained intrigue and respect as a methodology, it surfaced within even more disciplines. These disciplines included law, psychology, medicine, and education. Within education, narrative inquiry was used to explore the lived experiences of teachers, students, and classrooms “as a way to reshape the views of education” (Kim, 2016, p. 19). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) led the charge regarding narrative inquiry in educational research. They recognized it as a phenomenon to be studied and a methodology. According to them,

Narrative inquiry is a way of understanding experience. It is a collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or a series of places, and in social interaction with milieus. An inquirer enters this matrix in the midst and progresses in this same spirit, concluding the inquiry still in the midst of living and telling, reliving and retelling, the stories of experiences that make up people’s lives, both individual and social. (p. 20)

Additionally, Connelly and Clandinin (1999) recognized how knowledge, context, and identity are intertwined within these experiences. Therefore, it is important to note that narrative inquirers start with experience, but these experiences also influence the shaping of professional identities as they engage with knowledge and context. In educational research, these experiences occur in schools with those who make up the school culture, which includes teachers, students, and any other stakeholders. As narrative inquirers enter these narratives, they are also a part of

the space, and they make sense of it as they go. The result is that the experience of participants and the researcher are both recognized, and this experience takes precedence as literature is woven throughout the story to show the relationship between theory and practice. Therefore, narrative inquiry gives us a special glimpse into how professional identities are shaped. To further address these ideas and this space of narrative inquiry, I will now take a closer look at narrative inquiry's three dimensions according to Clandinin and Connelly (2000).

Three-Dimensional Narrative Inquiry

According to Clandinin and Connelly (2000), inquiry is defined by a three-dimensional inquiry space. This space consists of temporality, sociality, and place. In the following section, I will define these three dimensions and their importance to narrative inquiry, which consequently influences identity development. While each dimension will be considered separately, they occur simultaneously and are interconnected. Subsequently, this space results in the necessity of embracing complexity, ambiguity, and the potential paradoxes of inquiry. This three-dimensional space also requires the embracing of the unknown and being open to seeing the phenomenon that an experience can bring to light (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). This aligns well with Anzaldúa's (1987) theories related to identity, and once again brings to light how identity and narrative go hand in hand.

First, temporality addresses time. It considers the past, the present, and the possible future. This dimension recognizes that events do not happen independent of other temporal factors. They are a part of a continuum, a process (Clandinin, 2013). For example, what is going on today in a teacher candidate's identity development is connected to that individual's history as well as the histories of the school and others they interact with in that school. This is an important point to acknowledge. Institutions have narratives. Classrooms have narratives.

Individuals have narratives. Every time we enter a narrative, the multiplicity must be recognized. In addition, our own narrative must be acknowledged. Our past experiences influence our current experiences, which will then influence our future experiences. The result of this can be going back in time through memories, recognition of what is currently going on and being felt, and imagining what a future may be like (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Next, narrative inquiry is relational, and it is within this method that there is a “relational living alongside” (Clandinin, 2013, p. 23) of one another regarding time, places, events, feelings, and people. Therefore, context is important, and this context includes cultural, social, institutional, familial, and lingual narratives. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) conceptualized this as being both personal and social. It requires looking inward and outward. Looking inward means considering “feelings, hopes, aesthetic reactions, and moral dispositions,” and looking outward means looking toward “the existential conditions,” which includes the social environment (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 56). Additionally, this idea of relational living includes narrative inquirers working alongside their participants. The result is the forming of a relationship between inquirer and participant in which both are a part of the narrative unfolding (Clandinin, 2013). This means living life together with participants and “trying to make sense of life as lived” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 78). Once again this points to the intertwining of narrative and identity, as we see the importance of the personal and communal in both.

The final aspect of three-dimensional inquiry is place. Place is about the physical location of narrative inquiry. Places shape who we are and who we become, and then shape our knowledge (Clandinin, 2013). For example, teacher candidates have been shaped by their own school experiences and continue to be shaped by them and new school experiences as they pursue their own teacher identity. Place can also influence people differently (Clandinin &

Connelly, 2000). Some may have fond memories of school, but others may have experienced trauma revealing quite different feelings.

Each of these elements, temporality, sociality, and place, have an essential role in the creation of a three-dimensional space for narrative inquiry. Additionally, these elements are apparent in identity development. Therefore, they inform how professional identities are shaped as teacher candidates negotiate this three-dimensional space which is embedded within the larger entities of clinical practice and partnership. So it is within this space that I will focus my research.

Summary

My research is unique in that I will focus on the professional identity development of teacher candidates within a contextually specific clinical experience using narrative inquiry. In particular, I will look at the stories of teacher candidates and their identity development in a TR as experienced in clinical practice within a partnership. Past experiences, current experiences, tensions, borders, and bridges are of particular interest. I began this literature review by creating a picture of the entities in which teacher candidates are embedded and the consequential importance of those entities to the narrative and identities of teacher candidates. I emphasized the prioritization of clinical practice in teacher education, and then I showed how clinical practice has been implemented in PDS and TR partnerships. While PDSs and TRs were both explained, TRs are of great interest to me because they support context-specific experiences based on the needs of school districts. This, in turn, has the potential to support the shaping of a professional identity that is properly prepared for the contexts teacher candidates will enter once they are in-service teachers. Additionally, TRs promote a transformational space where teacher candidates can collaborate and reflect, which is needed for negotiating identity changes.

Following the literature for clinical practice and partnership models that support the prioritization of clinical practice, I turned to literature on professional identity and then narrative inquiry. The literature emphasized how identity and narrative are intertwined. Therefore, one influences the other. One might even say that the one equates to the other. Of specific importance regarding identity development was the necessity of tension for transformation. These tensions surface within experiences, which I suggest should be contextually specific and related to the future employment of teacher candidates. While the experience is of importance, the consideration of the experience cannot stop with itself. For identity to genuinely change, there must be reflection both within community and within oneself regarding the experience. This encourages the reconciling of the past and the present, and this reconciling can relate to experiences, ideologies, etc. Therefore, discourse becomes pertinent to professional identity development, and this is further supported via the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space. As a result, in this study I will address the need for listening to and exploring the professional identity development stories of teacher candidates as they engage within a contextually specific clinical practice within a partnership. This will all be done with the intent to see how their professional identities take shape within this specific context. I describe the methods I will use to accomplish this goal specifically in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

The purpose of my study was to explore stories of teacher candidates within a teacher residency (TR) to investigate how their professional identities⁴ took shape through their experiences in a contextually specific clinical experience within a partnership. Bruner (2004) argued, “We seem to have no other way of describing ‘lived time’ save in the form of narrative” (p. 692). Therefore, we share our lives through the stories we tell and retell, which occurs through avenues of memory, interpretation, and reflexivity. Likewise, this sharing of lives results in the revealing of identity and how people construct themselves. Ultimately, it is through this sharing that we become the stories we tell (Bruner, 1986; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Gee, 2011).

Additionally, the stories we tell happen within a place, over time, and with others (Bruner, 1990; 2004; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Bruner (1990; 2004) would refer to these elements as culture and context. Culture influences how our stories are told, whether we acknowledge this or not. For example, our stories are a series of events and particularities within a culture where meaning is constructed, and it includes beliefs, values, norms, and ways of interpreting. These interpretations within narrative point to why things happen rather than strict causality, and they denote the importance of understanding that smaller pieces of a narrative exist in connection to the whole narrative (Bruner, 1991). For example, my experiences as a teacher have influenced my current interests as a teacher educator.

⁴ According to Alsup (2006), professional identity is defined 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).

Another piece of the stories we tell and become that is essential to recognize is what Anzaldúa (1986) called tensions, contradictions, or blocks. These are the places of conflict and ambiguity. These places can result in discomfort and pain because it is difficult to be in the middle. It is difficult to be unsure and embrace the process and waiting that it may include. However, it is within these spaces and the telling of these stories that identity growth can occur. Reflection and interpretation are encouraged to transpire within these difficult moments because it is within these aspects of our stories that there exists a possibility of transformation. Therefore, it is with this understanding that narrative and identity are intimately intertwined through the stories we tell and become that I rooted my study in narrative inquiry. I also chose research questions that supported the intermingling of narrative and identity. They specifically point to the importance of how stories shape who we become and our identities. Within this chapter, I will flesh out the pieces of my study. I will first share my positionality because it is integral to my purpose for this study as well as my research design. Following my positionality, I will address my design, methods, and plan for analysis.

Positionality

All my life there has been this nagging feeling that I do not quite fit; I am out of place. When I am in one place, there are pieces of me that seem misunderstood. When I am in another place, there are pieces of me that cannot even be comprehended. And still, when I am in another place, there are pieces of me that seem as if they will not be accepted. They must be discarded or protected until I feel safe. I am in a perpetual borderland, as Gloria Anzaldúa (1987) calls it. This borderland is vague and ambiguous. It is uncomfortable. As a result, I have had to learn how to “be” in more than one place. I have had to learn how to live within the paradox. I have had to learn how to cross borders.

I have become a border crosser, whether I want to be or not. It has become a part of my identity, a part of who I am. I am she who “copes by developing a tolerance for contradiction, a tolerance for ambiguity...She learns to juggle cultures...Not only does she sustain contradiction, she turns the ambivalence into something” (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 79). As a border crosser, I carry around all the pieces of me wherever I go. While these pieces make me feel out of place at times, they also help me navigate the different places I find myself. They help me turn the ambivalence into something, as Anzaldúa argued. With them I am also able, as Wenger (1998) wrote, “to make new connections across communities of practice, enable coordination, and—if they are good brokers—open new possibilities for meaning” (p. 109). Additionally, these different pieces are making something new. Anzaldúa (1987) called this a new consciousness, a *mestiza consciousness*. It is where the separate pieces unite and where straddling borders is acceptable. It is a new reality of sorts. This reality. This both/and. I live within this all the time. But maybe this is exactly where I am supposed to be.

Looking back on my life, I see that border crossing is not a new phenomenon for me. I see this interwoven throughout my life. Most recently, this has revealed itself in my journey to becoming an academic. Pursuing a doctorate has been challenging for me in many ways. I have had to learn and apply theory, write academically, and defend purposes for research. I have also had to explore pieces of myself, which has perhaps been the most challenging part to traverse. Who am I? Why am I doing this? What kind of researcher do I want to be? Do I even want to be a researcher? While this has been difficult at times, this exploration along with my own journey as an educator has brought me to this exact place. Every piece of this dissertation is influenced by my journey and positionality. I do not know how to “be” or do this any other way. So it is

very fitting for me to begin this chapter with my positionality told through pieces of my own personal story—a story of personal border crossing and professional identity shaping.

A Calling?

I believe with all my heart that the people we meet and the experiences we encounter, whether they be painful or our greatest joys, are purposeful and aid in shaping who we are and who we become (Anzaldúa, 1987; 2015). When I first started college, I really had no idea what I wanted to be or do. I just knew that I was a good student, and I also knew I enjoyed loving and helping people. This meant that as long as I read and studied, I did well in school. This also meant that I was drawn to helping professions. Initially this manifested in an interest in social work. Then, this evolved into human services counseling. However, during all of this, I found myself teaching five-year-old children on Sunday mornings and receiving affirmation about my teaching abilities from several people. These social encounters led me to think about how I could combine a joy for learning with helping children via the field of education. While I am very thoughtful about my choices, I am also sensitive to that nagging feeling within myself that things happen for a reason. In this case, I thought I was being guided to pursue teaching.

Some may describe this phenomenon I experienced as a calling. According to Hansen (1995), a calling is synonymous with vocation, and its definition is two-fold. First, a calling must have social meaning and value. Secondly, it must provide a sense of personal satisfaction. It is more than a job that one does for monetary gains but finds little fulfillment. Instead, it is fulfilling, meaningful, and “helps provide a sense of self, of personal identity” (p. 3). In the case of teaching as a calling, it is deeply reflective of one’s identity as well as oriented towards being helpful to others. Dik and Duffy (2009) defined calling slightly differently. They wrote,

A calling is a transcendent summons, experienced as originating beyond the self, to

approach a particular life role in a manner oriented toward demonstrating or deriving a sense of purpose or meaningfulness and that holds other-oriented values and goals as primary sources of motivation. (p. 427)

In this case, the calling comes from outside of oneself and is solely others focused. I tend toward Dik and Duffy's definition, but not without acknowledging that when you feel like you are pursuing what you were made to do, it can feel self-satisfying as well. At least, it felt that way at first, because I was unaware of the toll that borders, tensions, and ambiguity can take on a person if they do not have the correct tools. However, once I decided to pursue teacher preparation, I went full force. For me, there was something invigorating about having a direction, a goal, and a calling. It was not just something that I might be good at doing. It was something I had been affirmed in and that purposefully and intentionally invested in others, my city, and the future.

Teacher Candidate

As I mentioned above, school was something I had learned to do well. Being a student was an identity I was familiar with and knew how to traverse. I had learned to navigate those borders throughout my primary and secondary education. Or maybe I should say being a student the way it was shown and modeled to me through my own experiences was something I was familiar with and knew how to handle (Lortie, 1975). I was a first-generation college student, but I had mastered how to be a student, and these skills transferred to my higher education experiences and teacher preparation. I knew how to take in knowledge, write papers, and pass tests. I could adopt strategies for learning, and I could watch others model and then enact what they modeled. I could write good lesson plans. I could differentiate learning on paper. And even though I had some timidity when in front of others, my experiences in classrooms gave me comfort and ease when it came to being in front of a classroom of children. I could meet the

expectations in the university and in the classroom, and I could meet them well. However, these experiences in the university and the classroom did not necessarily overlap. I, like many others, would hear about the divide between the ideals of the university and the reality of the classroom, and I would also one day repeat this narrative (AACTE, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2014; Zeichner, 2010). Was I truly prepared for the classroom? How does one truly cross borders and shape one's professional identity when you realize pieces that are supposed to become one feel more disconnected than reconciled? What happens when tensions surface? Do you give up on the calling? Or do you lean into the process and grow?

Pause

I should probably pause here to note some additional pieces of my identity that have influenced my story. By the time I was in college and then a teacher, I would have been considered white and middle class. I should also mention that I chose to teach in the city where I grew up, but it is also extremely important to note that I did not attend the public school system. Therefore, my prior school experiences were very different from those who attended the Title I school where I began my teaching career. In addition, my students who were primarily African American and of a different socioeconomic class had very different life experiences than me.

Past experiences influence the shaping of our identities, and they can create borders. We take our culture with us wherever we go. Anzaldúa (1987) related this to a turtle that always carries their home on their back. It is always there. This carrying of home has been exemplified by others, including me, who have not experienced urban education themselves, and it is within this recognition of home I had to realize that my experiences were not the same as my students. Positionality and how that influences how one sees the world must be acknowledged (Bowman & Gottesman, 2017; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017). Consequently, I think it is important that

prospective teachers have opportunities to explore this, reflect on this, and then have experiences that align with their future students (Ladson-Billings, 2000; Stairs, 2010).

In addition to being aware of my own positionality, I also had to recognize that students carry home with them wherever they go. Therefore, the funds of knowledge from the community needed to be acknowledge and accessed (Miller & Hafner, 2008; Murrell et al., 2015). Funds of knowledge refers to “historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household individual functioning and well-being” (Moll et al., 1992, p. 133). It is the knowledge that comes from the homes and communities of our students. To foster this accessing of community knowledge, community-based opportunities are needed and essential for teacher candidates (Brayko, 2013; Napolitan et al., 2019; Zeichner et al., 2015). This provides the opportunity to build relationships with students and question hegemonic beliefs, which allows teacher candidates to see their own borders but also the borders that their students face (McDonald et al., 2011; Seidl & Friend, 2002; Zeichner et al., 2015).

This consideration of “home” for both myself and my students was not a large part of my personal teacher preparation. What I recall is a focus on how to handle urban students instead of how to understand them, especially when they have different experiences than oneself. For example, Ruby Payne’s (2005) *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* was required reading, which has now undergone much scrutiny and critique for its emphasis and promotion of stereotyping and deficit theories related to those living in poverty (Gorski, 2008). While at the time I did not have the words to verbalize this need to understand myself and my students at this level, I somehow knew there were borders. I also knew I needed experiences to aid in this crossing. One of the things I intentionally did for myself was to do all my observations and clinical experiences within the school district where I wanted to teach. I knew I wanted to teach

in my hometown, so I took every opportunity where I had a choice to be in the school system and get to know the people, culture, and students. Consequently, this shows my own personal belief that context is important and should be considered more when placing teacher candidates in schools.

Teaching

I have a heart for people, but one of the things I learned through my experiences as a public school teacher is what having a genuine heart for people looks like and the tensions it can produce. While caring for others is an ethic dear to me, expectations at school resulted in internal conflict. Nel Noddings (1984) wrote:

To act as one-caring, then, is to act with special regard for the particular person in a concrete situation. We act not to achieve for ourselves a commendation but to protect or enhance the welfare of the cared-for... The one-caring desires the well-being of the cared-for and acts (or abstains from acting—makes an internal act of commitment) to promote that well-being. (p. 24)

This idea of caring bringing about favorable conditions for those being cared for causes questions to surface regarding education. Working in the public school system has its difficulties, I do not think anyone in education would deny that. There is the constant battle between what teachers know is good for our students and what others tell us is good for our students, which is usually wrapped up in standards, assessments, and money (Dunn, 2020; Santoro, 2011). Theory, practice, and other pressures all collide, and it is straining on teachers, not to mention the children in our classrooms. The tensions are glaring. This borderland was extremely straining on me. I wanted to please everyone, meet all the goals, and of course change the world one class at a time. I remember having a breakdown in a staff meeting at one point because I could not take the

pressure. The goals seemed unattainable and overwhelming, and I was feeling the tensions regarding my professional identity as well. When you start to focus on the wrong things, or maybe the right things in the wrong way, you start to lose sight of people (Noddings, 1984). People become numbers, and you start to forget all the pieces that make them. You ultimately become uncaring. I remember thinking to myself after three years of teaching that this was not what I had signed up for at all. And I wonder what it would have looked like to have had more support and more opportunities to reflect on the tensions I was encountering. It was not that people were not willing to be supportive. It was just that they also were busy wearing too many hats and trying to meet all the expectations themselves. They were also in their own caring struggles.

The result of this seemingly overwhelming burden and expectations is that I left teaching for three years after being in the classroom for four years. I became one of the statistics of teachers leaving the profession early (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). This was also a breaking point for me in many other ways. This was a borderland that I was not quite prepared for at the time. It felt forced upon me, but also like I could not stay where I was. How does one handle losing the things that you thought were a part of you? How do you handle what feels like losing a piece of who you are? Sometimes life is painful and sad. There is a weariness about it. Something is broken. I recognize that in crossing borders, there is grief and there is lament. Sara Ahmed (2017) wrote, “To get ready often means being prepared to be undone” (p. 27). I could not agree more. There is this sense of leaving something behind and some pieces being shattered, but there is also a sense of moving toward something. This makes me think about how the tears can bring healing. Pain, the breaking of things and bonds, can help us find things—things about ourselves and the world that need to be discovered (Ahmed, 2017). Things

that are necessary in and for the process. Anzaldúa (1987) noted, “The painful periods of confusion that I suffer from are symptomatic of a larger creative process: cultural shifts” (p. 74). This rupture in my life was necessary and part of a larger shift to come. It would just take time to see where it was leading.

The Splinter

Leaving the classroom resulted in the beginning of a lot of undoing in my life, a lot of unraveling. Anzaldúa (1987) compared this feeling of unrest to a cactus needle under one’s skin. I imagine this to be like a splinter. There’s pain as long as it is under the skin, and there is pain in the removal of it. But when the splinter comes out there is relief. For the next three years, I dealt with the splinter. I endured the borderland. I went to school for business. I went to work. I finished the degree. I looked for jobs. And somewhere along the way I remembered I enjoyed teaching, and I started to look for jobs that had to do with business *or* education. Interview here. Interview there. Still nothing. I gave up. Sometimes the best thing we can do is let go. Then I got a call, “Hi, would you like to come teach 4th grade for me?”

I thought this was the removal of the splinter. I thought this was my opportunity to finally run. But instead, this was a continuation of the process. I went back into the classroom for two years. During those two years, I continued to see my district, my school, my colleagues, and myself struggle. Being a teacher can feel like being pulled in a million directions and then like hitting a wall. These walls that were there during my first years of teaching did not go anywhere; they were still there years later. Ahmed (2017) argued that institutional brick walls are ones that people are invested in not acknowledging. I was tired of not acknowledging them. I liken these walls to borders as well. Borders keep certain people out. Borders are harder to cross for some

more than others (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017). The more I was reminded of how things are—the borders faced by teachers and students—the more I wondered how to change things.

I had two thoughts. The first had to do with how I could connect various stakeholders and get them involved in our schools. However, there appeared to be borders between the university and school. The university held the theory. The schools held the practical and were skeptical of the university. And then there was the community. Where was the community and its knowledge within all of this? It is not always easy to connect people with all different interests. Even if they agree to work in partnership, there are issues of power that need to be addressed (Miller & Hafner, 2008). If people are going to work together, they must first recognize the borders. Then, they must create a space together which is focused on crossing those borders. In addition, they must be willing to live in the borderland for a time to learn how to cross them. The second thought had to do with specifically preparing teachers for struggling school districts so that they would be willing to stay. What kinds of experiences do our teacher candidates need to prepare them for specific schools? Here I see more borders like the borders I faced myself associated with my positionality and my students' funds of knowledge (Bowman & Gottesman, 2017; Miller & Hafner, 2008; Murrell et al., 2015; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017). Having questions, being a teacher, juggling all the responsibilities, and being heard were difficult. That is, if one spoke up at all. So I left the school system in pursuit of my terminal degree, answers, and the continued desire to remove the splinter. I wanted answers to questions like, What has been done? What is being done? How do we move forward?

Pursuing Answers

Of all the places I have been on my journey thus far, this doctoral journey has been one of the most challenging to me. The process of becoming an academic has been a borderland

experience professionally and personally. I have felt intensely ruptured and in need of using my defense strategies “to escape the inadequacy” I feel (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 45). I have felt tired. I have felt grief. I have had to sit in these things in all their discomfort and uncertainties. I have had to accept living in the tension. I have had to accept that there are things that I must give up and others that I may have to give up in time. As Ahmed (2017) said, “To become conscious of possibility can involve mourning for its loss. You can feel the sadness of what could have been, but was not to be” (p. 47).

You would think that all my past experiences would make this current border crossing easier, but it has been the hardest to traverse. It has been where I have felt most out of place. It has been where the clothes have seemed the most uncomfortable. Sometimes too big. I cannot fill them. Sometimes too small. They are suffocating. And sometimes too itchy. Can I just get rid of them? Kuhn (1995) referred to this idea of ill-fitting clothes. About her own school experience she said, “My clothes did not fit, I was different: and, being born of inferiority, this difference was the source of deepest shame, the most craven fear of exposure” (p. 93). I have struggled with this. I have felt out of place in academia. Never enough or never quite fitting wherever I go. This reminds me of Ahmed’s (2017) reference to fragility. I keep going. I keep working. I keep trying to cross borders. But fragility can lead to shattering. It can lead to exhaustion and a breaking point. But maybe, just maybe a break can lead to a healing of sorts. Maybe out of grief hope springs. Maybe this hope looks different than one envisioned. Perhaps the expectations have changed or been thrown out the window. Possibly, a voice is found. Bridges are built. And borders are crossed more easily. Relief is coming.

Mestiza Consciousness

“Knowledge makes me more aware, it makes me more conscious. ‘Knowing’ is painful

because after ‘it’ happens I can't stay in the same place and be comfortable. I am no longer the same person I was before” (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 48). I *am* no longer the same person I was years ago. I cannot be. I have felt the ruptures of change, and I have felt the formation of a new kind of consciousness, what Anzaldúa (1987) called the *mestiza consciousness* in which duality is transcended. This is my bridge.

Crossing borders is difficult work. I know because I have done it and continue to do it every day personally and professionally. People say that doctoral students rarely stay with the topic they are initially interested in when they start graduate school. However, I have continued to dig into my topic throughout my time here. I now use words such as *partnerships*, *stakeholders*, *clinical practice*, and *professional teacher identity*. In some ways, I have learned to speak a different language, and my thoughts have been given new words. I have discovered what has been done, what is being done, and I have thoughts about what moving forward could potentially look like. But to get here, I have experienced so many tensions. Mostly these tensions have had to do with negotiating the various pieces of my identity (Anzaldúa, 1987). This goes back to the questions: Who am I? What kind of researcher am I? But it has also forced me to look at all the different pieces of my story from race and class to student and teacher, and then consider how I got here, how others have influenced me, and how I have influenced them (Bruner, 1990; 2004).

As a teacher educator, I recognize the borders, and then I straddle the borders of the university and the school trying to reconcile the two. Trying to be a part of a space in which we can all work toward collaboration and co-construction rather than duality. Working toward the *mestiza consciousness* (Anzaldúa, 1987). This consciousness means that all the pieces that have been a part of me—the student, the teacher, and the teacher educator—must come together, and

instead of keeping these pieces separate, they are turned into something new. Something where I recognize the strengths that each of them provides and give them voice. This voice is not just for me. It is for all those contemplating crossing the border themselves. I am not just a border crosser; I am here to help others cross as well. Therefore, my story has led me to wonder about the stories and identities of teacher candidates: their borders, their tensions, and their negotiations. How do their experiences influence who they are becoming?

Putting it All Together

Sometimes life can feel disconnected, confusing, and downright maddening. The borders and resulting borderlands can feel overwhelming. However, as I have explored my professional identity and then the identity of others in partnerships between schools and universities, I have come to see that these tensions *are* purposeful, because they can lead to change (Alsup, 2006; Anzaldúa, 1987; Luehmann, 2007). The result has been a research interest and direction for me. First, I have been drawn to clinical practice because this is one of the most authentic places for teacher candidates to enter school cultures and have the opportunities to see teachers and be teachers (AACTE, 2018). I believe experiences are essential to teacher identity development. Specifically, I have been drawn to TRs because they are contextually specific (Berry et al., 2008; Hammerness et al., 2016). TRs also address the importance of clinical practice within partnerships because TRs encourage intentional connections between theory, practice, and community knowledge. Therefore, different stakeholders should ideally be speaking with teacher candidates and co-constructing knowledge together. This allows for the various pieces of stakeholder knowledge to intertwine and properly prepare teachers through influencing their stories and identities. Finally, it is within this idea of the shaping of individual professional identity that I finally find myself. I am specifically interested in the stories of teacher candidates

in a TR and how they develop a professional identity as they experience clinical practice within a partnership. I wonder how these different pieces related to experiences, relationships, and reflection prepare teacher candidates as their professional identity is formed through tensions and negotiation. Consequently, my reflections, wonderings, and studies have led me to narrative inquiry for my research, because I am interested in the experiences of people and the stories their lives tell (Bruner, 1986; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). It allows people to be human and pays attention to the details that have shaped, are shaping, and will shape their narratives. Narrative inquiry also allows me to enter that story. Therefore, I conducted a study rooted in narrative inquiry that addressed my interest in the stories and construction of a professional teacher identity in the clinical practice of teacher candidates within a TR.

Research Design

I used a narrative inquiry design (Clandinin, 2013; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Kim, 2016) that also employed analysis through thinking with theory (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012) for this qualitative study. I chose this design because it allows the researcher to listen and participate with teacher candidates and their stories. Additionally, I specifically chose this design because it allowed me as the researcher to explore and analyze the lived experience of teacher candidates regarding their professional teacher identity construction during clinical practice within a partnership. By listening to teacher candidates tell their stories, watching as they live their story out, and participating within the story, I had an opportunity to draw on experiential knowledge that can then be shared with others (Clandinin, 2013). In addition, thinking with theory allowed me as the researcher to examine the “interlocking relationship between theory and practice” (Kim, 2016, p. 30). Through this analysis, I had an opportunity to discover something new as the data were pushed to their limits (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). Therefore, a narrative inquiry design

coupled with thinking with theory was the best choice and resulted in the voice of teacher candidates and their experiences being heard through the retelling and reliving of their stories (Clandinin, 2013; Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). Specifically, I thought with Anzaldúa's (1987; 2015) theories related to identity. The guiding research questions were:

1. How do teacher residency experiences shape the professional identity stories of teacher candidates?
2. How do teacher candidates navigate the borderlands (tensions, ambiguities, etc.) in a teacher residency experience?

Participants and Context

The participants in this study were 3 teacher candidates in a TR in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States (citation withheld to protect confidentiality). The TR is an intense, one-year program that incorporates coursework alongside contextually specific practice within a local public school. Therefore, it is a partnership between a university and the local school system, and the purpose of the residency and partnership is to prepare the teacher candidates for specific high-needs schools. The first year is the residency year in which teacher candidates complete coursework, coteach with a mentor teacher, and then solo teach within an iterative cycle. Following this residency year, teacher candidates have committed to the school district for three years, and they will become teachers of record within the same school division they were residents. The hope is that these teacher candidates will then stay beyond their commitment and be agents of change within the classroom, school, school district, and beyond. For this study, the teacher candidates were in their summer and fall semesters, which included coursework, coteaching, and some solo teaching. I also only chose teacher candidates participating in the elementary track of the TR.

The school districts are divided by counties and/or cities in this state. One participant was located in a county's public school, and two participants were located in a city's public schools. According to Poverty USA (2021), in 2019 the county in which this study took place had a 6.8% poverty rate, and the city in which this study took place had a 24.1% poverty rate. Table 3 includes poverty according to the population of each race in the city. Additionally, 8.7% of children in the county and 36.5% of children in the city were living in poverty in 2019. The state also reported that all students enrolled in the city's elementary schools were eligible for free lunch in the 2019-2020 school year (VDOE, 2020). In the county, the state reported that 38.09% of students were eligible for free and/or reduced lunch in the 2019-2021 school year.

Table 3

Poverty by Race in City and County

| City | | | |
|-----------------|------------|------------|-----------------------|
| Race | Population | In Poverty | Percentage in Poverty |
| White | 5,235 | 1,085 | 20.7% |
| Hispanic | 1,495 | 399 | 26.7% |
| Black | 23,711 | 5,822 | 24.6% |
| Asian | 292 | 84 | 28.8% |
| Native American | 74 | 65 | 87.8% |
| County | | | |
| Race | Population | In Poverty | Percentage in Poverty |
| White | 229,506 | 12,897 | 5.6% |
| Hispanic | 30,075 | 4,884 | 16.2% |
| Black | 76,815 | 6,971 | 9.1% |
| Asian | 11,852 | 877 | 7.4% |
| Native American | 1,021 | 45 | 4.4% |

In the 2021-2022 school year, all the elementary schools within the county and the city were considered Title I schools (VDOE 2021b). The total fall 2021 membership for the specific school from the county that was used in this study was 490 students (VDOE, 2022). This school had a pass rate of 48% for all students taking an English standardized test and a pass rate of 32%

for all students taking a math standardized test in 2020-2021 (VDOE, 2021a). The total fall 2021 membership for the specific schools from the city that were used was a) 521 and b) 342 (VDOE, 2022). The first school had a pass rate of 82% for all students taking an English standardized test and a pass rate of 81% for all students taking a math standardized test in 2020-2021 (VDOE, 2021a). The second school had a pass rate of 31% for all students taking an English standardized test and a pass rate of 16% for all students taking a math standardized test in 2020-2021. I think it is important to note here that the 2020-2021 school year was during the COVID-19 pandemic and therefore resulted in various hardships and virtual learning.

Sample

I used purposive sampling to recruit teacher candidate participants in the TR (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Participation was requested and communicated to the participants by email in July 2021. The teacher candidates were accepted to the residency program and were in their first semester of the residency at the time of my request. They also had chosen the elementary track of the TR. Finally, they chose to opt into the study and provided informed consent to be a part of this study.

Data Collection

A three-dimensional space is of the utmost importance within a narrative inquiry. The three dimensions that make up this space are temporality, place, and sociality (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). To capture these elements of inquiry, I collected several pieces of data for this study. Each piece of data was essential to providing the rich detail needed within narrative inquiry and facilitated a weaving together of the story being told. Data collection included interviews, artifacts, and field notes from observations, and each piece informed the other. Data collection was also iterative in nature to capture professional identity growth. For example,

artifacts and observations informed interview questions. See Table 4 below to see the schedule of data collection.

Table 4

Schedule of Data Collection

| July/August | September/ October | October | November | December |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-Interviews • CAL Artifacts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation • CAL Artifacts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid Interviews • CAL Artifacts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation • CAL Artifacts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post Interviews • CAL Artifacts |

Interviews

I conducted individual interviews with the teacher candidates before, during, and at the end of their first semester of clinical practice in the TR program. The interviews were semi-structured, so there were guiding questions (see Appendix A for interview protocol). However, I asked additional or follow up questions as needed (Kim, 2016). By interviewing participants, teacher candidates could “tell their own stories in their own way” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 111). In addition, interviews gave the participants the opportunity to share background, personal thoughts, and reflections. By doing the interviews before, during, and at the end of their first semester of clinical practice, the three-dimensional aspect of temporality was emphasized. Additionally, participants were able to share their stories and voice their understandings and experiences through interviews. Therefore, it was important for me as the researcher to be an active listener who empowered the participant to tell their story (Kim, 2016).

Artifacts

Kim (2016) compared artifacts to a cabinet of curiosity where extraordinary items are stored. These promote wonder and curiosity as they evoke “imagination, empathy, and

understanding of the other” (p. 178). Overall, I used artifacts to further the narrative inquiry as stories and details came to light. Specifically, I collected one artifact to promote the further excavation of the narrative inquiry (Kim, 2016). This artifact is called the Collaborative Assessment Log (CAL), and it was mostly completed weekly throughout the teacher candidates’ first semester of clinical practice (Dembowski & Ward, 2018). The CAL was co-constructed between the teacher candidate and their mentor. The questions on the CAL focused on what is working, challenges, and next steps for the teacher candidate and mentor. This artifact provided the opportunity to see tensions as well as change over time. Sociality was also expressed as the teacher candidate and the mentor negotiated and worked together on the CAL.

Observations

Observations were an additional piece of data collected to reinforce the relational aspect of the three-dimensional space as living alongside others occurred. The intention was to capture teacher candidates while they were teaching in actual classroom settings with students.

Observations gave me the opportunity to verify the other pieces of data. For instance, were teacher candidates making the changes that they wrote in the CAL? These pieces of data also informed interview questions, and they allowed me to observe if concepts associated with professional identity were being enacted. For example, I looked for instances where concepts associated with borders, tensions, negotiations, etc. were potentially occurring. Ultimately, the observations were intended to aid in the construction of meaning, verify the stories of teacher candidates, and inform the other pieces of data as professional identities emerged and grew. Finally, recording of field notes is a part of this type of data collection as meaning is constructed, and field notes include details of what happened. For this study, they included activities observed, and they also contained interpretive content.

Data Analysis

Regarding data analysis for this study, I employed thinking with theory. Thinking with theory required using theory to think *with* data or vice versa. Jackson and Mazzei (2012) used the metaphor of “plugging in” (p. 1) to exemplify this process. For example, interview data can be plugged into a theory to discover something new. It is within this plugging in that data and theory are decentered and then organized, connected, and made—or perhaps remade. Theory and data are pushed beyond their limits, or beyond their threshold as Jackson and Mazzei (2012) wrote. This is done with the intent of pursuing the new. Three moves that are suggested for plugging in are as follows:

1. putting philosophical concepts to work via disrupting the theory/practice binary by decentering each and instead showing how they *constitute or make one another*,
2. being deliberate and transparent in what analytical questions are made possible by a specific theoretical concept...and how the questions that are used to think with *emerged in the middle* of plugging in; and
3. working the same data chunks repeatedly to ‘deform [them], to make [them] groan and protest’ with an overabundance of meaning, which in turn not only creates new knowledge but also shows the *suppleness of each when plugged in*. (original emphasis; p. 5)

In my analysis, I followed Jackson and Mazzei’s suggested maneuvers for plugging in. First, I plugged in my various pieces of data (i.e., interviews, video recordings, etc.) alongside of theory. Specifically, I utilized Anzaldúa’s (1987; 2015) theories related to identity in conjunction with the data. Within this space, theory and data had the opportunity to inform and transform one another as the concepts were used. Second, I was cognizant of additional emergent analytical

questions that came about through plugging in. Finally, I took my data and massaged the various pieces repeatedly for meaning. This means I took various pieces of Anzaldúa's theories and intentionally applied them to the data.

In addition to the three moves above, thinking with theory demanded additional veering from traditional qualitative analysis related to coding. Instead, data coupled with theory was seen as having an opportunity to lead to something new rather than something predetermined and predictable as in coding. Additionally, thinking with theory encouraged paying attention to details. This meant being attentive to small pieces of information that revealed tensions and texture, which was essential to my research. Finally, thinking with theory also promoted a folding and flattening of oneself into the mix (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). Therefore, the researcher was situated within the research and became a part of something new as (a) relationships were flattened between researcher, participants, theory, and data, and as (b) the researcher was folded "into the texts and into the theoretical threshold" (p. 10).

Plugging in Anzaldúa

Pieces of Anzaldúa's (1987; 2015) theories related to *borders*, *borderlands*, the *Coatlicue state*, *bridges*, and the *mestiza consciousness* were plugged in to the data collected. Therefore, I take some time here to reiterate what these terms are and how they may find themselves plugged in alongside data. First, *borders* reveal who is "us" and "them," and they reveal separation with others and even within ourselves. For teacher candidates, this may manifest as they negotiate the university's theory and the school's practice or maybe their own positionality compared to the others they interact with during their clinical experiences. They may see that the different pieces of their identity either have borders or result in borders. When these differences are faced, ambiguity and tensions begin to surface, and this shows that a *borderland* is occurring. There can

be confusion and uncertainty as there is a process occurring because it is confusing trying to resolve or negotiate the different pieces of oneself. The tensions or ruptures and the resulting process of transformation are referred to by Anzaldúa as the *Coatlicue state*. It is within this state that teacher candidates can decide to either embrace or not embrace the changing process. They can either undergo the identity growth as they reconcile the different pieces of a professional teacher identity, or they can stay the same. If they decide to embrace the growth, there are *bridges* that may provide assistance. These bridges could be a person, such as the mentor teachers and teacher educators within the TR. These bridges could also be experiences. For example, participating in the TR, which is a contextually specific partnership between schools and a university, may provide experiences that intertwine theory and practice in a way that aids student in resolving identity issues. Finally, there is the *mestiza consciousness*. The mestiza consciousness lacks duality and is the result of transformation. It is the new identity that recognizes every piece of oneself and has reconciled the pieces into something new. This may look different for every teacher candidate. However, it is the result of recognizing and reconciling the identity pieces of the university, school, community, and oneself, and undergoing the change process and tensions which results in a new professional identity.

Verisimilitude

Verisimilitude addresses the idea of reality. Within narrative inquiry, verisimilitude has to do with the appearance of reality as if one could be there within the experience. It invites the reader in and captures their attention as they begin to live vicariously through the text (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Kim (2016) related this to virtual reality in which readers “vicariously experience the reality of the text” (p. 109). Therefore, the writing should draw the reader in and make them feel like they are a part of the experience. This includes attention to aesthetics and the

imagination. As a result, ambiguity is welcomed, as this leaves room for the reader to create meaning. Additionally, metaphors are encouraged to make the text accessible (Kim, 2016).

To address verisimilitude in my design, I used two specific elements. The first was to provide rich, thick details that show rather than tell what is occurring within the narrative. By providing details, the reader was invited into the stories of my participants as the different senses were engaged (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Additionally, I used metaphor within the narrative. Metaphor is another tool to engage the imagination of the reader because metaphors create a picture and something relatable. Kim (2016) noted that using metaphors “makes abstract concepts become more accessible and approachable, and allows the reader to bring in different perspectives, resulting in different interpretations of the text” (p. 111). Therefore, these elements were used to promote verisimilitude for the reader.

Summary

The purpose of this narrative inquiry was to explore the lived experience of teacher candidates and the construction of their professional teacher identities as they participated in clinical practice within a TR. I chose narrative inquiry because it allowed me to listen and participate within the experiences and narratives of teacher candidates. But, most of all, using narrative inquiry allowed me to recognize the humanity of others and then invite them to tell their stories, stories that were relatable and engaging. The result was a sharing of stories as they were lived with special consideration of all their elements, whether they were joys, tensions, or negotiations. In the case of this study, I gave the readers an opportunity to observe how a professional teacher identity is formed while teacher candidates were in clinical practice within a TR. Additionally, I believe there are always other stories going on that perhaps are bigger and more all-encompassing than our own stories. Therefore, narrative inquiry alongside thinking

with theory allowed me to push the data from my participants and me to its limits and explore the possibility of “something new” that came from the data and its analysis.

This narrative inquiry also allowed me to place myself within the research. My distinct positionality allowed me to relate, empathize, and provide hope. For example, I identified with the process of forming a teacher identity with all its contradictions as one moves from student to teacher in the teacher preparation phase because I, too, went through this journey. Additionally, my experiences beyond teacher preparation have furthered this desire to cultivate a teacher identity during teacher preparation because I see from my own classroom practice and then within research where gaps in preparation remain. Therefore, I gave teacher candidates a voice, but I also continued to develop my own voice as I processed along with the participants and other narratives at play. After all, narratives cannot help but be intertwined within a three-dimensional space of time as we live alongside one another within a place (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). With this in mind, I will utilize Chapter 4 to share the stories of my participants and their professional identities as they came to light within the three-dimensional space we shared.

CHAPTER 4

STORIES

Paying attention to the past as well as the current place in which we find ourselves is essential to narrative thinking and identity work, and these elements are necessary for making sense of the present (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Therefore, it is important to explore these components of temporality because they are essential to narrative and the development of identities. This is exemplified as the past of teacher candidates informs their present teacher residency experiences and identities. Likewise, the particular composition of the place and people, or sociality, of the various school contexts can inform teacher residency experiences and identities. The result is that these elements of time, sociality, and place that make up a three-dimensional space will easily find their way into the stories of each of my participants. Additionally, as I was invited into my participants' three-dimensional spaces, the stories each participant told through their actions and words gave me glimpses into their professional identities as they were in process within each of their teacher residency experiences (Bruner, 1986; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Observations and Collaborative Assessment Logs (CALs) also gave me further glimpses and opportunities to verify other pieces of data.

As the narratives and professional identity stories naturally entwined themselves, I began to explore the stories through the lens of theory, with special attention to Anzaldúa's (1987) identity theories. Her metaphors associated with borders, borderlands, tensions, and bridges came to light within each story. Borders showed themselves as the participants encountered dividing lines and steep edges. When the crossing of borders was pursued, they encountered places that lacked comfort. This *Coatlicue* state consisted of tensions and ambiguities. It was a place where clarity was muddled, and uncertainty was sure. Difficulty was expected. Yet

something new had the possibility to surface, and one hoped that the borders would not be victorious. Instead, transformation and growth were the hope. A pertinent source in crossing were the bridges that were built or already accessible and therefore aided in the construction of the participants' professional identity. Finally, the participants were all encountering the process of becoming something new. In each of their ways, they were pursuing a mestiza consciousness by turning "the ambivalence into something else" (p. 79).

So it is here that I will now invite each reader into this sense making space and share the stories that I was honored to hear. At the beginning of each story, I will introduce the participant and provide a brief glimpse into their school context. Then, using theory as I think throughout, I will explore how teacher residencies shaped the professional identity stories of these teacher candidates. In addition, I will pay special attention to tensions that surfaced. For privacy reasons, I have given my participants and their schools pseudonyms.

Stephanie: Becoming Human

One of the first things Stephanie shared with me was that she was a mother, and it was within this role that she first became involved in education. She has two children, and she was the kind of parent who was constantly involved. This was intended to encourage her kids to succeed in school and show them that she cared about them and their education. Additionally, she had a heart for helping and caring for teachers and their students. She said, "I didn't see a lot of parental involvement, and I felt like the teachers were struggling in areas where they didn't necessarily need to because they just needed help. So from a parent perspective, I was always willing to lend a hand..." These experiences resulted in a passion for teaching, and it was clear to me that this passion was closely connected to and rooted in an ethic of caring. This idea of the ethic of caring was developed by Nel Noddings (1984), and it involves acting "with special

regard for the particular person in a concrete situation” (p. 24). There is also an emphasis on intentionally acting with the intent of promoting the well-being of another. The fingerprints of caring are all over Stephanie’s past as she was constantly in pursuit of enhancing the welfare of others.

While Stephanie had never been licensed as a public school teacher, she had many experiences over the years in a summer program, after school program, and daycare environments in the private sector. She recalled that her first experience as a summer counselor in 1990 with a sixth-grade class was a significant experience in igniting her passion for teaching. As she told me her story, I could not help but once again see how an ethic of care seemed to naturally flow out of her and into the space she occupied that summer. For example, she did her best to incorporate things that interested her students and would make learning interesting for them. She used hands-on activities, current events, and brought in her radio for them to listen to while they worked. She said, “I just played the radio station...It made such a difference. Just the fact that I cared to bring in a radio.” Her care was obvious in how she related to her students. This was exemplified in how she shared personal stories with the students that humanized her to them. She also would attend events outside of the classroom, like student sporting events. The result was a special respect they had for her. In fact, she returned for the next two years to work with this group of students in an after-school program until they graduated from eighth grade and subsequently were not eligible for the program any longer.

In addition to her personal past teaching experiences, Stephanie also reflected upon her own teachers from childhood. She specifically mentioned three elementary teachers. Coincidentally, what she remembered most about two of her teachers was how they cared for her. There was a level of receptivity and responsiveness that Stephanie felt within these

relationships (Noddings, 1984). For example, she mentions feeling welcomed, cared for, and loved. She even maintained a relationship with one of the teachers as an adult, and this teacher also taught her sons, nieces, and nephews. The third teacher was an African American male. This was memorable because he was her first African American teacher. He stood out because he included his own experiences as well as relevant information into his class. She said, "...he put a lot more of his experience into it [teaching]. And I felt like it made the teaching more relevant. He made me do that with my first teaching experience. And that's when I knew that bringing your own experience into the classroom was important..." The influence of these teachers can already be seen in how Stephanie has interacted and related to students during her early teaching experiences mentioned above.

It is clear to see that prior to starting the teacher residency experience, Stephanie's professional identity was already in process, and she looked forward to pursuing this identity further as a licensed classroom teacher within the public school system. The following statement nicely summarized Stephanie's outlook about becoming a public school teacher. She said, "...it's not teaching bodies, it's teaching people." This emphasized the importance of caring and relating to students that consistently came to the forefront in her past experiences. This was further emphasized when she shared that caring for her students and creating a relationship with them would aid in challenging her students' borders. She said,

...when they have a teacher that shows that they care and know I care whether or not you go to jail. I care whether or not you learn this math concept. I care whether or not you know how to spell and read. It means something...

She expressed how some students are conditioned to believe that they are "nothing" and "never going to be anything." Therefore, it was important to her to be an advocate and a part of

changing that mindset. She wanted to be the counternarrative, and her own story gave her the ability to empathize and communicate that borders can be crossed. Additionally, within her past experiences, bridges were already in use and under construction for Stephanie as she moved toward her teacher residency experience. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) wrote, “Any event, or thing, has a past, a present as it appears to us, and an implied future” (p. 29). Regarding Stephanie’s story, her professional identity had been in process for many years. The events, or experiences she was currently having could not help but be influenced by her past. As a result, her past experiences in education from her own schooling to teaching in a summer school program and the private sector had already been disrupting borders and helping her navigate tensions and preparing her for the residency experience that she found herself in currently.

Finally, as Stephanie reflected on her past and looked forward to her placement in the residency, she also expressed concern about potential challenges, or borders. Some of these were rooted in her past experiences, and one was rooted in her current role as a teacher candidate within the teacher residency. First, she mentioned trying to do too much too soon when it came to advocating for change. She wanted to make sure she had all the research, knew all the knowledge, and was aware of the school system beforehand. Therefore, she was already cognizant of how structures and institutions can have borders in place to limit change, and she was considering what she would need to know and how she would need to act to start crossing those borders. Another border she brought up was communication with parents. Her past experiences had shown her that this could be difficult, but she also knew how important this was to her. How could she cross this border well? She hoped that what she had been learning in her own classes would help bridge this. Finally, she expressed the need to have support from peers, the district, the principal, etc. This was rooted in a desire to be respected and seen as an equal

within the classroom. She did not want her position as a teacher candidate to result in others not treating her like a teacher or to diminish the experience she already had. This showed concerns related to borders of power, mutuality, and reciprocity. When I asked how she might handle these borders going forward, Stephanie said that her actions would speak louder than her words. In other words, she saw her own character and work ethic providing a bridge in her placement – a third grade classroom at School A.

Context: School A

School A had 342 students at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year (VDOE, 2022). The room in which Stephanie taught had a group of 3rd grade students sitting in the shape of a U. There were also outliers, who were sitting in their own islands outside of the U. On each face were masks, and on the perimeter of each desk was a clear plastic trifold over a foot high signaling that COVID-19 continued to affect our schools.

The room also included an interactive board in the middle of the front of the room, and there was a teacher's desk in the front corner. In the back of the room was a u-shaped table for holding groups, and towards the back of one side of the room was Stephanie's desk. Around the room were various signs of classroom décor. There were statements about how to be a good citizen, schedules, and word walls. Student work that addressed their own cultures was also visible.

Additionally, there were clear procedures within the room. These were not posted on the walls, but it could be felt and seen as the mentor teacher and Stephanie moved about the room and as students followed directions as if they had done these things before. Finally, there was a slight hum whenever the air would kick on showing the age of the building. But it was not a

nuisance. It just seemed to be a part of the regular rhythms of the room. A familiar sound that echoed the feeling this room brought on to those who entered. This was a community.

Past and Present Collide

Without skipping a beat, Stephanie started her placement in the third grade room at School A with a focus on care and creating trusting relationships. Her CALs from this time showed her perspective of her efforts as well as the response from the students and her mentor teacher. She wrote,

It has a great impact on my practice when I can put what I learn into practice and be respected by my peers. The students also show me great respect because Mr. Stanley does, and I really appreciate that.

On another day she wrote,

I was able to give out several rewards to students for being good citizens and helping one another. I consistently talk to the students about us being a family and I can see how they are listening to me and really understanding the concept of family and community in our classroom.

When I went to observe Stephanie's classroom, this was all confirmed. It was clear that her students respected her and saw her as a teacher as much as the mentor teacher in the room. She naturally made her way around the room interacting with students, showing care, providing feedback, and giving directions. She was constantly on the move. While her mentor teacher was teaching a writing lesson, she was busy creating an anchor chart based on his lesson. She looked right at home in the community they were creating.

As I watched and later reflected, I thought about the unique past experiences Stephanie's story contained, because she had many teaching experiences prior to the residency teaching

experience. Therefore, her past became an important bridge to her present experiences. She had the benefit of bridges, as Anzaldúa (1987) would have said. While others may have desired to watch and learn, she had the privilege of being able to “kind of jum[p] in with both feet.” As a result, she said,

I guess with my experience, my [mentor teacher], felt comfortable with just allowing me to lead from the very beginning. So, I really didn’t have much of an observation point from the beginning, I’ve pretty much been teaching since day one. And I think that’s been extremely helpful because that set the tone, I believe, for the students. One, to help me build that relationship with them. And two, for them to see me and him as equals.

Stephanie seemed to easily embody teacher-like dispositions such as giving directions, interacting with students, and providing feedback and redirection to students when needed. It really did appear that her and her mentor teacher shared the role of teacher, and the students acted like this as well. I could not help but remember the previous events in Stephanie’s life within school settings and observe how, while the contexts were different, the actions were similar.

Additionally, the influence of her past teachers surfaced again, creating bridges years later. Some areas in which she saw herself imitating them included sharing her personal life with students and building relationships with her students. She also saw her past school experiences as an influence because she wanted her students to have experiences that she did not have the opportunity to have. When talking about how she interacted with students in the classroom she said, “...I think it does have to do with my background because I wish I had teachers like how I am.”

While past experiences were providing bridges, there were also many new people stepping up and into Stephanie's story. For instance, her mentor teacher was a pertinent bridge. She said, "...he's allowed me to bring my experience of what I've learned in the past from my teaching experience, and he's telling me how to maneuver it in the public sector." While her use of the word "allowed" seems to connote that it is essentially his room and space, she also shared that he said "the room is hers" in relation to decorating. Therefore, it seemed that the room had been a safe space for Stephanie where power was easily shared. The result was a collaborative and communicative space between the two of them where her mentor teacher provided guidance and a bridge when needed, especially to help her maneuver the new context of the public school system.

In addition to her mentor teacher, there were others within the school who were bridges for Stephanie. For instance, she worked with the entire third grade team. Within the team, they shared plans, and she co-wrote reading plans with one of the teachers. There also was an instructional coach and IT person who were instrumental in making sure that Stephanie had access to a computer, email, and all the accounts used by the grade level. This way she did not have to log in using her mentor teacher's account. Instead, she could access the programs and student data pertinent to have input as classroom instruction decisions were made. Additionally, the principal, custodian, and art teacher were people she mentioned who made her felt welcome. She said, "...I just never felt like an outsider."

Finally, Stephanie mentioned the importance of those from the university's residency program. For example, she mentioned the observations and the feedback that they provided to both her and her mentor teacher. But what seemed the most influential was her academic advisor who provided an empathetic ear and support. From feeling overwhelmed to dealing with

personal conflicts, the academic advisor was a listening ear but also one who helped problem solve. Stephanie said, "...just having her to talk to, as an ear within the program, is just nice." As Stephanie's past and present collided, significant bridges supported her and influenced the shaping of her professional identity.

Lesson Planning

While creating a caring and respectful community did not seem challenging as people entered Stephanie's story and her past informed her present, in time, more substantial borders did come into focus. One border that Stephanie faced had to do with lesson planning, specifically as it is expected within the public school. For the state in which the school was located, there was a curriculum framework that guided what should be taught and learned in each grade level and subject. For her city, there was also a pacing guide. This pacing guide shared what should be taught and the timeline in which it should be taught. This became a borderland for Stephanie because the private sector in which she had experience had much more freedom related to lesson planning and then executing lessons.

Regarding this borderland, she said, "...I feel like in the public sector is like everything is more structured." I could also hear the tension when she expressed that she wanted to stay in the moment to make sure that the lesson and content were understood before moving on to something else. Therefore, being able to implement the pacing guide and incorporate her own style and personality proved difficult at times. For instance, when she first started completing reading lesson plans, she noticed that another teacher had deleted some of her ideas from the final plan. This was due to Stephanie's ideas being outside of the pacing. Additionally, she expressed the process could be overwhelming as there was much information in the pacing guide and really no time to complete it all. Stephanie was beginning to bump into several borders,

specifically those created by the district and state guidelines. She was in a borderland, and within borderlands resides tension, ambivalence, and unrest (Anzaldúa, 1987) As a teacher myself, I could empathize, because this had been my experience too. I could feel the tension stirring within me again. For me, this borderland was hard to resolve, because the borders were deeply set by the city and state governments. Questions from my past entered my thoughts again - Can the borders be challenged? Or do we learn to work within them?

As Stephanie lived within this borderland, she recalled how her mentor teacher entered the story. Specifically, she mentioned his feedback. When she encountered her lesson plans being edited more than expected when first writing reading plans, her mentor teacher kindly helped her navigate this space of vulnerability. She shared that he said, "Listen don't take it personal, but you did the plans based off of your personality. You didn't do the plans off of the pacing guide." Stephanie expressed how this communication helped her understand the lesson plan requirements and enabled her to work through the feelings of her input in the reading plans being dismissed. Stephanie's mentor teacher also gave her pertinent insider information to make sure she was prepared for what may be required of her as a future teacher. For example, he mentioned that one of the first things observers will look at is if she is on pacing, especially observers from within the district. He also shared how teachers are expected to follow their schedules closely to make sure they are on time and providing the appropriate amount of time for each subject. As a result, they created a signal to help her when she was going too long in a lesson.

Another person who entered Stephanie's story related to lesson planning was a district language arts curriculum specialist. After reviewing the grade level's plans, this specialist thought that there were important pieces missing from the plan, so she came in once a week to

meet, help edit, and revise the reading plans as needed. Stephanie expressed how helpful this was. She especially found the breakdown sheet of exactly what a lesson plan should have in it beneficial. Stephanie used this resource in addition to the pacing guide as a tool when she wrote lesson plans. There was also the additional benefit of going through this process with someone else as another third grade teacher was involved in this process. Therefore, Stephanie had support from a peer and vice versa as they learned simultaneously.

As Stephanie was trying to resolve this borderland, the people who entered her story were significant in the formation of her identity as she tried to work through the dissonance between her past experiences and her present experiences. Like Stephanie, others have likewise expressed the meaningful influence of a mentor and sometimes unintended mentor (Clarke et al., 2014; D’Souza, 2014). For example, teacher candidates have acknowledged the importance of the transfer of knowledge from mentor teachers to themselves as well as the influence of mentor teachers on their confidence and development of identity (Izadinia, 2015; Koerner et al., 2002). Cuenca (2011) also expressed the significance of mentor teachers “sanctioning the entrance of the student teacher into the community of teaching and providing access to the settings that contain the tools, artifacts, and message systems student teachers need to learn to teach” (p. 118). Consequently, relationships, especially mentoring relationships, within TRs are essential and influential. However, further tension may occur in teacher candidates’ professional identity development when or if the voices of mentor teachers conflict with voices of other stakeholders. I will consider this more in Chapter 5.

Pedagogy and Assessment

Within the areas of pedagogy and assessment, Stephanie mentioned the influence of her coursework. Specifically, she mentioned being able to apply her knowledge quickly. For

example, when her reading course focused on assessing students' reading of text, she soon encountered a standardized literacy exam at her own school. She was easily able to administer and score the test due to recently covering this in her course. Her reading course also helped her be able to administer running records, which she said helped her pinpoint student needs related to reading. Lastly, this course encouraged incorporating writing alongside reading, so Stephanie made a point to have her students perform some type of writing after reading to foster this.

Stephanie also found her math course extremely beneficial because this is the subject in which she was the least comfortable. She said this was because she did not view herself as good at math. She never really liked it and expressed that she did not have teachers who helped her really apply the concepts. However, regarding her math course she said, "...my math teacher has really been awesome with breaking down the strategies of how to actually get to the answers and how to actually teach math to students."

In addition to the math course providing Stephanie with confidence in both doing and teaching math, she was able to apply a strategy called Number Talks from her math course. Number Talks encourage students to talk about math by activating prior knowledge and noticing aspects about the problem at hand. Manipulatives are another resource she was able to use. Through using these tools, she could see the effect on her own students as they appeared to be engaging and grasping concepts as a result of the application of these tools. This dynamic revealed more interaction between the different stakeholder bridges aiding Stephanie as she was becoming someone new. For instance, Stephanie's coursework was making its way into her practice at school, and it appeared that the school curriculum had in some way influenced the coursework

Advocate

Stephanie considered being an advocate an important part of her identity as a teacher. This was also a pertinent tenet of the teacher residency as the residency encouraged teacher candidates to be change agents within their schools. Therefore, Stephanie was keenly aware of borders her students encountered associated with access and equity. For example, when she was preparing English learner (EL) students for an online test towards the beginning of her residency she wrote, “My concern is that my EL students do not have enough resources to be successful in benefitting from these assessments.” Because her students faced borders, so did she. She was in this with them and desiring to advocate for them in some way by removing the borders that standardized testing can create for students whose first language (and probably culture) are not English. Sara Ahmed (2017) likened these borders of diversity work to brick walls that are immobile, tiring, and difficult. It requires intrinsic motivation and the ability to innovate or maneuver to find another way to get through blocks. So what does Stephanie do to resist this? What resources and bridges did she have so that she could then be a bridge for her students?

As we know from Stephanie’s story, she is one who engages in acts of care. In this case, Stephanie also took it upon herself to create a more culturally responsive classroom for her English learner (EL) students (Geneva Gay, 2010). She did this by implementing small group instruction, doing one-on-one instruction when necessary, using books with multiple languages, and learning Spanish words. She was pivotal in creating a classroom community where she encouraged students to also take on the characteristic of care. She said,

I always talk to them about us just being a family in our classroom, about being kind to each other...Just showing them that we can make a difference. And it matters how you treat someone and how someone treats you.

Something else she incorporated into the classroom that aided in creating community was celebrating the birthday of each student. For each birthday, she brought cupcakes, balloons, and other decorations. She said it was just something small, but it meant so much to the students and made them feel special.

Stephanie also found using different types of instruction important for her EL students. For example, she and her mentor teacher incorporated small and one-on-one groups into the classroom. They used data to determine who should be in which group, and they practiced with all their students how to act during small group time. This way the group was not interrupted while meeting. Stephanie had the following to say about small groups,

...small groups provide me an opportunity to really talk to them individually in a smaller setting. And I really get to learn more of their personalities and things like that. And then you really get to see what they know and what they don't know, what their strengths and weaknesses are.

As a result, Stephanie said she saw significant growth in one of her EL students in math. Initially, she had met with this student one-on-one. Due to the student's growth, she then decided to add her into a small group, but she found that the student knew the material, could answer the questions, and then was able to help others. With this information, she realized that this student may even be able to work independently. Stephanie was thrilled, and she relayed to me the importance and benefit of alternative formats for instruction and how they can provide potential bridges for her students. Therefore, as Stephanie had bridges, she then extended these bridges to others. Her experiences gave her the opportunity to advocate and mediate for those in the third grade community with the gentle, familiar hum at School A.

Becoming Human

While Stephanie had great support from other resources, she also demonstrated her own ability to engage the ambivalence and tensions she came across. With each university class, day in the classroom at School A, and interaction with whomever she encountered, she cared, and she learned. She learned about her students, her school, her colleagues, and herself. Her experiences shaped who she was becoming. When I asked Stephanie in our second interview how she thought she had changed thus far, she replied,

Some days I get tired, but at the end, I feel like it's worth it. And I definitely feel like I've become a better person. I just generally love my kids. *I just feel like they humanize you, if it makes any sense.* They just touch a part of you emotionally that it makes you soften. So, I feel like I'm not as hardened as I used to be. I don't get angered, I don't think, as easily. I feel like I have more patience than I did prior to going into this year. And I think it's just all due just to my students, just being with them day in and day out because I know that patience is an attribute that I have to have. I know that love is something that I have grown for them. So, just having these feelings is having an effect on me overall just as a human being.

She also shared with me that she saw herself becoming a better educator, continuing to be an advocate for her students, and getting more involved in the school, the school board, and the community at large. While some borderlands remain and others will surely come, Stephanie was indeed becoming something new. Through her experiences, she was not the same.

“Knowledge makes me aware, it makes me more conscious. Knowing is painful because after ‘it’ happens I can’t stay the same person I was before.”

(Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 48)

Kaci: Becoming Confident

To know Kaci is like getting a little glimpse of joy even when things are hard. She naturally brings laughter with her personality, and her laugh is one that makes you want to join her in the moment so that you can enjoy it as well. But this presence is not devoid of the trials of life and a journey to where she is now.

Since Kaci was in fifth grade, she has had a desire to become a principal. However, as with many stories, there have been roadblocks, U-turns, and alternate routes. During college, she remembered her own friends in education telling her that they were unprepared and that the students were not well-behaved. Additionally, a family member was concerned that she would not have enough patience. This led her to pursue business instead of education. Following college, she found it hard to find a job in her field. As a result, she has held various jobs over the years in other fields related to pharmacy, retail, customer service, special needs, and administrative support.

Most recently, she loved her job, but she still found it lacking. She said, “The thing that started to stress me out was I said I’m not maximizing my skills. I know how to do my job so easily. I liked the people that I worked with. I liked the fact that I feel like I’m making a difference but how else can I make a difference in my community?” This was when her best friend told her about the teacher residency. Upon looking it up, she found out that the residency covered tuition and fees, and they would help with daycare. In addition, she would be paired with a teacher. With this knowledge, her fears began to dissipate. The borders and blocks that had been in place before were being removed. Finances would be handled and being paired with a teacher would help her be properly prepared. And finally, she could make a difference in her community and ultimately pursue being a principal like she dreamed of as a child.

When I asked Kaci who had influenced her decision to become a teacher, she specifically mentioned two people. The first was her elementary principal, who also indirectly instilled in her the desire to become a principal. Kaci mentioned that her principal was someone who brought order. She mentioned that when she entered the building everyone, teachers and students alike, would act differently. She said, “I was just like if this one lady just commands so much attention, she puts everything in perspective. I was just like wow. Even the teachers stopped gossiping and everything because this lady came in.” The other person who influenced her was her teacher from 5th and 6th grade. This teacher looped with her class, so she had her for two years. Some things she mentioned about her were that she cared, had real life conversations, taught them practical things, was consistent, and kept her word. Kaci specifically recalled how this teacher even helped shape her personality. Finally, this teacher along with a few other teachers would plan trips for students that the students earned through good behavior. This stood out because most of the students had never been outside of their town.

While care shows up in Kaci’s story as well, what comes to light even more is the borders that she bumped up against throughout her lifetime. As a child she had borders associated with her location. Her teacher helped overcome these borders by becoming a bridge that provided opportunities outside of their community and school. However, borders still discouraged her from pursuing education during her college years. The borders were in place and seemed to prevent her from entering the borderland to discover whether education was the right place for her. Anzaldúa (1987) wrote that borders have steep edges, and in the past the steep edge of the border was too much for Kaci to handle. As a result, it appears that it was always there in the background as both a memory and possibility. It was not until the residency program entered

Kaci's life that old and current borders seemed to dissipate some. Borders related to finances and preparedness were challenged as the program helped her navigate borders and cross bridges.

When I asked Kaci what she foresaw as challenging in her teacher residency experiences, she focused on personal struggles. Specifically, she mentioned autonomy and time management. She confessed that structuring her own day was difficult. When I brought up lesson planning going forward, she admitted that it was *not* her favorite thing to do. Concerning a class assignment she said, "...when she paired us with a teammate it was a little better. But then, I overthink everything. I'm learning to stop doing it but it's hard. I overthink everything. I can write something and then I want to second guess it. Do you think? Do you think? I'm just in my head." From this, it seemed that Kaci thought her challenges or borders were herself. But I wondered if it was more complex. I needed to hear more from Kaci. As Kaci's story continued to unfold, her personal struggles surfaced again, and as more is shared I will try to tease out the potential borders and resulting borderlands as we continue to see her straddle the borders of her home life, school life, and academic borders of the university classroom. When contemplating how she might overcome the potential borders, Kaci said her faith helps her focus on her purpose rather than the challenge at hand. She also mentioned that knowing there is purpose in what she is doing and asking for help were important to moving forward. Therefore, having a purpose and the support of others seemed especially important to Kristi crossing borders within the place she found herself: a second grade classroom at School B.

Context: School B

At the start of the 2020-2021 school year, School B had 521 students (VDOE, 2022). Amongst those 521 students as well as the faculty and staff, there was a welcoming culture. For example, during my first visit there, the principal welcomed me, gave me a place to work while I

waited to observe, and made sure I knew where the classroom I would be visiting was located. She also made sure I knew the schedule for the grade level. In addition, I was greeted by children and adults alike. There were several hellos offered and even some “How are you doing today?” follow-ups.

Proceeding down the main hall and down a set of steps was Room 105, which was the second grade room I was about to enter. Outside of the room hung work by the students where they shared what they liked about other students. You could even see where the mentor teacher and Kaci had chimed in on the assignment.

Upon entering the room, it felt slightly crowded. Due to COVID-19, the second grade students had masks on and were in rows facing the front of the room. Each desk had a clear plastic tri-fold desk shield that was probably over a foot high. In addition to the physical reminders of COVID-19, this class was no stranger to the virus. At the very beginning of the year, they had a COVID-19 case in their classroom. The result was a series of events in which some students and the mentor teacher had to quarantine. Some students also went virtual for a time. As I found my place at the group table along the side of the room, Kaci shared with me from her desk towards the back of the room that it was the first time they had had all the students in the room since the beginning of the year.

Needles

While this beginning of the school year was certainly inconvenient due to COVID-19, Kaci seemed to handle it in stride. She mentioned it, but it was not a tension she referred to often as she shared her story with me. However, a tension she did refer to had to do with her coursework, specifically her assignments within her reading course. She said, “I wasn’t doing certain assessments because I didn’t understand it.” Kaci shared that it was challenging and

therefore frustrating. She commented on how her frustration would come out in talking negatively about the class and making jokes. It was a borderland that she was trying to navigate.

Within this situation, Kaci's defense strategies were showing themselves. Anzaldúa (1987) likened these defense strategies to the needles of a cactus that are there for protection. Kaci was guarding herself, but the *Coatlicue* states are ones "which disrupt the smooth flow (complacency) of life" and they "are exactly what propel the soul to do its work; make soul, increase consciousness of itself" (p. 46). Within this state, there are two choices: you can either allow the experiences to lead to some new meaning, or you do not.

As Kaci lived with these tensions, specifically the one regarding her reading course, she acknowledged that "the most challenging classes tend to be the most influential ones." Therefore, she knew that there was potential for something new to come. As the ambiguity increased, she began allowing people into her story. First, there was the cohort of other teacher candidates within the residency. Kaci expressed that her cohort members were a safe place to call, text, and ask questions.

Next, another trusted person in who she could confide entered the story, her advisor. Kaci mentioned how this person is someone she could call about any issue. For example, in the past when concerned about financial issues, the academic advisor provided her with resources. Additionally, regarding overall frustration and feeling overwhelmed as Kaci tried to juggle life and the teacher residency program, the advisor seemed to be a listening ear, a calming presence, an encourager, and a provider of possible solutions. When it came to discussing the reading course, this advisor was one who listened to her struggle and then encouraged her to talk to the professor. In allowing herself to be vulnerable, Kaci's needles began to slowly retreat.

Her next step was to take the advice of her advisor and ask the professor for help. So that is what Kaci did. She told the professor that she was having a hard time understanding some of the material from the class. The result was that the professor sat with her and explained it to her one-on-one. Through that conversation and learning opportunity, Kaci was able to catch up and complete an assignment she was avoiding due to lack of understanding. More relief.

With time, Kaci also found that material from the reading class began to surface in her school life. For instance, her grade level was asked to administer an assessment like she had learned about in class. She was also able to use a word sort for short and long I sounds with her second grade class. As the material became more applicable to what she was doing in her classroom, she said the assignments started to make even more sense. Kaci said it was like having an “Aha” moment. What had felt separate was now becoming intermingled. Dual identities were becoming something new.

Put Your Own Spin on It

Another place of tension for Kaci was reading instruction. She mentioned that it was a more difficult subject for her to teach. While traversing the borderland, there were several strategies in use as a period that may have felt like wandering was underway. But perhaps wandering is purposeful at times. Perhaps it is a part of the process.

To help Kaci with instruction in general, she was gradually introduced to instructing in the classroom. For example, at the beginning of Kaci’s residency year her CALs mentioned just giving Kaci time in front of students to build confidence. This was followed with opportunities to solo teach in more comfortable subjects like science and social studies. But as reading was introduced into her repertoire, she began to feel tension and uncertainty.

To prepare her for those aspects of reading that felt most uncomfortable to her, Kaci's mentor teacher attempted to provide a bridge through modeling and co-teaching. As Kaci began to teach portions of the reading lesson, she was becoming confident in some areas but still hesitant in others. During one of my observations, I could see how her confidence was increasing in these certain aspects of instruction as she was getting experience. However, I could also see where she felt uncertain and where the borderland remained. In these uncertain moments, Kaci mentioned that her mentor teacher would use this as an opportunity to either guide her along or model. Becoming more familiar with the curriculum and lesson plans were steps suggested within the CAL. But co-teaching seemed to be a safe place for Kaci, and I wondered how she would embrace the *Coatlicue* state even more.

By our third interview, I could tell that Kaci was enjoying teaching more. Something was different. She spent time telling me details about recent lessons in social studies and math and how she taught them. She emphasized how students were engaged and making connections during the lesson, which was encouraging and motivating to her as the teacher. Then, she shared with me that according to her mentor teacher, Kaci had done her best lesson ever. It was a social studies lesson that Kaci had created herself. Regarding future lessons, her mentor teacher gave her the advice, "Put your own spin on it." She recommended that Kaci incorporate her own style into other subjects and lessons created by other teachers. With this permission to be herself, perhaps she was just coming into her own. Perhaps the borderland was beginning to find resolve. However, when I asked if she thought this would be helpful when it came to reading instruction, she was not so sure. Instead, she suggested that practicing at home more would be beneficial.

Within this space of instruction, specific to reading, Kaci was still in process. Her residency experiences and her mentor teacher were playing instrumental parts in the shaping of

her teacher identity. However, like Stephanie, I wondered what voices were missing. When Kaci's own voice was introduced into the process, it seemed to enliven her. And I wonder how fostering this would further the development of her teacher identity. I will consider this more within the discussion of Chapter 5.

Is the Power in the Candy?

As Kristi was trying to navigate within the borderland, she found herself encountering additional borders. These borders were associated with behavior management and power. She said,

I don't teach as much as Ms. Carol, so they're very aware that she's the main teacher. So when I get up, they try to turn up sometimes, and like get out of their seats, and do things they're not normally supposed to do as if I don't know that.

Within this situation, we first see the power struggle between the students and Kaci. One way she tried to resolve this was through punishment by taking away recess. She would also use rewards. For example, she and her mentor teacher would give out candy sometimes when students were doing what they should be doing.

Additionally, there are borders related to who the children see as in charge within the room. For instance, when I asked if Kaci's mentor teacher ever intervened, Kaci said she would if students were getting out of hand. Therefore, her mentor had power that Kaci did not seem to have. Kaci expressed that she thought this had something to do with her not teaching as much as well as not being there all the time. While these things may have calmed the situation for a moment or even seemed like a bridge, I think this still leaves Kaci with less power. Rather, the power lies in the punishment, reward, or another person. However, there was also a clue that Kaci was not completely devoid of power, because she did help manage students when her

mentor was taking the lead. The question just remains if this power would still be there with her mentor teacher out of the room?

Kaci also talked about her own consistency related to behavior management. Kaci loves having a good time and admitted that she can be goofy. However, at times she had a difficult time getting students back on task. She mentioned that she was having to learn when to turn that off and how to let students know that they also need to get back to being serious.

As I was thinking about power and Kaci's borderland, I recalled my observations in her classroom. The first time I was in there, I noticed that Kaci's mentor teacher had endearing nicknames for her students. The next time I was there, a time came when several students made their way over to give the mentor teacher hugs. There was relationship. There was care.

Kaci mimicked these thoughts about her mentor teacher when she mentioned how her mentor teacher modeled important teacher dispositions. For instance, Kaci noted how her mentor teacher knew when the students needed a break. Instead of pushing through, she gave the students the opportunity to move by using brain breaks. Additionally, Kaci's mentor teacher exhibited ways of creating a classroom community through creating memorable experiences. For example, during the holiday season they had a Christmas tree, and the students helped decorate it. Kaci saw how much these small gestures influenced the students and aided in creating relationships, and she wanted to imitate these things herself.

With this in mind, was there power in the candy? Yes, there was. However, I began to think about how respect is not always gained by extrinsic motivators. Instead, it is something freely given in response to being cared for (Noddings, 1984). So while Kaci's mentor teacher did have power within the room, it seemed like one reason was linked to the person she was for and

to her students. And this for Kaci may only come in time as she continued to work through her own process of developing this part of her teacher identity.

Becoming Confident

As Kaci progressed and moved within the borderland, her support systems were very important to removing some of her defense strategies. As a result, she seemed to be gaining confidence in her own teacher identity. While there are aspects of her identity still in process (because there always are), Kaci is embracing the process with more and more self-assurance.

When I asked Kaci how she had changed since starting the program, she quickly replied, “Confident.” Then she went on to say,

I’m more confident in my teaching ability. I don’t get as stressed. One, when I’m preparing the lessons for tutoring sessions. Like that whole thing stresses me out, like writing lesson plans. So I’m getting more comfortable with writing lesson plans. I’m getting more comfortable with actually managing a class. Not just teaching them but making sure I walk them to lunch by myself in the hallway. But before I was so afraid, on the inside, I didn’t show it to them. But on the inside, I’m like, oh my god, they’re going to act up. And I mean they was so good. The principal was like, Hey Ms. Kaci, I like your line. And I’m like yeah.

Additionally, Kaci shared that this experience has influenced her self-esteem. Kaci also expressed that this experience has really helped her see what being a teacher is like. How to run a classroom, how to follow the schedule, how to follow lesson plans, and how to walk children down a hallway were all things she mentioned. She said, “Stuff like that you just don’t learn in a textbook.” Agreed, Kaci. It is moving within the experiences that certain things come to life. Or do not. I guess it all depends on what we do with it.

*Our greatest disappointments and painful experiences—if we can make meaning out of them—
can lead us toward becoming more of who we are. Or they can remain meaningless. The
Coatlicue state can be a way station or it can be a way of life.*

(Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 46)

Caroline: Becoming Herself

Caroline has a calm and steady presence, which makes a person feel at ease. In my first interview with her, she came across as both confident and kind as she shared about herself. Her words were not superfluous, but instead appeared carefully chosen, thoughtful, and to the point. In addition to being a self-proclaimed introvert, she also shared how she has taken on characteristics of both of her parents: the structure, adaptability, and calmness of her career military father and the respect and consideration of feelings of her mother who was a social worker. This reminded me of Anzaldúa's (1987) turtle analogy in which she claimed that people take home with us wherever we go. For Caroline, this rang true as she considered her journey and how she saw herself being in the classroom going forward. She took this metaphorical turtle shell that her parents had instilled in her wherever she went, and it seemed like her experiences continued to build upon it.

Since Caroline was a young elementary aged child, she shared that she was the kid who liked school, and then would play school with her brother and assortment of teddy bears at home. She said, "...it was always my dream to become a teacher one day." In fact, Caroline's teaching career had an early start, because she had a third grade teacher who saw and fostered this even at an early age. She recalled that this teacher would give her opportunities to teach the class at times. She said, "...so I would be in the front of the class. I was literally a mini me. So I mean she really pretty much motivated me...she saw the potential in me. And she just kind of trusted

me to the front of the class.” Caroline also remembered that while she disliked public speaking it seemed to go away when she was given opportunities to teach the class.

Caroline also had a unique history of schooling. Since her family was military affiliated, she moved around a lot. In fact, she went to eleven schools from Pre-K to 12th grade. However, she saw this as a strength of hers because it developed an ability to adapt to different kinds of people and environments. She specifically shared a story about her fourth grade year and the area in which she lived and went to school. She said,

There aren’t any black people there. So where I lived, pretty much if I wanted to hang out with a black person, it would be my mom. Like, that’s it. But I [also] saw poverty, and I think that’s one thing that really encourages me or motivates me to want to change, like teach for change because it’s like those students there, I mean, I’ve never seen poverty like that before.

Therefore, her schooling experiences not only further instilled the ability to adapt, but she also encountered specific racial and socioeconomic contexts that forever changed her outlook on teaching. She saw the need to teach in a way that would impact students’ lives through having relationships and understanding the child. She said, “So it’s like if I’m dealing with a child that’s dealing with poverty I can just teach in a way or impact his life, not just teach reading, writing, and arithmetic...”

However, when it came to college, Caroline ended up pursuing a different interest. Following college, she held different jobs such as caretaking and retail, but she eventually found herself coming back to teaching. Most recently, through the process of trying to substitute, she found out and applied for the teacher residency. Upon applying and being accepted, her brother said, “I always knew you would be a teacher.” It appeared that thus far in life and in her career

pursuits, Caroline had come full circle. Additionally, with her experiences from being in her family and within her own schooling, she had the privilege of some initial bridges.

Nevertheless, Caroline was also aware that challenges would find her. During my first conversation with Caroline about challenges, we focused on her most recent rejection from another teaching program and how she processed that. She shared that she believed it was meant to happen, and her faith helped to solidify that even though it hurt, it was purposeful. After all, that is how she found her way to the residency. Therefore, Caroline saw her faith as an important bridge for overcoming borders, because it made the challenges purposeful. In addition, she saw others, such as the cohort of other teacher candidates and her family, as important to her becoming a teacher and the borders that may surface. Finally, she mentioned the importance of herself in the process. Concerning what it would look like in the classroom to have that support from others and herself she said,

...I think it will help me become more confident. I think knowing that I can lean on other people but knowing that I have to develop the skill sets to be able to stand on my own. So sometimes it's good to know that you have support, but then it's like being able to jump in the pool yourself without...You know that you have a lifeguard right there, but it's like, I can do it myself.

While Caroline is very aware that there are borders, she is especially confident in the existence of bridges. She is also aware of her own agency. As her story continues, I will wonder more about Caroline's borders and how this agency unfolds within the place she found herself—a kindergarten classroom at School C.

Context: School C

School C has been around since the 1920s. However, this school year School C has a new building. It just opened in August of 2021. When I first visited the building, it had a pristine sort of look to it as aspects of the building appeared untouched by age, wear, and hundreds of little bodies inhabiting a space over time. Within this new space and at the start of the 2021-2022 school year, School C had 490 students (VDOE, 2022). Of these 490 students, I was most interested in the kindergarten class at the end of one of the very long halls, because this was the classroom in which Caroline taught.

The classrooms in the new building appeared large to me. This particular kindergarten classroom had four tables for the children. At each table there were three to four students. COVID-19 was still looming, so masks adorned every face in the room, including mine when I visited. The tables were non-adjacent but formed the shape of a U, which made it convenient to have a carpet in the middle. This area was frequently used as the energetic kindergartners moved from tables to carpet and back to the tables throughout instruction. There was also an interactive board in the middle of the front of the room, which was directly in front of the carpet area.

Additionally, the room included a bathroom, places for students to store their belongings, a U-shaped table for meeting with groups, and a teacher's desk at the front corner of the room. While the mentor teacher occupied the desk at the front of the room, Caroline occupied space at a table in the back of the room. Her lunchbox and notebook showed that this space in the back of the room had become hers, in a way. A place where she could place her things. A place where she could work when needed. A place that was hers. However, having a place labeled yours does not necessarily equal belonging. In this case, it became a symbol of one of Caroline's biggest borderland experiences during the period of my research.

Classroom Borders

According to Anzaldua (1987), “Borders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish us from them” (p. 3). At the beginning of Caroline’s teacher residency, Caroline expressed that she was encountering several of these borders, and the borders were related to how she was seen in the classroom. For example, she was aware that other residents in other schools had desks and places to call their own with their classrooms, but Caroline did not. Instead, she had a table in the back of the room. She expressed, “...I think that can impact how, if she [mentor teacher] doesn’t see me as a teacher, then the students aren’t, the parents aren’t.” Therefore, power was surfacing in Caroline’s story as mutuality and reciprocity were lacking, and she was feeling the blocks in developing her teacher identity. A *Coatlicue* state had entered her story. Anzaldua (1987) said that these blocks are “painful periods of confusion” but are indicative of “a larger creative process: cultural shifts” (p. 74). Therefore, blocks can be persistent and provide the opportunity for further transformation into something new.

In addition to not having a desk, Caroline also shared that there was a lack of a sense of togetherness between herself and her mentor teacher. By this I mean that Caroline did not feel like the classroom was theirs together. She just seemed like an extra person in the room. This led to further disconnections. For instance, regarding classroom management she said, “...sometimes it’s a little difficult, and I think it goes back to if the students don’t see me as a teacher.” As a result, Caroline perceived that there were additional repercussions to not being seen as a teacher figure in the room.

Caroline shared that these feelings were further supported by not being informed or having all the resources she needed. For instance, she recalled that when I came to observe, her mentor teacher was telling her what to do via passing her sticky notes, because she did not have access to the lesson plans yet. When Caroline communicated that she needed access to the lesson

plans, this was rectified. However, she also stated that the tension remained, because there might be changes to the lesson plan that were not shared. Additionally, she was not on the email list for the school, so she did not receive important emails and announcements. Therefore, the lack of communication and access resulted in frustration and tension as there were power struggles occurring between her and mentor teacher. A rupture had occurred.

While Caroline was trying to figure out how to navigate these tensions at the beginning of the year, several people stepped in and tried to create bridges for her. For example, there was another teacher who started forwarding her pertinent emails. There also was another teacher candidate in the building who would inform Caroline of events she might not be aware of within the school. But these were not completely adequate for the border she was facing. For there to truly be forward movement, Caroline and her mentor teacher would need to create a more collaborative space. Power would need to be addressed and shared.

Finally, Caroline also shared the situation with her advisor within the residency program. This was an important step as she invited someone else into the uncertainty she was facing, and this advisor was instrumental in helping to resolve the tension. The advisor became the bridge and stimulant she needed to overcome this block. Caroline said about her advisor, “I can sing her praises all day.”

After Caroline expressed her concern, her advisor initiated a conversation with the mentor teacher. This conversation led to several significant changes. For instance, Caroline was given a desk to have in the classroom, signaling that she was a teacher in the room. Her and her mentor teacher also began meeting weekly to go over the plans, decide what parts of the lesson each of them would teach, and make sure Caroline had all the tools and supplies that she needed.

Additionally, Caroline began to feel more of a comradery and partnership forming. Therefore, Caroline felt much more respected and a part of the classroom.

This reflected the important role the residency and its staff have within the formation of teacher identities. They have essential bridging qualities as they seem to be a significant connection point between the university, school, and teacher candidates. Within this situation, they were able to aid in the crossing of a difficult border and help in the sharing of power.

Process and Complexity

As the tension began to improve between Caroline and her mentor teacher, Caroline began to feel more at ease focusing on other aspects of her teacher identity. Additionally, bridges her mentor teacher were providing became clearer. Their weekly meetings were helping her be more aware of the content that was to be presented. Her mentor teacher was also modeling various aspects of instruction and behavior management. For example, Caroline's mentor teacher modeled how to lead guided reading groups as well as how to create differentiated centers. Regarding behavior management, Caroline mentioned that her mentor teacher tried a variety of methods. This not only showed Caroline that there is more than one way to encourage positive student behaviors, but she also realized that it is a process—a process of getting to know what works for your students, trying multiple approaches, and being willing to change when needed.

As I saw this idea of process enter Caroline's story, I also noted how her thinking shifted in several areas concerning her own teacher identity. For example, when Caroline applied for this residency, she had certain expectations of how she could be an advocate for students. After being placed in a kindergarten classroom, she realized that some of these expectations needed to be altered to accommodate the students that she had, not the students she had envisioned. For

example, she may not have been able to do an in-depth study of African American studies, but she could instill that their voice mattered. She said,

...I think it's just making peace with the fact that amending my standards doesn't mean that I'm changing them. It doesn't mean that what I thought I was going to do isn't what I'm doing, or I'm a hypocrite because I thought I was going to do this, that, and the third. I have to build with what I have. You can't give a baby a steak dinner.

Anzaldua (1987) talked about how the *Coatlicue* state can slow us down, especially if we embrace it. This slowing down can be trying but it also allows a person to “assimilate previous experiences and process the changes” (p. 46). As Caroline took a step back, reflected, and interpreted her current experiences, she seemed better able to maneuver within the process and shifts occurring within her as the past and present melded.

Regarding Caroline's access to more teacher like tools, there was forward movement, but she was still coming up against some borders as she embraced the process. Specifically, she still did not think the students saw her as a teacher. Instead, she said that they seemed to see her more as a friend. She rationalized that there were several ways in which she still did not have teacher-like accessibility such as getting into the building or making copies. Power was still at work. However, she was also able to acknowledge this and then decide how to best move forward in the classroom and situation at hand. She was starting to embrace the ambivalence. So for her, to deal with this borderland, she decided to shift her thinking once again, welcome the process, and consider how she could aid in student learning within the role she had instead of the role she desired, for now.

Within the process, Caroline also seemed to begin to see the complexity of teaching, checking for student understanding, and scaffolding. For instance, she mentioned that the

students and their answers could be inconsistent at times. Sometimes it seems as if they knew the information, but then when asked again they did not get it correct. While she tried to incorporate assessment into everyday conversation to help bridge this, it still seemed like a borderland to her as inconsistency appeared to prevail. Additionally, she mentioned borders that students may have for productive learning. For instance, one student had a mother who worked night shift, so he would be up with her in the middle of the night at times. This would result in him being tired and unfocused. The complexity of learning and the individual lives of students created multiple borderlands that created a complex learning environment of uncertainty for her at times. However, Caroline was observing this, being curious about it, and continuing to press into the process. The ambivalent process as Anzaldua (1987) would say.

At times Caroline's curiosity looked like learning by observing and taking notes, so she found it important to her learning to communicate when she needed to see what and how her mentor teacher was doing something. For example, when it was getting to the point that Caroline would be taking over reading groups, she voiced her need to watch her mentor teacher with all groups to see how she accommodated all the children with their different learning needs. This observing went beyond her own classroom and mentor teacher, too. I noticed that Caroline took note of how other teachers managed certain aspects of behavior management and considered if this was something she wanted to adopt. So informal observations and perceptions were also influencing her process and providing bridges.

Becoming Caroline

In my very first interview with Caroline, she expressed that while she would need support from others for this process, she stated she also would need to take some initiative herself. And that is what she did. Whether it was letting her mentor teacher know that she needed access to

lesson plans or informing someone at the residency that she needed help navigating a tension, she did it. She was very aware that this residency was preparing her for her future, and her focus and goal was to be adequately prepared. When she felt like she could not depend on someone else, she would take it upon herself to do as much as she was able on her own. Therefore, she had no problem being her own advocate or taking initiative when needed. An additional way she exemplified this was when she took it upon herself to find resources and make connections with others within her school. At the end of the day, she desired to "...live, breathe, eat teaching, and hopefully that will just ooze out and when I need it."

Her process of sense making reminded me that developing new identities can be difficult and create times of struggle and wrestling. Sometimes it requires "kicking a hole out of the old boundaries of self and slipping under or over, dragging the old skin along, stumbling over it" (Anzaldua, 1987, p. 49). But within the residency, she was provided opportunities to exercise her agency. In time, she was becoming more and more comfortable with the content and meeting the needs of the students. For instance, when discussing the collaboratively written grade level lesson plans and actual implementation of them she said,

So I get to tweak the things that I teach and then my coach [mentor teacher] will tweak whatever it is that she wants to teach. And then sometimes we just leave it the way it is on the lesson plan. And sometimes we see that even we'll have to tweak it midway because maybe the students are just a little bit too squirrely or something. Like yesterday I did a lesson and I'm like, 'Okay you guys aren't doing this.' They were a little too wild, so I just had to amend it. I'm like, 'We're going to do this a different way.'

While there were borders remaining, she was handling the ambivalence with more confidence as she had the tools she needed. Additionally, having access and discussions about the plans beforehand was helpful in increasing her comfort.

Her past also had a place in this current experience in aiding her with handling uncertainty. Specifically, I saw her ability to adapt coming through. She was surely carrying this part of “home” with her. For instance, throughout this current experience, this characteristic could be seen as she navigated not having lesson plans, technology, or other tools that she needed. She also noted that she uses adaptability when meeting the needs of her students. For example, she mentioned that one student may need her to teach or word a concept one way, but for another student she may need to do something altogether different. She adapted for herself, but also for others.

When I asked Caroline how she saw herself changing through this process, she said, “I think I am realizing more about myself, that I am able to handle more than I thought I would.” She also mentioned how she is becoming a “silent leader type.” While she used the word *silent*, I would not use silent, because Caroline is not silent. She is confident, steady, and uses her words intentionally. They may not be loud, but they are influential, whether in the classroom or beyond. As she moves within the process she is embracing, Caroline is surely becoming someone new—a new version of herself. One who is able to tolerate the ambivalence.

“The new mestiza copes by developing a tolerance for contradictions, a tolerance for ambiguity...Not only does she sustain contradictions, she turns the ambivalence into something else”

(Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 79)

Moving from Telling to Told

As each participant's story moved from the present to the past, these stories will remain an essential piece of each participant's identity. Each person, experience, and interpretation was and will continue to be a part of who they become. Every border crossed, borderland navigated, and bridge provided cannot help but be a part of the shaping. However, the process does not stop, it continues. And, as we know, there still are borders occurring, and more will likely come in time. However, these stories that were told have given us a rich and pertinent glimpse into how these participants' professional teacher identities were taking shape within this specific place and time. These participants graciously shared with me and now each reader a glimpse into their becoming. With this honor, I am grateful. As I hold each story with gratitude, I will now move into Chapter 5, which will provide more discussion of the findings within these stories as well as implications for the shaping of professional teacher identities within the clinical practice of teacher residencies.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

My pursuit of this study was grounded in my own story and the wonderings I have about the stories of others becoming teachers. These wonderings eventually led me to inquire about how prospective teachers are prepared for the classroom and the importance of clinical practice. Delving into this interest led me to the importance of partnerships within clinical practice, which finally led me to consider how the different aspects of teacher education, clinical practice, and partnerships may be shaping the identities of teacher candidates. Specifically, I took interest in teacher residencies (TRs) that pay special attention to providing contextually specific clinical practice within partnerships. As a result, the purpose of my study was to explore the stories of teacher candidates within a TR to investigate how their identities take shape through their experiences within a contextually specific clinical practice within a partnership. The two questions that guided my research were:

1. How do teacher residency experiences shape the professional identity stories of teacher candidates?
2. How do teacher candidates navigate the borderlands (tensions, ambiguities, etc.) in a teacher residency experience?

To answer these two questions, I used narrative inquiry. I listened to the stories of my participants. I asked questions and read their reflective thoughts within their collaborative assessment logs (CALs), and I sat in their classrooms. This allowed me to enter and participate within a three-dimensional space with my participants where time, place, and sociality were all considered (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Finally, as I held each story and examined it, I used Anzaldua's (1987) identity theories as a lens. The result was a glimpse into the significant

professional identity stories of each of my participants as told in Chapter 4. Now I will address how the findings within the stories of my participants relate to my research questions by delving into a deeper discussion. I will consider the significant role of TRs in the shaping of professional teacher identities as they foster relationships between all stakeholder voices, and I will discuss the ways in which my participants navigated borderlands. Finally, I will conclude with implication for practice and research.

People, Places, and Time: Borders, Bridges, Sometimes Both

Since the becoming of teaching is a process, the structures created by TRs are pertinent to intentionally creating relationships that in turn have the potential to become bridges. For example, the residency in this study paired teacher candidates with knowledgeable mentor teachers within high needs schools, and the residency facilitated opportunities for teacher candidates to participate in intentional reflection. The residency also provided coursework that focused on current theory and practices, which supported identity development of teacher candidates. Additionally, the residency was intentional in creating relationships between school districts and the university where teacher candidates were placed. Finally, the staff of the residency became significant mediators between the schools, university, and teacher candidates. Therefore, the building of bridges is possible, probable, and in some cases definite as identities develop and borderlands are navigated within the structures supported by TRs.

Likewise, borders and borderlands are likely to occur. While these may be difficult or even painful to encounter, they can also be purposeful. Consequently, as borders and their resulting borderlands occur, TRs are not meant to keep these times of dissonance at bay but rather provide teacher candidates with the opportunity to work through them by providing possible bridges and ultimately growth. Britzman (2003) said, “Learning to teach—like teaching

itself—is always the process of becoming: a time of formation and transformation, of scrutiny into what one is doing, and who one can become” (p. 31).

Within this becoming, people, places, and time intermingle within experiences. My participants mentioned several people who aided in shaping their identities and navigating borderlands by becoming bridges and at other times creating borders. These people resided in two main places: the school and the university. From the university, there were professors and the residency faculty. At the school, they had their mentor teachers, school faculty and staff, and sometimes district faculty. Additionally, there were family, church, and residency cohort members who had a presence in each person’s story. These voices made their presence known as they moved in and out of each story as time moved from the past to the present and to the future, and the residency aided in the intermingling of many of these voices.

School: Mentor Teachers

Amidst these voices and bridges, mentor teachers stood out as one of the significant influencers of my participants. Teacher candidates spend much time with mentor teachers and look to them for knowledge, wisdom, and tricks of the trade (Cuenca, 2011; Koerner et al., 2002). For instance, Stephanie looked to her mentor teacher for support as she navigated various teacher like duties and dispositions. This influence of the mentor teacher may be even more evident within the residency because teacher candidates spend an entire year with their mentor teachers. Additionally, mentor teachers are important for building confidence in teacher candidates (Izadinia, 2015). For example, I could see confidence increase when Kaci shared that her mentor teacher noted her best lesson yet, and I could also observe uncertainty when Caroline was struggling with being seen as a teacher by her mentor teacher. Thus, positioned as experts

within the realm of practice, the voices of mentor teachers are vital to the shaping of professional teacher identities.

Yet, within this role a tension persists. As teacher candidates who are already in process enter the three-dimensional space of TRs, they can encounter borders and borderlands in their own way, space, and time. At times, the borders can be overly cumbersome to navigate for teacher candidates. At other times, bridges may result in additional or unexpected borders. In relation to mentor teachers, these borders and tensions may be rooted in the importance of adding other voices to those of mentor teachers as teacher candidates' identities develop. For instance, when Stephanie was working through her borderland experience regarding lesson planning, her mentor teacher provided multiple bridges that reflected expectations of the school and the district. Yet other voices were not as prevalent within the borderland.

When considering this tension, I began to wonder how partnerships can better invite others into this borderland to include other pertinent voices into these significant professional identity places of tension. This is not to say that the district and school voices are not needed, but it is to say that ensuring the presence of other pertinent voices that are beneficial and part of the shaping of professional teacher identities would create a more shared and holistic perspective and identity for teacher candidates. Because any narrative may become a border when other perspectives are not considered. For that reason, it would be most prudent for stakeholders to co-construct with teacher candidates to resist this. Instead of building separate bridges, it is necessary to build the bridge together.

University: Professors and Advisor

The voice of the university was mentioned mostly by my participants within the setting of courses or residency activities outside of the schools. Past stories of clinical practice,

partnerships, and teacher candidates' identities are ones of disconnect between the university and schools, but the stories of my participants and this TR was one that contained instances of the intermingling of theory and practice (AACTE, 2010; Berry et al., 2008; Darling-Hammond, 2014). Within courses, professors provided theory that teacher candidates could link with their experiences, and teacher candidates did this application. Sometimes the teacher candidates were able to do this immediately, and sometimes this occurred when it became applicable. Professors also became significant bridges in content that teacher candidates were hesitant about teaching. For instance, Stephanie began to feel confident in teaching math. A subject she said was not her best. Kaci also became more confident in reading assessments when her professor took time to sit with her one-on-one. These experiences were important to professional teacher identities because it allowed for the crossing of borders via bridges and the creation of something new: an identity where theory was given the space to inform practice and vice versa.

The other prominent voice was that of the residency advisor. Every participant mentioned how she helped them work through difficulties. For instance, this advisor was instrumental in helping Caroline navigate her borderland experience with her mentor teacher. Hence, within this slice of space and time, the residency and those associated with the residency were instrumental in assisting teacher candidates with crossing borders. They were intentional about connecting course content to school practices, and they were deliberate about paying attention to the intricate details of relationships.

Anzaldúa (2015) claimed that bridges were intended to help create links between two different entities and to help others navigate what they had already navigated, and that is what was occurring within the participants' university courses. Within this space of professional identity development there appeared to be increased navigation and reciprocity as the two ways

of knowing informed one another. This ability to bridge together is in large part due to the residency program that laid the foundation and fostered these relationships and links. Therefore, residencies may have a significant role in continued movement forward regarding the creation of an increasing culture of co-construction for professional teacher identity development. However, I think the tension here lies in how the university can become more involved in the school setting and within that specific space. Not to take power, but to continue to share power and pursue true co-construction within both spaces: the university and the school. Anzaldúa (1987) wrote, “A massive uprooting of dualistic thinking in the individual and collective consciousness is the beginning of a long struggle” (p. 80). In other words, we need spaces of increasing co-construction, and this will take time and energy.

Histories and Biographies: Teacher Candidates

Each participant came to the TR experience with a past. When considering narrative inquiry and the aspect of time, we know that the past and those events associated with the past cannot help but be influential (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The past *will* influence the present and the future. One way this revealed itself was in Stephanie’s story where her past experiences in education became a bridge for her current teaching experiences. She felt prepared and ready to jump into the experience. However, these experiences also felt like borders in some ways as she tried to navigate the differences of the private sector and public sector in planning for lessons and time. Likewise, Kaci also had to face borders as those past fears of pursuing teaching had to be overcome.

Another way the past became a bridge for my participants was through the influence of their own past teachers. For instance, the teacher candidates recalled characteristics such as their teachers’ care and interest in student lives, and some mentioned how their favorite teachers

talked about real life and related this to learning. As a result, the teacher candidates took on some of these same characteristics. However, these past experiences can also be both a bridge and a border. The tension is that past school experiences are not always beneficial (Lortie, 1975). Depending on the experience, they can provide teacher candidates with unhealthy strategies for learning, discipline, etc. For example, caring is a wonderful characteristic to take on and emulate. However, how do we encourage teacher candidates to consider pedagogies that are different from those in which were modeled to them as students?

Additionally, participants brought “home” with them wherever they went. For example, Caroline had characteristics from her upbringing and her parents’ personalities that she brought with her to the classroom. This was expressed in her ideas of respect for feelings and ability to adapt. In line with other past experiences, these ideas from home can be extremely beneficial to the classroom as these ideas were for Caroline. But once again we must pause to caution that not all past experiences that we bring with us are beneficial for the classroom. Therefore, there must be spaces for teacher candidates to negotiate these differences as they obtain new information from the other pertinent voices within the residency.

Power and Agency

As mentioned above, mentor teachers were significant influences for each of my participants’ identities. At times, within these relationships, there was shared power. This was clear in how Stephanie and her mentor teacher shared the space in their classroom. It truly felt like a community within their room. On the other hand, my other participants questioned if they really had power in their classrooms. They noted that students were aware of who was really the teacher within the classroom. Therefore, Kaci expressed some behavior management concerns, and Caroline wondered if the students would continue to only see her as a friend. In addition to

power struggles between mentor teachers and teacher candidates, there were also larger looming power struggles between the schools and universities, teacher education, and professional identities. These in turn were affecting the teacher candidates whether they realized it or not as they tried to negotiate the different types of knowledge.

This brings me to the subject of agency. As power was being expressed on varying levels, how did the teacher candidates get to a place of feeling any agency? For example, how was Kaci able to get to a place where she called herself confident? How was Caroline able to shift her thinking? And how was Stephanie able to become a bridge herself for her students?

Poststructuralism would tell us that this came to be through “a discursive positioning that they and others sometimes had access to” (Davies, 1991, p. 51). Specifically, this was facilitated and made possible due to the structures put in place by the TR. Within this context and its discourses, teacher candidates were provided and given access to opportunities that supported this. However, even as agency was supported, in other ways it was not. For example, discourses of other stakeholders at times made it hard to be agentic. Regarding this, Davies (1991) wrote,

Agency is never freedom from discursive constitution of self but the capacity to recognise that constitution and to resist, subvert and change the discourses themselves through which one is being constituted. It is the freedom to recognise multiple readings such that no discursive practice, or positioning within it by powerful others, can capture and control one's identity. (p. 51)

Therefore, in order for teacher candidates to further negotiate their identity development, they must recognize the various powers and structures. Then, they must be intentional about the discourses that they then create.

Community Knowledge: Community

Within my conceptual framework, the community and its knowledge were recognized as pertinent aspects of identity. The way in which the community mostly surfaced within the stories of teacher candidates was in regard to their students. For instance, Stephanie's classroom contained student work reflective of student lives, and she also was intentional about getting to know her students. Caroline also regularly had conversations with her students about their lives. Participants also mentioned the importance of advocating for their students, which pointed to the importance of knowing their students and their communities, specifically inequities that may exist. Additionally, Stephanie struggled with the disconnect between the school and parents, which could be another opportunity to not only understand student lives outside of the classroom but also to understand the community. Therefore, teacher candidates' knowledge of the community came mostly from their students.

Zeichner (2017) wrote that the community has little influence on teacher education, and this may still be a concern. Some partnerships have pursued the addition of community based clinical practice experiences to increase teacher candidate knowledge of the community (Hallman, 2012; Klein et al., 2013, Lee, 2018). Incorporating community knowledge into teacher education may result in further complexity. However, there is a need for this, especially for those teachers who come from outside of the communities in which they teach.

Hybrid Spaces

To encourage simultaneous discourse and reflection, hybrid spaces and roles have been encouraged and implemented to further the development of teacher candidates and their professional identities. In this study, this was seen when roles and spaces reflected hybridity. For instance, this was observed as the CALs were used amongst stakeholders, and this was also noticed as the residency advisor and mentor teachers took on a hybrid role. In addition, others

like this residency have pursued these spaces. For example, the TR in Klein and colleagues' (2016) study encouraged a hybrid space for identities to change as teacher candidates engaged in experiences and instruction in inquiry. Jackson and Burch (2019) also showed in their research how a partnership's benefits and continued challenges existed in tandem as a hybrid space was promoted.

However, it must be noted that this type of space requires a continued pursuit. As with identity, hybridity is a process on a continuum (Bhabha, 1994). Therefore, these spaces take time, and they should be pursued intentionally to prioritize spaces where multiple discourses can be reflected upon simultaneously. Due to current COVID concerns and the nature of technology, it may also be important to consider digital hybrid spaces. Digital third spaces have shown to be beneficial within clinical practice and partnerships (Chan, 2020; Howell, 2017; Moran, 2017). The CALs were one way this was pursued as residency faculty responded to them via Google documents. However, it also seemed that participants preferred collaborative conversations in real time compared to collaborative documents, so perhaps other tools such as Zoom would provide a space that supported hybridity where all stakeholders could have a simultaneous presence.

Implications for Practice and Research

In discussing my research questions, I argue that TRs are important to the shaping of professional teacher identities. Therefore, TRs should continue to play a significant role in the shaping of teacher identities by facilitating increasingly co-constructive environments amongst stakeholders. Specifically, it is necessary to provide spaces where all entities can aid in furthering simultaneous discourses and reflection on teacher candidate identity. Additionally, these spaces must enable teacher candidates to further negotiate their identities amidst the

various discourses. To support this, I suggest continued pursuit of co-constructed spaces amongst all entities and intentional borderland discourse for teacher candidates.

Continued Pursuit of Co-Construction

It is important to note that pursuing a hybrid space is a complex process as well as a persistent journey. Therefore, it is important for a partnership to acknowledge where they are and where they would like to be, especially regarding spaces for teacher candidates to reflect on identity development. For example, there is a need to reflect and take note of the spaces in which hybridity is not occurring and where certain voices are not present. Burroughs and colleagues (2020) have considered this need of reflections for partnerships. In response, they created a framework for guiding and reflecting. Within this framework, they acknowledge the need for continuous negotiation and time for “meaningful planning and collaboration” (p. 131). Thus, for residencies to continue to pursue hybrid spaces that are beneficial for the professional identity development of teacher candidates there must be intentional times carved out for reflection, assessment, and the creation of shared goals amongst all stakeholders.

Teacher Educators

One way this co-construction between the university and the school was encouraged in this TR was through completion of the weekly CAL. This was a collaborative and reflective document created between the teacher candidate and mentor teacher. It provided opportunities to think about what was going well and what was challenging, and it encouraged thinking about next steps. In addition to the teacher candidate and mentor teacher making notes, the residency staff also had access to this and made comments. Therefore, this was a way in which the residency facilitated intentional co-construction and reflection amongst several voices and ways of knowing. However, while teacher candidates found this useful to some extent, they seemed to

favor the everyday conversations between their mentor teachers and themselves, which leaves out the important voice of teacher educators.

Considering how my participants preferred these everyday conversations with mentor teachers, I began to think more about ways that would get school and university stakeholders within the same physical space and into the everyday rhythms of a school. One such example is found in the study by Martin and colleagues (2011). This study discussed hybrid teacher educators from the university who are regularly located within school sites, which in turn provided more opportunities for organic and intentional co-constructive discussions between the school, university, and teacher candidates. Others have also mentioned inviting the school more into the university via avenues such as co-teaching courses (Zeichner, 2020). Regardless of how it is done, the increased presence of all entities would aid in furthering simultaneous discourses and reflection on teacher candidate identity.

Mentor Teachers

Regarding mentor teachers, the broadening of their role to include knowledge associated with teacher education has been encouraged. However, mentor teachers need appropriate support and preparation for this role of school-based teacher educator (Mutemeri & Chetty, 2011; Zeichner, 2010). In some instances, this has resulted in an application process and provided trainings for mentor teachers (Klein et al., 2013). Additionally, it has resulted in opportunities for reciprocal professional development in which the university and school are intentionally collaborating (NAPDS, 2008). This in turn impacts teacher candidates as mentor teachers are more aware of knowledge traditionally housed in the university *and* schools. They become hybrid school-based teacher educators.

Residencies should continue to pursue properly preparing mentor teachers to occupy this hybrid space along with offering opportunities for reciprocal professional development. This will aid mentor teachers in building bridges with teacher candidates and other stakeholders while keeping both types of knowledge in mind. To further support this, universities could also consider offering mentoring courses. Within these courses, mentor teachers could get pertinent information, practice the skills associated with mentoring, and earn certification points.

Community

The inclusion of community knowledge within teacher education and therefore the professional identities of teacher candidates appear to be lacking. As schools have taken on the responsibility of educating children, I wonder how this has created a disconnect between schools, families, and communities. Lee (2018) wrote,

Without intentional community-based learning engagements...a critical perspective is excluded—the lived realities of the children and families TCs encounter during clinical experiences and in future teaching endeavors...By working alongside community-based experts and scholars (i.e., families and residents), we can collectively work to write an asset -based counter narrative of our urban schools and communities. (p. 199)

To pursue this, Lee (2018) mentioned having a physical space and presence in the community, ensuring reciprocity, becoming a part of the community, and inducting and mentoring teachers who will stay and become community teachers.

Teacher residencies have the opportunity to be and do this. They already have a presence in communities, and they are already recruiting teachers to stay within high needs communities. These teacher candidates are also engaging in schools and with their students providing significant relationships, desiring to be advocates, and implementing culturally relevant

strategies. To encourage this further, it will require further interaction and engagement with the community. Teacher candidates could have additional experiences in after school programs, library programs, or local recreational programs. They also could interview members of the community. Therefore, being aware of and involved in the spaces of the community outside of the school could further facilitate community knowledge.

Borderland Discourses

It is necessary for teacher candidates to have spaces in which they can be intentional about negotiating their identity development amidst the various experiences they are having. They need spaces where they can wonder: How can I create this lesson to meet these student objectives (school/district) in research proven (university) ways that also allow me to infuse my own ideas (personal history)? I would suggest that one such way is through borderland discourse (Alsup, 2006). This type of discourse gives students the space and opportunity to reflect, interpret, and negotiate or renegotiate identity through various discourses. Alsup (2006) wrote,

Accepting the centrality of borderland discourse to teacher education necessitates the rejection of the theory that either through knowledge of pedagogical or disciplinary content or through isolated and disconnected reflective exercises a young teacher can emerge from a teacher education program ready to begin a satisfying and successful teaching life. It isn't only about learning content, pedagogical technique, or research strategies for reflection and practice; it's also about how to honor personal beliefs, life choices, and experiences that have value and meaning while enacting elements of the professional identity that society demands. (p. 126)

Therefore, borderland discourses and facilitating spaces for teacher candidates to have them allows them to consider what they have learned, think through it critically, and make choices.

Additionally, Alsup (2006) noted that teacher candidates who had borderland discourses were more successful when they started their careers in the classroom. This further supports Anzaldúa's (1987) idea that to become someone new, one must be able to live within the contradictions and be able to turn the ambivalence into something new.

Future Research

Further research in this area could expand to include the stories of other stakeholders within the TR. For example, hearing from mentor teachers, professors, and residency staff would be beneficial to further understanding how TRs shape professional identity stories of teacher candidates. This would also provide rich details about the multiple perspectives and discourses within this three-dimensional space. Secondly, a longitudinal study would benefit this research, because this study only encompassed the first fall semester of the participants' residency year. For instance, a longitudinal study could include stories that encompassed the entire residency year. In addition, following teacher candidates beyond this residency year and into their in-service years would further show how the residency year may have shaped identity. There are also various lenses in which these stories could be examined. Gender and race are just two examples of ways in which these stories could be explored further. Finally, further research into the influence of community knowledge related to professional identities of teacher candidates should be considered. Therefore, its significance as well as how it does or should manifest within the discussion of identity would be beneficial.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research adds further knowledge to the field of clinical practice, partnerships, and the professional identities of teacher candidates. TRs provide experiences that can support the shaping of professional identity stories of teacher candidates. As teacher

candidates tell their stories and navigate these experiences, both bridges and borders co-exist. Therefore, it is pertinent that stakeholders of TRs build bridges together. Otherwise, more borders are created. Additionally, it is also pertinent to facilitate further co-construction through hybrid spaces and borderland discourses to address borders that continue to present themselves within the complex environment of TRs and the professional identities of teacher candidates. As with any other structure and process, there is always room to grow. Therefore, regular reflection is needed to embrace and maintain the continual forward movement of TRs as they are integral to the process of teacher candidates becoming someone new.

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APPENDIX A – INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Protocol⁵

Pre-Interview Protocol

Good _____! Thank you for being willing to participate in my research study. I am looking forward to hearing your stories about becoming a teacher. This interview will consist of five questions, and each question may also have follow up questions. The focus of this interview will be your past experiences related to becoming a teacher. I anticipate that the interview will take about 1-2 hours. Let's get started.

1. Tell me about why you became a teacher?
 - a. Can you tell me more about...?
 - b. Can you give me an example of ...?

Guiding Ideas for Interviewer:

- What is a calling? How is teaching a calling?
 - How did others influence your decision to become a teacher?
 - How did events influence your decision to become a teacher?
2. Share with me about your own personal school experiences? (elementary, secondary, higher education)
 - a. How might influence you now?
 - b. Can you tell me more about...?

Guiding Ideas for Interviewer:

- How do you think this will influence your own teaching?
 - Would you do anything the same? Why?
 - Would you do anything different? Why?
3. Tell me about how you think your past experiences (family, work, etc.) might influence you as a teacher in the classroom today.
 - a. Tell me more about
 - b. How might that look?
 4. Share with me your thoughts on any challenges you may have to overcome going forward?
 - a. Can you give me an example of...?
 - b. How might that look?

Guiding Ideas for Interviewer:

- How have you overcome uncertainty or challenges in the past?
 - Who or what has provided support?
 - How has this manifested individually?
 - How has this manifested in community?
5. If you feel comfortable, would you be willing to share your ethnic and gender identity? How old are you?

⁵ Due to the emergent nature of qualitative research, questions are subject to change during the interview. However, new questions will not deviate from the intent of the study

Thank you for your time and for the honor to hear your story. I will be in contact with you once it is time to schedule the second interview in October.

Mid-Interview Protocol

Good _____! Thank you again for being willing to participate in my research study. I am looking forward to hearing how your story of becoming a teacher is developing today. This interview will consist of several questions, and each question may also have follow up questions. The focus of this interview will be your current experiences within the teacher residency related to becoming a teacher. I anticipate that the interview will take about 1-2 hours. Let's get started.

1. Tell me about your experiences been thus far in the teacher residency.
 - a. Can you tell me more about that experience?
 - b. What does that look like?
 - c. How did you work through ...?

Guiding Ideas for Interviewer

- How have those within the partnership (RTR, school, etc.) influenced you thus far?
- How have those challenges affected you? How have you navigated or worked through those challenging experiences?
- How do you work through combining what you are learning in your coursework and the school at the same time?
- How have you worked through those areas of change related to (yourself, your experience, the partnership, etc.)?

This question is optional and will be based on if there is anything I see that I need to be expanded upon within observations, video, or the CAL.

2. I noticed _____ within the observation/video/CAL. Can you tell me more about that?

Thank you for your time and for the honor to hear your story. I will be in contact with you once it is time to schedule the last interview in December.

Post-Interview Protocol

Good _____! Thank you again for being willing to participate in my research study. I am looking forward to this last interview and hearing once again how your story of becoming a teacher is developing. This interview will consist of several questions, and each question may also have follow up questions. The focus of this interview will be your current experiences within the teacher residency related to becoming a teacher. I anticipate that the interview will take about 1-2 hours. Let's get started.

1. Tell me about your experiences since October in the teacher residency.
 - a. Can you tell me more about that experience?
 - b. What does that look like?
 - c. How did you work through ...?

Guiding Ideas for Interviewer

- How have those within the partnership (RTR, school, etc.) influenced you?

- How have those challenges affected you? How have you navigated or worked through those challenging experiences?
- How do you work through combining what you are learning in your coursework and the school at the same time?
- How have you worked through those areas of change related to (yourself, your experience, the partnership, etc.)?

This question is optional and will be based on if there is anything I see that I need to be expanded upon within observations, video, or the CAL.

2. I noticed _____ within the observation/video/CAL. Can you tell me more about that?

Thank you for your time and for the honor to hear your story. I will be in contact with you once I have completed the qualitative report.

LAUREN LAUGHLIN

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EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy in Education: Curriculum and Instruction **2022**

Old Dominion University
Norfolk, VA

Master of Arts: Management & Leadership **2015**

Liberty University
Lynchburg, VA

Master of Science: Elementary Education **2008**

Old Dominion University
Norfolk, VA

Bachelor of Arts: Teacher Preparation **2007**

Old Dominion University
Norfolk, VA

LICENSURE

Virginia Postgraduate Professional License, Elementary Education PreK-6

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Graduate Assistant **2018 – 2021**

- Assistant to Dr. Melva Grant: assisted in STEM 433: Developing Instructional Strategies PreK-6: Mathematics and the creation of surveys and script for research concerning virtual simulated learning and preservice teacher preparedness in math methods
- Assistant to Dr. Jamie Colwell & Dr. Kristie Gutierrez: assisted in the Computer Science for All NSF Grant with focus groups, interviews, observations, and professional development for research concerning integrating Virginia computer science standards in inclusive classrooms
- Assistant to Dr. Mary Enderson: assisted with documentation for Virginia Department of Education associated with the approval of a middle school earth science program at Old Dominion University
- Assistant to Dr. Jori Beck: assisted with school-university partnership work, which included clinical faculty nominations, clinical faculty bios for the website, prep work for partnership committee meetings, review of partnership documents, and participation in a school-university workshop with an expert regarding future steps for the partnership

PUBLICATIONS

PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES

Laughlin, L. (2021). Third Space, partnerships, and clinical practice: A literature review. *The Professional Educator*, 44(1), 21-33. <https://doi.org/10.47038/tpe.44.01.05>

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Laughlin, L. (2022, April). *The narratives of teacher candidates in clinical practice within a teacher*

residency: The shaping of professional teacher identities. Poster presented at Old Dominion University's 12th annual Graduate Research Achievement Day Competition, Virtual.

Laughlin, L. (2021, November). *The stories of teacher candidates within a teacher residency: Borders, tensions, and growth*. Poster presented at the Virginia Association of Colleges and Teacher Educators Fall 2021 Conference, Virtual.

Laughlin, L. (2021, April). *Third Space, partnerships, and clinical practice: A synthesis of the literature*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association annual meeting, Virtual.

Beck, J. S., *Smigiel, T., Kidd, J., O'Hearn, M., & Laughlin, L. (2020, February). *Looking back and looking ahead in the NPS-ODU partnership*. Concurrent session presented at the 2020 National Association for Professional Development Schools National Conference, Atlantic City, NJ.

Hutchison, A., Colwell, J., Laughlin, L., Taylor, V., & Vardas-Doane, A. (2019, December). *Designing a model of professional development to prepare K-5 teachers to integrate computer science into literacy instruction*. Presentation at the annual meeting of the Literacy Research Association, Tampa, FL.

Grant, M., Ferguson, S., Laughlin, L., & Ruffin, M., (2019, May). *Designing computer classroom simulations for pre-service teachers to practice engaging students in math talk*. Paper presented at 7th Annual International TeachLive Conference, Orlando, FL.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

PK-6 TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Teacher: 4th Grade Language Arts & Virginia Studies
 Portsmouth Public Schools
 Portsmouth, VA

2016 –2018

Teacher: 4th Grade Language Arts
 Portsmouth Public Schools
 Portsmouth, VA

2009 – 2013

Lead Teacher: 2nd & 4th Grade
 Horizons Hampton Roads
 Norfolk, VA & Portsmouth, VA

2009 - 2010

UNDERGRADUTE TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor

- TLED 426: Introduction to Literacy Research, Theory and Practice in the Classroom (Face-to-Face, Online Synchronous, & Online Asynchronous)
 - Spring 2020, Fall 2020, Spring 2021, Fall 2021, Spring 2022
- TLED 432: Developing Instructional Strategies PreK-6: Language Arts (Online Synchronous)
 - Summer 2020, Summer 2021
- TLED 326: Socio-Cultural Perspectives in Education (Online Asynchronous)
 - Fall 2020
- TLED 301: Foundations and Introduction to Assessment of Education (Face-to-Face)
 - Spring 2022

University Supervisor

- STEM 101: Step 1: Inquiry Approaches to Teaching STEM (2018-2020)
- STEM 401: Project Based Instruction in STEM Education (2019)
- MonarchTEACH Summer Internship (2019)

SERVICE ACTIVITIES

DEPARTMENT

- **Committee Member**, Revision of Admission to PhD in Curriculum and Instruction Ad Hoc Committee (2021)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- American Educational Research Association (AERA), Division K Teaching and Teacher Education

HONORS and AWARDS

- Old Dominion University Darden College of Education and Professional Studies
Outstanding Curriculum & Instruction Doctoral Student (2021)

SERVICE ACTIVITIES

National – Journals

- **Reviewer**, *The Teacher Educators' Journal* (2021)