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Extending the Apprenticeship of Observation: How Mentee Experience Shape Mentors

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Abstract

Although the importance of mentor teachers in clinical teacher preparation is well established, few studies explore the social identity development of these individuals. This study contributes to this body of research by exploring mentor teachers' social identity development through the concept of Apprenticeship of Observation—specifically, how they felt their own mentoring experiences influenced their approaches to mentoring. The multi-case study includes findings about mentoring beliefs and practices during the laboratory school component of an Alternate Route to Licensure program. Incorporating semi-structured interviews and video analysis, the findings demonstrate how four mentor teachers' prior experiences as mentees—including Alternate Route to Licensure, traditional teacher preparation programs, and inservice teaching— influenced their interactions with teacher candidates as mentors. Recommendations for practice and implications for future research are provided.

Keywords: mentoring, teacher candidates, social identity development theory

Extending the Apprenticeship of Observation: How Mentee Experiences Shape Mentors

Teacher education is moving to a clinical model to develop programs that are “fully grounded in clinical practice and interwoven with academic content and professional courses” (National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education [NCATE] Blue Ribbon Panel, 2010, p. ii). The rationale for this shift is that an extended apprenticeship will develop teacher candidates (TCs)¹ into stronger novice teachers through coursework and field experiences that are closely linked. Mentor teachers are a critical element of this work (Scheetz, Waters, Smeaton, & Lare, 2005) since they potentially spend hundreds of hours working with TCs in schools. Indeed, mentoring has been shown to foster TC learning (Mena, Hennissen, & Loughran, 2017). Studies of mentors’ identity construction are scarce (Leshem, 2014), but this is an important area of study due to the rise of various pathways to licensure and the connection between identity, professional learning, and growth (Bullough, 2005).

Roughly one third of first-year teachers in the U.S. hired since 2005 entered through Alternate Route to Licensure (ARL) programs (Feistritzer, 2011), and enrollment in these programs may continue since 74 countries face acute teacher shortages (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO] Institute for Statistics, 2015). Many teachers become mentors for TCs and novice teachers, and at least one study posited that the way in which mentor teachers were mentored may influence their role perception (Klieger & Oster-Levinz, 2015). It is necessary to know more about how this mentoring transfer unfolds. The idea of transferring what a teacher has seen from one context to the other is what we refer to as *extending the apprenticeship of observation*. Lortie (1975) coined this term to refer to the circumstance in which TCs enter teaching after “having spent thousands of hours as

¹ In this study, teacher candidate (TC) is defined as any individual who is being trained to become a teacher through university coursework and field experiences.

schoolchildren observing and evaluating professionals in action” (Borg, 2004, p. 274). Because of these experiences, TCs enter the profession believing that they know more about the art and science of teaching than most novices in other professions. We posit that mentoring may be enacted similarly: mentor teachers learn about mentoring by being mentored themselves. In this multiple case study, we explored how four mentor teachers cited their own mentoring experiences and how these experiences shaped their social identity development as mentors.

Literature Review

The literature on mentoring TCs consists of two major themes: (a) the international importance of school-based teacher preparation (Hennissen, Crasborn, Brouwer, Korthagen, & Bergen, 2011; Hudson, 2014; Jaspers, Meijer, Prins, & Wubbels, 2014); and (b) the significance of mentor teachers in that work (Izadania, 2015; Jaspers et al., 2014; Yavuz, 2011). However, despite this clarity, mentoring is a poorly theorized “contested concept” (Kemmis, Heikkinen, Fransson, Aspfors, & Edwards-Groves, 2014, p. 155) and mentor teacher practices vary wildly. The practices of mentoring teachers have been identified on a continuum of closed, invited, or claimed (Gaventa, 2007); closed elements are those in which the mentor teacher makes decisions without input from the TC, invited elements involve negotiation between the mentor and TC, and claimed elements are those in which the TC acts independently of the mentor. Such practices are reflected in the literature we review below. Quality mentoring has many benefits, including increasing teacher retention (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004), fostering commitment to teaching (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011), and influencing TCs’ development (Bullough, 2012). Our review of recent literature related to mentoring TCs yielded subthemes on mentoring dialogues and conversations, affective and social elements of mentoring, and mentoring styles and support.

Mentoring Dialogues and Conversations

Providing feedback is often a closed element of the mentor and TC relationship (Clarke, Triggs, & Nielson, 2014), but mentoring dialogues have been explored through a variety of methodological approaches and have been shown to provide benefits and challenges (Hudson, 2014). Research in this area has demonstrated that both TCs and mentor teachers can dominate mentoring dialogues (Crasborn, Hennissen, Brouwer, Korthagen, & Bergen, 2011). In an intervention study that utilized lesson study as the experimental condition, Helgevold, Næsheim-Bjørkvik, and Østrem (2015) found that P-12 students and general concerns (e.g., homework, family engagement, evaluation, etc.) dominated these conversations. Other research in this area has shown disparities in mentor teachers' evaluations of TCs' positive practices and differences in how much positive feedback mentor teachers offered (Hudson, 2014). Mena, Garcia, Clarke, and Barkatsas (2016) explored the knowledge that TCs articulated in mentoring conversations. They found that the use of video stimulated recall generated the greatest number of TCs' specific appraisals of their teaching as well as the highest proportion of inferential knowledge. Collectively, these studies speak to the importance of the quality or type of training mentor teachers receive to work with TCs (Gareis & Grant, 2014; Russell & Russell, 2011) which we explore in the current study.

Affective and Social Elements of Mentoring

Mentor teachers are considered "agents of socialization" (Clarke et al., 2014, p. 182), which falls between the invited and claimed elements of participation (Gaventa, 2007). This category indicates that mentors have a strong influence on TCs' understandings of and participation in teaching, but they often do not realize the extent of their influence (Clarke et al., 2014). Studies within this theme demonstrated how mentor teachers played roles in the networking and social capital building of TCs (Fox & Wilson, 2015); how mentors influenced

TCs' professional identity development (Izadinia, 2015); and the potential for ethnically diverse mentors to prepare White teachers for minority-majority schools (Moule & Higgins, 2009). In addition to these findings, it has been noted that a power hierarchy does not always exist in mentor-mentee relationships (Loizou, 2011). Rather, "mutuality" (p. 383) was expressed.

However, other studies have uncovered unproductive mentor-mentee relationships. Yuan (2016) examined the negative experiences of two TCs who, during a practicum experience in China, were treated as assistants, prevented from interacting with students, and had their teaching controlled. Hamel and Jaasko-Fisher (2011) investigated the "invisible drama" (p. 442) of mentoring, which included shifting transitions in initiative and authority. Mentor teachers have also been found to reinforce the value system of a particular school, which may not be conducive to TC learning and persistence (Kleinsasser & Liu, 2013), and they may hold negative perceptions of teacher preparation programs—including the belief that mentors cannot learn from their mentees (Aydin, 2009). In Yavuz's (2011) Turkish study, the author concluded that the school-university partnership lacked communication and support. These latter two studies speak to the importance of context that can influence mentoring and preparation, and this context is crucial in analyzing the mentoring style of the participants in the present study.

Mentoring Styles and Support

Mentor teachers commonly support TCs through feedback, modeling, and reflection (Clarke et al., 2014). Kemmis and colleagues (2014) uncovered three archetypes of mentoring: mentoring as supervision, mentoring as support, and mentoring as collaborative self-development. Other international studies support these findings, concluding that TCs accurately perceived the behaviors of the mentor teachers (Hennissen et al., 2011) and that preferences for mentoring styles varied based on context (Ibrahim, 2013). Additionally, Ibrahim found that

mentor teachers and other clinical faculty developed a range of supervisory styles that they varied for the TC and the situation. Mena and colleagues (2017) found that non-directive mentoring fostered greater TC learning and that this type of mentoring could be taught via professional development. The remaining studies in this theme testified to the importance of meaning-oriented learning, deliberate practice, and revealing the thinking behind complex tasks (Bronkhorst, Meijer, Koster, & Vermunt, 2011; Nilssen, 2010).

Some researchers have shown that TCs and mentor teachers negotiate differing beliefs and practices throughout the mentoring process. For example, Rozelle and Wilson (2012) studied a year-long teacher internship program in which six TCs gradually gained control of different aspects of the classroom. As the program progressed, some TCs took ownership of their mentor teachers' methods while others mimicked the methods but did not adopt the strategies or beliefs. Similarly, Thompson, Hagenah, Lohwasser, and Laxton (2015) investigated negotiations between 14 pairs of mentor teachers and TCs regarding "reform-based practices" (p. 364) and their attempts to reconcile tensions those practices created. The authors found three frames from which mentor teachers work: conversations situated in frame 1 dealt with fixing a specific concern, while frames 2 and 3 encouraged TCs to evaluate their choices and teaching methods.

Other researchers have investigated personal tensions for mentor teachers. Jaspers and colleagues (2014) studied the conflict that many primary mentor teachers encounter between being a teacher and being a mentor teacher. Ultimately, for the seven teachers in the study, the primary teacher role seemed to overrun the mentor teacher role, and the authors advocated that this tension continue to be explored in secondary settings. Tillema, Smith, and Leshem (2011) explored the tension within mentor teacher assessment of TCs as evaluation or fostering learning.

The authors concluded that the mentors emphasized performance improvement in assessment whereas students were focused on guidance-oriented assessment.

The reviewed research was primarily devoted to the roles and supports that mentor teachers provide and how these roles and supports are perceived by mentees. This literature also included the training and interventions for shaping mentors' work with TCs, but it does not fully illustrate how mentors' own experiences in the extended apprenticeship of observation shape them. Livingston (2014) argued, "Uncovering what each teacher brings to any stage of their professional learning is necessary to be able to facilitate them in developing their learning and teaching according to their own and their pupils' needs" (p. 228). Thus, it is important to understand how teachers who were mentored in various ways develop their mentoring identities. Next, we explore social identity development theory to better understand how mentor teachers' social identity development as mentees can shape their approaches to mentoring.

Theoretical Framework

To understand mentor teachers' social identities, we viewed participants' experiences through the lens of social identity development theory (Stets & Burke, 2000). From this perspective, teacher identity develops when and where teachers negotiate the meanings of their experiences as members of social communities (Wenger, 1998). Through the process of sharing information and experiences, in this case through apprenticeship, people learn from each other and develop personally and professionally (Lave & Wenger, 1991). We posit that the extended apprenticeship of observation is a part of social identity development theory because mentors develop their mentoring strategies and techniques based on the social experience of being mentored themselves. As Lortie (1975) pointed out, the apprenticeship of observation is not a true apprenticeship in which one learns the technical knowledge of an occupation; rather, it

requires that the learner imitate what he or she is observing. In this way, the extended apprenticeship of observation requires social interaction.

The bulk of researchers' work on mentor identity has explored how the act of mentoring helps mentors grow professionally. These researchers have examined the complicated contexts in which mentor teachers navigate their identity development as teacher educators (Bullough, 2005); the impact of communities of practice on identity development (Kwan & Lopez-Real, 2010); and mentors' perceptions of their roles, identities, and professional needs (Leshem, 2014). Feiman-Nemser (1998) suggested that mentors have difficulty developing social identities because many teachers believe that teaching must be learned from experience, while others believe it is the university's job to teach teaching during field experiences.

As many researchers have conveyed, some TCs are comfortable taking ownership of their mentors' methods while others only mimic the methods without internalizing the beliefs or practices. This internalizing of beliefs and practices (or lack thereof) could extend to mentorship in an extended apprenticeship of observation. In this case, many mentors would take ownership of what they witnessed as TCs themselves while others would not adopt the strategies of their mentors. Similarly, the conversations that their mentors had with them may have dealt with specific concerns or they may have required evaluation of their choices (Thompson et al., 2015). In the extended apprenticeship of observation, mentor teachers follow what their mentor modeled, much as the novice teacher follows what they witnessed as students.

We connected mentor teacher learning to teacher preparation programs and compared traditionally prepared mentors to those trained in a Professional Development School ([PDS], Klieger & Oster-Levinz, 2015). We attributed differences in the mentor teachers' role perceptions to their preparation. With the rise of new models of teacher preparation like

residency programs (e.g., Solomon, 2009), it is important to explore the connection between mentoring experiences and mentoring beliefs and practices. Indeed, Amaral-da-Cunha, Batista, MacPhail, and Graça (2018) have alluded to this connection, “Studies that support [TCs’] development through effective mentoring practices will hopefully instil [*sic*] in them an appreciation for the powerful role of mentorship that they could consider emulating as practising [*sic*] school teachers” (p. 252). To explore this connection, we answered the following research questions: What influences, if any, do four mentor teachers cite as shaping their practices? How do these four mentor teachers differ in their mentoring beliefs and practices?

Methods

We used a multiple case study design of four separate, but linked, cases which allowed us to analyze each case in connection with the other cases (Stake, 2006). The quintain, or phenomenon to be studied, was the mentor teachers’ own mentoring experiences and how they influenced their social identity development. Because of this focus, we selected four mentor teachers who provided the greatest diversity in experience and approach to mentoring. Each case is complex and molded by social interactions, cultural and historical contexts, and backgrounds.

Research Context

This study took place during a summer lab school practicum created as a joint endeavor between Southwestern State University² and Pioneer Middle School, which have been working together for 7 years to prepare teachers in the southwestern United States. This experience was designed to prepare teachers during the summer months as part of an ARL program to address a regional teacher shortage. This ARL program consisted of individuals with bachelor’s degrees who entered into an accelerated teacher preparation program at a major university in order to

² All names of people and places are pseudonyms

receive their secondary teaching certificate in English language arts, science, or math. The lab school was a free summer enrichment opportunity open to students in grades 6, 7, and 8.

Site and Participants

Southwestern State University is both a Minority Serving Institution and a Hispanic Serving Institution with over 28,000 students. The lab school took place at Pioneer Middle School from June 8 through June 30, 2015. Pioneer is an urban, Title I middle school, and this site was chosen to expose TCs to an urban school with a positive climate and experienced mentor teachers. Seventy-one percent of students at Pioneer identify as Hispanic, 12% as Black, and 8% as White with other students identifying as Asian, Pacific Islander, or Two or More Races (citation not shared to preserve confidentiality); approximately one third of students are emerging bilinguals. The student transiency rate is 40%, and over 85% of students are eligible for free and reduced lunch. The district serves over 300,000 students and 45% of these students identify as Hispanic, 28% as White, and 13% as Black with the remainder of students identifying as Asian, Pacific Islander, or Two or More Races in their heritage.

Mentor teachers who participated in this study were selected by university faculty and the principal of Pioneer Middle School. We selected current middle school teachers who were viewed as student centered by the principal and/or researchers. Prior to beginning the summer program, the mentor teachers were not given any specialized mentor training, but they attended a curriculum planning session to get acquainted with the other mentor teachers and the researchers. Only one of the four participants (Bridget) had completed any formal mentor teacher training and this took place at another university. The mentor teachers' role during the lab school was to model, observe TCs, provide constructive feedback, and evaluate the TCs.

TCs spent approximately 150 hours with their mentor teachers instructing students and taking part in a field trip to Southwestern State University. In all, 6 mentor teachers worked with 20 TCs during the summer lab school. All of the mentor teachers agreed to participate in the study, but only 4 of the mentors agreed to be video recorded. Three of the mentor teachers were men and three were women. All of these mentor teachers identified as White except for one female English language arts teacher who identified as Black. We chose to report data from three White, male teachers and one Black, female teacher. These participants were chosen through purposive sampling because of their thorough description of their own mentoring experiences during interviews and their willingness to be video recorded, which allowed for more robust data.

Data Collection

Data collection consisted of semi-structured interviews with mentor teachers and video recording. Mentor teacher interviews were conducted between June 9 and June 12, 2015. Interview questions focused on participants' background experiences, teacher preparation, beliefs, practices, and work with TCs. Semi-structured interviews were chosen to afford some consistency across interviews while providing flexibility for follow-up questions. Interviews lasted between 11 and 36 minutes, for a total of 2 hours and 13 minutes of audio recording; 1 hour and 17 minutes of those data are reported here for the corresponding participants (i.e., two mentor teachers were not included in this analysis and neither were their data).

Video recording occurred between June 15 and June 29, 2015. In all, 18 videos were recorded of TCs teaching and interacting with mentors. One of the English language arts mentor teachers conducted one-on-one interview sessions with his mentees, and these were recorded when possible (2 videos). In all, over 7 hours of video recording was captured during the lab school. Interactions between mentor teachers and TCs were transcribed for data analysis. The

video and interview data are part of a larger data set consisting of middle grade student focus groups, TC interviews, TC videos, and artifacts from the lab school including lesson plans and instructional materials. The data included here were most relevant to the current study.

Data Analysis

Data analysis consisted of a two-round coding process (Saldaña, 2009). During the first round of analysis, members of the research team conducted open coding of the audio and video transcripts. Two researchers coded each interview and video transcript simultaneously in the process of analyst triangulation (Patton, 2002). These codes were then synthesized and used to write a narrative about each participant's perspective which was subsequently shared with the participant for member checking; 75% of participants responded.

A frequency analysis was then conducted. Two separate matrices were created to analyze the interviews and videos. The matrices indicated the frequency with which each participant discussed emic beliefs related to mentoring (in the interview matrix) or exhibited mentoring behaviors (in the video matrix). These beliefs included reflection, feedback, modeling, degree of mentor participation (supporting, hands-off, etc.), co-teaching, and many more. The matrices were then compared to find the most frequently cited mentoring beliefs and practices.

Trustworthiness

Like any other investigation, this study was subject to threats to its credibility. First, this study was limited to just 4 weeks during the summer months and was not an authentic school setting. Because of this unique school setting, the findings are not transferrable to many other educational contexts. Although this is a limitation, it is also necessary to study these expedited ARL preparation programs since they are becoming more common. The class sizes were smaller than those in most schools in the region, and student participation in Southwestern Academy was

voluntary rather than compulsory. Therefore, classroom management concerns, curriculum planning, and assessment were different during the lab school than they would have been in a traditional practicum experience. Although these differences presented challenges, the mentoring relationship remained intact. Because of the study's focus on mentoring rather than TC or student development, we believe that the limitations were not detrimental to the study. Finally, some qualitative researchers may consider the data set to be thin (i.e., less than 10 hours for 4 participants) because only the most relevant data from the larger study were included. In order to increase trustworthiness of the study, we only reported data that directly related to mentorship, and we also included direct quotes from participants as often as possible.

Findings

Below we present cases of four mentor teachers who had varied mentoring experiences to convey their social identity development. Although their mentoring beliefs and practices cannot be attributed directly to their mentoring experiences, these cases illustrate how these mentors enacted their work. Each case includes the mentor's experiences as a mentee, mentoring beliefs, and mentoring practices to address our focus on their social identity development. At times the participants explicitly connected how their mentoring experiences influenced how they work with TCs. The findings answer our research questions: What influences, if any, do four mentor teachers cite as shaping their practices? How do these four mentor teachers differ in their mentoring beliefs and practices?

Keith

Keith delayed his desire to teach for 30 years while he worked in finance. Because of his experience in the corporate workforce, Keith secured a teaching position through an ARL program. He had taught for 14 years and was a Grade 8 science teacher during this study.

Experiences as a mentee. Keith described his experience in an ARL program, “They hired me, and I got a book on my desk, and they said ‘good luck.’ And that was basically my indoctrination into teaching. No student teaching, nothing.” Because of his limited teacher education, Keith did not experience any formal mentoring. He did experience informal, peer mentoring, though, when another teacher took him “under his wing.” As a new teacher in a “tough school,” Keith quickly realized that he had not established sufficient rules. His mentor helped him create a plan to “revamp” his teaching and classroom management:

I thank him to this day. Otherwise, I would have not been a teacher any longer . . . So I really love to help teachers not go through what I went through—to understand the pitfalls and do what I did to start out in teaching, to show them the right approaches.

Keith desired to pass on the advice from his peer mentor, and he did so by sharing his experiences with new teachers, which we discuss further below.

Mentoring beliefs. Keith’s beliefs about mentoring included the importance of preparation and building student relationships. He believed that all TCs are experts in their content areas—perhaps due to his own extensive experience in finance; rather than focusing on content knowledge, he emphasized avoiding the “pitfalls” of novice teaching:

You’ve got to be 100% knowledgeable about the lesson you’re going to deliver. You’ve got to fill from the time that the kids get into your room until the last minute. You’ll have zero classroom management issues if you fill the day.

In addition to preparation, Keith believed that relationships with students were crucial, “You have to convey you’re caring for them.” He transferred his belief in the power of respect to his work with TCs. He told them that they are intelligent and his job is to ensure that they do not encounter the same struggles that he did as a new teacher. His social identity as a mentor

developed from his lack of essential teaching skills as a TC that were bolstered by peer mentoring, and his mentoring beliefs included modeling preparation and rapport building.

Mentoring practices. As a mentor, Keith viewed his role as preparing the TCs “to go into the real world of teaching.” On the second day of the lab school he “had them actually do the presentation and work.” By teaching immediately, Keith hoped the TCs would, “feel comfortable when they get in front of the kids” to alleviate classroom management concerns. He also shared his experiences with them by telling them, “you are going to make mistakes every day, little ones, and your first period is the one, unfortunately for the first year, where you’re probably going to mess up the most.” Thus, Keith seemed to set up a classroom where it was acceptable to make mistakes in order to grow.

Keith also encouraged TCs to incorporate hands-on strategies and to show interest in students’ lives to foster engagement. Keith’s beliefs were present in his daily interactions with TCs. His emphasis on student-centered instruction was illustrated during a TC’s lesson on the history of rockets when he interjected to establish relevance to the students’ lives. The importance of preparation was evident in his modeling of overlapping. As a TC delivered his lesson, Keith passed out materials for the next activity. These practices indicate that Keith’s struggles as a novice teacher and the mentoring support he received from a colleague may have informed his mentoring beliefs and practices and shaped his social identity as a mentor.

Tony

At the time of the study, Tony had finished his 20th year of teaching in primarily Title 1 schools. He held an undergraduate degree in Physical Education, a master’s in Science Education K-8, and was pursuing a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction in Science Education. At first, he was unsure about his future career path and took classes in a variety of topics such as

engineering, sports broadcasting, journalism, and physical education before discovering that he wanted to be a teacher. In his youth, Tony, “had a natural ability to teach different ways” and teaching felt like a natural path for him.

Experiences as a mentee. Tony felt that his teacher preparation was positive, but he primarily remembered the content courses. He felt that that strongest aspect of his preparation was the supervising teacher he had during his field experience because he provided “guidance, especially when it came to that final semester . . . and gave feedback.” Tony felt that he did not have a lot of experience with pedagogy in his teacher preparation program. Keith and Tony had similar beliefs about mentoring, but their preparation was different. Keith did not have preservice mentoring while Tony did, and Keith had an inservice peer mentor while Tony did not,

My very first job was a private school and it was the very first year of the school. [It was a] one-room schoolhouse . . . I taught 17 kids K to 8 and I didn’t have anybody there who was a mentor.

Although he valued the mentoring he received in his teacher preparation program, as a first-year teacher Tony did not have that support.

Mentoring beliefs. Tony felt that it was important for new teachers to have a “growth mindset” because “every year there’s more to learn, there’s more to add to my practice. You’re never going to teach a classroom perfectly.” He explained that there are always students who, “maybe I’m not meeting their needs, so what can I learn to help to address those needs?” In other words, he believed it was important to help TCs understand that growth should continue throughout their teaching careers.

Tony also believed that building a relationship with a TC is crucial. He valued “an ongoing dialogue” that allowed for questioning and “openness where they can ask me questions

and I feel comfortable to share ideas with them.” Like Keith, he felt that building a relationship with TCs was important to the mentoring process.

Mentoring practices. Tony’s mentoring practices were evident in an interaction during a particularly difficult TC lesson that we video recorded. As the TC struggled to teach the students about soil and nutrients, Tony interjected to model scaffolding information. He gave the TC time to try to explain the concept before intervening, but when it became clear that the students were lost, Tony broke down the graphic information step by step. He allowed the TC to jump back into the conversation after he explained the concept. Later on, Tony made a joke about a movie to lighten the mood. This interaction showed that while Tony believed that the TC should learn and grow through the experience, he also valued the relationship with the TC and felt that humor may alleviate a tense situation. He valued the guidance provided by his mentor teacher during his teacher preparation program, and that experience may have shaped his interactions with his TCs.

Edward

Like Keith, Edward was a career switcher. He worked for 16 years as a manager in the restaurant business before transitioning to insurance. He pursued a master’s degree in education to earn certification. Edward completed his student teaching at a school that identified as a PDS and worked closely with Southwestern State University to prepare teachers. He now teaches at this school and is a colleague of his former mentor teacher.

Experiences as a mentee. Edward mentioned often that the strongest aspects of his preparation were his multicultural coursework and his mentor teacher,

[I] had a fantastic mentor teacher who actually reinforced a lot of the things that I learned in my multicultural class and my methods courses at the university. And it was just so amazing how well the two lined up.

He believed that the weaker components of his training, like inauthentic instruction, were made up through his multicultural education course, student teaching experience, and mentor teacher.

Mentoring beliefs. Edward's mentoring style incorporated collaboration, experiential learning, and feedback. He focused on trust, providing structure, and developing TC cultural competence. One of Edward's main beliefs when working with TCs was to set clear expectations,

When I'm dealing with student teachers I find they're not as receptive to change, and so I need to have things much more structured for them. Much more detailed, much more explicit so that they can follow a clear sequence of activities and experiences. So, just, clarity and structure is really the most important when I'm dealing with a student teacher.

He also mentioned that collaboration is better face-to-face than with technology. He loved to integrate technology in the classroom, but when it came to collaboration with TCs, he expressed his preference for those meetings to be in person to better read social cues. In addition, Edward stated that face-to-face collaboration helps create a leadership environment for TCs, "I try to take any collaboration more as a team leader than as a superior or supervisor . . . I want them to feel like they're my colleagues because one day they will be."

Edward expressed his desire not to be seen as an authoritarian. He wanted the TCs whom he supervises to, ". . . feel like they can talk to me. That if they see something that they don't think I'm doing well, they feel comfortable giving me the feedback. I want to build that culture of reflection and receptiveness to feedback." Overall, he hoped the TCs would learn that teaching demands flexibility and collaboration and to become reflective practitioners, "They need to think about what they're doing, how they're doing it, why they're doing it, how it could be better."

Mentoring practices. Edward observed the TCs from a distance and did not provide suggestions in front of the class. Instead, he took notes on his computer and, without students

present, provided feedback that demonstrated his belief in building trust and respect.

Individualized sessions focused on specific feedback. For example, one discussion included: (a) student engagement, “The materials you chose were definitely appropriate as far as keeping their attention”; (b) differentiated and culturally responsive instruction, “[When working with accelerated learners] just think deeper, broader, and sometimes different”; and (c) classroom management, “A good strategy is to either just make eye contact with kids you’re talking to and just say, ‘I’m waiting,’ or you could touch your nose—the silly stuff like that, it works.” Edward allowed TCs to provide feedback to each other and facilitated portions of class in which students provided feedback to TCs creating a culture of collaboration and social identity development.

Bridget

Bridget explained that she “always wanted to be a teacher.” Both her mother and her father were teachers, “I don’t know if it’s my blood . . . [I] would go to school with my mom, summer school.” Ultimately, these experiences drew her to become a teacher. In particular, she noted that she, “always want[ed] to teach in the inner city areas because I . . . never went to inner city schools. The only experience I got was when I went to school with my parents.” Bridget had taught for 15 years at the time of the study, including 7 years in the local school district.

Experiences as a mentee. Bridget moved from her home state to a neighboring state in the Midwest to attend a “predominately Black university” where she completed her degree in teacher education. She recalled her student teaching, “we were kind of on our own, that was a bad thing, but that was also a good thing.” Fortunately, her cooperating teacher provided additional support, “she jumped in and helped us all out.” She also had a professor who “treat[ed] us, even though we were adults, she would treat us like we were students. If we talked,

she would do the proximity [control] . . . that really helped with my classroom management.”

These experiences shaped Bridget’s approach to mentoring TCs.

Mentoring beliefs. Without hesitation, Bridget explained her approach to working with TCs, “I always introduce them as a co-teacher . . . versus a student teacher or, you know, just a [teacher education] student.” Building upon her own training and mentoring experience Bridget stated, “I kind of just believe in throwing [them] right out there, you know, [they] can learn from mistakes. That’s how I learned and I think I came out OK, so I kind of just believe in just jumping right in there.” She wanted her TCs to learn from their experiences, “take advantage of any moment you can teach,” and she strongly believed that “classroom management” defined TCs’ success. Thus, she recognized the importance of feedback, “good feedback, very good feedback is—ways to correct themselves where they made mistakes, so that way . . . the more they do it, the better they’ll get.” Although she valued learning through experience, she also provided TCs with the necessary skills and scaffolding to learn and grow as teachers.

Mentoring practices. Bridget professed an interest in co-teaching and providing feedback; however, she remained silent during and after the TCs’ lessons and took on the role of a tutor. When the students were working collaboratively, she would find groups who needed assistance, but she rarely interacted with the TCs. During one lesson, a TC asked Bridget to stand in front of the room as part of a lesson on asking questions in research. Bridget participated in the activity, but she did not provide the TC with any feedback. Bridget professed an interest in providing feedback, but there were no instances of this feedback on video or in the TCs’ interviews. Bridget’s tendency to remain on the sidelines rather than interjecting or providing feedback seemed to connect to her own belief in the importance of “sink or swim” experiences. However, her view of her TCs as colleagues may have also led to her hands-off approach.

Making Sense of the Data

Each of these mentor teachers had a variety of experiences as mentees that informed and transferred to their work as mentors in the classroom. To date, much of the mentoring research has focused on different styles of mentoring (e.g., Kemmis et al., 2014) without acknowledging how mentor teacher beliefs and practices may be shaped by their own experiences as TCs and novice teachers. This body of literature would benefit from additional research that illustrates,

what allows a mentor to shift away from mentoring the way he or she was mentored . . .

Research is needed to deepen our understanding of the role and to develop mechanisms and pedagogy that will support mentors as they assume each role. (Yendol-Hoppy, 2007, p. 695)

Here we draw conclusions about the four cases and how these mentors did or did not shift away from their own preparation.

Tony and Edward credited mentor teachers during their teacher preparation programs with shaping their teacher and mentor teacher identities and conveying the importance of mentoring. As an inservice teacher, Keith felt as though mentoring is what kept him in the classroom and he expressed deep gratitude to his mentor. Edward cited powerful mentoring combined with coursework in multicultural pedagogy as a shaping force in his own social identity development. Although the four mentors provided feedback differently—Keith and Tony were active during TCs' lessons whereas Edward preferred to provide feedback privately and Bridget did not provide feedback at all—all four mentors did express collaborative approaches to mentoring rather than a preference for hierarchical relationships. Interestingly, Edward, Tony, and Bridget went through a traditional, university-based teacher preparation

program whereas Keith was trained in an ARL program. Keith, like Bridget, described “sink or swim” experiences, yet he did not seem to impose these on his own mentees.

Bridget stood out from her fellow mentors for several reasons. She spent an extended amount of time in classrooms with her parents who were both educators; the other three mentors did not have these experiences. Although she experienced “sink or swim” experiences like Keith did, she saw these as beneficial and seemed to project her own preferred way of learning onto her TCs (Grossman, 1991). Perhaps as a result of these experiences and beliefs, Bridget barely engaged with her TCs during the program, and did not seem to shift away from the methods used in her own preparation.

Discussion

Since the 1980s, the field of teacher preparation in the U.S. has seen the rise of forms of preparation outside of colleges and universities, such as ARL programs (Feistritzer, 2011) and, within the last two decades, teacher residency programs (Solomon, 2009). Teacher preparation is changing, and research must respond to these changes to understand the effects on the field. This broad range of preparation experiences may influence mentor teachers’ identities (Kwan & Lopez-Real, 2010), and understanding how mentors are shaped by their own mentoring experiences as an extended apprenticeship of observation is just one example of how to respond. Our findings have several implications for teacher preparation and research.

Traditional programs, ARL programs, and PDSs may all have different and even competing visions. Thus, in designing mentor preparation programs, this training must be considered and leveraged. It is estimated that teachers spend 13,000 hours in schools as students before they become teachers (Sykes, Bird, & Kennedy, 2010). Mentor teachers have not only gone through the same apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975) but have spent additional

time as mentees in teacher preparation programs. As Borg (2004) explained, the apprenticeship of observation allows individuals to recognize when they are being ineffective or using traditional methods rather than student-centered methods, but because of their extensive background observational experiences they feel powerless to change their methods. Mentors have even more apprenticeship hours than the TCs and may be even more unwilling to try methods that are different from those that their previous mentors used.

All of these experiences led to the formation of our participants' social identities as mentor teachers in complex ways. For example, despite entering through an ARL program with very little support, Keith proved to be a collaborative and supportive mentor. Bridget, on the other hand, entered teaching through a traditional program but likely required more intensive coaching and reflection to provide hands-on support to new teachers who might require it since this seemed to go against the beliefs she professed. Furthermore, she did not seem to be aware that she was not providing the feedback that she expressed as valuable. Thus, any program designed to prepare mentors for work with their TCs might require reflection-in-action (Schön, 1983) in which mentors use video evidence to metacognitively explore their actions and discover any potential disconnects between their beliefs and practices. What was clear to us as researchers may not have been evident to Bridget who did not view these data. The metacognition that occurs through reflection-in-action stimulates "reflection on patterns, interactions, and relationships in different fields of knowledge and practice" (Roglio & Light, 2009, p. 162), and this type of thinking could help break the cycle of relying on traditional methods that are created by the apprenticeship of observation.

Along the same lines, more research is needed to see if our results can be supported in other settings. Specifically, how are other mentor teachers who have been trained through ARL

programs, traditional programs, PDSs, or even teacher residencies working with TCs and novice teachers? Although Keith grew to understand the importance of mentoring, how will other ARL-trained mentor teachers respond? Will they adopt the same hands-off, sink-or-swim approach that Bridget advocated? To date, only traditional teacher preparation programs and PDSs have been compared in one small study of mentoring (Klieger & Oster-Levinz, 2015). We add another layer to this work through studying mentors prepared through an ARL program, a PDS, and traditional, university-based programs. The current international teacher shortage (UNESCO, 2015) may be driving the same adoption of ARL programs that we have seen in the study's setting in tandem with the call for more clinically rich programs (NCATE Blue Ribbon Panel, 2010) thus creating even further divisions or differences in preparation programs. Researching these programs in conjunction with reflection-in-action could give us a more robust understanding of how mentors develop their practice and break the apprenticeship of observation cycle. Moreover, teacher residency programs serve a variety of purposes including forming partnerships between school districts and universities and driving competition with higher education (Solomon, 2009). It is important to study and understand not only the influence of teacher preparation programs on TCs, but also on veteran teachers who become mentors and teacher leaders.

Research on mentor teachers is particularly important in times of teacher shortages when an additional burden is placed onto mentor teachers at both the preservice and inservice levels (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016). Their contributions to both P-12 students and TCs deserve to be recognized. The current study is one effort toward this goal.

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Appendix: Mentor Teacher Interview Protocol (Abbreviated)

1. Tell me about your background and why you decided to become a teacher.
2. Tell me about your experiences in your teacher education program.
 - a. What were the strongest aspects of your preparation?
 - b. What were the weakest aspects of your preparation?
3. Did you have any mentoring as a new teacher? If so, what was it like?
4. Tell me about your beliefs about teaching.
5. Tell me about your beliefs about students.
 - a. How do students learn best?
 - b. What do students need in order to be able to learn? ...
8. Tell me about your teaching practices.
 - a. Walk me through a typical lesson in your classroom.
 - b. Describe the methods you use most successfully in your teaching (e.g., presenting and explaining, direct instruction, concept teaching, cooperative learning, problem-based learning, or inquiry learning)? Why do you think it's so successful?
 - c. Describe the methods you find to be least successful in your teaching? Why are they ineffective?
9. How do you approach working with preservice teachers?
 - a. What do they need in order to be successful?
10. How do you collaborate with other teachers?
11. What are your goals for working with middle school students during [Southwestern] Academy?
12. What are your goals for working with preservice teachers during [Southwestern] Academy?