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The Practicum Dyad: Investigating Collaborations between Resident Teachers and University Supervisors to Support New Educators

By

HEATHER BALLINGER
DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

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DAVIS

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2021

The Practicum Dyad: Investigating Collaborations between Resident Teachers and University
Supervisors to Support New Educators

ABSTRACT

The practicum experience is critical to the preparation of future teachers, yet the working relationships between resident teachers (RTs) and university supervisors (USs) as they provide co-supervision to preservice teachers (PSTs) has received little focus in the empirical literature. Much can be learned from understanding the working relationships, and efforts of collaboration, between the RT/US dyad in support of PSTs. This qualitative study examined how these supervising partners view their roles and the roles of their counterparts in their working relationships to support PSTs during the practicum in one school of education at a large, land-grant university in the western U.S. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with thirteen participants of this teacher preparation program, which included five university supervisors (US) and eight resident teachers (RT) who were all involved in supervising PSTs during their practicum. All interviews were transcribed and analytic coding completed.

The experiences of the participants ranged from 1-15 years in their RT or US role, participant vignettes and collective thematic findings are presented. Four major themes emerged after coding that have important implications for teacher preparation programs. The primary dyadic relationships for both RT and US were with the PST rather than with each other. The concept of a triad relationship that explicitly emphasized the importance of the US/RT relationship within that triad did not emerge from either US or RT interviews. Both also mentored from a protective stance toward the PST, expressing the need to emotionally support PSTs during this difficult learning experience. However, despite this protective stance, both also worked with the assumption that PSTs would self-advocate if they needed more support, clarity

or resources from the supervisors or the program. Participants from both groups lacked role clarity from the university program and relied on their experiences as classroom teachers to support their PSTs in learning to teach. These findings provide opportunities to engage in programmatic reflection to engage faculty, USs and RTs in defining supervisory roles that are complementary and collaborative, committing resources to preparing supervisors for their roles and creating opportunities for ongoing collaboration during the practicum with the goal of developing strong, collaborative relationships among all the triad (RT/US/PST) partners during the practicum.

DEDICATION

In gratitude, I dedicate this dissertation to my loving family. Especially my mom, Robin (aka "Ging"), who has been a constant source of support, advice, and encouragement during the challenges of balancing life, work, and a doctoral program during a pandemic. Mom, I am truly thankful for the help and guidance you have provided to me throughout my life and this educational endeavor. Thank you for your unconditional love and good examples which have taught me the value and rewards of hard work for the things that I aspire to achieve.

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The completion of this educational journey would not have been possible without the support and contributions of the caring and knowledgeable community who have guided me along the way.

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Thank you to the UC Davis Graduate School of Education community of faculty and staff who guided our cohort, adapting to ever changing shelter in place, COVID-19 related restrictions and generally making things work while facing unprecedented obstacles. Thank you for

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Background

Teaching is a dynamic, ever-changing profession that requires complex professional decision making, excellent communication skills, deep understanding of learning theory and content knowledge, and empathy and advocacy for students and their families (Ovens et al., 2016). According to the Common Core State Standards Initiative (2020), public school teachers in California are tasked with providing "clear and consistent learning goals to help prepare students for college, career, and life" (para. 1). Many CCSS learning goals include incremental skill building towards advanced levels of complex problem solving, creativity, argumentation, collaboration, and differentiation across subject areas. Despite the challenge of increased standards and accountability measures for new teachers, how these ambitious skills are to be taught is tasked to university and college credential programs and local schools that host novice teachers through partnerships with higher education programs.

Two invaluable practicum participants that work in tandem to support novice teachers are the university supervisor (US) and the resident teacher (RT). In this study, higher education based teacher supervisors are referred to as US, as this is the term used by the university of study and should not discount small colleges that also maintain strong teacher education programs. Ensuring a strong supervision dyad between the US and the RT to support the preservice teacher (PST) is an essential component of the teacher education process, as it provides access to knowledgeable and experienced professionals who can provide a support system that ideally encourages effective teaching practices. Despite the importance of the dyad relationship between

RT and US, the California Commission on Teaching Credentialing (CCTC) makes no mention of it, nor does it provide guidance for how to facilitate strong relationships in support of PSTs.

PSTs arrive for their credential preparation having already spent thousands of hours in classrooms as student learners, observing and evaluating the actions of their own teachers from K-12 to college. While concurrently completing their university coursework, PSTs enter their RTs' classrooms ready to try out teaching strategies they have been introduced to, as well as call on experiences they have had from their past as students (Borg, 2004). Lortie (1975) described this phenomenon as "the apprenticeship of observation," highlighting that, unlike doctors, nurses, lawyers, and other novel apprenticeships, PSTs often arrive at their practicum experience believing that the frontstage behaviors (e.g., monitoring, correcting, and lecturing) of teachers encompass the majority of their job. This can be a problematic assumption when PSTs do not learn the behind-the-scenes actions of teachers that are often the most important, including planning, reflection, goal setting, and assessment (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Johnson, 1994). To have access to these less visible but equally important aspects of teaching, PSTs learn under the guidance of both an experienced K-12 RT and a US (Bates et al., 2011). The relationship between the RT and US is of critical importance within the practicum, as they together scaffold the learning of the PST, providing opportunities to practice and reflect while allowing the PST to assume more and more responsibility for both the class and curriculum (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005).

Robust literature on various aspects of PST, RT, and US practicum will be reviewed in detail, focused on three major themes, which include the "disconnect" between academic pedagogy and school site placement, influence of power hierarchies within the practicum triad,

and inadequate preparation resources. Despite this wide range of literature on the practicum experience, there remains a gap within practicum research that specifically investigates the dyad relationship formed between RT and US in terms of role clarity, shared conceptual frameworks and expectations of the relationship, and the resources they need. It is this identified gap in the empirical literature that this study hopes to address (Bacharach et al., 2010; Dooley et al., 2011).

My goal in this study was to examine the meaningful working relationships between USs and RTs in one school of education at a large, land-grant university in the western United States. Much can be learned from increasing our understanding of the working relationships of these important dyad members as they work together in support of PSTs in learning to teach. This study explores ways to bolster and strengthen the practicum experience by centering the voices of PST mentors and evaluators.

Research Statement

This qualitative study explores the working relationships of the RT and US dyad in shaping the PST experience during the practicum. The purpose of this research is to address the gap in empirical research that scaffolds our understanding of how to strengthen and sustain the key relationships among the partners in the resident teacher, university supervisor, and preservice teacher triad. This case study focuses on the voices of the RT/US dyad to present an in-depth understanding of working relationships as they support PST preparation within a teacher education preparation program at a large land-grant university. This study focuses on the dyad relationship between the RT/US to examine the supports, systems, and structures drawn upon and developed between themselves to make their working relationships reflective of program and personal insight into learning to teach. USs and RTs will reflect on their supervision and

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mentoring experiences, navigating program requirements and practicum experiences in support

of PSTs. This study focused on the following three research questions:

Research Questions

- How do university supervisors and resident teachers interpret their role, and the role of their counterpart, to collaboratively support preservice teachers in learning to teach?

- How do university supervisors and resident teachers collaborate to align pedagogical practices into their mentoring practices to support preservice teachers in learning to teach?

- How do university supervisors and resident teachers incorporate and align the program pillars of reflective practice, collaboration, advocacy, and inquiry into their mentoring practices to support preservice teachers in learning to teach?

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

In this chapter, I begin by providing information about the context and terms related to the research study. Thereafter, I review the expansive body of literature that addresses the practicum and relational dynamics between resident teachers (RTs), university supervisors (USs), and preservice teachers (PSTs) within participating K-12 schools and credential programs. I then discuss three closely related thematic areas of research which emerged in reviewing the literature on the clinical practicum experience as a critical part of teacher preparation. That section concludes with the review of the literature focused on understanding RT/US dynamics within the available studies. This chapter concludes with my presentation of the theoretical frameworks that guide the direction of the research in this study; conceptions of teacher knowledge (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999), teacher learning communities (Shulman & Shulman, 2004), and cognitive apprenticeship theory (Collins et al., 1991).

Context and Terms

The RT and US bring different strengths and skills to benefit the PST and K-12 students. The US serves as the liaison between the university curriculum and the classroom and guides the US/RT/PST triad to ensure university program requirements and the Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs) designed by the CCTC are successfully completed. The RT provides insight into the daily realities of teaching, including both the front and backstage skills, provides access to K-12 students, and supports the PST as they make the steady transition from student of learning to teacher of students. Ideally, the US and RT develop a collaborative and supportive working relationship through shared visions of good teaching and learning, frequent visits at the

school site, observation debriefs, and productive feedback to help the PST reach their agreed-upon goals. Despite the importance of the dyad relationship between RT and US, the CCTC makes no mention of it, nor does it provide guidance for how to facilitate strong relationships between them. University programs define the preliminary parameters of these relationships, with some programs facilitating them by providing joint RT and US trainings and professional development opportunities; however, this is not consistent across programs. Universities that support these opportunities recognize the importance of this dyad in providing a strong scaffold for PSTs that bridges the university program curriculum and the school site experiences to develop ambitious, innovative teachers for K-12 students.

All PSTs in California, regardless of program, are required to participate in 600 clinical practice hours to earn their credential (CCTC, 2016). The parameters of these hours are primarily determined by the university, communicated via program documents, trainings, and US liaised interactions with the RT and PST. Guidelines on clinical practicums are broadly provided by the CCTC, requiring that they are "designed in such a way that candidates learn from experienced educators, are evaluated against the Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs), and have the support and guidance they need to become effective educators" (CCTC, 2016, p. 2). In Standard 4 of the *Preliminary Multiple Subject and Single Subject Credential Program Standards,* the CCTC requires university program faculty, program supervisors (US), and district-employed supervisors (RT) to "monitor and support candidates during their progress towards mastering the TPEs . . . the program provides support and assistance to candidates and only retains candidates who are suited for advancement into teaching" (CCTC, 2016, pp. 6-7). In addition to

coursework, the RT and US work with their PST to guide and determine their fitness for one of the most challenging professions.

Who are University Supervisors (US)?

University Supervisors (USs), referred to as "program supervisors" by the CCTC, are selected by the university program and must be "individuals who are credentialed or who have equivalent experience in educator preparation" (CCTC, 2016, p. 11). How USs are selected and retained varies by university. Some programs employ graduate students (former K-12 educators transitioning into higher education) while others favor mostly retired teachers and administrators. Hiring mostly retired teachers and administrators as USs, raises critical questions about who is hired to support RTs and PSTs during the practicum. According to the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), and the National Teacher and Principal Survey (NTPS), USs remain a mostly white, female group. USs are former teachers and sometimes retired administrators. In 2017-18, 54% of public school principals identified as female, and 78% of all public school principals were white (NCES, 2019). Per CCTC requirements, "program supervisors maintain current knowledge of effective supervision approaches such as cognitive coaching, adult learning theory, and current content-specific pedagogy and instructional practices" (2016, p. iv). How USs are prepared to supervise and support RTs and PSTs is variable and also primarily determined by the university program (Anderson, 2009; Zeichner, 2010).

Who are Resident Teachers (RT)?

Selection criteria for RTs, referred to as "district-employed supervisors" by the CCTC and known in the university of study as "resident teachers" or "cooperating teachers," have more

specific criteria and guidelines for university programs than for USs. University programs must select RTs "who hold a clear credential in the content area for which they are providing supervision and have a minimum of three years of content area K-12 teaching experience" (2016, p. iv). Although minimum qualifications are clear, guidelines for the matching of PST, RT, and US are less defined, described as "a collaborative process between the school district and the program" (2016, p. 2). To familiarize the RT with program requirements, university programs are required to provide a minimum of 10 hours of initial orientation to the program curriculum about "effective supervision approaches such as cognitive coaching, adult learning theory, and current content-specific pedagogy and instructional practice" (p. 2). In addition to this, the university is required to keep RTs "current in the knowledge and skills for candidate supervision and program expectations" (2016, p. 2). Although not explicitly stated, in my professional experience, much of the responsibility of communicating university and program expectations to the RT falls on the US, whose primary role is to liaise between the university and K-12 school site.

Literature Review

Teacher education programs rely heavily on RTs and USs to support and prepare future teachers, but there is a significant gap in the literature concerning the roles, relationships, and resources needed by RTs and USs to best prepare PSTs during the clinical practicum (Bacharach et al., 2010; Dooley et al., 2011). Three closely related thematic areas of research emerged in reviewing the literature on the clinical practicum experience as a critical part of teacher preparation. The first thematic area relates to studies investigating the disconnect between the academic faculty, content curriculum, and the RT at the clinical practicum site (Anderson, 2007;

Bullough & Draper, 2004; Cuenca, 2011; Smagorinsky et al., 2004; Valencia et al., 2009). The second important thematic area includes the influence of power hierarchies on role clarity and collaboration within the practicum triad of USs, RTs, and PSTs (Anderson, 2007; Bates et al., 2011; Beck & Kosnick, 2002; Bullough & Draper, 2004; Cuenca, 2011; Long et al., 2013; Martin et al., 2011; Smagorinsky et al., 2004; Steadman & Brown, 2011; Valencia et al., 2009). The final thematic area includes US and RT contributions to "ambitious teaching" that encourages critical thinking and curricular change that influence PST development (Anderson & Stillman, 2013; Braaten, 2019; Danielowich & McCarthy, 2013; Long et al., 2013). Explicit research on the US/RT dyad is lacking, but studies available implicitly assume relationships about the US/RT dyad. Within these studies, US/RT relationships function amidst disconnects and poor role clarity and within power hierarchies that provide opportunities to further understanding of how to best help PSTs achieve ambitious teaching.

Disconnect Between University and School Site

Investigating relationships between the RT and US is essential to understanding and bridging the gap between the university and the school practicum site. The disconnect experienced by PSTs between the university curriculum and the public school classroom is not new and remains persistent in the research. Over a century ago, John Dewey (1904) warned that an overemphasis on practice leads the PST to mirror or mimic the RT, causing an unquestioned acceptance of RTs' techniques and away from the development of reflective inquiry. Cultivating continuity between the university and school site experience should be a goal of teacher preparation and a primary focus of the RT/US dyad. Unfortunately, the literature suggests continuity is often not found within and across teacher preparation programs (Darling-Hammond

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& Bradsford, 2005; Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1985). Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann (1985) identified and termed this conflict the "two-worlds pitfall." According to this seminal study, the conflict arises when PSTs experience a disconnect between the university curriculum and their RTs' teaching philosophies and classroom strategies, which "arise from the fact that teacher education goes on in two distinct settings and from the fallacious assumption that making connections between these two worlds is straightforward and can be left to the novice" (p. 63). This notable challenge has led researchers to take an ecological approach to researching the practicum triad, utilizing a framework of activity theory to position student teaching as:

> A "collective" activity because it involves not just the student teacher but also the cooperating teacher and the students in the classroom in which student teaching occurs, as well as the [university] supervisor and other members of the university community with whom the student teacher has been involved and to whom the supervisor and student teacher are responsible. (Valencia et al., 2009, p. 306)

By taking a collective (ecological) approach, Valencia et al. (2009) explored opportunities to collaborate and further the learning of the PST within the triad during the practicum. The qualitative data analysis revealed two important themes: (a) all members of the triad negotiated the shifting terrain of the student teaching experience, adjusting their roles throughout the experience and (b) opportunities to learn to teach language arts "were few and far between, despite the fact that all participants agreed this was the primary goal of the setting" (p. 309). The authors contend that the mimetic perspective of student teaching remains common, with few examples of triad experiences in which the three work together to help the PST develop innovative teaching strategies that reflect university curriculum for their future classrooms. Despite efforts by the US to disrupt PST mimetic inclinations, incorporate feedback on teaching

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subject matter, and link to methods course information, research suggests that disrupting mimetic practices is often unsuccessful.

Conflicts with RT and the university arise when traditional K-12 teaching practices differ from those of progressive, Piagetian constructivist learning advocated by most universities (Smagorinsky et al., 2004). Bullough and Draper (2004) used a case study of a failed clinical practicum triad (RT, US, PST) to highlight the sometimes disparate goals and strategies used by RT and US in aiding the development of new educators. Bullough and Draper (2004) provided rare insight into the clinical practicum triad, describing it as "inevitably hierarchical and thus promotes shifting alliances, one with the university supervisor on top and another with the cooperative teacher on top, with a conflict of potential consequence" (p. 407). The study found the relationship between RT and PST is strong and highly valued by the PST because of the importance of positive teaching evaluations and acculturation into the K-12 context. Within this study, the US positioned himself as a supporter of ambitious, inquiry-driven mathematics instruction. From his perspective, his primary role was to support the PST in improving mathematics instruction in a situation in which he did not believe the RT or school site was innovative in math instruction. On the other hand, the RT cared deeply about her current students and rejected the US interventions that pushed the PST to utilize his newly developed curriculum. Ultimately, the unproductive and irreconcilable differences among the US and RT forced the PST to choose sides and align with the RT whom she eventually identified as most important to her professional career. The findings of this study highlight the potential for a disconnect between the university and school site and the importance of a finding ways to support a cohesive dyad between RT and US in order to address the *two-worlds pitfall*.

A notable extension of the *two-worlds pitfall* as PSTs learn to teach in multiple spaces has been developed by Smagorinsky and colleagues, described as the *multiple-worlds pitfall*, noting the various influences over PST learning including (a) RTs own beliefs and instruction practices, (b) the school culture, (c) PST prior educational experiences, and (d) student responses during classroom instruction (Smagorinsky et al., 2013; Smagorinsky et al., 2015). Smagorinsky and colleagues challenge the binary nature of the *two-worlds pitfall*, which positions conservative K-12 schools against progressive universities, fighting to gain the loyalty and attention of PSTs, with the RT and US at odds. Instead, the research in their studies of English Language Arts curriculum in both secondary and elementary schools highlights that K-12 and universities alike hold competing beliefs even within their own institutions. These competing beliefs about teaching expands the contextual influences of PSTs in learning to teach to include federal and state curriculum mandates, state and local funding availability, and dispositions of students within the K-12 classroom and how these relationships are mediated by the RT (Barnes & Smagorinsky, 2016).

Beck and Kosnik (2002) conducted a 4-year study of a practicum supervision model that required involvement of tenured and tenured-track education faculty in an attempt to alleviate PST- and RT-reported feelings of separation between university coursework and the practicum experience. Integrating tenured-track faculty as USs represents a shift from commonplace approaches that often include adjunct faculty, retired teachers or education professors, graduate/doctoral students, and special supervisory staff who carry out clinical practicum supervision. The authors contend that faculty have not traditionally participated in supervision during the practicum experience because it is "not as highly regarded or rewarded as graduate

work, research and publishing . . . many education professors believe they can make a greater contribution to schooling through research and theorizing" (Beck & Kosnik, 2002, pp. 6-7). Despite qualitative results in this study indicating improvements in K-12 partnerships, RTs' and PSTs' increased feelings of worth and improved experiences when the faculty were engaged, faculty remained caught up in "a university culture that downgrades the practical and sees academic work as not requiring much reference to practice" (p. 16). Due to university emphasis on theory and research, the practical nature of the practicum limits the investment of faculty in this aspect of teacher preparation, contributing to disconnect and poor communication between practicum partners.

Researchers have begun using more ecological frameworks to explore the practicum that position the triad as a network of individuals who negotiate roles and responsibilities throughout the experience. Within this framework, the focus of the practicum experience is on the development of a successful new teacher identity, despite the often conflicting notions of how this is defined and how best to accomplish it. Many studies acknowledge the pivotal role RTs play in the development of PSTs, but very few examine the relationship between RT and US in respect to their collaborative roles in supporting the development of PSTs and their identities as teachers. Further, there has been little attention to how USs function as the ongoing connection to the university, how they perform during their observational/reflective role with PSTs, or how they support the RT. USs should serve as primary connectors among the university and the school site, RT, and PST. For this to be successful, USs need a strong understanding of their philosophical stance as educators and the role they play in supporting the other triad members

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(Bates et al., 2011; Long et al., 2013). How USs develop these philosophical stances as educators and how these are communicated within the triad remains understudied.

Hierarchies and Role Clarity

Another thematic area highlighted within the review of the literature focuses on the hierarchies within teacher preparation programs between university and school sites that contribute to confusion over roles and responsibilities between members of the practicum triad and potentially impedes the formation of cohesive US/RT dyads. Research on the influence of the RT on the development of PST identity (Anderson, 2007; Cuenca, 2011), on the role of the US within the triad (Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Bates et al., 2011; Danielowich & McCarthy, 2013; Long et al., 2013; Steadman & Brown, 2011), and on the triad dynamics of all three participants (Bullough & Draper, 2004; Smagorinsky et al., 2004; Valencia et al., 2009) has identified the importance of both clear role definition and preparation.

Traditional practicum placements often operate in hierarchical ways, with universities on the top tier, dictating the roles and responsibilities of the participants (PST, RT, and US) with the purpose of combining university-based theoretical studies with practical experiences in the classroom (Zeichner, 2010). Conceptualizing university and K-12 campus connections that are more egalitarian and democratic in practice may help alleviate some of the role confusion and tensions that teacher-education programs currently experience (Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Zeichner, 2010). Less hierarchical approaches include teachers-in-residence programs (Zeichner, 2010), faculty associate positions (Bullough et al., 2004), as well as teacher residency models (Dooley et al., 2011). These approaches require reimagining the practicum by developing a new model of hybrid educators, using the theoretical framework of "third space" or "hybridity theory"

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(Bhabba, 1990). Third space comes from hybridity theory and recognizes that individuals draw on multiple discourses to make sense of the world. Zeichner's use of third space is related to the creation of hybrid spaces in PST education programs that "bring together school and university-based teacher educators and practitioners and academic knowledge in new ways to enhance the learning of prospective teachers" (p. 92). In Zeichner's conception, hybrid educators reject the binary of either/or spaces and aim to transform learning between the university and school site into a both/also point of view.

Related studies highlight efforts by university faculty to implement Zeichner's hybrid educator concept with the goal of developing less hierarchical, more democratic connections between universities and K-12 schools. Martin et al. (2011) completed a self-study documenting their 3-year effort as "hybrid educators" to develop relationships among themselves, other university educators, PSTs, RTs, and their partnership schools that strived to move beyond traditional hierarchical models of university supervision. Through interactive and collaborative processes, the researchers documented their efforts to build K-12/university connections by forming relationships with school site principals, conducting on-site seminars for PSTs, and meeting monthly with RTs as a group in attempts to disrupt the traditional hierarchy of PST/RT/US triad dynamics and develop a more ecological approach of building collaborative relationships between members of the school community that influence the experience of PSTs. The three strongest themes that emerged from this study were the importance of relationship building, the complexity of the work of hybrid educators, and the tensions that arose. The researchers found that as a US, they "constantly shifted roles during the school site interactions, moving through varying degrees of intersubjectivity and distributions of power" (Martin et al.,

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2011, p. 303). This shifting power dynamic was highlighted during US interactions with RTs, whom they identified as the most important partner in the school site relationship, but also the most challenging partner because "on one hand, we [USs] had a vested power (or sense of power) from our university in roles as teacher educators and professional developers. On the other hand, they [RTs] were our colleagues: Each of us [USs] was once a classroom teacher" (p. 304). One example of the tension in this dynamic was that RTs were happy to receive advice about how to mentor PSTs, but the researchers in their role as USs did not feel it appropriate or within their role to address instances in which they disagreed with RT classroom practice.

The researchers' relationships with PSTs were the most varied and complicated. Power dynamics surfaced often despite the researchers' attempts to foster collaborative spaces for PSTs to share and learn from them as USs and from each other's experiences at their school sites. The researchers noted that:

> Although we endeavored to "flatten the power structures" of these relationships, establishing collaborative interactions with preservice teachers was problematic. This was often a hit-and-miss affair that seemed to have more to do with development and capabilities of student teachers than anything we did to foster collaboration. (p. 305)

The differences in PST abilities and development as educators significantly affected the researcher's ability to develop a collaborative learning environment in their role as USs. The researchers struggled with PSTs "who perceived us as the teacher and the setting as a transmissive rather than discursive one" (p. 306). Interactions such as these highlight the complexities and power dynamics of working relationships that USs meet while interacting at the school site.

Bullough et al. (2004) also studied the results of their attempts to reconceptualize university/public school partnerships by hiring exemplary RTs for 2-year contracts to serve as

Clinical Faculty Associates (CFAs) for the university, a role similar to USs in traditional teacher preparation programs. The researchers interviewed a total of 49 participants, 32 current and former CFAs (1996-2004), 14 faculty members, the dean of the School of Education, and two department chairs to understand the evolution of the CFA role and "how it is understood by both university-based and clinical faculty" (p. 507). When researchers asked about CFAs connection to the university, the results were conflicted. Many grew from and enjoyed the experience but highlighted the temporary nature of their 2-year appointment, making connections with university faculty difficult. As a result, the CFA developed a community of practice amongst themselves that supported their shared experiences, without much contact with university faculty unless it was structured by the university (e.g., faculty meetings). When interviewing the faculty, tensions regarding the nature and differences between the theoretical learning within faculty-directed curriculum and the practical, school-based experiences provided by CFA were highlighted, as well as the fear that CFA were seen as more influential to the development of PSTs because of their more frequent contact with PSTs in comparison to university faculty.

Overall, the significant and relevant finding of this study was that "The university-based teacher educators seemed unaware that the clinical faculty (CFA) only wished to be supportive. On their part, the CFA seemed unaware that they were seen as threatening to the university-based faculty's authority" (p. 514). Ultimately, the researchers determined that making connections between university faculty and CFA was difficult due to the short term of CFA service and the threat to authority felt by many of the university faculty. Traditionally, the role of the university (faculty) is seen as transmissive, as well as authoritative. If faculty feel threatened by the experiential knowledge of current school-based teaching compared to university

theoretical and research-based practices, they lose the opportunity to learn from the CFAs and the opportunity to better align content with practice in university coursework.

Alternatives to the traditional practicum triad models offer the possibility of less hierarchical relationships between universities and school sites and increased clarity of roles within the triad; however, changing long established models presents many challenges. The studies detailed here examined different approaches to reconceptualizing the relationships between the university and K-12 educators and the inherent difficulties experienced by the participating partners in implementing changes. The researchers in these studies clearly demonstrated that, despite best intentions, power differentials within university and school site settings are difficult to change over the short term and must be considered when conducting future research and in attempting to implement change for the long term. Ultimately, the authors of these studies contend that third space concepts and hybrid teacher educator models offer transformative alternatives to the traditional hierarchical triad, despite the challenges. While the results of these studies are complex, they underscore that US/RT relationships are influenced by the systems they participate in, highlighting the importance of studies that re-conceptualize issues of control and power that may affect the supports provided by USs/RTs to PSTs during the learning to teach process.

Supporting Ambitious Teaching

If universities provide curriculum on current student-centered methodologies (e.g., inquiry, project-based learning, cooperative learning) required by recently adopted state standards including the Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs), Common Core, Next Generation Science Standards, the History-Social Science Framework and the teacher

performance assessment, edTPA, then the placement site, and US/RT dyad, must also support

these standards of the profession in practice (CCTC, 2016). Despite its importance, few studies

address the concept of student-centered methodology, termed "ambitious teaching." Each of the

studies focused on one of the key players in the dyad, the RT and the US separately. Evaluated

collectively, this suggests that the US/RT need to collaborate around what ambitious teaching

looks like. Examining the perceived roles of USs and RTs in relationship to each other and in

relationship to the PST may help clarify ways that USs can best support RTs as well as PSTs and

help support ambitious teaching strategies within the classroom.

In a recent review of clinical practicum experiences, Anderson and Stillman (2013)

argued that the default experience of PSTs is to replicate RT instructional practices rather than

incorporate strategies taught through university coursework. Braaten (2019) suggested that

reconceptualization of instructional practices towards more "ambitious" teaching practices, one

that focuses on understanding how PSTs reorganize, repurpose, and retool instructional practice

to meet and respond to the needs of the students within their classroom, should be the focus of

teacher preparation programs. Ambitious teaching is defined differently, depending on the focus

of the research and researcher. Braaten (2019) defined ambitious teaching within the study of 22

science teaching candidates as:

> (1) Eliciting and interpreting students' science ideas, (2) working with students'
> contributions to build shared understanding through model-and explanation-construction,
> and (3) pressing students to revise, compare, and weigh models and explanations based
> on available evidence. (Windschitl et al., 2012, as cited in Braaten, 2019, p. 62)

Using situative perspective theory and the concept of figured worlds to "examine how

people construct and reconstruct their work and selves across different contexts and

communities" (p. 64), Braaten collected and analyzed transcribed observations of PSTs teaching

science and post-observation interviews (*n* = 88) to develop an understanding of how PSTs navigated and made adjustments to their teaching practice as a result of their methods course instruction and their RT interactions. Ultimately, Braaten identified a persistence of differences between status quo (rote memorization of facts with teacher-centered instruction) and ambitious science teaching, detailing school site experiences with RTs that both afford and constrain PSTs' efforts to teach ambitiously. Despite promising findings, the study mostly focused on RT/PST interactions and missed the role of the US within the relationship to advance ambitious teaching strategies and its effect on the dyad.

The type of support, or conversation frames, used by USs while helping PSTs develop visions of "ambitious teaching" in mathematics and science education related to the new CCSS, was the focus of Long et al.'s 2013 study. Ambitious teaching in this study is defined through the programmatic goals of the institution being studied, reflective of recent standards in Common Core curriculum. These goals included "developing discourse communities in the classroom, attending to the needs of diverse learners, designing instruction to develop content area literacy, and analyzing and reflecting on practice" (p. 182). Through analyzing post-observation meeting interactions, the researchers identified three conversational frame types that influenced the effectiveness of US/PST interactions towards more ambitious teaching: Educative, Evaluative, and Supportive, and determined that the most useful conversational frame used by USs to support ambitious teaching by student teachers to be the Educative frame. In this study, Educative frame conversations:

> Were characterized by discussions in which the supervisors provided specific comments
> on student teacher practice, detailed explanations of their comments, and related
> suggestions for improvement; and student teachers described their teaching decisions,

analyzed classroom interactions, and asked questions as they analyzed their teaching. (Long et al., 2013, p. 184)

The authors also highlighted the importance of frame alignment between the US and PST. The study is one of the only studies to focus on the role of the US as a partner in furthering ambitious, standards-based teaching during the practicum. However, the study focused only on PST/US conferences and the role of the RT is left out, emphasizing the gap in our understanding of how ambitious teaching practices could be encouraged within the triad utilizing participation by the RT. Communication and shared goals among the RT/US dyad in supporting ambitious teaching remains unstudied.

Research on professional development with USs provides renewed vision for the potential influence they can have on the development of new educators and ambitious teaching practices. Danielowich and McCarthy (2013) designed an action research study which focused on understanding how creating and using videos of PSTs can help USs develop more of an inquiry stance toward their supervision by helping them analyze their existing approaches for supporting PST learning and further developing their own supervision pedagogies by creating and sharing their experiences through a Community of Practice (CoP). The inquiry approach advocated by Danielowich and McCarthy attempts to disrupt traditional K-12 pedagogical models of rote memorization of facts and the memetic practices of PST of their RT and guide PST towards more ambitious practices such as collaborative learning and student contributions during instruction. Utilizing video and participating in a CoP gave USs a platform to discuss and further PST learning, as well as help to clarify their influence within the practicum triad. Limitations of this study include limited mention of the RT as a potential collaborative partner, highlighting a tendency in the research to choose an either-or approach to US/RT studies within

the practicum. Further research into the role of CoPs, integration of technology, and the ability to influence the development of ambitious teaching in PSTs during supervision practices that involve both USs and RTs (and their ability to collaborate with shared vision of ambitious teaching) would add to our understanding of the practicum experience.

Conclusion

This literature review highlights the many challenges teacher preparation programs face in preparing highly qualified teachers and implement ambitious teaching strategies to prepare students to become informed citizens with critical thinking skills. The clinical practicum experience is pivotal in this preparation, yet there are significant gaps in our understanding of how to maximize the differing strengths and skills of the primary mentors in the clinical practicum, the US and the RT, in facilitating the transition from being a student of teaching to classroom teacher. The literature discussed here helps to identify these gaps, increasing my research interest on the perceived supports RTs need during the practicum experience from the USs and developing strategies to facilitate collaboration and communication between them. This dyad is essential to building and maintaining strong connections between K-12 school sites and universities, as well as helping alleviate common alienating experiences of PSTs as they navigate the between them.

Theoretical Framework

The working relationships of RTs and USs, how they navigate and engage with each other in support of PSTs learning to teach, is the focus of this study. In developing an analytic frame for this study, it is important to look beyond designated professional standards and take a closer look at both the "doing" and "knowing" of teaching and the teaching apprenticeship. The

frameworks presented here represent three conceptual areas that are foundational to this research, aimed at understanding the dyadic communication and relationships between RTs and USs. Two frameworks represent conceptions of teacher knowledge (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999) and teacher learning communities (Shulman & Shulman, 2004). Within these two frameworks, the philosophies that the RT and US have about teacher learning, and the similarities and differences of these beliefs, will ultimately influence how they structure their relationship to support their PST. The final conceptual framework addresses *how* RTs and USs are supervising PSTs via Cognitive Apprenticeship Theory (Collins et al., 1991).

Conceptions of Teacher Knowledge (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999)

Examining Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (1999) conceptual theories about relationships of knowledge and practice as related to teacher learning illuminates the different frames a RT and US potentially have about the purpose of teacher education and how PSTs learn to teach. According to Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999):

> Different conceptions of teacher learning—although not always made explicit—lead to very different ideas about how to improve teacher education and professional development, how to bring about school and curricular change, and how to assess and license teachers over the course of the professional life span. (p. 249)

The conceptions of teacher learning a RT or US has will influence their perceived roles and their interactions with each other and with their PST.

Three prominent conceptions of teacher learning, described within Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (1999) teacher learning framework, differ in purpose and have consequences for how RTs and USs structure their working relationships, thus affecting the learning and professional development of PSTs. The three conceptions are "knowledge-*for*-practice" (formal knowledge and theory), "knowledge-*in*-practice" (embedded in practice and reflections on practice), and

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"knowledge-*of*-practice" (intentional investigation, interrogation, and interpretation of teaching practice).

Knowledge-for-Practice. The most common operating framework of universities and teacher educators is "knowledge-*for*-practice," the idea that understanding and using knowledge from empirical studies and improving content knowledge should be the focus of teacher preparation programs. In teacher preparation programs that follow this model, learning to teach is seen as a process of learning from the research on teaching and gaining content knowledge of subject areas to improve practice. For example, if a RT and or a US base their mentoring practices with a "knowledge-*for*-practice" frame, they will likely rely on university faculty and curriculum to teach PSTs the theories and content knowledge necessary to be successful in their practicum placement. In "knowledge-*for*-practice" frameworks, RTs and USs see their roles as support providers to the university and PSTs as they apply theories from their coursework. The university is primarily responsible for preparing the PST through educational methods and theory courses demonstrated during the practicum under supervision by the RT and US. RTs and USs who follow a "knowledge-*for*-practice" framework believe there is a series of common "best practice" techniques (e.g., classroom management, instruction, curriculum, and assessment) "that transcend difference in local context and hence require minimal translation by teachers for use in the classrooms" (Fashola & Slavin, 1998, p. 28). Understanding and supporting these techniques would be the focus of support of the dyad for supporting their PST.

Knowledge-in-Practice. Alternately, "knowledge-*in*-practice" conceptual models of teacher learning emphasize the "artistry of practice," viewing teaching as an "uncertain and spontaneous craft situated and constructed in response to the particularities of everyday life in

schools and classrooms" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999, p. 262). Under this framework, teaching

is seen as the process of acting and thinking wisely in response to classroom activities; it is

action oriented. To improve teaching, more experience, observation, and reflection of

experienced teachers is paramount. RTs and or USs using this framework may see the university

as having a less important role in the preparation of teachers. This conception places time in the

classroom and experience above others; RTs and USs call primarily on their experiences in the

classroom to help prepare the PST for their role. They believe that "good teaching can be

coached and learned (but not taught) through reflective supervision or through a process of

coaching reflective teaching" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999, p. 269). Within this conception, the

focus is on experience and reflection to gain knowledge of teaching. Knowledge-*for*-practice and

knowledge-*in*-practice differ in that the latter acknowledges the active role of the learner, in this

case the PST, in the construction of their knowledge of how to teach.

  Knowledge-of-Practice. The final conception of teacher learning represents a critical

constructivist, agent of change position that centers on the concept that both knowers and

knowledge are connected to larger political and social agendas within education. According to

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999), "This third conception of teacher learning emphasizes images

of teacher as agent and of teaching as agency in the classroom and in larger educational

contexts" (p. 276). Under this conception, the RT, US, and PST operate on equal footing. The

RT or US base their conceptual understanding of learning to teach on the idea that:

> teachers learn by challenging their own assumptions; identifying salient issues of
> practice; posing problems; studying their own students, classrooms, and schools;
> constructing and reconstructing curriculum; and taking on roles of leadership and
> activism in efforts to transform classrooms, schools, and societies. (p. 278)

This final conception views building a sense of community and spirit of inquiry as essential to the construction of knowledge, a conjoining of understandings that would ideally occur during triad interactions. RTs and or USs that use this construction of teacher learning do not necessarily see themselves as the experts and instead view their role as fellow learners and critical change advocates, providing opportunities for PSTs to investigate their own positionalities as emerging teachers. For example, Bullough and Gitlin (1995) advocate PSTs develop "personal theories" to prompt students to think about who they are as teachers and students, particularly with regard to race, class, culture, ethnicity, language, and gender. RTs and or USs who advocate for social justice and advocate for school change operate within this frame and encourage their PST to understand themselves as learners as well as adopt an inquiry stance to their emerging teaching practice.

Overview of Three Conceptions of Teacher Learning. It is important to note that these three conceptions are not meant to be hierarchical and they do overlap. Each of the three conceptions represents a distinct view of how PST knowledge is developed and can be supported within the dyad. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) present these conceptions in separate categories, adapted by the researcher in Table 1. For the purposes of this study, I envisioned what the three conceptions might entail for PSTs needs and roles that the RT and US might engage in if their conception matched the description for each. In conceptualizing these scenarios, RTs and USs could implement a multifarious approach, in which they sometimes adapt or react to a supervision situation in a "knowledge-*for*" frame, in others a "knowledge-*in*" frame, and a "knowledge-*of*" frame in others. The research uncovered examples of an adapted frame approach specific to the dyad or triad experiences.

Table 1

Overview of Conceptions of New Teacher Learning

Knowledge-Practice Relationship	Knowledge-for-Practice	Knowledge-in-Practice	Knowledge-of-Practice
Conception described	Assumes the knowledge teachers need to teach well is produced primarily by university-based researchers and scholars in various disciplines	Teaching as a craft or art that is uncertain and spontaneous in reaction to the realities of everyday life in schools and classrooms	"Teachers learn by challenging their own assumptions; identifying salient issues of practice; posing problems; studying their own students, classrooms, and schools; constructing and reconstructing curriculum; and taking on roles of leadership and activism in efforts to transform classrooms, schools, and societies" (p. 278)
What PSTs need according to the conception to learn to teach	Subject matter knowledge, access to educational theories, conceptual frameworks for learning, expertise within content area	Learning to teach requires opportunities for practice, reflection, more and less experienced teachers work collaboratively to make implicit the exemplary practice of experienced teachers	Collaborative partners in inquiry need to be treated as co-constructors of knowledge and learning
Role of RT/US within this conception	Supervise, support, and help PST demonstrate how they use formal knowledge base in the daily work of the classroom	Assist PST through modeling and discussion of practice, use expertise to make sense of classroom experiences by connecting them to previous ones and others learned in practice information	Facilitate opportunities for joint collaboration among triad participants, provide self-reflection activities for PST to encourage understanding of positionality as teacher, help identify advocacy-minded educators at school site

Teacher Learner Communities

Shulman and Shulman (2004), through an investigation of how different teachers implement complex models of teaching and how they learn through the process, began to wonder about the variations they were seeing in teacher learning. Their work focuses on identifying the attributes needed for teaching in a "theory-rich, open-ended and content-intensive" classroom environment where students are active, constructing their own knowledge, and practicing metacognition (p. 261). According to Shulman and Shulman, an accomplished teacher:

> is a member of a professional community who is ready, willing, and able to teach and to learn from his or her teaching experiences. Thus, the elements of the theory are: Ready (possessing vision), Willing (having motivation), Able (both knowing and being able "to do"), Reflective (learning from experience), and Communal (acting as a member of a professional community). (p. 259)

Within this framework, dimensions of teacher learning are identified: Vision, Motivation, Understanding, and Practice (see Figure 1). Learning to teach occurs within and across these dimensions through the process of individual reflection and reflection within the context of a specific community. In the case of the proposed study, the community is part of the triad, with the US and RT working with shared commitment to support the PSTs' development. In this image, the community is layered on top of individual teacher learning, which is occurring within the sphere.

Figure 1

Frame for Conceptualizing and Directing Teacher Learning and Development Within Community Contexts
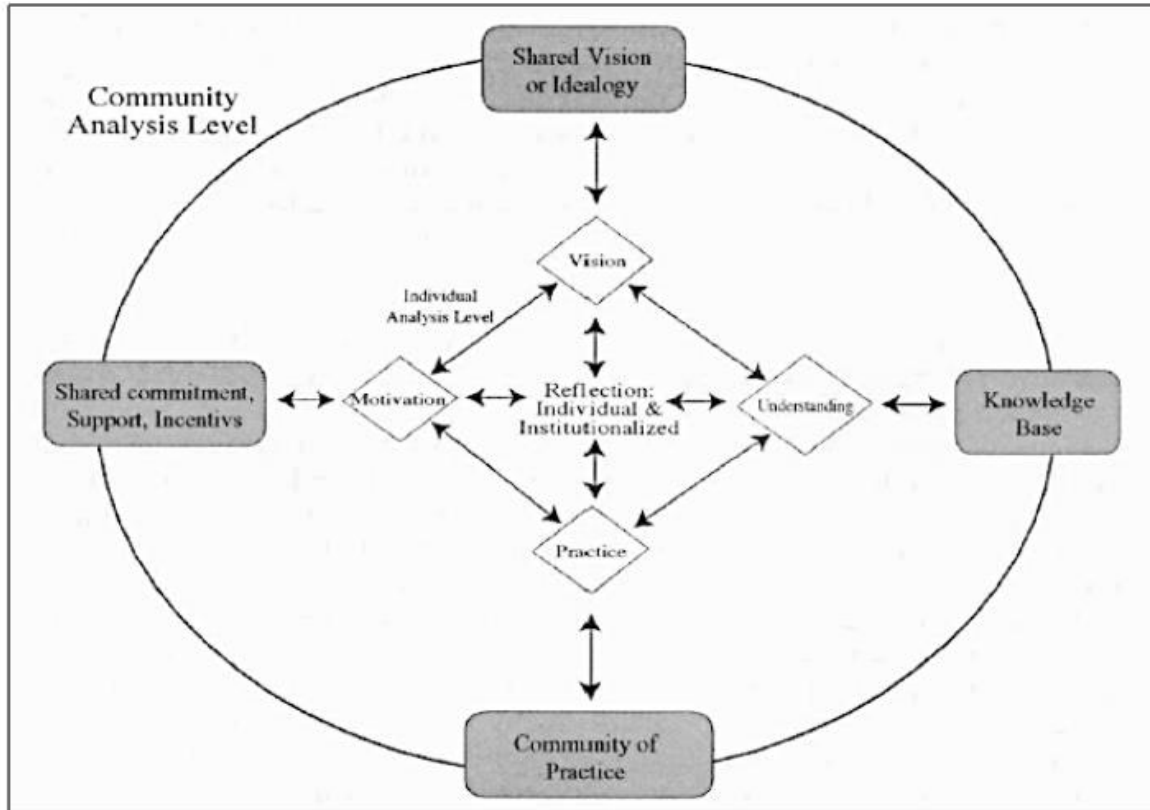
Note. From "How and What Teachers Learn: A Shifting Perspective," by L. S. Shulman & J. H. Shulman, 2004, *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, *36*(2), 257-271, p. 265.

The Shulman and Shulman (2004) model is complex, consisting of nested polygons representing multilayered conceptions of how new teachers learn and interact within their learning communities. According to Shulman and Shulman (2004):

> In both teacher education and school settings, educators must create environments that support, sustain, and 'tune' the visions, understandings, performances, motivations, and reflections of all its members. Thus, as Merton taught, the individual and community levels are both independent and interactive. (p. 267)

For the present study, the community context is most relevant, conceptually understood by the researcher as people (triad members) shaping their organizations, K-12 schools and a teacher education program, and those organizations, in turn shape them (Merton, 1967). Although this model is primarily focused on new teacher learning, this research will further the understanding of the RT and US as part of a community aimed at providing essential components and opportunities for designing learning experiences for PSTs, so they may explore teacher learning and identify areas within K12 classrooms that further encourage progress in their becoming a teacher. As partners in the learning-to-teach community, the RT/US dyad (depending on the circumstances of their working relationships) can "enhance the development of particular accomplishments, actively inhibit their development, or are neutral in respect to them" (Shulman & Shulman, 2004, p. 267). By viewing teacher learning as multi-layered and interconnected, this framework highlights the importance of understanding the connection between RTs and USs and their influence on PSTs learning to teach within a community context.

Cognitive Apprenticeship Theory

Cognitive apprenticeship is an instructional framework that is constructivist by design, supported by several learning theories, including Vygotsky's (Cole et al., 1978) sociocultural theory of learning and zone of proximal development, as well as situated cognition (Collins et al., 1991). Cognitive apprenticeship theory is modeled after traditional apprenticeships in which the novice observes the external behaviors of more experienced mentors. However, cognitive apprenticeships require that more knowledgeable others make explicit the implicit knowledge they possess. Put another way, the model endeavors to make the invisible (e.g., the thinking of experts) visible to the novice (Collins et al., 1991). In cognitive apprenticeships, participants co-

construct knowledge and learning together; theories are blended within the organization of traditional apprenticeships where experts (e.g., RTs and USs) model, scaffold, coach, and gradually release control of tasks as the novice learns to perform those tasks. For cognitive apprenticeships to be successful, the novice must learn (have access to) the internal, mental process of the experts (RT & US).

In many ways, the organization and conceptualization of the practicum experience is an apprenticeship. The practicum assumes that PSTs should be given opportunities to observe, engage in, and eventually create and implement curriculum for students in the classroom. Collins et al. (1991) outlined six teaching strategies that support cognitive apprenticeships: modeling, coaching, scaffolding, articulation, reflection, and exploration. They describe modeling, coaching, and scaffolding as the core of cognitive apprenticeships, "designed to help students acquire an integrated set of skills through processes of observation and guided practice" (p. 13). Articulation and reflection refer to opportunities for students to explain their own understanding around complex problem solving and also sharing and comparing their thinking between themselves and the experts. Finally, exploration encourages "learner autonomy, not only in carrying out expert problem-solving processes but also in defining or formulating the problems to be solved" (p. 13). The connections between how RTs and USs structure their work around the aforementioned goals of cognitive apprenticeship and their success with PSTs in assisting them in learning to teach warrants further study. Ideally, RTs and USs would be in regular contact, working to structure opportunities that reflect cognitive apprenticeship elements.

The cognitive apprenticeship framework has been used as an effective structure for learning in a variety of contexts, originally as a model for teachers to interact and develop

curriculum for students. The six foundational teaching strategies of cognitive apprenticeship theory provide a framework to evaluate the congruence between RTs/USs in the use of these strategies as a dyad to support PSTs. Based on cognitive apprenticeship theory, successful RT/US dyads would utilize the foundational teaching strategies in complementary ways to develop an effective relationship with the characteristics listed in Table 2. Moreover, understanding the fundamental beliefs RTs and USs have about supporting PSTs in learning to teach will provide insight into how they collaborate to provide opportunities for modeling and other techniques recommended within the cognitive apprenticeship model.

Table 2

Cognitive Apprenticeship Dyad Supports Provided to PST

Cognitive Apprenticeship Element	Example: How the dyad supports each element…
Modeling	-Models how to plan and share lessons -Provides access to (themselves) as experts at modeling problem solving, reflecting, and planning -Modeling of teaching in a classroom (RT) -Models professional behaviors and communications
Scaffolding	-Provides structure with clear goal setting and expectations -Conferences to determine when to gradually lift supports as they see more confidence in teaching, planning, management, and instruction of lessons -Accurately diagnose current skill and provide appropriate feedback and suggest next steps to furthering ability -Provides support for PST learning to take on active role in frequent goal setting and interaction
Coaching	-Observes teaching, offer hints, feedback, reminders, and help "bring their [PST] performance closer to expert performance" (p. 14) -Feedback occurs in real time, immediately related to specific events or problems that arise during teaching or observation -Reflects on their past experiences and use successful strategies from previous candidates

Table 2 (continued)

Cognitive Apprenticeship Element	Example: How the dyad supports each element…
Articulation	-Provides opportunities for and encourage PSTs to verbalize their knowledge, thinking, experiences -Develops relationship by verbalizing and sharing their ideas and understandings about teaching with each other and the PST
Reflection	-Provides opportunities for and encourage PSTs to reflect on emerging practice, demonstrate and model that it is valued and important
Exploration	-Provides opportunities for PSTs to communicate their understanding of the process of teaching and articulate best practice -Encourages PSTs to explain theories that undergird their practice, use specialized language of teaching in appropriate context

Studying the working relationships between the US and RT can lead to better understanding of how similar or different conceptual frames are used with the dyad as they support the PST in learning to teach. How RT and US interpret their roles impacts their perceived relationships with each other, as well as their relationship with the PST. The importance of congruent, or complementarily productive, conceptual frames between the RT and US clarifies roles within the dyad, resulting in stronger, more productive relationships within the triad.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS

Research Design and Overview

This qualitative study explored ways in which RTs and USs perceive their roles and how they structure their working relationships to support PSTs in learning to teach. A qualitative research approach was chosen to answer the research questions, as it focuses on understanding how USs and RTs construct and make sense of their working relationships and their interactions within the practicum. In this chapter, I present an overview of this qualitative study, review the research questions, and discuss data collection, analysis, and the methods used to address my research questions. This chapter contains the following sections: (a) research setting, (b) analytic sample, (c) data collection, (d) data analysis, (e) my positionality, and (f) the limitations and assumptions that are present within the study.

My study centered on the following questions:

- How do university supervisors and resident teachers interpret their role, and the role of their counterpart, to collaboratively support preservice teachers in learning to teach?

- How do university supervisors and resident teachers collaborate to align pedagogical practices into their mentoring practices to support preservice teachers in learning to teach?

- How do university supervisors and resident teachers incorporate and align the program pillars of reflective practice, collaboration, advocacy, and inquiry into their mentoring practices to support preservice teachers in learning to teach?

Before any data were collected, I conducted two pilot interviews with university supervisors outside of the analytic sample. Pilot interviews allowed me to practice interviewing while testing transcription of Zoom recordings and discern the strengths and weaknesses of my interview questions in order to allow for necessary adjustments. My pilot study participants were not employed by the university being studied, but represented a sample of experienced educators,

each with over 15 years of US experience. These pilot interviews helped refine my interview questions to focus specifically on RT relationships and how they are used to support PSTs in learning to teach. I also sought feedback from the participants on the pace and content of the interview questions and solicited areas needing clarity and further explanation. The interview questions were adjusted to maximize opportunities to collect thick, descriptive data during the study itself (Geertz, 1973).

Review of the pilot interview transcripts provided opportunity and practice developing provisional codes for qualitative data analysis. One key finding from the pilot interviews was that participants tended to focus their responses on general, vague descriptions of RT and PST relationships. The questions were reworked and revised accordingly to develop interview protocols that ensured specific reference and focus on examples of US/RT working relationships in order to fully address the study's key questions.

The first set of questions focused on understanding US/RT beliefs about teacher learning, university and K-12 practicum practice, and opportunities for collaboration reflective of the conceptions of teacher learning developed by Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999). The second set of questions centered on apprenticeship elements of the triad experience, centered on the main elements of Cognitive Apprenticeship Theory (Collins et al., 1991). The final set of questions asked about US/RT connections to the university program, reflective of Research Question 3. USs in the pilot interviews were asked to reflect on the mentoring aspects of their role and instances in which they worked collaboratively with their RT to model, coach, scaffold, articulate, reflect, or explore teaching concepts to support PSTs in learning to teach. The

interview questions can be found in Appendix A, reflecting the adjustments made after pilot interviews.

Setting

This study was situated in the context of a multiple subject credential program at a large land-grant institution situated in western United States. Within the university program, nine USs and 66 RTs (also referred to as mentor teachers, cooperating teachers, or district-employed supervisors) are employed by 14 surrounding area public K-12 schools (both rural and urban settings) that participate in the practicum. In the 2020-21 school year, a proposal to suspend upcoming 2021-22 admissions to the teacher education program for one year to give faculty time for program redesign was put forth by the Department Chair and Dean. However, this postponement proposal was not put to a faculty vote due to community outpouring of support to maintain program enrollment and the proposal was rescinded. In a statement prepared by the Dean in October 2020, it was confirmed that the program remains committed to thoughtful program redesign centered on equity and social justice within teacher preparation. In the context of these events, discussion of programmatic changes related to equity came up often in participant interviews. Within the university program there were sixty-five multiple subject preservice teachers, thirteen of whom are on track to receive Bilingual Spanish authorization (Bicycle University, n.d.). The university program is an integrated model where student teaching and university coursework occur simultaneously over four academic quarters (summer, winter, fall, spring) beginning prior to the K-12 academic school year in early August and ending in mid-June. The program's *Credential Candidate Handbook* describes the program as:

> a year-long guided apprenticeship into practice, application of theory, and completion of course assignments. Our co-teaching model of teacher preparation provides candidates an

opportunity to collaborate with an experienced classroom teacher while gradually taking on increasing responsibility in the classroom. (Bicycle University, 2019, p. 11)

In determining field placements, the program considers "the demographics of the school setting, paying attention to diversity of race and ethnicity, socioeconomic background, linguistic diversity, the quality of teachers, and any unique school programs" within close proximity of the school campus (p. 11). All RTs have a minimum of 3 years of teaching experience and "a willingness to guide your student teaching journey and partner with you and your university supervisor throughout the student teaching experience" (p. 11). Of the nine USs, four teach courses within the credential program as faculty, the remaining five are retired classroom teachers, considered adjunct hires. The four faculty supervise ten students each, and the adjunct USs supervise between four and six students. Each PST is assigned a RT and a US at the beginning of the academic year; USs are contracted to make a minimum of four observations of PSTs per quarter and conduct three-way conferences with the PST and RT at the end of each quarter to submit grades. Supervisors in the program participate in a variety of professional development programs, including a recent virtual supervisor seminar held in July 2020, in which supervisors from participating universities gathered to share successful equity-based supervision practices focused on social justice orientations. The program differentiates itself from other credential programs in the area as a research-based program that prepares "teacher leaders who understand issues of equity and who inquire deeply about how teaching practices work or don't work well in their classrooms" (p. 3).

Expectations for collaboration between the RT/US are limited within the *Multiple Subject Handbook* (Bicycle University, 2018). Understanding the types of collaboration and relationships

that develop between the RT/US during these required and as needed meetings and through additional communications (e.g., phone calls, text, and emails) were the focus of this study.

Analytic Sample

The USs and RTs for this study were selected using purposeful, typical sampling, a technique commonly used in qualitative research cases that wish to "highlight what is typical, normal, and average" (Patton, 2015, p. 268). For this study, I aimed to recruit six to eight US/RT dyads, beginning with the US email list provided by my chair. Once possible participants were identified in consultation with the program leader, I contacted all four full-time US faculty and five US adjunct-faculty via email to request participation in the study via a 60-minute recorded interview via Zoom. After recording Zoom interviews with each of the five consenting USs, I used snowball sampling to identify RTs with whom the interviewed USs had worked. In total, five USs and eight RTs were successfully recruited and expressed willingness to participate in the study. The sample size of 13 total participants was agreed upon as reasonable to reach necessary saturation or redundancy in themes, requiring analysis of incoming data throughout the research process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Data Collection

Before interviews were conducted and data collected, approval from the University of California, Davis Institutional Review Board was granted November 17, 2020. After recruitment was completed via email, participants were invited to in-person Zoom interviews at their convenience. Prior to Zoom interviews, I sent consent documents and responded to participant questions about the nature of the study and interview request. After obtaining consent via Adobe signed, IRB approved consent document, I conducted semi-structured interviews that each

ranged between 50 and 60 minutes in total. All interviews were audio and video recorded; each recording was secured on a password-protected server. Transcribed notes and recordings were stored in a password protected cloud-based system to ensure privacy and anonymity of all study participants. In addition, pseudonyms were created for each participant to protect participant identities.

All of the qualitative interviews were conducted within a 2-month period from December 2, 2020 to January 6, 2021 via Zoom, due to shelter in place, COVID-19 related restrictions. I interviewed five University Supervisors (US) and eight Resident Teachers (RT) who fit the analytic sample criteria. Table 3 summarizes the backgrounds of participants interviewed in the study.

Table 3

List of US Participants

Pseudonym	Gender/ Ethnicity	Current Position (US/RT)	Years in US Role	Former RT, Years	Educational Credentials
Brenda	Female/ White	US, adjunct faculty, Multiple Subject	14	No	ELA and Multiple Subject Credentials (1987)
Camille	Female/ Latina	Former US, adjunct faculty, Multiple Subject and Bilingual	5	Yes, 1	M.A. (2001), Multiple Subject Credential (BCLAD,1995)
Dolores	Female/ Latina	US, adjunct faculty, Multiple Subject and Bilingual	6	No	Administrative Services Credential (1997), M.A. (1985), Multiple Subject Credential (BCLAD, 1976)
Kendra	Female/ White	US, adjunct faculty, Multiple Subject	8	Yes, 2	Multiple Subject Credential (1971), Certified Early Literacy and Reading Recovery Teacher (1997, 1994)
Sabrina	Female/ Latina	US, full-time faculty, Bilingual	1	Yes, 2	Ed.D. (2020), MA (2008), Multiple Subject Credential (BCLAD, 2003)

Table 4

List of RT Participants

Pseudonym	Gender/ Ethnicity	Current Position	Years in RT Role	Educational Credentials
Aubrey	Female/ White	RT, 6th grade	8	Multiple Subject Credential (2001)
Edith	Female/ White	RT, Kindergarten	15	Multiple Subject Credential (1978), MA (2002)
Grace	Female/ White	RT, 6th grade (Bilingual)	3	Multiple Subject Credential (BCLAD, 1979), MA & Administrative Credential (2015)
Jerry	Male/White	RT, 4th grade	3	Multiple Subject Credential (1990)
Juliette	Female/ Latina	RT, 3rd grade (Bilingual)	3	Multiple Subject Credential (BCLAD, 2002)
Sasha	Female/ Latina	RT, 1st grade (Bilingual)	12	Multiple Subject Credential (BCLAD, 1991)
Sophia	Female/ Latina	RT, 1st grade (Bilingual)	15	Multiple Subject Credential (BCLAD, 2001)
Thea	Female/ Latina	RT, 3rd grade (Bilingual)	3	Multiple Subject Credential (BCLAD, 2013), M.A. (2014)

The 13 participants represented a cross-section of experience within the multiple subject credential program at Bicycle University (BU). Of the five US participants, four are adjunct faculty, towards the end of substantial careers as long-time educators, researchers, and local outreach coordinators. One of the USs had just returned to the classroom as an RT and was able to speak to both experiences during her interview, although we mostly focused on her experiences as a US for BU. The one full-time faculty US was new to her role as bilingual supervisor and university instructor. Three of the RTs interviewed teach in the district town of BU. Of the five bilingual RTs interviewed, three work at the same school and collaborate regularly and share placement experiences with each other. Some RT/US dyads have worked together for many years, others were establishing new relationships with their counterpart and university program at the time of the interviews. All 13 participants made comparisons of

COVID-19 related differences in their practice, comparing and contrasting differences from current and normal contexts.

Interviews and member checks were the main sources of information used to answer the research questions and develop emerging themes (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). RTs and USs were interviewed separately to elucidate their underlying assumptions about what it means to learn to teach and how to best support that process during the practicum for PSTs. See Appendix A for interview protocol details, Appendix B for Codes, Appendix C for participant profiles that served as part of the member check and coding process.

A format suggested by Creswell and Creswell (2018) was used during the interviews, with semi-structured questions that asked broadly about the teaching and mentoring experiences of the participants and their connection to the university program, which then centered on examples of their working relationships within the dyad in support of the PST in learning to teach. Semi-structured interviews allowed me to respond to the situation as it progressed, providing opportunities for probing questioning strategies and elaboration of ideas (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Data Analysis

Following each interview, I immediately reflected on the experience and engaged in analytic memo writing to reflect on my personal interactions with the participants as well as the participants' responses to the interview questions relevant to my research questions (Saldana, 2009). Within 48 hours, I had Zoom recordings professionally transcribed by Scribie, an audio transcription service, and I edited them to adjust for inconsequential filler words. As I listened to each recording and reviewed the transcripts, I added additional notes and memos that allowed me

to develop profiles of each participant, include connections between the participants and their responses, identifying significant patterns and emergent themes across interviews. The participant profiles and interview transcripts were shared with each participant as part of the member check process, confirming my interpretation of emergent themes and confirming the intention of participant words.

As qualitative research is emergent, it is common for the researcher to not know ahead of time every participant who might be interviewed, all of the questions that will be asked, or where to look next until the data collected are analyzed using frequent iterative and recursive methods (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). My qualitative data analysis process progressed iteratively and required following leads and recurring responses to identify emerging by analyzing data sets early and often, simultaneously with data collection (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). My primary data analysis technique used in this study was the aforementioned analytic memos, capturing my initial hunches, ideas, and issues to pursue after each interview or observation was collected and analyzed (Bogdan & Biklen, 2011). These analytic memos helped with the next step in my process, open coding. During my initial open coding, I reviewed each transcript and identified "any segment of data that *might* be useful" (emphasis in original, Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). After this, I used inductive analysis and open coding to generate themes across the interviews by assigning shorthand designation to various aspects of the data using ATLASti 8 software so the themes became easily retrievable and patterns began to emerge (Saldaña, 2016).

After open coding and organization of the research data was complete, I grouped my codes using axial coding, using the group open codes into thematic categories. During axial coding, I looked across transcripts using ATLASti 8 software to capture recurring patterns and

abstractions that cut across the datasets as clear categories emerged (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The categories connected to my research question represented a saturation of data, and generated conceptually congruent themes for discussion in my findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Throughout the process, I acknowledged my role as the researcher as the primary instrument in the study, addressing potential issues of reliability and consistency through use of member checks of study participants, peer review through dissertation committee, and the statement below of researcher positionality.

Validity

The validity, credibility, and trustworthiness of the study were ensured through careful planning and execution of strategies commonly recognized in qualitative research. Not being a part of the program of study allowed me to distance myself from the personal connections I have at my own institution, and role as a US within a credential program. I triangulated my data by comparing and contrasting thirteen interviews, developed participant profiles, member checked profiles and transcripts with study participants, and reviewed pertinent program documents (Saldaña, 2009). One unique challenge of the time was that all interviews were completed remotely via Zoom due to COVID-19 restrictions. On the topic of interviews, Merriam and Tisdell (2016) wrote, "Participants usually enjoy sharing their expertise with an interested and sympathetic listener" (p. 129). During my interviews, I strived to develop a comfortable and welcoming environment by practicing my questions in advance and sharing a bit about my experience and interest in the topic with participants in advance of the interview. After the interviews, I developed participant profiles which I used to complete member checks with study

participants and asked clarifying questions over phone and via email as necessary to validate my findings via participants' words and experiences shared.

Positionality

My interest in this research topic is a reflection of my experience as a former teacher, university supervisor, and teacher educator. Fundamentally, I see the practicum as an invaluable part of the student teaching experience, one that warrants further study in relation to RT and US working relationships. I bring to this study many lenses. As a former K-12 teacher, I appreciate the challenges of the profession and demands on RTs' time and energy. I am currently a US and leader of a teacher credential program at another university. I believe that USs, as former teachers now affiliated with university programs and curriculum, have a wealth of teaching and learning experience and the opportunity to directly draw on their classroom experience to support both the RT and PST in learning to teach. On one hand, this experience is beneficial in that the US brings with them a variety of strategies and experiences to share, as well as familiarity with the university curriculum. On the other, each individual teaching experience is filtered through their worldview, perspectives, priorities, and biases, making the translation of teaching skills complex.

In my role of teacher educator, a large part of my interest in this study is based on conversations I have had about practicum placements and relationships with RTs. Many PSTs express the difficulty of navigating what they see as two complex worlds within teacher credentialing programs: the university and their school site. As an instructor responsible for teaching curricular content and as a US, I encourage my students to utilize student-centered models of teaching, focused on eliciting student interest and scaffolding inquiry-based

experiences that center the learners in their classrooms. Unfortunately, conflict occurs when

PSTs are tasked with developing and teaching student-centered curriculum when many RTs in

K-12 schools continue to emphasize rote memorization and other passive, teacher-centered

methods of teaching and learning. However, this is not always the case. In my experience, RTs

who are dedicated to learning and growing from both their PSTs and USs during the practicum

year get much out of the experience. If university programs wish to make changes and promote

progressive teaching practices, buy in and support from both USs and RTs is essential.

Understanding how this dyad communicates and works together seems essential in

understanding how to improve the practicum experience and acknowledge its influence.

Although I do not work at the institution of the study, I have developed several

preconceived ideas about the working relationships of RTs and USs. According to Merriam and

Tisdell (2016), considering issues such as positionality and insider/outsider stances within a

research study is critical. During my CANDEL coursework, we conducted a pilot study in which

I interviewed two USs and two RTs about their working relationships. The findings of this pilot

study confirmed some of my initial ideas about the research topic and challenged others. In my

personal experience, RTs are busy and stretched for time, which I believe to be a major

contributing factor that challenges the development of strong working relationships. "Face time"

contact and regular communication about the progress of the PST between RTs and USs varies

greatly, and many factors contribute to the quality of communication possible between these

important practicum partners. Surprisingly, some of the US participants in my pilot study did not

see support of the RT as part of their role as supervisor. These findings highlighted my desire to

learn more about how RTs and USs navigate their roles in supporting PSTs together. Although

these pilot study findings were interesting, it is important to acknowledge these experiences as not part of this specific study, to set them aside, and allow the research participants to share their experiences as an RT or US.

Limitations of the Study

This study focuses on understanding the working relationships of a specific group of RTs and USs within one large land-grant university's credential program. The purpose of the study is to better understand RT/US working relationships to inform preparation within credential programs more broadly and help educational leaders and policymakers understand the successes and challenges that occur within the RT/US dyad during the practicum and learning-to-teach process of PSTs. While participants of the study will identify as "resident teachers" or "university supervisors," these participants identify as many other things as well that are mostly congruent with these titles, with some exceptions. For example, RTs are employed by K12 school districts and some have limitations on their ability to mentor that are school-site specific which affect working relationships within the dyad.

As is the case with most educational professionals, being a RT or a US is only a small portion of their professional identity and although these identities affect the study's findings, they are beyond the scope of this study. During the interviews, RTs and USs reflected over the course of their multi-year experience as mentors or supervisors, highlighting that RT/US combinations often vary year to year, and the participants reflected over multiple experiences. Additional limitations to US/RT/PST communication were present this year due to COVID-19 restrictions which are difficult to measure in this context, the fact that participants have had multiple years' experience should minimize the impact on their responses. At times, multi-year

experiences may have led to over generalizations of working relationships and lack of specific examples to validate participant responses. Related to generalizability of the study, sufficient descriptive data was collected to facilitate the transferability of key study findings to help maximize applications for other credential programs (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Finally, the findings of this study may not be applicable to larger credentialing programs found in other parts of the state or other states, as this program credentials a small number of teachers per year.

CHAPTER 4: DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND FINDINGS

This chapter presents a summary of the data collection process and the experiences of US and RT study participants to provide context for interpretation of key findings derived from the interviews. Detailed vignettes illustrating each participant's perspective on their role as either a US or RT and their relationships within the training triad can be found in Appendix C. This chapter will present key findings synthesized from my 13 interviews by open coding the responses of the five university supervisors (US) and eight resident teachers (RT) and identifying key themes examined through the lens of my research questions and theoretical frameworks.

Research Questions

- How do university supervisors and resident teachers interpret their role, and the role of their counterpart, to collaboratively support preservice teachers in learning to teach?

- How do university supervisors and resident teachers collaborate to align pedagogical practices into their mentoring practices to support preservice teachers in learning to teach?

- How do university supervisors and resident teachers incorporate and align the program pillars of reflective practice, collaboration, advocacy, and inquiry into their mentoring practices to support preservice teachers in learning to teach?

Data Collection

Data collection consisted of semi-structured interviews, conducted within a two-month period from December 2, 2020 to January 6, 2021 via Zoom, due to shelter in place, COVID-19 related restrictions. I interviewed five University Supervisors (US) and eight Resident Teachers (RT) who fit the analytic sample criteria. Tables 5 and 6 summarize the backgrounds of participants interviewed in the study.

Table 5

List of US Participants

Pseudonym	Gender/Ethnicity	Current Position (US/RT)	Years in US Role	Former RT, Years	Educational Credentials
Brenda	Female/White	US, adjunct faculty, Multiple Subject	14	No	ELA and Multiple Subject Credentials (1987)
Camille	Female/Latina	Former US, adjunct faculty, Multiple Subject and Bilingual	5	Yes, 1	M.A. (2001), Multiple Subject Credential (BCLAD,1995)
Dolores	Female/Latina	US, adjunct faculty, Multiple Subject and Bilingual	6	No	Administrative Services Credential (1997), M.A. (1985), Multiple Subject Credential (BCLAD, 1976)
Kendra	Female/White	US, adjunct faculty, Multiple Subject	8	Yes, 2	Multiple Subject Credential (1971), Certified Early Literacy and Reading Recovery Teacher (1997, 1994)
Sabrina	Female/Latina	US, full-time faculty, Bilingual	1	Yes, 2	Ed.D. (2020), MA (2008), Multiple Subject Credential (BCLAD, 2003)

Table 6

List of RT Participants

Pseudonym	Gender/Ethnicity	Current Position	Years in RT Role	Educational Credentials
Aubrey	Female/White	RT, 6th grade	8	Multiple Subject Credential (2001)
Edith	Female/White	RT, Kindergarten	15	Multiple Subject Credential (1978), MA (2002)
Grace	Female/White	RT, 6th grade (Bilingual)	3	Multiple Subject Credential (BCLAD, 1979), MA & Administrative Credential (2015)
Jerry	Male/White	RT, 4th grade	3	Multiple Subject Credential (1990)
Juliette	Female/Latina	RT, 3rd grade (Bilingual)	3	Multiple Subject Credential (BCLAD, 2002)
Sasha	Female/Latina	RT, 1st grade (Bilingual)	12	Multiple Subject Credential (BCLAD, 1991)
Sophia	Female/Latina	RT, 1st grade (Bilingual)	15	Multiple Subject Credential (BCLAD, 2001)
Thea	Female/Latina	RT, 3rd grade (Bilingual)	3	Multiple Subject Credential (BCLAD, 2013), M.A. (2014)

Overview of Emergent Themes

Analysis of study participant interviews revealed the following four themes that reflect the participants perspectives on the practicum and the environment in which US and RT in this study provide support to PST during the practicum experience at BU: (a) Dyadic Relationship with PST, (b) Protective Mentoring, (c) Assumption of Self-Advocacy, (d) Mentoring in Isolation. The first theme, dyadic relationship with PST, reflects perspectives of both US and RT that their primary relationship in the practicum is a dyadic one with the PST, rather than reflecting an emphasis on the triadic relationship between US, RT and PST. The second theme, protective mentoring, describes the perspectives of both RT and US regarding the vulnerability of PSTs, emphasizing the importance of focusing on positive feedback and emotional supports while avoiding critical feedback. The third theme, PST as self-advocate, reflects the assumptions of RT and US that the PST will explicitly and proactively advocate for themselves in terms of what they need to meet program requirements and get the most out of the practicum experience, rather than waiting to be asked about their needs. The fourth theme, mentoring in isolation, reflects RT/US experiences navigating their own roles with minimal guidance from the program and identifies a shared desire for clearer program guidelines, more explicit training and clearer shared role definitions.

Theme 1: Dyadic Relationship with PST as Paramount

Theme 1 reflects the finding that all thirteen US and RT in this study described their roles in terms of their primary relationship with PSTs, rather than the practicum triad or the relationship between themselves as joint supervisors. Collaborative relationships and engagement as co-supervisors were primarily discussed in terms of practicum logistics,

summative assessments, and helping struggling PSTs. Both groups expressed that collaboration between RT/US worked best when dyads evolved over time to develop personal relationships and coordinated support, but the importance of their relationship was infrequently mentioned outside of the working relationship with their shared PST.

Brenda, US of 14 years, reflected the importance of relationships with PSTs she develops as well as the importance of experiential learning at the placement, which she sees as the essential part of her role:

> I really love the relationship you develop with the student teachers (PSTs) . . . Bicycle University attracts really strong students, but just because you're a strong student does not make you a good teacher. I help them build a bridge to learning for the students and really get down into the data; were you successful in your teaching and meeting the needs of all your learners?

Brenda's remarks exemplify the focus of the US interviewed on the primary relationship with PSTs and positions herself as a "grassroots guide" who develops good teachers by using observational data to help the PST learn the procedural aspects of teaching and meet the needs of diverse classrooms. For Brenda, being a good student academically doesn't necessarily translate into being a good teacher.

The USs interviewed in this study viewed classroom experiences, guided by their observations of PST, as the most essential part of learning to teach. Kendra's view that her expertise as a supervisor comes from years of experience as a teacher is largely shared by the other US. Kendra does not connect her role in the practicum triad to the university curriculum, instead placing emphasis on her role in modeling best practice teaching strategies she learned on the job as a teacher: "the strength that I bring to the classroom is classroom management, being able to sit in the back and see what's going on, understand what's going on, give feedback that's

relevant and helping students (PSTs) along that path." Similar to Brenda's example above, observational data and teaching expertise is the primary support they provide to PSTs. In both instances, developing a strong working relationship with the PST is prioritized and the supports provided are grounded in US teaching experiences rather than the university curriculum.

Ideally, RT/US dyads work together to share and collaborate on shared experiences with their PSTs and offer supports to each other during the practicum experience. Dolores, US, described frustration with her attempts to collaborate with the RT during evaluation of PST candidates, expressing her desire to work collaboratively instead of parallel:

> I want RTs to be honest with their evaluations, you're not going to get them (PST) in trouble, I want (RTs) to communicate to kind of reach out whenever they need or see something . . . so that we're both kind of nurturing this one person like we're both the parents.

For Dolores, working together, using the metaphor of co-parenting, is aspirational. As US, she feels it would better support PST learning and US/RT working relationships. Busy RTs make this challenging, often making outreach efforts for collaboration by the US feel one sided. The feelings lead to an emphasis on US relationship with their PST, who often serves are their connection to what is happening at the school site, despite Dolores' desire for a more collaborative connection to her RTs.

Sabrina, US, described her cautious approach when working with RTs, highlighting primary communication through her PST, not the RT, "I just very cautious. When a student teacher (PST) tells me, 'Oh my resident teacher switched the schedule on me and didn't tell me,' or 'Oh, my teacher didn't plan with me.' . . . Now I'm on alert." Sabrina's protective of her PSTs, making sure they're in communication with their RT and being included in the day-to-day

practices of the classroom. The USs in this study felt most comfortable when they were placed with the same RTs and school sites to help build trusting relationships over time.

Drawing on Experience. The eight RTs in this study also focused the development of relationships with their PSTs through feedback on their teaching and drawing on their own experiences as educators. Sasha, RT of 12 years, highlighted the focus on relationships in working with PSTs:

> Number one is the relationships that I build with these people (PSTs), seeing their growth from where they started as this timid, "I'm going to be quiet, try to blend in with the background," into these really competent, intelligent teachers.

Similar to US quoted above, Sasha expresses the sense of purpose in her RT role through the *relationships* she builds with PSTs. Sasha models and scaffolds successful teaching experiences for her PSTs to help nurture their growth into *competent, intelligent teachers.* For RTs in this study, PSTs learn to teach and grow into their role by modeling the expertise of the RTs.

Co-Teaching Benefits. An important part of the dyadic relationship with PSTs that was shared by many RTs was the collaborative relationship between the RT and the PST as co-teachers. The importance of supporting PSTs as the next generation of teachers was a common higher purpose of the RT role, expressed by participants in this study. Sophia, RT of 15 years, establishes her relationship with her PSTs by emphasizing her availability to work together as well as her experience teaching as being the key components of her role in assisting PSTs in learning to teach.

> I tell my student teachers (PSTs) when I come in in the morning, I'm already prepared for that day . . . I'm here to answer questions, to go through your lesson for the day. When my student teacher is there, we're working, so it can get exhausting and very rewarding at the same time.

Sophia's remarks highlight the emphasis she puts on maintaining a strong interactive relationship with her PST, despite the time commitment and advance planning required. Although it *can get exhausting*, Sophia finds working with and developing strong working relationships with PSTs *rewarding*.

For RT Juliette, the relationship with PST gives her new and different perspectives on lesson planning and teaching. Juliette views her relationship with her PST as symbiotic, expressing both her strengths as a *model* teacher, as well as someone willing to learn new techniques and ideas to engage students in her classroom:

> I serve as a model, but at the same time, I don't think I have to know it all and have it all, that's why I love that it's a two-way. I understand that she is looking to me to . . . How do I do this? But I also look to her when she comes up with her ideas and adds them into her lesson.

Juliette's remarks reflect the benefits RTs experience in hosting a student teacher, both through having an extra set of eyes, hands and help, as well as through the transfer of new ideas to include in their classroom curriculum. Similar to Juliette's experiences of serving as a both role model and learner, RTs in this study mentioned the importance of reciprocal relationships with their PST for curriculum ideas and lesson development. Primary support of PSTs was seen as an important part of the RT role, examples given included dedicating time to help PST with lesson planning and modeling best practice in the classroom.

Aubrey, RT, expressed the benefits of PST working relationship as both a professional development opportunity as well as helpful to her students. Aubrey described her co-teaching style of mentorship which centers the PST a co-partner in teaching and learning:

> I co-teach with my student teachers, having that co-teaching relationship and that ability for my students to have a student-teacher that really is working through things and integrating new fun experiences that I don't . . . Tricks up their sleeves that they're

learning . . . and then I learn from them, so I think it's just like a total symbiotic relationship for us as educators.

For Aubrey, ideas brought in and shared with students through the PST are both *fun* and inspiring. After 20 years of classroom teaching, Aubrey enjoys the fresh perspective brought by her PSTs, and finds it "rejuvenating" to her curriculum and beneficial for her students, as well as the PST, who is learning through modeling and experimentation. These RTs reflect the collaborative aspect of the dyadic relationship with PSTs, as co-teachers who are learning together from each other, gaining experiences and skills for their classroom and students that they otherwise would not have access to.

The infusion of creativity that a PST brings into the classroom is seen by RTs as an important part of the relationship between the two of them, and appreciated as a real benefit of welcoming an additional voice into the classroom. A co-teaching approach was especially important to these RTs during COVID related online learning adjustments. In our interviews, RTs gave examples of ideas and skills they learned through working with their PSTs that helped them design learning experiences for their students online via online learning management systems like Canvas. According to RT, Sophia:

> The technology skills that they [PST] bring, it's just amazing . . . I tell them, I don't care if you have no experience in the classroom, I want to hear what you're learning in your classes and let me know if you want to try something.

Edith, RT, also appreciates the technological skills and collaboration brought by her PST, especially during this challenging year with COVID related online learning adjustments:

> At the beginning of the year, we had a nice Zoom conversation. And I said, "I have to tell you, I'm just stressing with this Canvas." And he (PST) says, "no worries. We use that (Canvas) at BU and I know some of these things, I'm a videographer photographer for BU . . . but what I need from you is an overview of the curriculum." It was at that moment that I thought, breathe it in, we can share the perks and we share the teaching.

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The RTs in this study mentioned the stress of teaching during COVID-related distance and online learning restrictions. For these RTs, the ideas and technological support provided by their PSTs was a benefit of having them.

Academic Curriculum Links. Study participants were asked about opportunities for connecting academic curriculum to their supervision and mentoring practices. The linkages mentioned were primarily through the relationship with the PST, rather than through co-supervision between RT and US. Sasha, RT, highlighted the link between her relationships with the PST in the classroom with the academic curriculum:

> You need to be that teacher (RT) that shows them (PST) what they're learning in the classroom . . . And that is what really reinforces to me that I'm doing my job right for them academically, because they come back and say, "Guess what my professor was saying?" And I can say, "Oh yeah, we do that." So that affirms to me that I'm on the right path.

According to these findings, links between academic coursework and the practicum are introduced by the PST and reinforced by the RT.

Secondary Dyad – US and RT. Although both USs and RTs view their primary relationship existing with the PST, there is agreement that the US has an important role in serving as support for the RT. When USs support PSTs, they are in turn supporting the RT, a view expressed by Sasha, RT:

> Well, if they (US) support my student teacher (PST) then I feel like I'm supported, because they need to support them to support me. If I'm doing all the work, then they're not being supportive of me . . .When I say something to them about a concern, I expect them to follow through on that concern, so that they're supportive to me. I've had some really awesome supervisors where they're always checking in, asking questions that are pertinent to the development of the student teacher, making sure that I'm okay, that the student teacher is okay, and if there's any concerns. That's how I feel supported. When they're supporting the student-teacher and they follow through on my concerns, then I feel like everybody's being supportive, and we have a good relationship.

As noted here, RTs in this study often felt the support of the US was necessary when PSTs struggled to meet program requirements or did not meet their progress expectations for student teaching. A few RTs expressed feelings of redundancy with the roles of the RT and US in support of helping PSTs in learning to teach. Thea, RT, reflected on her frustration during a recent triad meeting to complete an end of quarter assessment of PST progress. According to Thea:

> I felt the meeting was really long, there were some questions I felt were redundant and very unnecessary, where those questions me and (my PST) could have talked about more intimately and reported back to the supervisor (US).

Thea's remarks illustrate the lack of a collaborative relationship and her perspective that show the US did not have as much context about the progress of their shared PST as she did. To Thea, a more productive use of time would have been to clarify between herself and her PST which areas needed more focus and to then share this assessment with the US. In this response, the US is viewed as an outsider from the university evaluating the progress made between the RT and PST.

Both US and RT view their primary relationships with their PST in navigating their roles within the practicum triad; both rely primarily on their experience as classroom teachers in this preparation process. The co-supervisor relationship between US and RT is viewed as secondary and only sometimes relevant, relying on the PST to provide the link between university curriculum and the classroom.

Theme 2: Protective Mentoring

Both US and RT in this study expressed concern about the vulnerability of PST during the pivotal year of the practicum, emphasizing a positive feedback environment with their PST

while avoiding critical feedback as much as possible. USs expressed the importance of providing

emotional support to the PST in their role as the university program school site liaison, although

their support was described primarily in terms of their past experience as teachers themselves.

Providing emotional support as PST face the challenges of the credential year was also expressed

as an important role by RTs, in addition to being available for reflection and collaboration,

modeling best practice and scaffolding experimentation in the classroom. Neither group

mentioned mentoring practices that centered on theoretical or pedagogical influence from the

university program into the practicum. In this section, US and RT responses are shared

separately, although the theme of protective mentoring emerged across both data sets.

Emotional Support. All five US interviewed for this study acknowledged the significant

challenges faced by PSTs during their credential year; three specifically referenced being a

source of emotional support for their PST as a major part of their role. US, Brenda, described

how she discusses her role to her PSTs at the beginning of the academic year:

> I view my job as to be your biggest fan this year in your journey to become an educator. I
> am your cheerleader. I'm your go-to person; if you want to do something, I'm going to
> help you try and do it. I'm your fan and I want you to be successful.

In the above quote, Brenda positions herself, and interprets her role, as the primary advocate for

her PST. In stating, *if you want to do something*, Brenda implies there may be potential pushback

from RTs when PSTs attempt to implement university teaching techniques. It is important to

Brenda that her PSTs know she is available as the 'go-to' person who will help advocate on their

behalf when needed. The intensity of the academic year on the PST is another reason why

Brenda feels it is especially important to emotionally support them. According to Brenda:

> I also view my role as an emotional support. It's a very rigorous, hard year so I'm
> emotional support for them . . . You're [PSTs] trying to go home to your spouse and

explain it all; it's really hard . . . it's a lot easier to just say to me, "Can I just download all this stuff that's gone down with someone who knows?"

As a former teacher and experienced US, Brenda acknowledges common stressors and challenges of the credential year and endeavors to make these burdens lighter for her PSTs by serving as a safe person to help download and process PST experiences. Similarly, Kendra describes her role as a US to include "being a cheerleader, being a hand-holder, being present as a person of support."

Sabrina, US, describes establishing trust as a way to encourage PSTs to address their vulnerability, and be open about the struggles faced during their practicum experience. She describes the US role as one of supportive mentorship that develops a sense of trust:

> If they (PSTs) know you, they'll trust you; if they trust you, they're more open to trying, the learning just comes easier. They're not scared, you'll have more success of them not quitting the program . . . I'm always letting them know how wonderful they're doing for that specific time of the year.

Sabrina's response implies that PST vulnerability is inevitable, that *trust* and rapport between the two of them must be nurtured by the US so that *learning comes easier* when the PST is feeling supported. Sabrina attempts to establish rapport and trust in order to mitigate anxieties of her PSTs during US observation by describing the expectations of her first observation in a positive frame:

> I tell them, "I'm going to come in and just watch you." They (PSTs) ask, "Well, what do I need to do well?" They don't know how to do anything, so I'm not expecting anything. "I just want to see you. That's all." It's about lowering that affective filter, lowering their anxiety, helping them to get across that bridge from I'm a student to now I'm a teacher.

Sabrina's remarks show that she appreciates that US observations can be stressful for PSTs, and attempts to *lower their affective filter* by making expectations for her initial observation foundational. Part of the learning to teach process described here includes helping

PSTs *across the bridge* from being a student of teaching to seeing themselves as the teacher. Sabrina believes the best way to mentor PSTs is to provide positive support and keep initial expectations low so that the PST feels successful during their first observation no matter what happens. These comments are reflective of the vulnerability of PST during their practicum and the protective mentoring stance adopted by the US.

USs in this study were all former public school teachers who acknowledged the everyday stressors and time constraints placed on RTs during the practicum, viewing their US role as liaison between novice PST and potentially overburdened RT. Part of the protective mentoring stance expressed by US reflects their experience as former teachers. They recognize the stressors and time constraints placed on RTs that may preclude being sufficiently available to the PST. This is acknowledged by US Brenda, when she clarifies with the PST that she is available if the PST is not getting sufficient support from the RT:

> What I want to say to my student teachers is "You are placed with this resident teacher, they have been deemed excellent, they are doing excellent work . . . If you're not getting what you need from your RT, talk to me . . . But your RT is not going to be your everything because they're doing so much other stuff. Your goal is to form a nice professional relationship with them, learn the most you can and take what you can from them.

Brenda positions herself as the intermediary between the PST and RT in the above quote; she articulates her availability as a primary support provider for her PST when she emphasizes that RTs are *doing so much other stuff.* Brenda encourages her PSTs to reach out to her directly when they're not getting what they need from their RT, acknowledging the realities of busy teaching schedules and demands placed on classroom teachers.

These examples illustrate the theme of protective mentoring adopted by the US, reflecting the vulnerability of the PST during the practicum and their role in providing for

emotional support. As former classroom teachers, the US acknowledged the many demands

placed on RT during the practicum that might impact the availability of the RT to emotionally

support the PST. However, rather than describing a role that included assisting the RT in

understanding how to support the PST, the US role was focused on stepping in to provide

primary emotional support to the PST.

Emphasizing Strengths. Six of the eight RTs in this study similarly acknowledged the

challenges PSTs face during a rigorous academic year and emphasized their role in providing

emotional support for their PST. Edith, RT, works hard to find ways to highlight the strengths of

each of her PSTs to support them in learning to teach. When asked about the challenges of being

an RT, she reflected on a PST who was having difficulties, "it was taking her a long time to find

out how to make the flow of managing children." Recognizing this challenge, Edith stated:

> kept trying to find her strength, what she could do to really get started and feel successful.
> I finally found out it was music and so I set her up with some percussion instruments and
> voice things. I said, "Why don't you go ahead and teach the kids singing it?" and she was
> brilliant.

By emphasizing strengths and providing positive feedback Edith helped build her PST

confidence in the classroom. Other RTs shared similar examples of PSTs who struggled with

nervousness about teaching, overcoming this challenge through guidance and positive support.

For Aubrey (RT), the key to overcoming such obstacles is:

> A really solid foundational support where my classroom is just like, "Yeah, try that out,
> see what happens." I kind of throw 'em in the fire and say, "Just do it! It's fine. We're all
> going to be alive tomorrow after you try this."

For these RTs, protecting the PST, ensuring support, finding strengths, and scaffolding

early successes are essential components of learning to teach. RT Aubrey appreciates it when her

PST communicates what they are comfortable trying in the classroom and supports

experimentation, with gentle pushes towards getting out of their comfort zone:

> They'll (PSTs) say, "I'm not ready." I'll say, "Okay cool, just watch me and then do it next week or whatever." I try to make it no big deal if they say no, it's that safe space to say "I can't do that, Aubrey." I'm like, "Okay, totally."

Being supportive while pushing PST progress towards taking on more responsibility in the

classroom was seen as a key component of the RT role. When and how to push is left for

negotiation between RT/PST dyads, although instance of triad collaborations were cited in

situations related to struggling PSTs who had difficulty receiving critical feedback. Sasha, RT,

discussed a PST who got emotional during feedback after observations:

> One of my student teachers (PST) a few years back . . . got emotional when you gave her criticism, she would take it negatively . . . she would cry and so we had to help her, the supervisor (US) and I had to sit down and discuss what kind of strategies, what can we do, what can we say to help her get over this hump, because she was an excellent teacher but she had a really hard time taking criticism . . . we were gentle with her and we gave her lots of guidance, allowed her to always talk about it and we met as a triad, and followed through. She did get better, she had to learn to overcome and she did.

> Here the RT and US worked together to develop strategies that were effective in

providing the PST with critical feedback as well as emotional support. Sasha and her US

endeavored to work with the PST to help them learn to interpret feedback as *guidance* instead of

criticism. Part of the protective nature of both RT and US mentoring in this example is described

as *gentle* and supportive. Ultimately, study participants centered their protective mentoring role

on the perceived fragility of the PST during the credential year, especially during feedback on

observations. Both US and RT practiced protective mentoring with a hesitancy, or difficulty,

providing critical feedback due to this perceived fragility.

Theme 3: Assumption of Self-Advocacy

The third theme that emerged, PST as self-advocate, reflects assumptions of both RTs and USs in this study that the PSTs will actively advocate for themselves, articulate and seek out what they need to meet program requirements and maximize the practicum experience. A majority of US/RT interviews confirmed that PSTs struggled to implement university coursework and concepts within the practicum, although most framed this disconnect as a challenge the PST was largely tasked with figuring out for themselves. While acknowledging the stressors and vulnerability of PSTs during the practicum and the need for emotional support under the theme of protective mentoring, both US and RT expected PSTs to be responsible for making the linkages between curriculum and classroom, and to self-advocate for resources and help when needed.

Setting Expectations. Dolores, US, sets up the expectation that it is the responsibility of the PST to bring the knowledge from the university to the classroom and the RT:

> I talk about how the resident teacher and their classroom is like a laboratory, that the student teacher (PST) is learning all this knowledge at the university and they're coming into the classroom as the lab to actually put the research into practice . . . the student teacher (PST) should be sharing that information, they need to say, "I learned this new technique" or "I want to do this." It's the student teacher's job to bring in that information to their RT. I set it up for them to be the ones sharing that information.

Dolores encourages connections between the university curriculum and the practicum, but leaves it to the PST to communicate actual assignments and/or needs, leaving it to RT/PST dyads to determine how these connections will be made. The unidirectional implications of Dolores' framing positions the PST as a self-advocate for their practicum experience. Additionally, by describing the classroom as a *laboratory,* Dolores expresses what Cochran-Smith and Lytle describe as a "knowledge-*for*-practice" conception of how PSTs learn to teach (1999). Under this

framework, Dolores views the role of the RT to provide space for the PST to bring their

university learning and *put the research into practice*. How exactly to do this is largely left up to

PST interpretation and their ability to advocate for space and time in the classroom to try new

techniques learned at the university. Dolores views her role as US to encourage this advocacy,

without providing specific examples of techniques PSTs should try or articulate the research they

should put into practice in the classroom.

In contrast to Dolores's "knowledge-*for*-practice" conception of PST learning, US

Kendra assumes PSTs learn to teach by observing and practicing RT behaviors in the classroom.

This framework was most common among US and RT in this study, representing a "knowledge-

in-practice" conception of how PSTs learn to teach (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999). Under this

framework, teaching is seen as the process of acting and thinking wisely in response to

classroom activities, in this case, modeled by the RT and practiced by the PST, and observed and

evaluated by the US. Despite this difference in conceptual framing, Kendra similarly expects

PSTs to advocate for their learning needs during the practicum by describing the importance of

having an RT that is metacognitive about their teaching:

> I expect RTs to be open and take the time . . . It's also the student teacher's (PST)
> responsibility to ask. Often resident teachers are so experienced they don't break down
> what they're doing . . . I've learned to write, "be sure to ask" . . . in my observation notes
> to my students (PSTs) so that they will read it, bringing the awareness that RTs are
> experienced but they don't often think about telling the student teachers what they're
> doing.

In this example, Kendra is observing RT teaching techniques that she feels are valuable

for the PST to understand and learn. When she writes, "be sure to ask," she is expecting the PST

to take responsibility to follow up with the RT to further their understanding of a teaching

strategy demonstrated. In these examples, the USs set expectations that the PST will actively

advocate for their needs within the classroom with the RT, but did not articulate an active role for themselves within the practicum triad in helping to translate the curriculum into the classroom.

Self-Advocacy. The assumption by both USs and RTs that PSTs are responsible to self-advocate for resources and supports they need to be successful during the practicum may be primarily associated with insufficient preparation and communication between US and RT. This is reflected in the response by Thea, RT, describing her interest but lack of information regarding program expectations:

> I definitely have an interest, when they (PSTs) tell us what the coursework is like, but in regards to the workload and what specific assignments they have, I've never been notified about it. She [PST] tells me, "Oh, I have this assignment is it okay if I record? Or is it okay if I take pictures? Or is it okay if I do this activity?" . . . but I don't know what more it encompasses, what more is involved, what's the end goal, what are you looking for, what are you hoping to learn from it, it's always just like, "Hey, can I do this?" "Yeah, of course, if you need to do it, this is the space for you to do it." But I don't know much.

Thea would like clearer communication from the program so that she has a better understanding of programmatic expectations for the PST, but currently feels she must rely on the PST to transfer information and articulate what they need. This lack of communication between university program and school site leaves the RT feeling insufficiently prepared to take a proactive role in helping the PST link the university coursework and programmatic requirements within the classroom. The lack of preparation and communication between US and RT also puts most of the responsibility for prioritizing and advocating for support on the PST.

For RT Aubrey, the lack of clarity of course learning objectives and goals contributes to her expectation that PSTs will transfer information on the key learnings and assignment requirements for the practicum, and has led her to ask PSTs:

What they are learning and why, and how to make it applicable to what we're doing. I always tell them, "If you learn something in class and you see me doing the opposite, let's talk about this because I want to discuss."

In this way, Aubrey encourages collaboration with her PST and clarifies expectations that the PST communicate programmatic requirements directly. Grace, RT, also prefers her PST to communicate their programmatic needs to her:

I prefer to get my information from the student teacher. If they need time, I give them time, if they need materials or if they need help with something, I help them. If they need help planning, understanding what we're going to focus on, when we're going to have time to do this, whatever they need I make it happen for them. . . . whatever they need to implement they've got to tell me what it is they need, 'cause I'm not in their shoes. But my job is to make sure that they get that support they need to get it done.

Grace is supportive of her PSTs and positions herself as available to help at the PSTs request. As Grace stated, "I'm not in their shoes," implying that her PSTs need to understand and articulate their learning, material, and space needs to meet the requirements of their credential year. In these examples, RTs felt that it was the PSTs responsibility to "take whatever you can from me . . . if there's something that I do that you don't like, don't do it. Simple as that" (Sophia, RT).

Another contributor to the reliance on PSTs to self-advocate identified by RTs is their multiple school and personal responsibilities in addition to mentoring a PST. Sophia shared expectations of PST self-advocacy from the beginning of the practicum, reminding them of the many different responsibilities and roles she assumes in addition to being an RT:

I tell them . . . "Hey you have to remind me on dates, I have a lot going on. I'm a parent, I'm a mom, I have children, and I'm a full-time teacher, so you need to let me know when these dates that are coming up," . . . I know I get emails from Bicycle University but it's mostly the relationship that I have with my student teacher, it's just worked out that way.

Sophia sets clear expectations, such as keeping her informed about important upcoming dates, with her PSTs to make her role and responsibilities as RT manageable.

Thea, RT, also acknowledges that the email communication she receives from the university comes at a particularly busy time of the school year, "We're bombarded with a lot of emails. I got the packet at the beginning of the year, but I'm also dealing with my lesson planning . . . she [PST] knows when she needs to come, I don't need to know that." Thea's remarks reflect that the communication she does receive from the university is not sufficient in preparing her to understand program expectations so she expects her PST to come into her classroom when required and comply with BU's practicum guidelines.

Similarly, Jerry, RT, struggled with the relevance of BU program communications via email, citing PST responsibility for their learning:

> The program sends me these emails about stuff the (PSTs) have to do and I just kind of go, "Okay, yeah, it's not my work." I just let the student teacher (PST) tell me . . . it's their class, and they have to tell me when stuff is due. We consider the assignments and I'm just providing the time and the space to do that.

As reflected here, Jerry sees his role as *providing the time and the space* to complete coursework requirements and guidelines provided by BU rather than being part of an interactive practicum triad. Jerry assumes the PST will communicate their needs, placing priority on this communication over email or contact with the US.

RTs' preference for dyadic communication initiated by the PST rests on the assumption that PST/RT working relationships are strong and open, that the PST feels sufficiently knowledgeable about their needs and secure enough in the relationship to ask for help. These comments also highlight how the focus on the primary dyadic relationship between the PST and the RT or the PST and US results in tremendous additional pressure on the PST to be the main

generator of communication in the practicum triad. This reliance by both US and RT on the PST to take on the responsibility of communicating programmatic guidelines and self-advocating is an interesting contrast to their views expressed about PST vulnerability and need for emotional support under the theme of protective mentoring. The themes of protective mentoring and assumptions of self-advocacy seem a bit contradictory and potentially confusing to PSTs. Under protective mentoring, RT and US acknowledge the stress of the credential year and the process of learning to teach and make efforts to scaffold the experience of the PST. Under assumption of self-advocacy, RT and US make the assumption that PSTs can self-advocate and should dictate their learning needs during the practicum. These findings reinforcing the need for strong preparation for RT and US with clear role responsibilities, to reduce PST distress and isolation during the practicum.

Theme 4: Mentoring in Isolation

The fourth theme, mentoring in isolation, reflects RT/US experiences navigating their own, and each other's, roles with minimal preparation or guidance from the program. Few structured opportunities are provided to promote collaborative mentoring within the practicum, although both RTs and USs express a shared desire for clearer program guidelines, more explicit training and clearer shared role definitions. The opportunities for collaboration shared in the interviews were generated informally outside of the program structure itself, rather than built into the program. The importance of these opportunities was highlighted by both USs and RTs.

Peer to Peer Training. Over the years, US adjunct faculty (4 of 5 interviewed) have scheduled their own meetings to compare supervision strategies, expectations, and feedback

methods for PSTs. Dolores reflected on her preparation for the US role and how she has adapted

her practice over the 6 years she's been a US:

> At Bicycle University I kind of felt like we were just plopped in, there was no standard form to use. We knew how often to go in, but not how long or what standard forms to use or how to observe, nothing . . . So we, the multiple subject supervisors (adjunct), decided to meet prior to seminar twice a month, to share ideas and things we're doing . . . it was peer to peer training.

Dolores articulates the minimal preparation provided by BU and the sense of being *plopped in*

that is shared by most US and RTs. The USs took advantage of seminar meetings to further

compare their own supervision strategies and develop guidelines to support each other in their

roles through *"peer to peer training."* USs all mentioned the importance of the professional

community they have created with each other as a critical element of supporting PSTs and

improving their supervision practice, despite requiring additional time and effort outside of

program requirements. The sense of professional community and preparation for the role is

expressed by US, Kendra:

> The supervisors are very close . . . we have our own meetings where we share what we're doing and talk about students and concerns that come up . . .when somebody new comes, we meet with them and share what we do because there wasn't anything like that for any of us when we started there.

> The US meetings have created a place to *share* and discuss student and programmatic

concerns *collectively* as they arise. Kendra also expresses a pay-it-forward approach that is

facilitated by these meetings, helping new supervisors develop an understanding of their role.

Camille, US of 5 years, shared similar feelings about the informal adjunct US meetings, "those

supervisor meetings were important . . . getting the supervisors together, we really helped each

other amongst ourselves." These informal meetings helped to alleviate feelings of isolation

within the US group. These meeting where open to every US, but only adjunct faculty attended regularly.

Brenda, US, also shared her experience with unofficial preparation developed by her and other long time adjunct USs over the years:

> The supervisors recognize that lack of preparation as a big weakness, so when new people come (to BU) we mentor them, guide them, and share all our resources . . . If we have difficulties together, sometimes we'll bother the professors . . . we try not to bother them unless it's a big problem or something.

As Brenda notes, the busy schedules of the full-time faculty is cited as part of the reason for not attending the unofficial US meetings. Hierarchical relationships, or potential tensions, between full-time and adjunct faculty were not the focus of this study, but Brenda's notion of not wanting to *bother the professors unless it's a big problem* denotes potential disconnect between full-time faculty and adjuncts interpretations of their roles as US. It is clear that, for the adjunct faculty US, these meetings function to both build a sense of community that may not be as important for full time faculty, as well as a forum for problem-solving and sharing.

Disparities in Experience. According to Kendra, US, differences in supervision of PSTs was common; each has developed their own mentoring style, sometimes in conjunction with their adjunct counterparts, but mostly in isolation.

> We've (adjunct US faculty) come up with several forms where we keep changing them but we all have our different ways. We don't use the same form . . . that's an issue that doesn't bother me. It used to, but I don't think about it anymore, we all do what's comfortable for us.

Kendra's experience notes stylistic choices made by adjunct USs, both collaboratively during their voluntary meetings, as well as individually, as a result of unclear guidelines from the program. Initially uncomfortable with unclear guidelines for her role, Kendra has developed her

own supervision techniques based on what's *comfortable* and what has worked over time for each of them.

During the interviews, USs and RTs both expressed disparities in experience that occur during the practicum for PSTs that are related to vague program guidance. Mostly, these disparities are reflected when RTs design their own experiences for PSTs, with little or no input from US. According to US Camille:

> Some of them (PST) get a better apprenticeship than others. I think the student teachers who are allowed to do more, of course, grow more. They get more experience than the ones that wind up in a classroom where the RTs less inclined to give them as much time to do their own thing, and develop their own style.

Camille's remarks demonstrate her experience with different RTs, some who allow for more PST experimentation and practice to *develop their own style,* while others do not. These statements were not followed by examples in which Camille attempted to advocate or change the structure of the relationship by providing feedback to the RTs but are stated as a reality involved in placing and supervising PSTs. It is another reflection of the lack of structure and collaboration between US and RT in the practicum relationship that contributes to mentoring in isolation.

Unclear guidelines for RTs from the university was also shared by RT Grace as a concern related to disparities in PST experiences as well as exemplifying a desire for a relationship between US/RT dyads:

> I would like to see more clearly defined what the supervisor is supposed to do, besides fill out evaluation forms, to have that communicated to me. I would also like to have time to sit down with supervisors and understand what their expectation is for the students (PSTs), and not just the form that we fill out, not just the evaluation. What are they looking for from them (PST)? Also, what they're targeting, what they're looking at, what they're looking for, strategies that they're encouraging? Just being more specific about what they're looking at and what they're going for.

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Grace is confident in her abilities to prepare PSTs to meet the needs of her students based on her experiences in the classroom but feels she is mentoring in isolation as evident in her remarks when she says, "I'd like to see more clearly defined what the supervisor is supposed to do." Grace sees it as the USs role to articulate the expectations of the university program during the practicum, to share *what they're targeting* and *strategies that they're encouraging*. The primary relationship development between US/RT dyads is an area for improvement that would reduce the sense of isolation RTs experience in their role as support providers to PST.

Insufficient Guidelines. Collectively, USs and RTs in this study shared that formal preparation for their role was limited and contributed to the sense of isolation in mentoring. RTs especially would prefer clearer guidelines and expectations from the program on how to support PSTs in learning to teach. Camille, US, supervised for a different credentialing program and reflected on the differences in guidelines provided by programs for the RT role:

> If you've been a US or RT for (the other program) they'd give you this plan; a semester, week by week. The student teacher (PST) should do this, then this and then it outlines this gradual release, very specific . . . Then I started as a US at BU and I said, "wait, hold on, where's my list of things?" . . . RTs want a list of guidelines about where PSTs should be. BU said, "No, we don't want to do that . . . we leave it up to them," kind of more open; and the RTs said, "No, we want it."

Camille enjoyed the week-by-week guidelines because they made expectations for her and the RT role clearer "To me, it worked. I knew, okay, I can send them reminders in week six of the semester. During semester one, the students (PSTs) should be taking over two subjects."

Overall, interview participants reflected that the students from BU seemed academically stronger than other programs they'd worked with, but the structure of the program was less clear and insufficiently communicated, leading to a variety of practicum experiences for PSTs. For

RT responses agreed with Camille's comments that the RTs wanted more structure, particularly the new RTs. RT experience in this study ranged from 3-15 years, with the four less experienced RTs expressing common experiences of isolation, role confusion and a desire for more preparation for their role, clearer guidelines and communication from the university program. Thea reflected on the stress and isolation of her first year as an RT, related to the lack of guidelines and information:

> I don't think there was much preparation other than, "Okay, here's an email, thank you so much for accepting, being a volunteer, and being a mentor" . . . Other than that, it was just, "You'll get more information." And that's it . . . So my first year, I felt like a fake, I thought, what am I doing here?

For Thea, being an RT was an important responsibility that she endeavored to be successful at. She continued, reflecting on how the university program could better support RT/PST experiences:

> I think this is something that the university, the program should do. You ask them (US), "Hey, what are the expectations for this month, by this week? When should they (PSTs) be doing this?" The USs say, "Well, it's up to you, it's how you feel." I get it, but especially as a first time resident teacher, you definitely want a backbone, you want some sort of structure, some sort of layout that you could follow if you want to, and then from there you can modify it.

Thea describes her understanding of her role as a new RT as uncertain as a result of insufficient guidelines, desiring *expectations* and *structure* to follow, provided by the university program via her US. Both US and RT in this study expressed desire for more specific guidelines about their role in supporting PSTs, but were expected to develop these on their own by the university program. Jerry, RT of 3 years, shared his desire for clear guidelines and structure from the university program via the US,

> What I would like most is telling me what I can expect this teacher (PST) to do at certain points of the first 10 weeks . . . I just want them to sit down with me and say, "Okay, this

is what is to be expected. And then make sure that he [PST] takes over a lesson here. And maybe a little more thought going into what the expectations are of the resident teacher.

Similar to Thea, Jerry expresses uncertainty about his RT role, especially related to when PSTs should assume additional responsibilities in the classroom, such as teaching a lesson. Ultimately, these RTs are looking to the US and university program for confirmation that they are adequately supporting PSTs as they learn to teach.

RTs with many years of experience in the role appeared more comfortable with supporting PSTs with little guidance from their US or the university program, emphasizing the importance of their roles in modeling excellence in teaching for the PSTs. Sasha, RT of 12 years, described this role:

The number one thing is being a model for excellent teaching, . . . being an excellent model for relationships with students, with staff, with administration . . . you're a model and you're a counselor, you counsel them, you advise them, you help them, you guide them.

As an experienced RT, Sasha shares her view that helping PSTs acculturate into the K-12 classroom, modeling teaching strategies and providing opportunities to learn from her example as the important aspects of her role, rather than meeting specific program guidelines. The experienced RTs in this study felt less need for structure and collaboration, their comments reflect mentoring of PSTs that is isolated to the RT/PST dyad without a sense of being part of the practicum triad.

Opportunities for Collaboration. In addition to the general consensus by both USs and RTs that the program would benefit from clearer guidelines that are better communicated, there was agreement that structured opportunities for collaboration between USs and RTs would be helpful, both for professional growth and input for the program. Jerry, RT, reflects the sense that

RTs, in particular, feel they have few opportunities to provide feedback to the program because scheduled times to meet together as co-supervisors are not part of programmatic expectations.

> We (RTs) don't have scheduled times to meet with the supervising teacher (US) and you know if we had that, then I could say, "Hey, you really need to work on this, and maybe you can cover that a little bit more in your program," so it's just having a scheduled time to meet.

Jerry expresses a desire for *scheduled times to meet* with both US and PST, so that his input can be shared on what needs further emphasis in the *program.* Lack of programmatic support for dialogue between RT and US contributes to mentoring in isolation and undermines relationship development between RT/US dyads and the practicum triad.

One opportunity for collaboration that was heralded by both US and RTs for reducing the sense of role isolation was the bi-annual RT breakfasts. Both groups viewed these as opportunities to gather information about the practicum and reflect on experiences together. Originally conceived by the US as a celebratory "thank you" event for RTs participating in the practicum, the bi-annual RT breakfasts developed into important opportunities for collaboration between US and RT, time to reflect, and share information about the practicum. According to Brenda, US:

> At first it was just a 'thank you' breakfast . . . literally, we would cook them breakfast . . . Now, we're asking RTs to come and share what they're doing and how they're mentoring and it's so great.

Kendra, US, similarly shared the importance of the breakfast as:

> the best thing ever, a chance for resident teachers to understand what kinds of things are being taught, and it's also just a wonderful chance for them to come together. They (RTs) get ideas from each other and we try to talk about issues that are important to them.

RTs agreed that the professional development opportunities, personal connections and program information sharing at the RT breakfasts were highlights of the academic year. Sasha,

RT, appreciates the sharing amongst colleagues during the breakfast, "I'll get little jewels in the training . . . and I think, I'm going to use that gem because it'll make me a better teacher or a better RT." Thea, a new RT, agrees the breakfast is helpful but thinks it would be beneficial for the collaboration to continue online, "I think it would be really cool to have Twitter or Facebook where everyone shares their lessons, like, 'Hey, this is what I'm doing with my student teacher,' so it's more shared and all resident teachers are collaborating." RT Grace also echoes the importance of the RT breakfast as a way to collaborate with both RTs and USs, "It's good to meet with all the other RTs. It's good to have focused time when you're all together with the university people." In addition to getting important reminders from the program, Grace enjoys being a part of the professional community of RTs, "I know people from all over. So it's really neat to go and see people I've worked with . . . hearing different people's ideas and ways of working with their PSTs." Aubrey, RT, shared, "We kind of always do the same thing, which I appreciate, talking about problem solving, and brainstorming ideas about common situations with this new teacher (PST), what you could do. And so hearing everybody, it's a way to reflect." Opportunities for collaboration, reflection, and reminders about important dates were also mentioned by Jerry, RT:

> I really liked being there, because then you hear what other experienced teachers are saying they went through and I think, "Wow, that same thing happened to me." It's the experience part of it, I pick up some ideas, because teachers are always sharing, we're like sponges.

The RT breakfast has become a place for communal sharing of ideas by both RT and US about what works to support PSTs during the practicum.

This opportunity for collaboration and sharing which grew out of the informal voluntary bi-annual RT thank-you breakfasts, was consistently highlighted as a positive learning

experience that decreased the sense of isolation in mentoring PSTs and created important connections between co-supervisor groups as well as within groups, increasing a sense of professional community and partnership. All study participants expressed interest in additional opportunities for collaboration to strengthen partnership relationships amongst the co-supervisor dyad and increase connection to the university program.

Chapter Summary

Inductive analysis of semi-structured interviews reflecting the experiences of USs and RTs within BU's multiple subject credential program identified four major themes: primary relationship with PST, protective mentoring, assumption of self-advocacy and mentoring in isolation. These themes are interrelated and largely stem from the perception that there is insufficient programmatic structure, role definition or participant preparation. Participant responses reflected primary dyadic relationships with the PST for both the US and RT, rather than an emphasis on a triadic relationship between the PST and the US and RT as co-supervisors with different roles within the triad. Both the USs and RTs had limited preparation for their role as support provider for the PST, resulting in individual choices in best mentoring practice during the practicum and a sense of isolation. While participants acknowledged the stress and vulnerability for PSTs during their practicum and the need for emotional support, there was also consensus that it was up to the PST to advocate for themselves regarding what, when and how they needed to complete program requirements. Despite the lack of programmatic emphasis on the importance of a strong relationship between US and RT, both groups felt opportunities to communicate and develop these relationships are important. Chapter 5 provides analysis of the findings, implications and recommendations for future studies.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

Chapter 5 is organized into five parts: summary of the study, analysis and discussion of findings, implications, recommendations, and conclusion. In the summary of the study, I review the purpose of the study and the research questions that guided it. The discussion of findings includes answers to the research questions connecting to the themes that emerged. The implications section delineates how the study informs Bicycle University's credential program and other teacher credentialing programs. I include recommendations for future studies, and reflect on how this study impacts my work as the program leader of a university credential program.

Summary of the Study

This qualitative study investigated the dyad relationship formed between the RT and US and its role in shaping PST experiences during the practicum. The purpose of this research was to address the gap in empirical research and increase our understanding of how to strengthen and sustain the key relationships among the partners in the RT, US and PST triad. My goal in this study was to examine working relationships between RTs and USs as co-supervisors in the practicum triad in one school of education at a large, land-grant university identified in this study as Bicycle University (BU) in order to understand (a) how RT/US dyads communicate, collaborate and work together during the practicum to support the PST in learning to teach and (b) how each stakeholder views their own, and their counterparts, roles in the triad. The perspectives of RTs and USs within the multiple subject credential program at BU were elicited through semi-structured interviews to examine the mentoring roles, relationships, supports and

structures drawn upon and developed between themselves to make their working relationships reflective of program guidelines and to explore ways to bolster the practicum experience by centering the voices of PST joint supervisors.

The study findings are important to university programs who wish to make changes that promote progressive teaching practices by exploring existing relationships between US and RT dyads that support PSTs in implementing university curriculum within the classroom. This study found similarities and differences in how USs and RTs describe their roles and the roles of their counterparts in the complex process of learning to teach. Four themes emerged during the semi-structured interviews that inform responses to the three research questions posed for this study: (a) Dyadic Relationship with PST, (b) Protective Mentoring, (c) Assumption of Self-Advocacy; (d) Mentoring in Isolation. In the following section, these themes will be discussed in depth in the context of each research question.

Research Questions

- How do university supervisors and resident teachers interpret their role, and the role of their counterpart, to collaboratively support preservice teachers in learning to teach?

- How do university supervisors and resident teachers collaborate to align pedagogical practices into their mentoring practices to support preservice teachers in learning to teach?

- How do university supervisors and resident teachers incorporate and align the program pillars of reflective practice, collaboration, advocacy, and inquiry into their mentoring practices to support preservice teachers in learning to teach?

Analysis and Discussion of Findings

Question 1: How do university supervisors and resident teachers interpret their role, and the role of their counterpart, to collaboratively support preservice teachers in learning to teach?

Both USs and RTs viewed their primary role in the practicum in terms of a dyadic relationship with their PST. The concept of a triadic relationship that explicitly emphasized the

importance of a collaborative US/RT relationship within that triad did not emerge from either US or RT interviews. Rather, the relationship between the US and RT remained secondary to the primary relationship with the PST. RT/US dyads were seen as primarily relevant when PSTs were struggling during the practicum. Otherwise, both described their mentoring roles in isolation from each other, seemingly as a result of unclear role definitions due to insufficient preparation or clarification from the university program. Perhaps related to this lack of role clarity, RTs and USs relied on the PST to interpret program guidelines, make links between the university curriculum and the practicum, and advocate for themselves when questions or concerns arose.

Despite their different programmatic roles within the practicum triad, both USs and RTs viewed their own experiences as teachers as the foundation for their mentoring and support of PSTs. In addition to modeling best practice and scaffolding experimentation in the classroom, RTs felt another important part of their role was to offer support by being available for reflection and collaboration with the PST. RTs also saw their role as a provider of emotional support as PSTs faced the challenges of the credential year. USs similarly expressed the importance of providing emotional support to the PST and being the university program school site liaison, although their mentoring role was also described primarily in terms of their experience as teachers themselves. Neither group mentioned mentoring practices that centered theoretical or pedagogical influence from the university program into the practicum, relying on the PST to make connections between university curriculum and the practicum. As research suggests, without clear connections to coursework, PSTs are likely to mimic the teaching practices of their RTs, limiting the influence of university pedagogy and theory (Valencia et al., 2009). The

importance of having a strong model for teaching and acculturation into the K-12 context was primary for both the RTs and USs in this study, rather than clearly differentiated roles as joint supervisors (Bullough & Draper, 2004). RTs and USs in this study where uncertain of their roles in relationship to each other, particularly those who were new to their positions, with limited opportunities for collaboration.

Lack of role clarity among practicum participants confirms similar research findings that RT/US roles need to be more clearly defined if collaboration is to improve among participants (Anderson, 2007; Bates et al., 2011; Beck & Kosnick, 2002; Bullough & Draper, 2004; Cuenca, 2011; Long et al., 2013; Martin et al., 2011; Smagorinsky et al., 2004; Steadman & Brown, 2011; Valencia et al., 2009). Instances of RT/US collaboration were mentioned primarily when PSTs struggled, with a majority of participant responses focused on the fragility of the PST during the credential year, especially during feedback on observations. RTs and USs focused their roles, and expected their counterpart, to provide emotional support to their PST and positive feedback, although most hesitated to provide critical feedback. These findings were similar to that of Martin et al. 2011, who found that RTs were often interested in receiving advice about how to support PSTs from the US, but neither the RTs nor USs felt it appropriate to discuss RT classroom practice.

In addition to lack of role clarity, limited preparation for their roles contributed to the theme of mentoring in isolation that emerged, reflective of RT/US experiences navigating their own, and each other's, roles with minimal guidance from the program. Both RTs and USs in this study emphasized a desire for clearer program guidelines, more explicit training, and clearer shared role definitions. USs sought out opportunities to collaborate as a group to refine their

supervision strategies in supporting PSTs and RTs. For example, originally conceived as a RT celebratory event, USs in this study worked with program leadership to develop the twice-yearly RT breakfast into a collaborative forum to increase collaboration between US/RT dyads. RTs cited these breakfasts as the key example of collaboration between the dyads and other RTs. Additional opportunities for collaboration were sporadic and not uniform across the participants. USs in this study met with each other to collaborate and develop their own supervision best practices, while RTs expressed a need for additional opportunities for collaboration from the university program. Lack of role clarity/preparation and its impact on collaborative relationship building has been demonstrated in previous research, leading to uneven experiences during the practicum for members of the triad (Anderson, 2009; Shulman, 2004; Steadman & Brown, 2011; Zeichner, 2010).

The findings of this study add additional perspective to previous studies of PST experiences demonstrating a disconnect among academic faculty, content curriculum, and the school site during the practicum (Anderson, 2007; Bullough & Draper, 2004; Cuenca, 2011; Smagorinsky et al., 2004; Valencia et al., 2009). If the findings of this study are true across university credential programs, it appears that lack of consistent preparation guidelines and few resources on developing clear role definitions and collaborative relationships between USs and RTs cause uncertainty about roles within the triad and lost opportunities to promote progressive teaching practices advocated by university programs (Shulman, 2004; Steadman & Brown, 2011). More extensive preparation of RTs for their role is especially significant as CCTC accreditation requires university programs to provide a minimum of 10 hours of initial

orientation to the program curriculum, as well as keep RTs "current in the knowledge and skills for candidates supervision and program expectations" (CTCC, 2016, p. 2).

Question 2: How do university supervisors and resident teachers collaborate to align pedagogical practices into their mentoring practices to support preservice teachers in learning to teach?

Both USs and RTs in this study based their dyadic relationship with the PST on their own experiences learning to teach and as a result tended to mentor PSTs in isolation, prioritizing the dyadic relationship with their PST instead of collaborating as a triad or with their RT/US counterpart. Study participant responses largely reflected few instances of collaboration or attempts at pedagogical alignment and discussion outside of program assessments. Collaboration between RT/US dyads in this study were viewed as important when their PST struggled with applying RT or US feedback, experienced emotional distress, nervousness about teaching, and/or difficulties meeting the responsibilities agreed upon at the start of the practicum experience. As a result, the theme of mentoring in isolation was prevalent across the BU practicum as RTs and USs preferred to communicate through their shared PST and monitored PST progress in learning to teach via their primary experiences with them.

One cause of RT/US tendency towards mentoring in isolation may originate from the study's finding that participants' responses pedagogically aligned with what Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) described as a *knowledge-in-practice* conceptual model of teacher learning. *Knowledge-in-practice* emphasizes teaching as a craft or "artistry of practice," viewing teaching as an "uncertain and spontaneous craft situated and constructed in response to the particularities of everyday life in schools and classrooms" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999, p. 262). Using this framework, teaching is seen as the process of acting and thinking wisely in response to

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classroom activities. Within the *knowledge-in-practice* model, improvement in teaching requires more experience, observation, and reflection of experienced teachers. The RTs and USs in this study both viewed themselves as the experienced guides, tasked with facilitating opportunities, space, and time for PSTs to develop their own teaching style and practice the art of teaching. This conceptual framework places time in the classroom and experience above others, including university coursework, theory and empirical studies. In contrast, Cochran-Smith and Lytle describe a *knowledge-for-practice* conceptual model of teacher learning as the most common operating framework of university programs and tenured faculty, who were not interviewed for this study. A *knowledge-for-practice* model emphasizes "best practice" techniques that transcend individual school and classroom characteristics (Fashola & Slavin, 1998). Although USs and RTs in this study discussed instances in which they inquired about PSTs curricular learning at the university and made efforts to connect the practicum to coursework, they spoke sporadically about these efforts and relied on the PST to make the connections as the students of teaching. Ideally, triad members would work together in a *knowledge-of-practice* conceptual frame in which the PST/RT/US view themselves as agents of change, centering their relationship on understanding how to advocate for students in the classroom, while critically evaluating and challenging their assumptions about teaching to build a sense of community using the spirit of inquiry to co-construct knowledge about teaching. At times, evidence of these conceptions of teacher learning overlapped amongst the words of the participants, representing the heterogeneous approaches of support and pedagogical practice utilized by USs and RTs for PSTs learning.

Question 3: How do university supervisors and resident teachers incorporate and align the program pillars of reflective practice, collaboration, advocacy, and inquiry into their mentoring practices to support preservice teachers in learning to teach?

Within the multiple subject credential program manual for Bicycle University, the four

pillars of reflective practice, collaboration, advocacy, and inquiry are presented by the program

materials as:

Reflective practice: an awareness and analysis of instructional practices, as well as school and education policy and procedures; an ongoing discovery and understanding about one's teaching guided by theoretical and empirical research as well as field experiences in culturally and linguistically diverse settings.

Collaboration: growth and participation in the teaching community through the collective interactions among students, resident teachers, school staff and University faculty.

Advocacy: educational equity fostered for all children especially students from culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Teachers must be advocates for changes that address the inequities of schooling and society.

Inquiry: study and reflection about teaching practice and student learning that is guided by theoretical and empirical research.

USs and RTs interviewed for this study primarily referenced the program pillars of

reflective practice and collaboration; explicit references to advocacy and inquiry were rare.

Explicit reference to advocacy and inquiry were rare. The importance of reflective practice and

collaboration between the RT/PST and the US/PST was the focus of the responses and examples

given by the study participants. The only explicit mention of US/RT dyad reflective practice was

made during the twice-yearly RT breakfasts, hosted by BU and facilitated by US and program

faculty. During these breakfasts, RTs were given important program information about

assessments like the RICA and edTPA, asked for input on program development and suggested

improvements, and given common practicum scenarios to discuss approaches to common issues

experienced when working with PSTs. USs and RTs in this study felt their strongest connection

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to their counterpart, professional community, and the program during these meetings and all participants agreed this was a highlight of their experience and validation of the importance of their role in supporting PSTs in learning to teach. Some of the RTs expressed the desire for additional opportunities to share common RT practices and mentoring successes with PSTs over the course of the academic year to alleviate feelings of isolation felt in their role (Dooley et al., 2011; Shulman, 2004). The USs in this study viewed the RT breakfast as a time to develop working relationships with their RTs, noting it as an opportunity to highlight new research and emphasize the university's recent focus on racial and social equity. Teacher learner communities as advocated by Shulman and Shulman (2004), envision the RT/US influence at the community context level as partners in the learning-to-teach community. Although the participants in this study did not highlight this RT/US community partnership in their relationships, instances of collaboration and reflective practice were most evident when discussing the professional community developed and maintained during the RT breakfast.

When discussing their dyadic relationship with their PST, both RTs and USs gave examples focusing on allowing time for reflection and collaboration during the learning to teach process. As described in cognitive apprenticeship theory (Collins et al., 1991), the practicum should seek to make the invisible (e.g., the thinking of experts, RTs/USs) visible to the novice (PST). In this study, a majority of the RTs described making their thinking visible and modeling as part of their primary roles, with the less experienced RTs desiring confirmation that their mentoring efforts were enough, wanting more guidance from the university program via their US. The USs in this study also assumed the role of teaching expert during observation and debriefing with the PST during formal observations. The USs in this study let the RTs choose to

participate in the PST observations and debriefings. A majority of RTs chose to leave the room to alleviate perceived PST stress; a few chose to remain in the classroom to observe but allowed US/PST debriefs without their input. Only one RT in this study chose to participate in both observation and debriefing as a triad. In response to Research Question 3, US participants value and connect the pillars of reflective practice and collaboration with the PST during observation debriefs, but did not mention collaboration with the RT as a method of connecting the program pillars into their role.

Five of the eight RTs in this study assumed PSTs would communicate next steps from US observations, others received notes via email from the US debriefing their feedback. The discussion of PST observations by USs was framed as transmissive rather than discursive, with the US providing feedback directly to the PST. In this case, opportunity for collaboration as defined by the program pillars as "growth and participation in the teaching community through the collective interactions among students, resident teachers, school staff and University faculty" was not enacted by either USs or RTs by program design nor interpretation of their role in supporting PSTs in learning to teach. The RT/US theme of mentoring in isolation provides further evidence of the complex and potentially hierarchical working relationships within the triad that may discourage collaborations (Martin et al., 2011, Zeichner, 2010). Further research should explore the reasons behind why only one triad group choose to collaborate together. The RT who chose to collaborate within the triad during US observation debriefings viewed this an important part of her role, although it was not an expectation set by the program or encouraged by the US. Reasons cited by participants in this study for RTs not participating in observation

debriefings was mostly due to RTs assuming classroom responsibilities during US/PST debriefings.

There was little mention of advocacy and its importance in preparing PSTs by the participants in this study. Both the RTs and USs in this study viewed their PST as a willing partner in learning about students' needs and advocating for their shared K-12 students. Reference to advocacy was made by three of the participants in this study, two USs and one RT. The two US responses referenced social justice coursework at BU and a program speaker series advocated for and developed by the program in reaction to the events surrounding Black Lives Matter protests and the death of George Floyd in the fall of 2020. The RT mention of advocacy was more related to classroom management and the importance of equity minded practice in the classroom. Relevant to this finding is a recent review of practicum experiences by Anderson and Stillman (2013) who found that the default experience of PSTs is to replicate RT instructional practices rather than incorporate strategies taught through university coursework. If RTs chose to incorporate advocacy into their practice, it was optional and was not the focus of this study. Advocacy was not translated or transferred by either the US or RT to the PST, despite its emphasis as a major curriculum component through the pillars. Specific guidance on how to incorporate advocacy into the school placement for the US and RT by leadership at BU would be helpful in emphasizing this pillar.

Inquiry was not specifically mentioned as part of the process of supporting PSTs in learning to teach by either RTs or USs in this study. Inquiry as defined by the program pillar includes "study and reflection about teaching practice and student learning that is guided by theoretical and empirical research" (Bicycle University, n.d., p. 5). At BU, PSTs are admitted

into a 2-year program. The first year they complete credential requirements and incorporate

Masters of Arts in Education (M.A.) coursework and research across both years. BU's MA

program incorporates inquiry-based action research, through which PSTs investigate the

application of theoretical and empirical research practices into their classrooms. When asked

about inquiry as a pillar, USs and RTs in this study referred to the MA component as the primary

place where inquiry-based reflection occurred and did not see it as part of their role to support

PST understanding of inquiry-based practices.

Additional areas connected to this study that may include inquiry but need further

research include the ways in which RTs and USs scaffold and support PSTs during portfolio

assessments such as edTPA. EdTPA is a performance-based assessment used by teacher

preparation programs to "emphasize, measure and support the skills and knowledge that all

teachers need" (edTPA, n.d., para. 3). Part of the commentary in the Planning section requires

PST candidates to connect their instructional practice to research and theory. Mandated

assessments such as RICA and edTPA were mentioned by both RTs and USs in this study as

important components of demonstrating teaching abilities. RTs understood their roles in

supporting PSTs during edTPA as allowing space and time in their classroom, access to students,

as well as providing feedback on lesson and unit plans. USs were less clear about their role in

support of PSTs during edTPA; most mentioned supporting PSTs emotionally during the stress

of implementation and ensuring the RT was aware of the associated deadlines/timelines for

implementation. If the RTs or USs are supporting edTPA as a connection to inquiry within

teacher practice (e.g., action research, teacher inquiry) it was not specifically mentioned in the

participant responses.

Summary of Discussion

My goal in this study was to examine the meaningful working relationships between USs and RTs in one school of education at a large, land-grant university. My analysis reveals that USs and RTs both view their primary role in terms of their dyadic relationship with the PSTs in learning to teach, rather than as joint supervisors within a triadic relationship. Collaboration as a US/RT dyad was largely restricted to times of PST distress or underperformance. Both RTs and USs expressed insufficient preparation for their roles and a sense of isolation in their mentoring practice. Dyad members do work together and enjoy collaboration when given the format and opportunity to participate, in this university program through twice yearly RT breakfasts. In addition to better preparation for their roles, RTs desire clearer guidelines from the program about timelines and expectations for PST learning over the course of the academic year. These dyad members have the potential to promote progressive teaching practice, as well as emphasize the program pillars, with better preparation and clearer role definitions. The program pillars of the university, especially advocacy and inquiry, need greater emphasis to build stronger connections between program coursework and to mitigate common experiences of mentoring in isolation.

Implications of this Study

Major findings of this study are organized into two areas that have implications for Bicycle University, and teacher preparation programs in general, in promoting progressive teaching practices and supporting increased clarity and strength of collaborative relationships between USs and RTs within teacher practicum programs.

Question and Define Conceptions of Teaching

An important theoretical framework for this study is the conception of teacher knowledge which represents a critical constructivist, agent of change position that centers the RT, US and PST as operating on equal footing. Described by Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999), as *knowledge-of-practice, "*this third conception of teacher learning emphasizes images of teacher as agent and of teaching as agency in the classroom and in larger educational contexts" (p. 276). The *knowledge-of-practice* conception aims towards building a sense of community and spirit of inquiry that is embraced by the members of the triad. When enacting this model, the triad co-constructs learning experiences and position themselves as advocates for students while exploring ways to innovate teaching and school contexts through teacher inquiry. If teacher credentialing programs wish to promote innovation and change within schools, particularly related to advocating for social justice and student advocacy, it is imperative that university programs model and provide resources and time for triad partners to question their existing conceptions of teacher knowledge and build collaborative relationships. In the absence of such guidance, this study revealed that RTs and USs will base their mentoring and support of PSTs on their own experiences with teaching, making the experiences of PSTs uneven and not necessarily tied to the program pillars of BU or tied to ambitious teaching practices (Danielowich & McCarthy, 2013, Long et al., 2013). One way university programs could promote meaningful working relationships is to make self-reflection about teaching and the learning to teach process more explicit. Programs could ask RTs and USs to reflect on past teaching experiences and share with each other, highlighting commonalities and differences in mentoring practice that could be a

source of potential disconnect with university guidelines or best practice ideas for supporting

PSTs (Barnes & Smagorinsky, 2016; Smagorinsky et al., 2013, Smagorinsky et al., 2015).

Increased Professional Development and Collaboration Time

This qualitative study was designed to examine working relationships between the USs

and RTs in one school of education at a large, land-grant university. Previous empirical research

on the practicum reveals that the relationship between the RT and US is of critical importance to

the PST experience within the practicum (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). The findings

of this study revealed that RT/US relationships remained secondary to the primary relationship

with their shared PST for both members of the dyad. The concept of a triad relationship that

explicitly emphasized the importance of the US/RT relationship within that triad did not emerge

from either US or RT interviews, although both expressed the desire for more time to meet and

collaborate. BU and other teacher preparation programs could provide structured opportunities

for RT/US collaborations, similar to the RT breakfast exalted by study participants, with a focus

on collaborative relationship building around clear role definitions. USs and RTs in this study

enjoyed feeling a part of a professional community of educators, and expressed interest in

additional opportunities to participate in these professional development experiences.

Commitment of additional programmatic resources to clarify and facilitate collaborative

relationships between the US and RT that link the program pillars and curriculum to the

practicum, promote progressive teaching practices and support all members of the RT/US/PST

triad should be explored by Bicycle University and other teacher preparation programs.

Other RTs mentioned the use of online platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and

Pinterest to share ideas for supporting PSTs, providing a bank of resources for new RTs that are

short on time but wish to seek out additional opportunities to improve their mentoring. Online sharing, a library or database of suggestions could be cultivated by university programs, grounded in the Teacher Performance Expectations (TPEs) mandated by the CCTC.

Recommendations for Future Study

University Collaborations

Collaborations between teacher preparation programs exist and could be built upon to help define US and RT roles within the practicum triad and promote collaborative relationships between RT and US to best support PSTs during the practicum. In a four-university project supported by the National Science Foundation, PSTs and RTs pairs ($n = 68$) helped researchers identify the kinds of tools and resources that would likely assist RT/PST dyads to learn together. These researchers identified "opportunities to learn" and ways to help PSTs make sense of the complex work of teaching (Cole & Engestrom, 1997; Greeno & Gresalfi, 2008). This group then developed a repertoire of mentoring practices available on mentorteachers.org. The group's research does not mention the role of the US, but the US should be incorporated as another key partner in communicating their suggestions, preparing the RT for their role, and understanding research based good mentoring practices themselves.

Absent Voices: PSTs

Although not the focus of this study, PSTs experiences of being stuck in the middle, navigating separate and sometimes contradictory conceptions about learning to teach is well documented in other studies on the practicum (Barnes & Smagornisky, 2016; Bullough & Draper, 2004; Smagorinsky et al., 2013; Smagorinsky et al., 2015). Moreover, literature on the practicum reviewed for this study demonstrates that PSTs often struggle with making

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connections between university coursework and practicum experiences and that continuity across

teacher preparation programs is often not found ((Darling-Hammond & Bradsford, 2005;

Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1985; Valencia et al., 2009). It would be helpful to study

experiences of PSTs at BU to determine if feelings of disconnect between university curriculum

and practicum exist as reported by US and RT. In terms of supporting PSTs in completing their

MA requirements, feelings of disconnect may be significant, related to the finding that

connection to inquiry-based practice and empirical research is largely absent among US/RT

participants. Future studies should include PSTs perspectives to explore their experiences in

regards to the potential disconnect between academic curriculum and classroom teaching when

RTs and USs are not in communication or clear about their responsibilities within the triad.

Absent Voices: Tenured Faculty

Senate and unit 18 full-time faculty voices from BU are mostly absent from this study as

only one, first year full-time faculty member responded and agreed to participate. Full-time

senate and unit 18 faculty who teach in the program may have a much different approach to

integrating university curriculum into the practicum for their PSTs and this is an identified

limitation of this study. Traditionally, university faculty have not participated in supervision

during the practicum experience because it is not seen as highly regarded or rewarded toward

tenure and promotion. It could be important to know if BU faculty USs share the common

research finding that university culture often downgrades the practical (learning to teach) in

favor of research and theorizing (Beck & Kosnik, 2002). Despite the absent voices, this study

provided opportunity for adjunct faculty and resident teachers to share perspectives and highlight

practitioner knowledge on the practicum and supports provided to PSTs. A variety of stakeholder

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knowledge adds to the research in this field, giving voice to US/RT participants who are not often included in programmatic decisions being made (Zeichner et al., 1998).

Conclusion

I have worked in teacher education for over 10 years, as adjunct faculty, university supervisor, and most recently as program leader of a teacher credentialing program at a different institution. The experiences of the study participants resonated in many ways, highlighting the joys of supporting new teachers while also illuminating areas for increased collaboration between RT/US dyads and university program growth and development. At the start of my research, the program of study was grappling with a decision to postpone enrollment of candidates for the 2021-22 academic year for program redesign. Although it never came to a faculty vote due to community outpouring of support to maintain the program, some of the participants in this study worried their words or the findings of this study might be used as justification for future postponement. The words and analysis shared here accurately reflect interpretations of the intentions and meanings of the participants to the best of my ability as the main research instrument in this study. Although this is not a study of the program I currently lead, the things I have learned about RT/US collaborations, the importance of role clarity, and focused program guidelines are key findings I will take with me, share with my university partners, and try to implement into my program and leadership practice. I am forever grateful to these participants who bravely shared their experiences with candor and hope the suggestions for improvement and future study make lasting change for new educators.

My goal in this study was to examine working relationships and programmatic connections between two invaluable practicum participants, the university supervisor (US) and

resident teacher (RT) who support preservice teachers (PST) in learning to teach. By focusing my study on one school of education, I was able to investigate one program's approach to supporting RT/US dyads that has important implications for teacher preparation programs who wish to better support PSTs during the practicum. Participants in this study generously shared their experiences as teachers, RTs and USs, as well as gave insight into other roles they hold in their professional spheres. Their narratives and experiences revealed the importance of role clarity among teacher credentialing program and the desire for collaborative experiences that many educators share.

Findings from this study showed that RTs and USs are passionate about working with and supporting PSTs. Their dedication and commitment to preparing new educators despite limited role clarity, time, and financial resources was inspiring. Despite the desire to collaborate and support new teachers, the experiences of study participants revealed different approaches to mentoring that resulted from a lack of clarity of their role and the role of their practicum partners. The experiences of RTs and USs in this study was mostly positive, they expressed a desire to work with new teachers and build community with the university to enrich their experiences in the classroom and expressed a desire for greater program communication and guidance to better support PSTs in learning to teach. The findings of this study were thematically powerful, highlighting the tendency of RT/US relationships to remain secondary or non-consequential without intervention and emphasis put forward by university programs and curriculum.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Adapted from Creswell & Creswell (2018, p. 191)

PURPOSE (Phase)	CONTEXT & QUESTIONS
Welcome, Basic Information, Forms	Welcome, my name is Heather Ballinger. I am a doctoral student in the CANDEL Educational Leadership program at UC Davis. Thank you for taking the time to meet with me today to share your experiences as a university supervisor and/or resident teacher. I have emailed you a consent form, please review and sign the form, unless you have questions or concerns you would like to discuss now? I will be recording our interview for research purposes and need your informed consent before we begin (distribute and collect consent form). To start, I'm going to record basic information about this interview to keep myself organized…today is ____ (date), it's __'o-clock (time), we are holding this interview via Zoom meeting, I am interviewing _____ (name of interviewee), who is a US/RT at _____ (role and school site). This interview should take about 45 minutes, please let me know if you have any questions.
Introduction/Purpose of Study, Confidentiality	As a teacher educator and researcher, I am interested in the preparation of new teachers. For this study, I am especially interested in learning more about the working relationships between resident teachers and university supervisors and how they support preservice teachers in learning to teach. When I say resident teachers, I mean the K-12 teacher who hosts the preservice teacher candidate within the classroom. I am interviewing both university supervisors and resident teachers in this study. For the sake of clarity, here are some definitions of roles I will be using during the interview: -Resident Teacher – K12 host teacher, sometimes referred to as the "cooperating teacher" or "mentor teacher" -Preservice Teacher– student enrolled in the UC Davis multiple subject credential program, sometimes referred to as the "apprentice" or "student teacher"

	-University Supervisor – sometimes referred to as "program supervisor," are selected and employed by UC Davis to supervise the practicum, or student teaching, experience. -Practicum – the fieldwork component of the credential program, sometimes referred to as the "student teaching experience." Your participation today is voluntary; any comments you make about the program will not be linked to personally identifying information. However, I cannot guarantee complete confidentiality. If you do not want to answer a question or feel uncomfortable, we can stop at any time. Now that you know more about my research topic, do you have any questions?
Opening Questions (Ice-Breaker)	How long have you been in education? What roles have you assumed over the course of your career in teacher education? What is your current professional role in education?
Content Questions	How many years have you been a RT/US? Tell me about your experience as a resident teacher/university supervisor. What do you enjoy about it? What do you find challenging?

Teacher Learning **(Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999)- trying to conceptualize where this RT/US is in their beliefs about teacher learning, this could be a continuum of university knowledge, practice, and inquiry.**	What do you think is the most important component of your role in supporting PSTs in learning to teach? What would you like to see more of from the US/RT and/or university to improve this relationship? Tell me about a time that a student teacher struggled… and how you worked with your counterpart to support them... Tell me a time when you had to collaborate w/your counterpart…What, if anything, did you do to set up that collaboration?

	In your role, in what ways, if any, do you see the curriculum from the university program getting translated to the K-12 classroom? Do you have access to syllabi or course outcomes within the program? Do have conversations with your PST about bridging content from their coursework into their emerging teaching practice? Could you give me an example? Can you give me an example or give more details about how curriculum is transferred from the university classroom into the K-12 environment? What are your expectations of your counterpart within their role? What do you need from your counterpart while supporting your shared PST? Tell me a time when you needed help or support from your counterpart… What type of support did you need? How do you ask for it? What, if anything, did they do to help? Or, what would you have preferred?
Teacher Learner Communities – RT/US as part of a professional community (Shulman & Shulman, 2004)	Do you feel connected to the university credential program? In what ways is this connection facilitated? What preparations for your role are provided by the university? How, if at all, are role responsibilities communicated to you by the university? How do you wish program and role responsibilities were communicated?
Cognitive Apprenticeship Theory (Collins et al., 1991)	In what ways (or to what extent) do you see the practicum as an apprenticeship? In what ways do you model, coach, scaffold, articulate, reflect, or explore teaching concepts with your RT/US? How do you work collaboratively with your RT/US to support your PST?
Go to probes: more information &	- Tell me more about.. - Tell me a time when… - I need more detail…

explanation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018)	- Could you explain that response more? - What does 'not much' mean?
Closing	Final questions: Is there any further information about your relationship with your RT/US that you would like to share that we have not covered? Can you think of anyone who serves as a RT/US that might be interested in participating in this study? Thank you for taking the time to meet with me and share your experiences as an RT/US. Your thoughts and participation are critical to my research and I appreciate the time you've taken to talk with me. I'd be happy to share the abstract of my final study if you are interested. Would you be willing to look at my preliminary findings and give feedback (member check)?

Appendix B: Member Check Communications

Dear Participant (US or RT name HERE),

      Thank you again for your willingness to participate in my study. The information you shared was essential to my study. As described during our interview, part of the research process requires a "member check." This is an opportunity for you to review the interview transcripts and the participant profile I have created based on our meeting.   Please see the participant profile below using pseudonyms "name HERE" and "Bicycle University".   Would you describe this as an accurate overview of your work and educational experience?

(Table HERE).

These are my current research questions:

- How do university supervisors and resident teachers interpret their role, and the role of their counterpart, to collaboratively support preservice teachers in learning to teach?
- How do university supervisors and resident teachers collaborate to align pedagogical practices into their mentoring practices to support preservice teachers in learning to teach?
- How do university supervisors and resident teachers incorporate and align the program pillars of reflective practice, collaboration, advocacy, and inquiry into their mentoring practices to support preservice teachers in learning to teach?

Here is your participant profile: (HERE)

I hope this participant profile serves as an overview of how I'm summarizing the discussion we had about US/RT relationships in supporting PSTs in learning to teach and their relationship to the program. If you have anything else you'd like to add or correct from my interpretation, please let me know as soon as possible. If I do not hear back from you in the next few weeks I will send a reminder. If I do not receive any feedback or changes, I will assume that I have your information correctly noted and you do not have any suggested changes.

Sincerely,
Heather Ballinger

Appendix C: Participant Vignettes

The participant vignettes below are descriptions/portraits of each participant's experience as a university supervisor or resident teacher and summaries of their responses during the interview primarily related to my research questions. Pseudonyms have been used to protect the identity of participants, presented in the order of the above tables.

Adjunct- Faculty University Supervisor- "Brenda"

"Just because you're a strong student does not make you a good teacher."

Brenda was recruited to become a University Supervisor by a Bicycle University faculty lead she'd worked with professionally as a K-12 teacher. Although "it felt like this thing was being dropped in my lap", Brenda has enjoyed her work as a US for the past 14 years. The most valuable aspect of her role is developing a relationship with her pre-service teachers (PSTs). Brenda describes the learning to teach process, and the practicum experience for PSTs, as a "crash from the dream world into the real world…almost like a metamorphosis, recognizing you're not the cartoon character teacher you imagined. You're a real person with all sorts of real talents and expertise, but also difficulties, challenges and struggles and so are your students." In Brenda's experience, Bicycle University attracts strong academic candidates, she sees her role as US to help bridge learning experiences from the university towards understanding how to meet the needs of diverse classroom learners. With recent current events, including "George Floyd and its racial reckoning" and COVID-19 required online learning, Brenda is focused on her desire for Bicycle University to become a leader in educational innovation, a place where RTs and PSTs look for innovation in educational research and theory. As a former teacher, Brenda appreciates the busy lives and responsibilities placed on RTs and PSTs. Brenda describes the US role as liaison between the university and the school site, helping to navigate challenges as they arise while providing space for critical feedback on the university program and navigating challenges

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such as completing high stakes CTC assessments like the edTPA and RICA assessments. For Brenda, the primary goal of the practicum is to learn how to meet the diverse needs of primary students, learn tools of the trade from experienced educators via positive feedback with frequent check-ins and communication.

Adjunct- Faculty University Supervisor- "Camille"

"I enjoy the one-on-one relationship with the student teacher and giving positive feedback"

Camille served as a US for BU for five years before returning to the classroom to teach at a bilingual primary school this academic year. Camille has been a bilingual K-6 teacher, university lecturer and researcher, migrant program coordinator, and US for another local university. Camille enjoys the "one on one relationship with the student teacher (PST) and giving positive feedback" best about being a US, as well as the flexibility of the position. Camille appreciates that PSTs are vulnerable during the learning to teach process, "you always have to navigate you know…not to hurt their feelings, but be professional and still maintain a relationship with the student (PST)." One way Camille reinforced feedback to PSTs, was through bi-weekly collaboration with her RTs via email, phone, site visit, or Zoom. When Camille arrived at BU, she felt prepared for her role as a US because of her former experience teaching and supervising for another local university. When asked to compare her supervision experiences, Camille felt that they were similar in many ways, formal guidelines for supervision were not given beyond a handbook of assigned duties (listed) for both the RT and US. Among the differences between programs was a detailed calendar (list) of expected PST tasks and developmental based suggestions provided by the other university (but not BU) for the RT/US to follow. In Camille's experience, RTs appreciated this calendar list of PST tasks and felt BU left mentoring processes more open for the RT to decide. In her experience, RTs prefer a list of suggested PST calendar activities. During her experience as a US, Camille acknowledges it's the RT that can often make "all the difference" in PST learning, and the relationship the RT has with

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the US and university program is essential. Camille uses praise, acknowledgement, and sometimes small tokens of appreciation to build "human connections" with her RTs by being available, flexible, and building trust and relationships over time.

Adjunct- Faculty University Supervisor- "Dolores"

"I think we could do a better job as a university reaching out, I mean individually, we (USs) kind of do our own thing."

Dolores has been an RT for Bicycle University (BU) for 6 years, recruited by a teacher colleague and faculty lead to apply for a bilingual university supervisor adjunct-faculty position. Dolores earned her multiple subject and bilingual specialist credentials from BU (1976), has worked both in and out of the classroom as a reading specialist, principal, vice-principal, and early childhood education and Even Start coordinator. While working as a part time teacher, Dolores served as a US for another local university for 2 years. Preparation for US from BU was minimal, "I kind of left like we're just plopped in, there was no standard form to use or, you know, we know how often to go in but not how long or how to observe, no direction was given." Dolores collaborates with other adjunct-faculty USs for "peer to peer" training, often organizing their own meetings to share/modify supervision forms, collaborate, and discuss common issues affecting their supervision practice, RTs and PSTs development, about twice a month. Dolores is passionate about her work with PSTs, she "loves seeing the new teachers grow…I love to see their energy and willingness to learn…when I finish an observation I'm smiling and thinking I could see my granddaughter in this classroom…working with the students (PSTs) specifically I think is the best part." Dolores acknowledges that building working relationships with RTs has its challenges, "RTs are always so busy. It's really hard to kind of even get a time to sit down with them, you know even when we're in the classroom they're always looking at their watch…it's hard to set up those times with them". She builds connections with RTs over time, asking them a blend of personal (family, children, hobbies,

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health) as well as professional (years teaching, academic interests) interests during her bi-weekly check-ins and visits. Dolores encourages the RT to think of their classroom like a laboratory, a place where PSTs can experiment, "put into practice the research, the theory." Dolores sees it as the PSTs responsibility to communicate university learning to the RT, asking for time and space to complete credential requirements. Ultimately, working relationships with RTs are possible if the US is flexible with meeting times, including when and where they occur. Dolores sees herself as an advocate for her PSTs and that communication to the RT often feels one sided. When considering how US/RT relationships could be improved, Dolores considered the metaphor of parents (US/RT) and child (PST), "maybe I need to be better about sharing that at the beginning…we're both the parents and that we need to kind of communicate about our child together."

Adjunct- Faculty University Supervisor-"Kendra"

"I think (of myself as) being a cheerleader, a hand-holder, being present as a person of support"

Kendra was a primary grades teacher and reading specialist for 39 years, recruited as a US for Bicycle University 8 years ago through her work with the university's writing project. Kendra's favorite part about being a US is being back in the classroom, observing primary students and helping PSTs develop curriculum and positive classroom environments. The primary challenge of Kendra's work is finding time to meet and discuss PST learning with RTs. According to Kendra, one unintended benefit of COVID-19 related shelter in place restrictions has been Zoom meetings with RTs, "I have had lengthier, deeper conversations because of Zoom, they're more focused" and it has been easier to find times to meet since no traveling is required. Despite these benefits, Kendra laments that lack of in-person classroom experiences related to the shutdown for PSTs. Kendra wishes the program was structured in a way that allowed for PSTs to be in the classroom more often to focus on learning how to teach in the classroom setting. One of the primary ways Kendra builds working relationships with RTs is

to meet with them before meeting their PST, prior to the start of the academic year. Kendra prefers to be placed with the same RT "over and over again because I know the routine. The teacher knows me, they're comfortable getting in touch with me." Kendra expects RTs to be metacognitive about their work, sharing with the PST the strategies they use with students and why. In her observation notes, Kendra encourages PSTs to ask follow up questions about RT choices in the classroom. Ultimately Kendra sees her role as a liaison between the university and RT, school site and district, "from the first day of school to the last day of school" and acknowledges that the US is often the primary connection between the university program and the school site, "resident teachers are taking on so much responsibility that they want to know what they're doing in their classroom that's going to help them move their student teacher along in classes...they would like to maybe have a broader idea of what kinds of underlying theories are being taught in the classes...they want to know that there's somebody like me or another supervisor, an in between person so that they don't just have their student teacher (PST) and nobody else." As a US, Kendra uses her experiences as an educator to help bridge university content with classroom experience by sharing classroom management, lesson planning, and curriculum development techniques she has perfected during her classroom teaching and supervision experience.

Full-Time Faculty University Supervisor- "Sabrina"

"I think the main thing is seeking your answers because not everybody knows your needs"

Although this is Sabrina's first year as a US and instructor in the Bicycle University bilingual program, she has a wide variety of experiences mentoring new teachers and interns as an RT for other universities and teacher support programs. Mentoring new teachers began for Sabrina when she noticed new teachers (including interns) at her school site struggling with common new teacher hurdles such as curriculum planning, classroom management, and

emotional burnout. Sabrina believes that new teachers and PSTs alike need a US that "makes them feel confident" and reduce nerves as they progress through the practicum via directed teaching experiences. As a US, Sabrina focuses on "lowering that effective filter, lowering their anxiety, helping them to get across that bridge from I'm a student to now I'm a teacher." For Sabrina, it is equally important that the RT feel comfortable with her presence in their classroom, building strong working relationships through frequent contacts including a beginning of the year introductory phone call, frequent informative emails, and three way zoom conferencing during evaluations. Sabrina's three-way conferences give her insight into the evolving dynamics between RT and PST, listening carefully and finding value in discussion of each score given, the participant's reactions, and input about PST progress in learning to teach. Without the conferences, Sabrina acknowledges the tendency for RT opinion to be more highly regarded and attempts to mitigate this with collaborative techniques. Sabrina appreciates the connections she's made with faculty and staff during meetings, sighting that email is more challenging way to communicate and get all of her many questions answered. Connecting PST coursework to placement experiences has been challenging and Sabrina mostly relies on her PSTs to communicate "objectives and learning targets" to her. As for RT interest in university coursework, Sabrina acknowledges that many experienced RTs are "familiar with what's going on, but at the same time, their mind is one their own class, their students, and so maybe they're not really fresh on what was taught or what concepts need reiterating." Over the course of the first half of a challenging academic year, Sabrina has been working on making personal connections and building relationships with her RTs by sharing personal tidbits about her family

and home life and prior classroom experiences that are relatable. Sabrina believes that if she has a strong relationship with her RTs "we can bring up difficult conversations later if needed."

Resident Teacher- "Aubrey"

"It's fine, we're all going to be alive tomorrow after you try this…just see what happens."

Aubrey has been a classroom teacher for 20 years at the same primary school in the town district of Bicycle University. In addition to teaching, Aubrey has been an induction support provider and has hosted PSTs in her classroom from either BU or another local university for 17 years. One of the highlights of being an RT is the "co-teaching" relationship she develops with her PST, she finds it "rejuvenating" and "energizing", she benefits from "the new research they're learning in class and bringing in all those ideas." Aubrey sees it as part of her responsibility to encourage PSTs to experiment with new ideas and help them overcome nervousness about teaching through scaffolded experiences. One of the greatest challenges of her role is finding time to collaborate with her PST, especially this academic year with COVID-19 related shelter in place restrictions as her PST balances online learning at BU and teaching online. She asks often about what her PST is learning at BU, "what are you guys supposed to be learning and how can we incorporate that into what we're doing here?" and making sure they feel like they have the opportunity to apply or "test out" any of the strategies they've learned but also acknowledges that sometimes "the theoretical stuff" is recognizable as either "applicable in the immediate timeframe" or "what they're just learning that is a more global view of education."

Aubrey appreciates her current US and "that pinpointed feedback" she provides, admitting that usually when a PST is teaching, she's monitoring her student's behavior, not necessarily the actions of the PST. In contrast, the US "is there, she's noticing the fabulous things that the student teacher is doing and also the things that might need a little bit more

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guidance, more discrete, more explicitly that I am able to give." Ultimately, Aubrey has had mixed experiences with USs over the years, some were less responsive to requests for support when PSTs struggled, but she admits that she only really needs to speak with her US independently "if there's a problem". During the interview, she did reflect that her relationship with the program and US could be improved, "I would just like to talk to Brenda, or anybody (from the university) and say, 'What are they (PST) supposed to be doing?...At what point of their process are they supposed to be…what's the benchmark at this point?"

Resident Teacher- "Edith"

 "They (USs) want to make something better for the world, there's a sense of humanity, and they're real"

Edith has been a classroom teacher for 28 years and a RT for another university and BU for a total of 26 years (15 years at BU). Edith has been teaching Kindergarten in the district town of BU since 1996, prior to that she owned and operated a child care center and taught parenting courses at a local college. Edith enjoys mentoring PSTs because "it keeps me professional, there's a check on me so that I'm not just kind of doing the same old, same old." Edith considers her PST a "co-teacher," scaffolding their learning through metacognitive modeling and reflection until "they're ready to take off and fly, I'm happy to let them do that." Edith was originally recruited by her principal to become an RT, she feels connected to BU's program through consistent relationships she's built with the program and USs via communications from the faculty lead regarding scheduling and expectations of her PST. Edith feels "connected to the program" because "they're very open to communications, they're very responsive...they include us in the Monday night (speaker) series" and sometimes US provide lesson demonstrations in her class or share lesson materials and research

articles. Edith makes sure her PSTs understand the importance of CCSS standards, integrated content, and using the TPEs to guide performance improvement.

As RT, Edith models and reflects with her student teachers about how to develop integrated curriculum and models positive communication with students and families. After a US comes in to observe her PST, Edith participates in three-way conferencing in which "everybody gets to discuss, there's a reflection by the student teacher, there's an observation by myself and the supervisor…it's a really great opportunity because we can really focus when you have all these three different perspectives." In her many years as an RT, Edith has had only positive experiences with USs. The USs Edith has worked with are "very credible people, I think because they care. They want to make something better for the world, there's a sense of humanity, and they're real."

Bilingual Resident Teacher-"Grace"

"They're (PSTs) an extra set of hands, new thoughts, new ideas, somebody to share ideas and thoughts with…plus they have better technologies, it's good for me."

Grace has been teaching for over 35 years in central valley primary schools, currently she teaches sixth grade at a Spanish immersion school. Grace has a long educational history with lots of experience, including National Board Certification and an (unused) Administrative Credential. Grace has been an RT for other programs and in the past, and has been an RT for BU consistently for the past three years. Grace's favorite part about being an RT is having a student teacher to collaborate with, she appreciates "their enthusiasm, their energy, and their willingness to look at things, to be open." Grace has struggled in recent years to connect with her US from BU and feels "there was a clear bias against me being a white teacher in a bilingual program" and as a result, believes she was not given a PST at the beginning of last year and has only been assigned a PST when they also are white. Although Grace has a new US, she continues to feel alienated and she's not "seeing a lot of support in growing these teachers. They're like

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processing and they're going through the process and they're writing up evaluations. But I'm not seeing that my student teachers are feeling like there's a lot of support from their supervisors as far as growing as teachers."

One of the primary concerns highlighted by Grace was "classroom management" and reinforcing the importance of "having kids sit up, pay attention, participate, be involved, and also not dominate the discussion", if PSTs don't see this being modeled by the RT, then Grace feels PSTs are not getting the experience they need from the university, curriculum she considers "real soft and fluff." Despite these challenges, Grace enjoys the RT breakfast hosted by BU twice a year, where edTPA requirements, scheduling, and other RTs share mentoring ideas. Grace feels like the RT breakfast helps build a network of RTs, getting ideas from others about how to best mentor their PST in the classroom. Ultimately, Grace is frustrated with the transactional nature of her relationship with her US and the program. "I would like to see it more clearly defined what the supervisor is supposed to do, besides fill out evaluation forms, to have that communicated more to me, and I would like to have time to actually sit down with supervisors and understand what their expectations are for the students…what are they looking for when they want them to grow? We don't ever do that."

Resident Teacher- "Jerry"

"I just try to empathize with them and tell them that, you know, this is a learning profession and I'm a lifelong learner"

Jerry is currently a 4th grade teacher and grade level leader at a primary school in the same town as BU. Over his 28 years of teaching, Jerry has served as an RT for two other universities and has been an RT for BU for 3 years. Jerry enjoys hosting PSTs because it "gives me that opportunity to keep trying new things...I benefit from, you know, just hearing what they are practicing and then seeing that in practice." According to Jerry, "a big challenge is classroom management" for PSTs. Having a US to meet with and discuss these concerns is part of the

support he appreciates about the program. Jerry feels connected to the program and his US, primarily because he feels a relationship has been built over the years. Initially, the US contacted Jerry prior to the start of the school year to meet for coffee, discuss teaching philosophies, using Twitter in the classroom, and other professional topics of interest. Building that initial relationship helped when his PST began struggling with mental health concerns earlier this academic year. Twice a year, BU hosts an RT breakfast that Jerry always makes sure to attend, these meetings are a time to learn about "current research" in education, go over important assessments (edTPA and RICA) requirements, and understand the placement schedule. In addition, RTs are split into groups and asked scenario based questions and collaborate on common PST struggles. According to Jerry, the most important role of an US is that they communicate often, they visit the school site, check in, and provide regular contact with the RT and PSTs. In addition, Jerry feels the program could communicate "what I can expect this teacher (PST) to do at certain points…say the first 10 weeks" more clearly. Jerry wants his PSTs to be successful and feels clear communication about expectations at the school site and explicit connection to university coursework would help.

Bilingual Resident Teacher- "Juliette"

"I love the energy that the student teacher brings, they always have these really awesome ideas, I love being able to work with another person."

Juliette has been teaching for 18 years as a bilingual teacher, she has been a RT for Bicycle University for 3 years. A busy mother of three school aged children, Juliette originally hesitated when her principal recruited her as an RT. Although time to meet and collaborate with her PST remains a concern, Juliette has been impressed with her PSTs and loves "the energy", "really awesome ideas", and being "able to share the work." Juliette sees her role as RT to "provide them (PST) an example of what teaching looks like", demonstrating her "teaching style", "classroom management", and "positive reinforcement." Juliette views herself as a guide,

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helping her PST figure out how to develop their own teaching style while using some of the teaching strategies they observe and then practice in her class. Juliette feels the relationship with her PST is "two-way", "I understand that she is looking to me to…How do I do this?...But I also look to her when she comes up with her ideas and adds them into the lesson." Juliette has a new US this year, she appreciates that her US reached out to her individually during the summer before meeting with her PST to introduce herself and connect with each other, recognizing that they were both teachers and working mothers. Juliette prefers to get program information from her PST, and describes some of the responsibilities of the US as "need to be observing the student teacher, making sure the student teacher's doing what they're supposed to be doing, keeping the student teachers up to date on what the requirements are." Recently, Juliette's US contacted her about completing fall evaluations and to check on PST progress. During this conversation, Juliette appreciated that her US shared with her that "other student teachers are just making their own lessons", giving her a better idea of what other RTs and PSTs were doing, giving her an idea of when an appropriate time to ask her PST to develop more of her own curriculum. Although her US is new, Juliette feels closer to her than in previous years, "I think it's definitely personalities, it's just who you can match with and what you have in common."

Bilingual Resident Teacher- "Sasha"

"You have to fit yourself into my schedule. You have to fit yourself into my program"

In her 28th year of teaching, Sasha considers herself a dedicated professional passionate about supporting new teacher learning. Sasha has mentored new teachers in different capacities, via teacher induction and has been an RT in multiple credential programs, including BU for the past 5 years. Over the course of her RT experiences, Sasha sees little difference in credential programs, but has growing concerns about the gradual increase in assessment requirements of PSTs to earn a credential, including the RICA and edTPA. Sasha enjoys her RT work, especially watching transformation of PSTs from "timid" students of learning into "competent, intelligent

teachers." Sasha has high expectations for herself and all of the folks she works with. As a RT, Sasha models and communicates her expectations of PSTs honestly and struggles when PSTs "don't listen" to her feedback and advice, "you're not all that yet, that's why you're with me. I'm going to make you into all that by the end of the year." Sasha maintains that high expectations and modeling are essential components of successful PST preparation, she views her role as RT to push students to reach their highest potential with constant feedback and encouraging personal reflection. When PSTs struggle, it's often with confidence in the classroom and taking feedback personally. When PSTs struggle, Sasha feels it is essential to have a good relationship with her US and overall her experience has been positive, "I've always had really good relationships with the supervisors…they've been honest and trustworthy…as soon as I see a concern, I immediately contact them by phone…we communicate, they communicate with the students, we meet in a triad and we try to resolve the problems." Using the example of the feedback sensitive PST, Sasha detailed how she and her US worked together to give "gentle feedback" with "lots of guidance and we allowed her to always talk about it when we met." To Sasha, issues like these must be identified early and worked on as a group, "it's so important to not let things slide…the supervisor needs to know cause otherwise it builds up and then all of the sudden you're giving them this negative report." Sasha feels responsible for the performance of her PSTs during evaluations, observations, and during assessments like edTPA. Sasha sees part of her role as RT to help her PSTs understand the parameters of assignments from the university and how to appropriately incorporate them into their classroom teaching. Sasha expects a supportive partner in a US working relationship, when giving feedback, she wants them to "go in with positive, lots of positive, as many as you can muster, and then go in with the negative, but not in the 'you, you, you', more like 'now do you think'." Finally, Sasha reflected on some current frustrations with the program surrounding teaching for social justice, what she considers a fundamental component of her bilingual teaching

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philosophy. She feels the program and faculty are doing a good job of teaching about the

theories and importance of social justice, but lack the practical experience in the classroom to be

able to articulate how to implement it.   To Sasha, "theory is great…the reasons why we need

social justice, it's needed…but if they leave you not knowing how to implement it into the

classroom, what good is that? Maybe you increase their awareness and their consciousness

about the issues, but if they don't do anything about it, then what's the purpose?"

Bilingual Resident Teacher- "Sophia"

"I think my biggest thing is to have that amazing relationship with my student teacher (PST) and getting information through them…I make it very clear the way I work and, I'm doing this, I'm not getting paid, and I love doing this. But if I'm going to give it 110%, I want you to give it 110%."
Sophia has taught 1st grade in bilingual schools for 20 years. Most of that time, she has

supported new teachers as an RT for other universities or through induction, she has been an RT

for BU for 15 years. Sophia was originally recruited as an RT for BU by a colleague at her

school, her former RT when she was a student teacher. Sophia enjoys being an RT so that she

can share her "passion for teaching" and preparing new generations of teachers, it "brings me a

lot of joy, I want to guide them."   Sophia considers herself "lucky", in 15 years as an RT, she

has never had a PST who struggled. Sophia worked with an US for many years before they

retired, since then, she has felt little connection with the replacements. For the most part, Sophia

communicates through her student teacher, telling them "I have a lot going on. I'm a parent, I

have children, and I'm a full-time teacher, so you need to let me know on these dates that are

coming up…I get emails from the university but it's mostly the relationship that I have with my

student teacher." Since the retirement of the US she felt connected to, Sophia feels that the

relationship between her and her US has "just been business." Part of this may be COVID

related, as all of her communications with her new US have been over email, phone, or Zoom. Sophia also shared, "some of these supervisors, they haven't been in the classroom for a long time…I think one part that bugs me is that they come in to supervise them…they want things done a certain way, and I just tell them, I say, 'Just give it to them the way they want it. I know what you're doing and I'm happy with what you're doing, and if there's something that you're missing, I'm going to let you know'." Sophia supports her PSTs in learning to teach through modeling enthusiasm for her curriculum and students, promoting "dialogue on a daily basis", and allowing them to experiment with techniques and strategies they learn at the university. Ultimately, Sophia finds joy and purpose in supporting PSTs in learning to teach, but feels the program and her US could do a better job acknowledging the "commitment cause it's a big commitment. That willingness to give up a lot of their (RT) time because it really is."

Bilingual Resident Teacher- "Thea"

"If I didn't feel loved and appreciated I wouldn't be here…I think they're (US) doing what they can, but definitely there's so much more room for improvement."

Thea has been teaching for 6 years, a graduate from Bicycle University's combined credential and MA bilingual program. Thea currently teaches third grade at a bilingual school, teaches in summer and after school programs for migrant education, and has been a GATE Art teacher. Thea's favorite part about being an RT is hosting a PST, "having a fresh pair of eyes, a fresh person coming in who wants to be in this career that you can just go off on these rants with and share…the collaborating part, and always getting a new perspective." Thea was recruited by a BU faculty lead to become an RT, at first, she didn't feel prepared for her role, cautious and careful to not hurt feelings but also "not mother them too much, just kind of knowing where to let them go and kind of explore" and when to "bring them back a little bit." In the 3 years Thea has been an RT, she's had a different US every year. Thea found her first year as a

RT especially stressful as she wanted to make sure her PST felt supported, but was unsure of how best to do this and received little guidance from the program. Thea reached out to other RTs at her school site for advice and continues to enjoy learning about the different strategies and approaches other RTs use to guide PST learning and development. From the program, Thea would appreciate a calendar "backbone" or "some sort of structure" that details "the expectations by this month, by this week, they (PSTs) should be doing this", which is different from the current structure which Thea described as "very vague, very open ended." During triad evaluation time, Thea struggled with the purpose of the three-way meeting and it's timing (before winter break). Thea felt like she and her PST had already discussed many of the questions on the evaluation form, and some of them seemed "redundant and very unnecessary." Feeling that their time could have been better used if they were "just reporting to the supervisor, 'look, this is what we had, this is what we realized, and this is where we're going forward' it could have been time better spent in terms of reflection. Thea sometimes feels like other RTs have "more structure" or a stronger feedback methods for their PSTs, ultimately she wants to create a sense of "game day" or formal evaluation for her PSTs to assess their progress but is unsure how to implement it. Thea thinks RT formal evaluation of PSTs should be encouraged to promote a sense of "evaluation" of progress, a process that is ideally encouraged and facilitated by the US. Ultimately, Thea feels strongly connected the professional community of BU as a graduate and RT, "I think they all have a big heart, they're all in it for the right reasons, and you can feel that good energy that they have…When they send those emails, when they're talking at the meetings the talk from the bottom of their hearts." Thea sees room for improvements and great potential in the BU program.