

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE LINKAGES BETWEEN PRESERVICE
TEACHER IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND TEACHING PRAXIS

by

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A Dissertation submitted to the

Graduate School-Newark

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in

Urban Systems

written under the direction of

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and approved by

Newark, New Jersey

January, 2021

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

A Phenomenological Study of the Linkages Between Preservice Teacher Identity

Development and Teaching Praxis

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Professional identity development is a complex phenomenon experienced by preservice teachers before, during, and after their time spent in a teacher education program. Developing an effective praxis is also a complex phenomenon experienced by preservice teachers. Preservice teachers' beliefs, perceptions, and experiences in teacher education programs shape their professional identity. What my study explored is the "how" about teacher identity development. My study is an inquiry into a black box: How does a preservice teacher's sense of professional identity development during the Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum semester?

As a clinical instructor in three New Jersey teacher education programs, my work piqued my interest in preservice teacher identity development and the possible linkages with emerging praxis. I observed preservice teachers flourish in their field placement classrooms and I witnessed others flounder with their praxis. I also observed preservice teachers flounder and then flourish, and, to my dismay, I witnessed preservice teachers who floundered and then failed in their quest to become teachers. Teachers and teaching practices have primarily been studied by what teachers do while ignoring what might be going on with what they experience (Freeman, 2000). There is limited research on the linkages between professional identity development and praxis. Grossman (2008) and

Cochran-Smith and Zeichner (2009) call for more thorough research on the linkages between identity development and preservice teachers' praxis. This study answers that call in its systematic documentation of how a purposive sample of five preservice teachers, enrolled in a northeastern university's college of education in their Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum semester, experienced *becoming* a teacher. An interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach allowed for a nuanced examination of the types and complexities of relationships between identity formation and praxis. Mixed methods were used to collect data in a pretest and posttest design.

Findings for this study indicate that teacher identity prescribes teacher praxis and teacher praxis, in turn, describes teacher identity. Engaging preservice teachers in their professional identity formation and facilitating their understanding and implementing effective classroom praxis must become the focus of teacher education programs, especially for programs with an urban education focus (Sardabi et al., 2018).

Keywords: teacher identity, preservice teacher, teacher praxis, self-efficacy, teacher education, field placement practicum

Acknowledgements

I could not have achieved this milestone without God's grace, mercy, and unconditional love. It is with the sage guidance of my committee chair, Dr. Arthur B. Powell, and the unwavering, covenantal support of my committee members, Dr. Rula Btoush, Dr. Larry Leverett, and Dr. Jeffrey Backstrand, that this dissertation was attempted. Dr. Powell brought the final focus to my work, introducing me to phenomenology, consistently encouraging me to use my voice, and expecting, requiring, and modeling excellence. Dr. Btoush, an exemplary teacher, taught, retaught, and untaught me until the light of understanding shined through my eyes. Dr. Leverett offered himself 29 years ago as a resource, mentored me and provided the opportunity for me to become an urban school administrator. Dr. Backstrand, consistently encouraging and supportive, made every course he taught come alive. I wish to express my deepest gratitude to Dr. Alan Sadovnik, who possesses an uncanny insight into the potential of his students; he never faltered in treating me as the scholar he believed and knew I could have become. I am deeply indebted to the late Dr. Clement Price, who responded to me in a personal letter in 1991 affirming my need to pursue a doctoral degree. He remained a source of affirmation and my biggest fan until his untimely death. It is with enduring gratitude that I acknowledge the tireless efforts of my sister, Melanie Speller, a gifted educator, who despite the requirements of co-caretaking of our mother spent many hours reading through drafts of my chapters, pushing me to use my own voice in writing this paper. My deepest gratitude to Stephanie Peters, a former colleague and forever friend who, despite severe challenges in her life, took time to tutor me in statistics. I would be sorely remiss if I did not acknowledge my friends and family who offered and provided

space, time, and meals in their homes for me to read, think, and write: Patty and Steve Miller in Pennsylvania; Margaret McGibbon in New Jersey; and Alfred Speller, my nephew, in Virginia.

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my late father, Lenrod Blowe, and mother, Virginia Blowe, who were my first teachers. Thank you for your unconditional love and example. It is dedicated to my siblings: brother and sister-in-law, Lamont Blowe and Nancy Fiske; sister Vanessa Blowe, MD; my nephew and niece, Alfred Speller and Adrienne Speller. This work is dedicated to my former pastor and his wife, Reverend Jimmie and Jayne Van Sant, along with my brothers and sisters at First Baptist Church of Bloomfield, NJ, whose effectual, fervent prayers brought me to complete this task. It is dedicated to all current and future preservice teachers who dare to enact a disruptive praxis in the classrooms and schools in which underrepresented, marginalized, disenfranchised students fight daily to learn. This work is dedicated to exemplary educators and my dearest of friends, Dianne Mayberry-Hatt and Josiah Hatt; Dr. Christine Johnston; Dr. Linnea Weiland; Patty Van Langen; Jeanne Venner; and Dr. Rebecca Hamman, whose commitment to the education of our nation's youth inspires and propels me not to grow weary in my efforts. This dissertation is dedicated to all of the educators I've interacted with on my journey to attain this degree, including my professors and the directors of the Graduate School-Newark, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey Global Urban Systems PhD program who understand that social justice must be enacted and tirelessly use their expertise to do so. It is dedicated to my professors at Williams College who, like Mark Hopkins, sat at the end of the log and invited me to sit and learn at the other end of the log and then inspired and expected me to do the same for others: Dr. David L. Smith who took the raw material he was given, looked beyond its faults, and co-constructed the teacher I became and continue becoming; Dr. Raymond Chang whose tenet, "if you fail

as a student, Paulette, I will have failed as your teacher,” is indelibly etched in my teaching philosophy; Dr. Michael F. Brown who, through anthropology, awakened my love for interdisciplinary learning, teaching, and problem solving; and Dr. James and Dr. Anne Skinner, crusaders for social justice.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

According to Darling-Hammond (1997), the single most impactful variable related to student achievement is the teacher. Teaching is a complex activity. During the student teaching practicum experience, student teacher candidates will develop or will fail to develop knowledge, skills, and attributes needed for recognizing, understanding, and implementing complex, effective practice and ethical conduct associated with becoming and being a teacher of record in a school setting (Sutherland et al., 2010).

Initial interest in this research topic resulted from my work as a teacher educator at three institutions in New Jersey: William Paterson University (WPU), Montclair State University (MSU), and Rutgers University-Newark (RU-N). Each of these institutions has preservice teacher education programs focused (to varying degrees) on preparing teachers to teach in urban public schools. Based on observations and evaluation of their practice (using evaluation tools sanctioned by each institution's program) in their field (school) placements, I witnessed junior practicum students and student teachers who flourished (i.e., effective in the teaching practices they implemented as evidenced in their students' engagement in learning); and I observed Junior Practicum students and Student Teachers who floundered (i.e., ineffective in the teaching practices they implemented as evidenced in their students' lack of engagement in learning through direct observation and student surveys). This phenomenological study explored how preservice teachers in their assigned field classroom contexts experience the development of a professional identity and how their professional identity development is linked to their praxis. For this

study, praxis is defined as informed, committed, strategic actions and interactions of the preservice teacher in the designated field classroom context (Smith, 1999/2011).

Problem Statement

Preservice teachers' beliefs, perceptions about becoming teachers of record, and experiences in their teacher preparation programs and practicum field placements influence their praxis. As found in the literature, self-regulation and the complexity of social functioning is empirically associated with preservice teachers' praxis (Côté & Levine, 2014).

Identity development is a normative phenomenon (Côté & Levine, 2014). The transition from student teacher candidate to teacher of record requires a sense of successfully appropriating the role of teacher and being recognized as a teacher by others within and external to the teaching profession. Research on teacher identity development emerged in the 1970s. Teacher professional identity development has been described in a variety of ways. Beijaard et al. (2004) in an attempt to codify descriptions and definitions of professional identity development, assert that professional identity is not a fixed attribute but a relational phenomenon—a continuous, dynamic process composed of interactions between individual characteristics, interpretations of experiences, and contextual factors. Additionally, a preservice teacher is integral in the formation of her professional identity. Interactions between a preservice teacher and the context(s) in which she is required to perform are also factors that impact her professional identity development (Sutherland et al., 2010).

There is limited research on ascertaining the interplay of preservice teacher professional identity development and effective implemented praxis in an urban

classroom context. Grossman (2008) and Zeichner and Conklin (2005) cite the need for more thorough, deliberate, intentional research to study the complex linkages between teacher identity development and the teaching strategies used by preservice teachers, and ultimately, the learning and academic achievement of their pupils. According to Zeichner and Conklin, little research has been conducted to study the complex relationships between the practices of beginning (novice) teachers and student growth in academic achievement. Even less research has been conducted to study the complex relationships among teacher identity development and its influence on emerging praxis. This study explored the lived experience of teachers at the preservice stage of development to assess the relationship(s) between preservice teacher professional identity development and classroom praxis. Study findings, in turn, can inform the crafting and meeting of policy goals and concomitant objectives of preservice teacher education and, the identification, recruitment and retention of teachers for schools in dire need of effective teachers.

Research Question

Two corresponding challenges arose in generating and articulating a focused, relevant research question. The first challenge was to identify a question that would extend, refine or revise findings in existing research (Pajares, 2007) or facilitate the movement in a new direction of research.

Interest in this specific research topic and the resultant research methods stemmed from my work as a clinical instructor having taught preservice teacher candidates in three different northeastern New Jersey institutions. I witnessed some junior practicum and student teachers flourish and, I witnessed some junior practicum and student teachers flounder. I also observed junior practicum and student teachers flounder then flourish;

and, to my dismay, I witnessed preservice teachers who floundered then failed in their quest to become teachers. My work with preservice teachers piqued my interest in preservice teacher identity development and the possible linkages between identity development and the emerging praxis of a preservice teacher.

It is my belief that teacher identity development is influenced by historical, cultural, and social constructs which, in turn, influence cognitive processes and affective responses that preservice teachers experience during their preservice teacher education. This belief falls under a social constructivist perspective. Teacher professional identity development is enhanced or hindered by preservice teachers' ability to navigate and negotiate those constructs. Research is needed to capture and describe cognitive processes and affective responses of preservice teachers' sense-making of what it means to be and what is required to become effective teachers. Through its approach to collecting, analyzing, and interpreting qualitative and quantitative data, this study sought to extract individual level and contextual level influences that enhance or inhibit teacher professional identity formation and, sought to describe what teacher education program features may be continuous or discontinuous in influencing teacher identity development and emerging praxis.

Considering these assumptions, a *primary research question* was generated:

“How does a preservice teacher’s sense of professional identity develop during the student teaching (practicum field experience) semester?”

Four *ancillary questions* followed from this:

1. What are the prevalent beliefs of preservice teachers about becoming and being a teacher of record in an urban school?
2. What are the teacher education program effects on preservice teachers' professional identity development? What program effects are continuous or discontinuous?
3. What are the field placement (school level) effects on the preservice teacher's identity development? What school level effects are continuous or discontinuous?
4. How does the teacher's sense of professional identity influence teaching praxis during the student teaching field experience practicum?

The primary research question and the first ancillary question were used to explore the perceptions, aspirations, and expectations of preservice teachers who are enrolled in a traditional teacher education program. The second and third ancillary research questions were used to explore the duration and magnitude of individual level and contextual level influences. The fourth ancillary research question facilitated the assessment of the effects of preservice teacher identity development on implemented practice as reported by the study participants about their praxis in their field classroom placements.

Purpose

This study was conducted to explore and describe the linkages between preservice teacher professional identity development and emerging classroom praxis.

Wilson and Floden (2003) conducted a review of research on teacher effectiveness. They

reviewed studies on the impact of teachers' levels of education, the relationship between teachers' years of experience and student achievement, studies about the relationship between teachers' verbal ability and student achievement, and many more studies on teacher effectiveness. None of the 51 studies reviewed by Wilson and Floden examined the relationships between teacher qualifications and characteristics to student learning. The purpose of my study is to explore and describe preservice teacher professional identity development and the linkages to classroom praxis as implemented in the assigned field placement classroom via the interpretive phenomenological analysis of preservice teachers' voices (Sutherland et al., 2010).

Significance

Research on teachers' professional identity development falls into three categories: (a) studies whose focus is on teachers' professional identity development; (b) research that focuses on determining the characteristics of teachers' professional identity; and (c) studies in which professional identity development is captured via teachers' voices/stories (Beijaard et al, 2013). My study is situated in all three research categories. Additionally, the research on preservice teacher professional identity development tends to be compartmentalized by subject area taught (Martin & Strom, 2016; Brewer, 2014; Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2013). The significance of this study is its systematic, holistic documentation of how a sample of preservice teachers experience *becoming* and *being* a teacher and how, in turn, their lived experience influences their classroom praxis. Teachers and teaching practice have primarily been studied by what teachers do while ignoring what might be going on with what they experience (Freeman, 2002). Using a mixed-methods approach allows for a nuanced examination of the types and complexities

of relationships between preservice teacher identity development and teaching praxis. Through an Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) approach using mixed methods for data collection, study participants' experiences, their interpretation of these experiences, and their reflections on individual level and contextual level influences their developing identities and emerging praxis are explored and described using preservice teachers' voices. Furthermore, this study can be replicated and used in improvement science for traditional teacher education programs in general and especially for urban focused preservice teacher education. The research design allows for flexibility in collecting data over time as determined by a principal investigator. Lastly, this study provides evidence that can lead to studies with in-service teachers to inform and guide state and federal efforts to create policies that will enhance and sustain the identification, education, recruitment, and retention of effective teachers for schools that purport to address the education needs of high poverty, low performing, urban student populations.

Delimitations

In calculus, the first derivative of a curve at any point refers not to the position of the point but to its propensity to change its position. For this study, I attempted to look at the propensity for preservice teacher professional identity to change (develop) its positionality—not just where the preservice teacher's professional identity is statically situated, but how and what, and possibly discover why it changes as well. Given that this study sought to explore the linkages between preservice teachers' professional identity development and emerging teaching praxis, a purposive sample of preservice teachers enrolled in the Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum were recruited for this study. Additional parameters were to be met by study participants: they had to be assigned to

and completing their practicum in secondary field placements. No restrictions such as subject matter taught, age, gender, or race/ethnicity of study participants were applied.

The purposive sample of study participants were, at the time of this study, enrolled as full-time students in a northeastern university that has a traditional teacher education program. The research data was collected at intervals during the Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum semester(s). A time series research design was initially proposed. However, challenges with participant recruitment and limited access to my study sample resulted in a pretest/posttest design with a mixed-methods approach to data collection.

My study can be considered an integrated mixed-methods study (Burch & Heinrich, 2015). The nature of my research question required more than one method to answer all question components. Mixed-methods allowed for the depth of analysis to discern some of the processes within the phenomenon of becoming a teacher. Additionally, a mixed-methods approach increases the robustness—increases the validity and reliability of what is being measured. For this study, the timing and use of mixed-methods was phased and concurrent. The same sample of preservice teacher study participants were measured using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The junctures at which both qualitative and quantitative methods were mixed were in the design, data collection, and in the analysis of this research (Creswell & Clark, 2011).

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Search Description

The approach to this literature review involved identification and selection of empirical and non-empirical articles, essays, monographs, online journals, and textbooks from broad categories with the use of multiple search terms. Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods studies were sought out and reviewed (Berg, 2007; Chatterji, 2004; Johnson et al., 2004). Criteria such as topic relevance, age of study, peer reviewed, and research methodologies were used to conduct this literature review. It can be argued that the age of studies reviewed—the time when research studies were conducted—may lessen applicability to current contexts. However, age does not render studies invalid. The focus for my study emerged slowly as my initial review of literature progressed through several phases and was initially unfocused as “the literature on teachers and teaching is large and disconnected” (Goe et al., 2008, p. 13).

Teacher Identity Development

In reading through the literature on teacher identity development, I wanted to see how it is defined and measured. I sought to identify the processes involved in identity formation and the influence identity formation has on a preservice teacher’s emerging praxis. I read through studies that focused on professional identity development in preservice teachers. Several studies reviewed had no explicit definitions of teacher professional identity development (Antonek et al., 1997; Gardner, 1996 Mawhinney & Xu, 1997). In the studies that attempted to define the construct, there is consensus that professional identity development is not fixed it is ongoing and influenced by both

personal and contextual factors (Dillabough, 1999; Goodson & Cole, 1994; Samuel & Stephens, 2000). In the literature, “professional identity formation” is the terminology most often used to describe one component of a multicomponent construct, a person’s identity. Identity is continuously being shaped and reshaped through interactions with others; and, identity is shaped by interpretations (as mediated by personal attributes) of those experiences (Gee, 2000; Geijssel & Meijers, 2005; Sutherland et al., 2010).

Sutherland et al. (2010), in their examination of preservice teachers’ professional identity development, found that even with limited contact with schools and classrooms (during the student teaching or clinical phase of their teacher education programs), preservice teachers undergo a developing, more complex understanding of teaching and create images of themselves as teachers. Sutherland et al., in concert with Gee (2000), Beijgaard et al. (2004), define professional identity as a “person narrativization of what consists of his or her (never fully formed or always potentially changing) core identity as a teacher” (Sutherland et al., 2010, p. 455). In the Sutherland et al. study, preservice teachers recorded their reflections of their development as teachers. The data were collected through facilitated online discussion forums. The unit of analysis was the teacher’s voice. The “teacher’s voice” was a construct conceived in the study to measure the extent to which the preservice teacher participants could articulate a personal practical identity of one’s self as a teacher. Teachers’ voices were used to trace changes in preservice teachers’ professional identity development. Involving more than just a study of participants’ statements, the study used two types of content analysis, preservice teacher participants’ self-labeling, and in-depth human coding-based content analysis to examine a preservice teacher’s capacity to express a developing professional image

(Sutherland et al.). An Index of Cognitive Engagement and Index of Reflection and Application were used to analyze individual participant's reflections. According to the study, both indexes showed "a continuous growth in [preservice teacher participants'] engagement with knowledge" as they wrote their reflections about the implications and applications for practice and future work as teachers (Sutherland et al., p. 463).

A preservice teacher's identity develops through ongoing, dynamic processes (Alsup, 2006). What it means to be identified as a teacher, by one's self and by others, is constructed through the intersections of preservice teachers' encounters with external contexts and their individual, internal beliefs and education histories.

How do preservice teacher candidates participate in their professional identity formation? How do their education histories, their evolving knowledge and skills interact with their teacher education program features to construct their ideal images and understandings of what it means to be a teacher? Berger (1963) and Berger and Luckman (1970) assert that there is a biographical and historical component to one's encounter with social and cultural contexts. One is born at a time in history into a society that has an already established system of symbols and conventions. Thus, becoming and being a teacher has social origins linked to symbols and conventions that may shape preservice teachers' interpretations of the reality of becoming and being in-service teachers (Crotty, 1998).

Lauriala and Kukkonen (2005) put forth that there are three dimensions of self-concept formation: (a) *actual self*: the one that currently prevails, (b) *ought self*: the one recognized by society or an external group as the goal, and (c) *ideal self*: the one set by the individual as a possible target for achievement. Similarly, Rogers and Scott (2008)

describe personal self and identity and professional identity formation as being influenced by two aspects: contexts and relationships (external aspects), and stories and emotions (internal aspects). When the demands of external aspects encounter the internal meaning making and desires of the preservice teacher, these are the junctures at which the “ought self” and “ideal self” merge resulting in the ongoing construction of a teacher identity (Rogers & Scott). Sfard and Prusak (2005) posit “actual” and “designated identities.” These terms coincide with the other theorists’ “actual self” and “ought self.” Sfard and Prusak define actual and designated identities as “discursive counterparts of one’s lived experience” (Beauchamp, 2009, p. 17). A preservice teacher’s perceptions and understanding of her “ideal self,” her “ought self,” and her “actual self” are what constitute identity development.

Wenger (1998) makes a link between the personal self and the professional self of a teacher in which identity is very closely linked with practice. Beijaard et al. (2004) assert that preservice teachers’ early experiences and personal beliefs as shaped by teacher education programs combine to influence their behaviors and future practices as novice teachers. Similarly, Wenger connects meaning, practice, community, and identity. He states that identity (personal and professional self) is acted upon by the community of learners in which preservice teachers reside. This community includes the teacher education program in which one is surrounded by the perceptions, expectations, and exhibitions of practice of peers, professors, field supervisors, and cooperating (mentor) teachers. Wenger reports that preservice teachers are subject to the influence of this community and, over time, will adopt and express a professional identity. Wenger describes five characteristics tied to personal and professional identity: (a) the negotiated

experience of self; (b) membership in a specified community; (c) has a learning trajectory; (d) combines different forms of membership within an identity; and (e) presumes involvement in local and global contexts. For Wenger, personal and professional identity is derived from the integration and interpretation of individual experience and the access to knowledge and skills from the community of learners of which one is a member. Thus, becoming a teacher and learning to teach result from participation in the social world.

It was challenging to find studies that focused on preservice teachers' identity formation during their enrollment in teacher education programs. Flores and Day (2006) conducted research on novice teachers in their first two years of in-service teaching. As part of their findings, they assert that the facilitation of teacher identity development needs to begin prior to the transition to in-service teaching (Flores & Day, 2006).

Feimen-Nemser (2001) asserts:

After decades of school reform, a consensus is building that the qualities of our nation's schools depend on the quality of our nation's teachers. Policy makers and educators are coming to see that what students learn is directly related to what and how teachers teach. What and how teachers teach depends on the knowledge, skills and commitments they bring to their teaching. (p.1013)

Teacher identity development is “dependent upon and formed within multiple contexts” (Rogers & Scott, 2008, p. 733); “not a fixed attribute of a person but a relational phenomenon” (Beijaard et al., 2004, p. 108); and “multifaceted and dynamic” (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p. 177). Acquiring requisite knowledge, skills, and personal attributes that are effective, sustainable, yet flexible and adaptable to the harsh environments often found in urban public schools and classrooms are all linked to the sound development of a teacher and teaching identity.

Preservice teachers host several identities: an identity brought to the teacher education program, an identity shaped by the features of that program, and an identity further shaped by the practicum field placement classroom (Sumara & Luce-Kapler, 1996). Beauchamp and Thomas (2007) similarly describe at least three phases of preservice teacher identity development. Preservice teacher identities can be further described dimensionally. These identities exist simultaneously, synchronously or asynchronously: the actual self, the ought self, and the ideal self (Lauriala & Kukkonen, 2005).

Teacher Education

Teacher education programs have continuous (enduring, persistent) effects on preservice teacher identity development and praxis. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) offer a comprehensive view of teacher identity development and its implications for teacher education programs. The literature on teacher identity development tends to focus on discussions of defining the concept of identity development through the type of teacher education program treatments administered (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Franzak, 2002; Graham & Phelps, 2003; Rice, 2003; Sanchez-Burks et al., 2015). Beauchamp and Thomas (2007) and Franzak present additional themes in the literature regarding the influence of contextual factors on preservice teacher identity development. Beauchamp and Thomas (2007) studied teacher education program effects on the development of professional identity from the preservice (student teaching) stage to beginning practice (novice, inservice teaching). Their findings indicate that “new teachers frequently experience frustration and difficulty in their early years of teaching, as the complex context of schools has an influence not only on their practice but also on their

professional identity” (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2007, p. 1). Beauchamp and Thomas (2007) described three phases of identity development in preservice teachers: an initial identity they have as students in a teacher education program, a transitional identity moving from learning theory in coursework to implementing practice as part of the clinical field courses, and a professional identity that results from the clinical field experience and into the novice year of in-service teaching.

Low-income school districts face the almost insurmountable challenge of recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers. What is a highly qualified teacher? Consensus was found in the literature about the need for highly qualified teachers and there is consensus that teacher preparation programs need to be reformed to produce highly qualified teachers. However, there exists controversy as to the definition of what is a highly qualified teacher. There is also controversy about the effectiveness of teacher education programs in producing highly qualified teachers. Controversy is found in the literature as to *what* reforms should be made to teacher education programs and *how* they are to be made (Akiba & LeTendre, 2009; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2007; Boyd et al., 2006; Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2009; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Dolan, 2010; Grossman, 2008; Hoban, 2007; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Smith & Lev-Ari, 2005; Wubbels & Korthagen, 1990).

A major feature of teacher education includes the evaluation of preservice teachers’ academic achievement and performance during the Clinical I Junior Practicum and Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum courses. In 1998, teacher performance assessments (TPAs) were introduced as policy at the state level in California to improve teacher quality through high stakes testing of preservice teachers in their teacher

education programs. This policy resulted in the creation of the California Teaching Performance Assessment (CalTPA). According to the policy, universities in California had to use the CalTPA or a state approved alternative for preservice teacher credentialing. However, because of its “generic design,” a consortium of universities created the Performance Assessment for California Teachers (PACT) in 2002 (Meuwissen & Choppin, 2015). The CalTPA allowed for adaptation to different subject area pedagogies and the submission of multiple artifacts. The PACT was one of the models used by Stanford University in the creation of the edTPA—a “performance-based, subject-specific assessment and support system used by teacher preparation programs throughout the United States to emphasize, measure and support the skills and knowledge that all teachers need” (https://www.edtpa.com/PageView.aspx?f=GEN_AboutEdTPA.html). The primary components of the edTPA consist of a preservice teacher’s submission of video recordings of 3–5 classroom implemented lessons of approximately 20 minutes duration (each). Student work samples, at least 3–5 artifacts, are also required. Additionally, written commentaries about the artifacts must be submitted for each of the required components (Sato et al., 2008).

The purpose of the edTPA is to improve teacher and teaching quality through high stakes testing to determine preservice teachers’ teaching certification attainment (Meuwissen & Choppin, 2015). The assumption is that edTPAs are dynamic and valid assessments that can improve teaching quality (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Peck et al., 2014; Wei & Pecheone, 2010). However, the extent of the direction and degree to which edTPAs improve preservice teachers’ practice is undetermined as there are other factors—individual and contextual—that impact preservice teacher praxis. Additionally,

the potential for edTPAs to improve teaching quality relies on the intent and application of the assessment (Meuwissen & Choppin). Also problematic is creating a reliable and valid assessment of teaching quality given the multiple and varied definitions of the construct. Finally, questions arise as to the adequate representation of teacher praxis given the required components of the edTPA (Heil & Berg, 2017; Greenblatt & O'Hara, 2015; Sato, 2014).

In New Jersey, the submission of the edTPA portfolio is required of all Clinical II student teacher candidates. In June 2014, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) required preservice student teacher candidates to pass a performance assessment in order to obtain licensure. This requirement for licensure is in addition to the ETS Praxis assessment for licensure. Resultantly, in December 2015, the edTPA was chosen by the NJ Commissioner of Education as the approved assessment. In 2016–2017, the NJDOE allowed for optional piloting of the edTPA by state colleges of education. Beginning in 2017–2019 by NJDOE mandate, all student teacher candidates statewide are required to complete the edTPA assessment to obtain licensure. During the period from 2017–2019, there was no designated cut score for the assessment. Beginning in 2019–2020, the NJDOE established a cut score for the edTPA which is one standard error below the national cut score. A standard setting process will take place in the state of New Jersey during the 2020–2021 school year. The state mandated policy requires Clinical I junior practicum students and Clinical II student teacher candidates to successfully complete two high-stakes tests in order to obtain New Jersey teaching certification(s) and licensure.

In the literature reviewed, no references were found about the possible linkages between teacher identity development and becoming a highly qualified (effective) teacher. Cochran-Smith and Zeichner (2009) in their report, *Studying Teacher Education: The Report of the AERA Panel on Research and Teacher Education*, cite the need to conduct research that assesses teacher quality through means other than standardized test scores. Cochran-Smith and Zeichner, in the same report, assert that there is a need to strengthen the knowledge base in teacher education through improvements in research. They state that “investment in long-term sustained research on teacher education and teaching and career effects” is a priority research issue. They also assert that “better tools in the areas of data collection and data analysis for studying outcomes of teacher education and consistent use of these tools across individual studies” are necessary in research on teacher education (p. 20). With regard to providing the impetus for fostering innovation and invention in preservice teacher preparation programs, Cochran-Smith and Zeichner call for research to be conducted “to determine the efficacy of certain strategies, such as mentoring, at the individual classroom and program level in enhancing the achievement of particular aspects of teacher and student learning and to identify conditions under which such strategies have the desired effects” (p. 30). Grossman (2008) states, “as researchers and practitioners in the field of teacher education, we seem ill prepared to respond to critics who question the value of professional education for teachers with evidence of our effectiveness” (p. 13). In the analyses and evaluation of research on teacher education that have been conducted in the past 20 years, Grossman (2008) states that there is “a shortage of carefully designed comparative studies that try to

tease out the effects of programs from the entering characteristics of the prospective teachers or the specific effects of particular pedagogical approaches” (p. 16).

Grossman (2008) asserts that gaps exist in the literature about the relationships between preservice teacher identity development and the formative influence of traditional route programs on preservice teacher identity. The following assertion about the gaps in research made by Cochran-Smith and Zeichner (2009) was found to be true: Little research has studied the complex relationships among teaching strategies used by teacher educators and the impact on the identity development of preservice teachers. Studies of teacher education programs have not sufficiently uncoupled the impact of teacher education on the identities that candidates bring to their programs or on the identities being constructed in the field practicum settings in which the preservice teachers are required to teach. Because of the gaps in research on teacher education programs and their impact on teacher identity development, an examination of teacher knowledge is presented in the next section.

Teacher Knowledge

In the epilogue of his book, *So Much Reform, So Little Change*, Payne (2008) provides a brief portrait of the type of teacher needed to improve schools in general, urban public schools, specifically: “My father used to say that no student came away from Mr. Moore [Payne’s father’s teacher] unchanged. He also believed that Mr. Moore could teach anything to anybody and could master anything himself. If he didn’t know something, he went and got some books and studied them until he could teach it” (p. 209). What teachers should know and be able to do is mostly influenced by the perceptions and beliefs of those external to education and who are not, themselves,

educators. Unlike law or medicine—professions in which both the knowledge-base and processes of practice are defined by members of those professions—the work of teachers, teaching, is still mostly defined by populist ideologies (Freeman, 2002).

In the research on teacher learning and teacher knowledge, two main socio-cognitive processes emerge: (a) the developmental process of learning to teach; and (b) epistemological origins of how teachers know what they know to be able to teach (Ball, 2000; Freeman, 2002; Kennedy, 1991). Research on teachers' perceptions of teaching and learning began in earnest approximately 40 years ago at which time Walberg (1977) proposed looking at the influence teachers' mental lives determined the quality (effectiveness) of their practice and their students' learning. Up and through the 1970s, process-product had been the main paradigm of research. The process-product research studies assumed a causal link between a teacher's practice and students' learning, but no link between teacher identity development and a teacher's practice (Dunkin & Biddle, 1974; Kremer & Hofman, 1985; Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1977; Lortie, 1975; National Institute of Education, 1975; Walberg, 1977). Lortie proposed a refocus for education research looking at teachers' experiences in the classroom. The role of a teacher's thinking—mental processes and decision-making regarding practice—are still thinly represented in the research literature.

Freeman (2002) organizes the research on teachers' knowledge around four themes and identifies three research timeframes: (a) content and teaching practices: the *what* and *how* teachers learn and think in learning to teach; (b) teachers' mental processes: how ideas about teaching are conceived; (c) the role of a teacher's prior knowledge and past experience in influencing present thinking and practice; and (d) how

context (social and physical) influence a teacher's thinking and learning processes. The timeframes include studies conducted up to 1975, research conducted in the decade from 1980–1990, and in the period from 1990–2000. Examinations of the role of preservice or inservice teacher identity development in teacher knowledge acquisition is absent from the literature during all those time frames.

Prior to the 1970s, the process-product model heavily influenced policy and research in education with teachers simply being master transmitters of content. Effective teaching was defined by one's ability to employ methods of instruction (validated by theories of learning). In the decade beginning 1980–1990, a new interpretive approach emerged in the study of teachers and their work. A paradigm shift occurred resulting in a new unit of analysis for research, teachers' decision-making. New research methodologies and theories, borrowed from anthropology and sociology, emerged (Clandinin, 1985; Elbaz, 1983; Grossman, 1990; Heath, 1983; Schulman, 1987). In this decade, the study of pedagogical content knowledge emerged acknowledging that teaching involved the teacher having to use complex thought processes in their classroom practice (Freeman, 2002). Teachers began to be perceived as “decision-makers” and studies were conducted to ascertain teachers' decision-making competency. However, a focus on the influence of preservice teachers' identity development and the ability to make decisions about their praxis is absent from the literature.

Feiman-Nemser (2001) asserts that the quality of schools depends on the quality of teachers. Gold (2007) posits that, in addition to “the influence of family and the local community on achievement ... there is also increasing evidence that classroom behavior of teachers, specifically instructional techniques, has a significant impact on student

learning” (p. 162). Gold also states that in addition to family and community poverty, classroom instruction can have a negative effect on student achievement.

Teacher Quality

In the literature, teacher effectiveness and teacher quality are often used interchangeably. There is an absence of meaningful consensus in defining and measuring a highly qualified teacher. Additionally, the linkages between teacher identity development and teacher quality or effectiveness is absent. A significant portion of the literature reviewed defines and measures teacher quality through the critique of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) (Amrein-Beardsley, 2006; Berry et al., 2004). The intent of the NCLB was to address the perceived problem of not having highly qualified teachers in low performing (usually urban) schools/school districts. Under NCLB, the definition for being a highly qualified teacher varied from state to state. However, some commonalities exist in defining teacher quality. These include having at least a Bachelor of Arts degree from an accredited teacher preparation program and demonstrated proficiency and certification in subject(s) taught. Demonstration of proficiency and the issuing of certification (and/or licensure) are most often satisfied through acceptable performance on state required exams. Most recently, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) replaced the NCLB. ESSA provides states with even more leeway to determine both the definition and measurement of what it means to be a highly qualified teacher.

In the literature on teacher quality, studies were conducted through the lenses of inputs, processes, and outcomes: qualifications (input), characteristics (input), practices (processes), and effectiveness (outcomes; usually measured by growth in student standardized test scores). Research conducted on teacher quality show inconsistent and

conflicting findings when determining what aspects of teacher quality matter in influencing student academic achievement. A dearth of research exists on what aspects of teacher quality are linked to teacher identity development and, in turn, linked to student engagement in learning.

Darling-Hammond and Youngs (2002) conducted research to refute the arguments made by the U.S. Secretary of Education regarding teacher qualifications. In the secretary of education's tenth annual report on teacher quality published in 2002, it is acknowledged that teachers impact student achievement; however, teacher effectiveness is not influenced by teacher education and certification. In contrast, Darling-Hammond and Youngs' study of research found that "some qualifications may matter more than others" (p. 5). In the research on teacher qualifications, Rice (2003) determined that there is limited evidence that preservice teacher education—whether traditional or alternate route—enhances teacher competency or student achievement. While some studies have shown that teacher certification in mathematics appears to have a positive impact on student achievement in mathematics (Wayne & Youngs, 2003), Rice found no evidence that certification gained through alternate route programs made a difference in student achievement. Wilson and Floden (2003) reviewed the research on the impact of teachers' level of education, subject matter knowledge, and advanced degrees on their effectiveness. Findings were inconsistent across 14 studies that looked at teachers' level of education and teachers' effectiveness. Findings were inconsistent for a review of 12 studies about the relationship between teacher experience and student achievement. In a review of five studies about the relationship between teachers' verbal/general ability and student achievement, findings were inconsistent. Rice, however, asserts that teacher

coursework appears to have a positive impact on student learning for all grade levels while subject specific coursework appears to have a greater impact on secondary students' achievement. Of six studies focused on the relationship between teacher race, student race, and student achievement, Wilson and Floden concluded that study results were inconsistent. A review of 11 studies on the relationship between teachers' degrees, coursework, and student achievement, findings were inconsistent. The studies examined by Wilson and Floden were not focused on tying teacher qualifications and characteristics to student learning and engagement. The studies reviewed by Darling-Hammond and Youngs, Rice, Wayne and Youngs, and Wilson and Floden, all highlight the lack of empirical evidence to determine relationships between certain teacher attributes and student achievement. A review of the literature on teacher quality led to a review of literature on teaching quality presented in the following section.

Teaching Quality

As described in the preceding section, *teacher quality* implies a set of inputs that has at least two dimensions: (a) teacher qualifications, i.e., education program completion, certification, licensure, etc. that are used as indicators of a teacher's potential success; and (b) teacher characteristics, i.e., gender, race, and experience (Goe, 2007).

Teaching quality has two dimensions: (a) it implies what teachers do once in the classroom; and (b) how what is done influences student achievement (Goe).

The two subsidiary questions for my study include a focus on teacher praxis and how developing teacher identities shape the implementation of praxis in the classroom. In looking at preservice teachers' emerging praxis, the intent is to discover and explain how my study's participants orchestrate and conduct students, time, and other available

resources within the physical space, the classroom. For my study, orchestration is defined as the preservice teacher's acumen in identifying, arranging, or directing elements in the classroom to produce a desired effect. Conduct is defined in my study as the preservice teacher study participant's methods of organizing and carrying out all the tasks, requirements she encounters in the classroom and school contexts. Both orchestration and conduct are influenced by the preservice teacher's perceptions, interpretations, and expectations of what constitutes her teaching identity: (a) teacher as executor: teaching (non-autonomous) to deliver administrator/supervisor prepared, codified curricula and prescribed instructional and assessment strategies; (b) teacher as craftsman: after deliberate, intentional planning, teaching using a repertoire of specialized techniques that have been mastered and expertly applied that result in a definitive end product; (c) teacher as artist: teaching that requires personal deftness and creativity not based on preconceived notions of an end product: and (d) teacher as professional: teaching with autonomy using a repertoire of specialized techniques possessing the ability to determine when the techniques should be applied (Lowe & Istance, 1989; Wise et al., 1985).

As a Clinical I and Clinical II seminar instructor and practicum field supervisor, I observed teaching practices that are found in four categories of formal classroom arrangements: *learning process arrangements*, *physical classroom arrangements*, *behavior arrangements*, and *learning materials arrangements* (Sulla, 2013). Learning process arrangements are the instructional activities deployed, the ways in which the preservice teacher had students participate in learning, and the preservice teachers' ability to develop and implement the appropriate scope, sequence, and content of curricula. Physical classroom arrangements are the preservice teacher's use of the physical

classroom space, i.e., seating and equipment placement, displays, etc. Behavior arrangements include decisions about rules, routines, student discipline procedures, time management, etc. Learning materials arrangements include the use of books, computers, and other technologies. Under similar conditions and in similar contexts, the preservice teachers made very different decisions about their implemented practice in the four categories listed which, in turn, influenced their students' engagement in learning subject matter. The preservice teachers who flourished were those who made decisions about their formal classroom arrangements that aligned with and met the academic and social-emotional needs of the students they taught. In addition to observed behaviors, those preservice teachers who flourished could clearly articulate the what, why, and how about the decisions they made in each of the four categories of formal classroom arrangements. Preservice teachers who flourished created classrooms where students had access and opportunities to succeed. In these classrooms, preservice teachers who flourished adjusted their teaching to meet the individual needs of the students they taught—"their backgrounds, talents, interests, and the nature of past performance" (Glaser, 1990, pp. 16-17). Preservice teachers who flourished were those who knew how to resolve the dissonance between their ought, actual, and ideal teacher/teaching identities. Flourishing preservice teachers' implemented teaching praxis were characterized by their craftsmanship, artistry, and/or professional conduct.

Unfortunately, a gap exists in research on the linkages between teacher identity development, teaching praxis effectiveness (quality), and the impact on students' engagement in learning. Effective teachers—whether preservice or inservice—implement practices that are found in the categories of teacher as craftsman, teacher as artist, and/or

teacher as professional. A well-formed professional identity ensures effective classroom praxis. Effective classroom praxis is responsive to students' cognitive and affective needs resulting in students' engagement in learning (Shernoff et al., 2014). A brief discussion of the extant research on student engagement is presented in the next section.

Student Engagement

Like definitions of identity development, teacher knowledge acquisition, and teaching quality, definitions of student engagement contain behavioral, emotional, and psychological components as well as cognitive components (Fredricks et al., 2016). Consistently, throughout the literature, student engagement is characterized as a multidimensional construct. While some studies list hierarchical models of engagement, many studies focus on non-hierarchical dimensions of student engagement. These dimensions of student engagement include behavioral engagement, emotional engagement, and cognitive engagement. Other studies include a fourth dimension, psychological engagement. Variations in terminology accompany the variations in construct definitions. The term “engagement” is used to describe the types and degrees of participation in academic and non-academic aspects of school (Audas & Willms, 2001); sustained behavioral participation in learning and exhibition of positive affect versus disaffection (Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Skinner & Belmont, 1993). The term “engagement in schoolwork” is used to describe behavioral, emotional, and cognitive participation in schoolwork and other activities within the school setting (Russell et al., 2005; Skinner et al., 1990; National Research Council & Institute of Medicine, 2004). Definitions for the term “school engagement” include emotional, affective, behavioral, and cognitive subtypes all describing students' positive and/or negative reactions to their

teachers, peers, learning tasks, classroom environments, and schoolwide contexts (Fredericks et al., 2004; Appleton et al., 2008; Jimerson et al., 2003). “Student engagement” and “student engagement in academic work” are two additional terms found in the literature. The definitions for these constructs are multidimensional including cognitive, behavioral, and affective dimensions (Chapman, 2003). Participation, willingness to participate, students’ exhibited efforts in learning tasks, feelings of belonging, positive interactions, relationship development with others (teachers, peers), and students’ participation in school-offered activities are found in the definitions of student engagement and student engagement in academic work (Marks, 2000; Natriello, 1984; Lamborn et al., 1992; Yazzie-Mintz, 2007).

Student engagement has been studied from psychological perspectives (London et al., 2007) and educational perspectives (Harris, 2008; Skinner & Belmont, 1993). Studies from educational perspectives focus on the behaviors of teachers that promote student engagement, determining the actual classroom practices that influence students’ cognitive engagement, disaffection, and motivational engagement. In some of the research from psychological perspectives, the terms motivation and student engagement are used interchangeably (Martin, 2007; Fredricks et al., 2016). Fredricks et al. (2004) propose that motivation is found within the student engagement construct. Others posit that motivation and engagement are distinct yet related constructs (Christenson et al., 2012). Motivation is often characterized as internal processes whereas student engagement is characterized as actions that are observable.

The reason student engagement is included in this literature review is because of its proximity to and its value as an outcome measure of the effectiveness of preservice (and in-service) teacher praxis.

Summary

A vast amount of literature was reviewed in order to design a study that would extend, refine or revise extant research. In the literature on teachers and teaching, there exists a cacophony of research assumptions and research methods (borne of these assumptions) used to explore and measure observable and not-so-readily observable phenomenon. There are studies that explored and measured well-defined, ill-defined, and not-at-all-defined constructs associated with teachers and their praxis. I began with an interest in and focus on preservice teacher education program features and their influence—whether continuous or discontinuous—on teacher identity development. I found the extant literature on teacher education programs overwhelmingly voluminous yet disconnected (Goe et al., 2008). Several gaps in the literature became evident. Surprisingly, the literature is thin on providing descriptions of relationships between preservice teacher professional identity development and implemented classroom practice. A glaring omission in the literature is the close examination of the influence and significance of teacher education program components on preservice teacher professional identity development and emerging teacher praxis. And finally, given the complexity of studying teachers and teaching, there is limited use of innovative, yet “gold standard” methodology and new technologies to study complex constructs. More specifically, there is limited use of phenomenological approaches that, in turn, use mixed-methods data collection.

Several disparate studies facilitated the defining and refinement of my research focus—both the topic and research methodology. Two studies I attribute to helping me focus my topic. A study by Boyd et al. (2009) examined the various teacher education/preparation programs that exist in New York State. This study looked specifically at non-traditional teacher education programs as alternative pathways to become certified and licensed as a teacher. The study explored various program features and the programs' impacts on the following: in what school contexts program graduates chose to become employed; how long these novice teachers remain in teaching in particular school contexts; and the impact of these novice teachers' practice on their students' achievement in reading and math. Methodological challenges, the difficulties involved in determining teacher effects on student achievement, and challenges in documenting teacher education program features were presented.

A study by Sutherland et al. (2010) that examined preservice teachers' developing images of themselves as teachers facilitated a refinement of focus for my study. What resonated with me was the use of a new construct, "a teacher's voice," conceived as a measure of the extent to which a person can articulate a personal practical identity image of oneself as a teacher (p. 456). In this study, the teachers' voices construct is used to trace changes in preservice teachers' professional identity. The teachers' voices construct involves more than study participants' statements; it also looks at their capacity to articulate a professional image.

A third significant influence on my research focus is a voluminous synthesis and assessment of teacher education as reported by the AERA Panel on Research and Teacher Education (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2009). In this tome, I found documentation of

what is known about the linkages between teacher education, teachers' praxis, and student learning. The ideas that resonated with me were the report's call to action for the development of methods and measures to be used in the investigation of the aforementioned linkages, and the call for investing in the training of researchers to conduct collaborative, multi-site, longitudinal research projects that will inform, and therefore, strengthen the knowledge base about teachers, teaching praxis, and their impact on student learning and achievement. This, in turn, facilitated the construction of this study's conceptual framework.

Direction and support for my choice in research design are attributed to my Qualitative Methods II instructor who insisted that I consider phenomenology as an approach to my study. As a result, I became enamored with Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as proposed by Smith and Shinebourne (2012). My choice of data collection methods are attributable to Chatterji (2004) and the use of Experience sampling method (ESM) by Shernoff et al. (2003) in their work on Flow Theory and student engagement. A conceptual framework for my study is presented in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3

Conceptual Framework

Miles and Huberman (1994) state that a conceptual framework “lays out the key factors, constructs, or variables, and presumes relationships among them” (p. 440). In this chapter, I present a conceptual framework, informed by the review of literature, that represents my perspective of preservice teacher identity development and the linkages between individual and contextual level influences on preservice teacher identity and emerging teacher praxis (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). My conceptual framework informed the chosen approaches to studying the phenomenon of preservice teacher identity development (Ravich & Carl, 2016; Luse et al., 2012). I begin with a brief description of my research perspective as my conceptual framework is derived, in part, from that perspective. Following, I present an explanation of my use of the “black box” metaphor to establish a context for describing the components that constitute my conceptual framework.

Social Constructivist Perspective

As found in the literature, sociocultural perspectives describe the development of identities and the interaction between preservice teacher identity and emerging practice (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). From past experience, I have observed that preservice teachers are not blank slates when they enter teacher education programs. Each comes with their image(s) and perception(s) of being teachers. Each have education histories, knowledge and skills in learning and, in some instances, teaching. And, their teacher education program features and assigned field placement classroom experiences all play a role in the construction of their professional identities.

In keeping with a constructivist perspective, meaning is a social construct (Mertens, 1998) constructed through one's interactions with the realities of one's world (Crotty, 1998). As a result, different people may construct meaning in different ways in the same contexts, and even in relation to the same phenomenon (Crotty). One's perspectives, perceptions, and experiences influence the sense-making of one's reality (Blumer, 1962). A goal of this study is to determine how the preservice teachers are experiencing the construction of what it means to be a teacher—how individual level influences and contextual level influences are used to construct their actual, ought, and ideal images and understandings of what it means to be a teacher. Berger (1963) and Berger and Luckmann (1967) assert that there is a biographical and historical component to one's encounter with the sociocultural world. One is born at a time in history into a society that has an already established system of symbols and conventions. Thus, becoming and being a teacher has social origins linked to symbols and conventions that provide some guidance and mechanisms (Crotty).

The primary research question for this study assumes that preservice teachers possess identities. It assumes that these identities are in flux due to individual and contextual influences; are malleable yet fragile. My primary research question also assumes that identities can be constructed in one context and carried over into other contexts where they may be co-constructed, deconstructed, and/or reconstructed over time (Bloome et.al., 2005, Chapter 4). What my study seeks to answer is the “how” about teacher identity development. My primary question is an inquiry into a black box: “How does a preservice teacher's sense of professional identity develop during the Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum semester?”

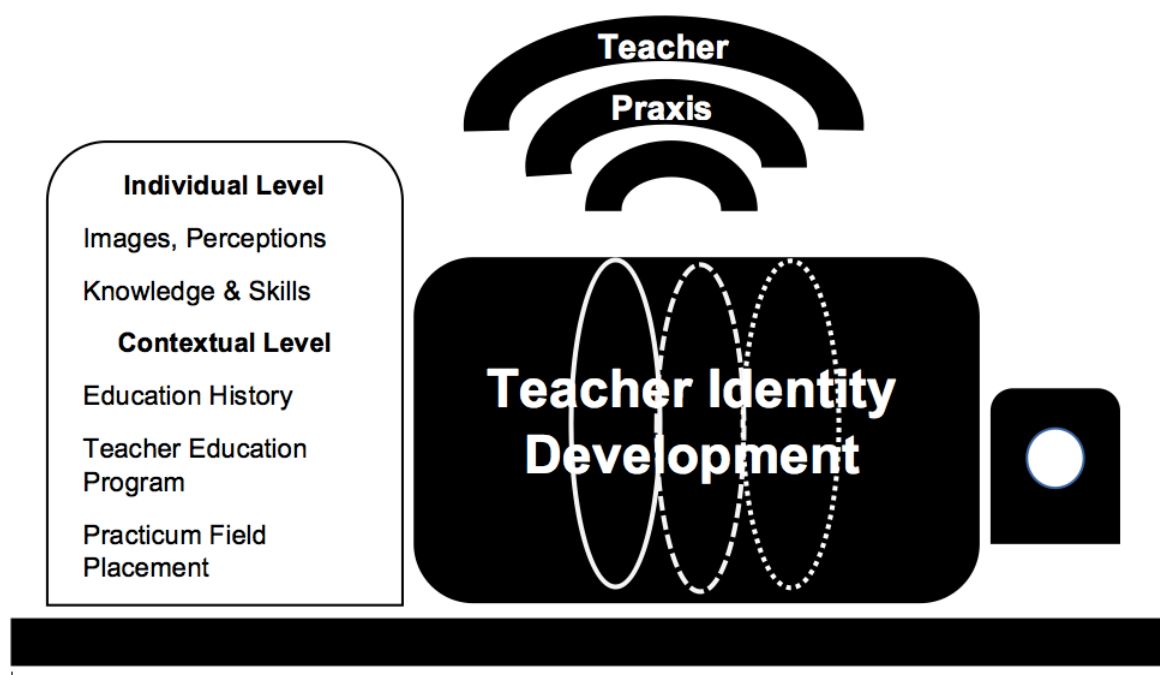
The Black Box Metaphor

“In our daily lives we are confronted at every turn with systems whose internal mechanisms are not fully open to inspection, and which must be treated by the methods appropriate to the Black Box” (Ashby, 1957, p. 86). The black box is a concept first used by electrical engineers to assist in their analysis of complex human and mechanical systems (Petrick, 2019). The transdisciplinary approach to exploring the structures, constraints, and possibilities of complex systems is known as *cybernetics*. During the 1950s and 1960s, cyberneticians began to use the black box concept to assist them in creating physical and mathematical models of human and mechanical systems. The black box metaphor continues to evolve and is applied in new ways, mainly in science. In terms of the mechanisms and functions of a black box, traditionally, it is considered to be a system that can be viewed by its inputs and outputs without any knowledge of its internal workings (Petrick). Ljung (2001) posits, “a black-box model of a system is one that does not use any particular prior knowledge of the character or physics of the relationships involved” (p. 3). As it is an integral part of the definition of a black box, a “system” is defined as “(a) a set of things working together as parts of a mechanism or an interconnecting network, and (b) a set of principles or procedures according to which something is done; an organized framework or method” (Oxford University Press, 2020). A system may be characterized as being “open,” “closed,” and “isolated.” For the purpose of my study, I use the black box metaphor to describe the open system of interactions between teacher education program features, preservice teacher identity formation, and their emerging praxis (Luhmann, 1995). An open system is one in which interactions occur between individual and contextual level influences, preservice teacher

identity, and their emerging praxis. My study is limited to exploring and describing the behavior of stimuli (inputs) and responses (outputs and outcomes) to infer what may be occurring in the black box that is professional teacher identity development.

Consequently, observations of inputs, outputs, and outcomes need to be explored over time in order to record the status (phases) of the black box system's various components. Definitions of inputs, outputs, and outcomes as they are applied to my use of the black box metaphor are warranted.

Broadly defined, inputs are measures of entities invested in the black box. Inputs are characterized by duration, frequency, and intensity, as well as scope and sequence. Outputs are the measure of what is produced from the interactions of inputs and the mechanisms and functions of the black box. Outputs are usually described in quantifiable terms. Outcomes are the measures of effects, changes that occur as a result of the system of inputs, black box mechanisms and functions, and outputs. The conceptual framework for this study is found in Figure 1. The black box metaphor provides an appropriate conceptual frame in that I am trying to explore a complex system. As a teacher educator and researcher, I have limited access to the internal processes that govern preservice teacher identity development. Unless given the opportunity and tools to do so, identity development is deep and unavailable for articulation by a preservice teacher.

Figure 1*Conceptual Framework***Identity Development**

A component in the conceptual framework for this study is teacher identity development. Identity is the black box. From the literature we find that identity is not fixed and is influenced by social, cultural, and institutional contexts. Identity is also experienced. It is “not just relational, i.e., how one talks or thinks about oneself, or how others talk or think about, it is also experiential, i.e., it is formed from one’s lived experience” (Tsui, 2007, p. 33). Identity is constructed, deconstructed, and reconstructed. Identity is also negotiated among the ought, actual, and ideal self (Lauriala & Kukkonen, 2005).

Burke’s (1980) Identity Control Theory, a variant of identity theory, is leveraged to describe preservice teacher identity development in the black box metaphor. As previously stated, the study focused on the dynamics of how teacher identity is shaped in

interacting with individual level and contextual level influences. According to Burke, identities are associated with a role, in this case the role of teacher, and vary from person to person. Preservice teachers begin with an identity standard—an ideal self as “teacher”—that is used to shape identity development over time and to direct initial and subsequent behaviors in their roles as teachers. Input from others (i.e., preservice program professors and clinical supervisors; mentor/collaborating teachers and school administrators; students and their parents; and, preservice teachers’ peers) can either verify or not verify the identity type being established by the preservice teacher. From whom do preservice teachers rely on for confirmation of their professional teaching identities? Who and/or what holds the most sway in catalyzing preservice teachers in adjusting their identities (and role performances), at what times, and why?

Burke (1980) conceptualizes identity as a cybernetic control system that revolves around at least four elements:

- an identity standard (founded on characteristics, attributes, beliefs, and knowledge about becoming and being a teacher) that serves as criterion for assessing the verification of an identity (in this study that identity is “teacher”);
- the inputs (responses) from others who respond to the exhibited behaviors of the preservice teacher (in this study, “implemented practice”);
- a comparison of the responses from others to the exhibited behaviors to the identity standard to see if there is congruency; and
- the set of behavioral outputs that are determined by the degree to which others’ inputs match the established identity standard.

The conceptual framework states that preservice teacher identity development is part of a cybernetic control system and guided the examination of the relationships between individual level influences, contextual influences, and classroom praxis.

Individual Level Influences

Preservice teachers bring to teacher education programs knowledge and skills and their images and perceptions about becoming and being teachers. They bring a desire to teach borne of their perceptions about teachers and teaching. They bring experiences, beliefs, conceptions and misconceptions about becoming and being a teacher. These inputs impact the translation of program features rendering some features continuous (persistent, lasting, uninterrupted) or discontinuous (not persistent or enduring). Prior individual and contemporary contextual inputs can lead to changes in identity and emerging teacher praxis (Flores & Day, 2006). My first subsidiary question addresses the individual level inputs as seen in Figure 1

Contextual Level Influences

Contextual influences are included in my conceptual framework. For this study contextual influences include preservice teachers' education histories, teacher education program features, and their practicum field placement classrooms (see Figure 1).

Subsidiary questions for this study are as follows:

- What are the prevalent beliefs of preservice teachers about becoming and being a teacher of record in an urban school?
- What are the teacher education program effects (non-causal) on preservice teachers' professional identity development? What program effects are continuous or discontinuous?

- What are the field placement (school level) effects (non-causal) on the preservice teacher's identity development? What school level effects are continuous or discontinuous?

Preservice teachers have narratives about when a decision was made to become a teacher. Included in those narratives are the significant events and/or persons that influenced the decision to become a teacher. These narratives constitute education histories for this study.

The teacher education program is represented as a contextual level influence on preservice teachers' identity development. Identity is shaped by preservice teachers' experiences learning about teaching and by their experiences with their praxis in the field placement classrooms. Conversely, identity shapes a preservice teachers' praxis and influences their learning about teaching. This necessitates the study of preservice teacher identity and its impact on praxis. According to Beauchamp and Thomas (2009), "a more complete understanding of identity generally and teacher identity in particular could enhance the ways in which teacher education programs are conceived" (p. 126).

Traditional teacher education programs have the following characteristics: instructors of diverse and varying expertise; curricula and courses; instruction and assessments within courses; and the awarding of certification(s) and licensure. Teacher education programs present delimited curricula in decontextualized settings up until the Clinical I and Clinical II seminar courses.

A culminating component of the teacher education program is the assigning of preservice teachers to the practicum field placement. While in many instances preservice teachers are assigned to schools, grades, and subject area placements of their choice, too

often student teaching candidates are placed in field assignments that are available. In these field assignments, student teacher candidates are beholden to their assigned cooperating teachers and university supervisors. Cooperating teachers bear the responsibilities of mentoring, observing, and evaluating the praxis of student teacher candidates. University supervisors are charged with conducting formal observations and evaluations of student teacher candidates at specified intervals during the Clinical II semester.

My conceptual framework is a model that assumes linkages exist between individual level and contextual level influences on preservice teacher identity. However, the assumption of the teacher education program is that, if given a set of simple inputs, one can become a teacher. This supposes a linear model that assumes the effects of teacher education program features are the most significant influences on preservice teacher identity while ignoring the significance and magnitude of individual level influences. As identity formation occurs, changes in knowledge and skill acquisition and praxis occur. Flores and Day (2006) state that teacher education program features can be destabilizing influences on identity. Perceptions of self-efficacy, agency, and locus of control (regulators of identity formation) can be negatively influenced by teacher education program features, most significantly the assigned field placement classroom.

Traditional teacher education programs “view teaching as a transmission of knowledge and learning as acquisition of that knowledge” (Bridges & Hallinger, 1995, p. 5). Bridges and Hallinger go on to state that

program designers for traditional programs make four assumptions about this knowledge: (1) the knowledge is relevant to the students’ future professional role; (2) learners will be able to recognize when it is appropriate to use their newly acquired knowledge; (3) application of this knowledge is relatively simple and

straightforward; and (4) the context in which knowledge is learned has little or no bearing on subsequent recall or use. (p. 5)

Additionally, assessment of teacher-candidate learning is often simply the evaluation of their ability to recall the “knowledge to which they have been exposed” (Bridges & Hallinger, 1995, p. 5).

During Fall 2010 semester, I was an instructor at three different universities that housed traditional route teacher education programs. I taught both graduate and undergraduate courses—methods and foundation of education courses. Across all three campuses, in the same semester, I encountered students who bemoaned their educational experiences in their respective program and complained about “not feeling prepared” to assume roles as full-time classroom teachers. These complaints spanned the number of years spent in a program (sophomore to senior year of study) and undergraduate and graduate level of study. Conducting a very informal (non-scientific) survey, students often stated that they felt under-prepared because there is a disconnect between the content of their teacher education programs and what actually happened in the classroom. This sentiment was expressed more frequently by my students in their Clinical I Junior Practicum and Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum courses. “Studies confirm the belief that knowledge and skills gained in professional education often transfer poorly to the workplace. Students often forget much of the material they have learned and/or are unsure how to apply the knowledge they have retained” (Bridges & Hallinger, 1995, p. 164).

Emerging Praxis

The next component in my conceptual framework is derived from my fourth ancillary research question: “How does the teacher’s sense of professional identity

influence teaching praxis during the student teaching field experience practicum?”

Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) assert that there is a relationship between identity, teacher knowledge, and teacher praxis. Identity determines teacher knowledge acquisition and teacher praxis; it also determines what is learned about becoming a teacher and implemented classroom practice.

For my study, emerging praxis is an output. This is in stark contrast to my personal observations of what are identified and measured as outputs of teacher education programs. These include numbers of teacher candidates enrolled; percentages of student candidates who passed (and met cut scores) on ETS Praxis exams and the edTPA. These conventional outputs do not communicate, predict, or demonstrate a preservice teacher's effectiveness or ineffectiveness of emerging praxis and its impact on student engagement.

In keeping with the black box metaphor, teacher praxis is characterized by a cybernetic control system loop: teacher praxis is the performance of work that includes planning and implementation. A next step involves monitoring and evaluating performance leading to taking corrective action as/if needed. Preservice teachers' emerging praxis includes enacting the formal theory(ies) learned in their teacher education program courses. It includes self-assessment of their praxis based on individual and contextual level influences and input from their identity formation. Emerging teacher praxis involves the integration of knowledge (learning) from multiple sources. This study seeks to explore what happens when new data comes from the teacher education program, the cooperating teacher, the university supervisor, and from the students in field placement classrooms. What resonates and is consonant with a preservice teacher's identity? What data cause dissonance and what decisions/choices does the preservice

teacher make about her praxis as a result? What information is adopted “as is,” is transformed, is ignored or rejected by a preservice teacher’s identity during the Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum?

Finally, for emerging preservice teacher praxis, a question arises as to what teaching identity typology is chosen and reflects identity: teacher as executor; teacher as craftsman; teacher as artist; or teacher as professional (Lowe & Istance, 1989, p. 19; Wise et al., 1985).

Summary

It is the assertion of this study that contextual influences (education histories, preservice teacher education program features, student teaching field placements) and, individual level influences (images and perceptions; knowledge and skills) affect teacher identity development. My study explores how identity responds to these influences. Preservice teacher identity works according to each individual’s sense-making, in response to individual and contextual level influences.

We know a sufficient amount about the “what” regarding preservice teacher identity development. I am seeking out the “how.” The explanations presented in the literature to date posit that there are multiple components of identity interacting in negotiation with each other. The “how” of the system, conceptualized in Figure 1, needs to be made more transparent. The system is open to inspection. Unfortunately, as reflected in the literature, the components of the system have been viewed and understood in isolation.

Chapter 4

Methodology

This study was conducted to distill preservice teachers' views ("sense-making") of what it means to become teacher: How does a preservice teacher's sense of professional identity develop during the student teaching (practicum field experience) semester? A key feature of the primary research question is that it is focused on personal meaning and sense-making in a particular context for individuals who share a particular experience. Therefore, interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was the approach used. Included in this chapter are explanations of my philosophical assumptions and interpretive framework that guided my research. Due to almost insurmountable challenges in the recruitment of study participants, descriptions of my initially proposed research design, required modifications, and resultant revised research design are also included. In the concluding sections of this Methodology chapter, explanations of research data protection and reporting, and the limitations of my study, are presented.

Philosophical Assumptions and Interpretive Framework

My ontological, epistemological, and axiological assumptions determined the focus and approach to my research. As such, I subscribe to the following epistemological assumptions: (a) knowledge exists and is waiting to be discovered; and (b) people develop knowledge based on their perceptions and experiences (Elliot, 1994; Fenstermacher, 1994). My ontological assumptions, as evidenced in the unit of analysis chosen for this study, i.e., preservice teachers, support that they are best understood as individuals first, and then understood as existing in a group. I anticipated finding similarities and differences in what preservice teachers experience, in how they interpret

their lived experiences, and how these interpretations influence their identity and teaching praxis. The preservice “teacher’s voice” (Sutherland et al., 2010) is central to my research. Finally, in designing and conducting this research, I sought to understand the phenomenon that is preservice teacher identity development in order to affect the positive, productive change of urban youth trajectories beginning with their teachers and their teachers’ classroom praxis. Table 1 shows the epistemological assumption of my research question.

Table 1

Epistemological Assumptions

Research Question	Key Features	Suitable Approach
<i>How does a preservice teacher’s sense of professional identity develop during the student teaching (practicum field experience) semester?</i>	Focus on personal meaning and <i>sense-making</i> in a particular context, for people who experience a particular phenomenon	Interpretative phenomenological analysis

Table 2 provides a comparison of the philosophical assumptions that constitute a social constructivist worldview.

Table 2

Interpretive Framework and Philosophical Assumptions

Interpretive Framework	Ontological Beliefs	Epistemological Beliefs	Axiological Beliefs	Inquiry Approach
Social Constructivism (Creswell 2013, 36)	Multiple realities: lived experiences & interactions	Reality co-constructed; shaped by individual experiences	Individual values honored and negotiated	qualitative
IPA (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009).	Lived experiences are what constitute reality	1. <i>Eidetic</i> reduction: the “essence”; practical and emotional meanings; 2. <i>hermeneutics</i> ; 3. <i>idiography</i>	Understanding content of what is said is primary; understanding the meaning for an individual is secondary	Interpretative phenomenological analysis

My research focus, problem, and research question determined the methodology, data collection methods, and data analysis procedures. Complex, multidimensional constructs of preservice teacher identity development and its influence on classroom praxis were explored and measured. Therefore, IPA was the approach used.

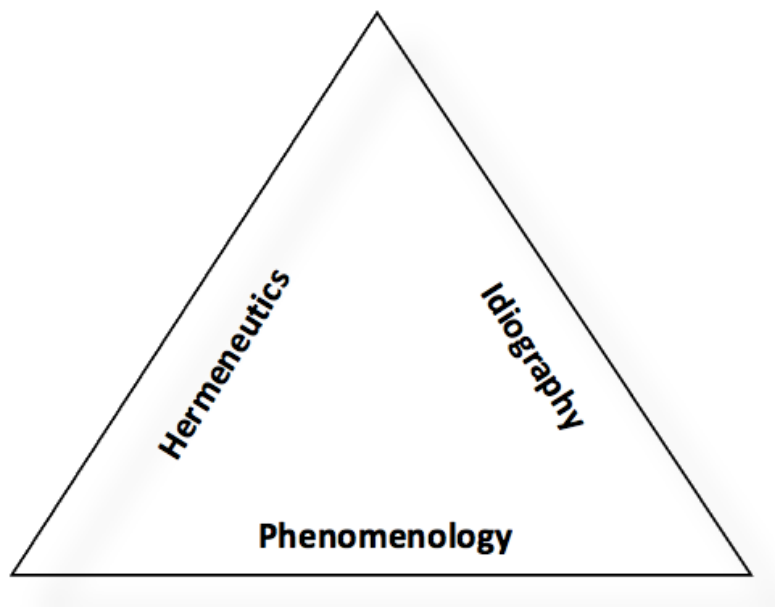
This study focused on exploring the black box processes of preservice teacher identity development; how preservice teacher identity development, in turn, influences preservice teachers’ implemented classroom practice.

As illustrated in Figure 2, there are three theoretical components of IPA: *phenomenology*, *hermeneutics*, and *idiography*. As a qualitative research approach, IPA is phenomenological in that it seeks to identify and describe the significance of a lived experience (phenomenon) for an individual or a small, purposive group of individuals

(Smith et al., 2009). The second theoretical component of IPA, hermeneutics, entails interpretation. In experiencing a phenomenon, an individual will reflect on and attempt to make sense of the experience. Smith et al. (2009) state, “IPA shares the view that human beings are sense-making creatures, and therefore the accounts which participants provide will reflect their attempts to make sense of their experience” (p. 3). In IPA an additional hermeneutic (interpretation) takes place. The researcher must make an interpretation of the study participant’s interpretation (“sense-making”) of the lived experience (Smith et al., 2009).

Figure 2

Three Theoretical Foundations of IPA



The third theoretical foundation of IPA, idiography, describes IPA's commitment to the in-depth examination of a case (Smith et al., 2009). IPA is idiographic in that the researcher uses methods to identify and describe "in detail what the [phenomena, lived experience] for *this* person is like, what sense *this* particular person is making of what is happening to them" (p. 3).

Given the idiographic nature of IPA, research is conducted on relatively small, homogeneous samples so that similarities and differences between each case can be portrayed in detail. Therefore, suitable methods to collect data for an IPA study include in-depth interviews, focus group interviews, observations, synchronous and asynchronous interviews via computer-mediated means, and first-person accounts of lived experiences that are recorded in diaries/journals (Smith, et al., 2009). It was incumbent upon me as

principal investigator to choose those methods best suited to elicit and capture the detailed stories, thoughts and feelings of the study participants (Smith et al.).

Methods for data analysis are what distinguish IPA from a general phenomenological study. IPA is characterized by an analytic focus on study participants' attempts to make sense out of their lived experience. Additional analytic tasks include "bracketing" and eidetic reduction. The researcher engages in listening and looking for the use of words and metaphors that are derived from the study participants' stories and experiences with the phenomenon under study. The next step for the researcher includes delineating units of meaning: looking at the literal content of participants' responses (oral and written forms)—the number of times a meaning was mentioned in various ways. Once units of meanings have been identified, they must be put in clusters to form themes—non-redundant units of meaning that form categories eliciting the "essence" of study participants' individual experiences with the phenomenon under study. Another task in the analysis of collected data includes summarizing individual interviews. These interview summaries must be validated and modified as necessary by the researcher as she asks herself and the study participant(s) if the "essence" of their experience(s) has been captured accurately.

Proposed Research Design and Required Modifications

Research can be conducted using subjective (e.g., humanistic psychology) or objective (e.g., behavioral, cognitive, social, or controlled experiments) approaches. My research explores a phenomenon: preservice teacher identity development and its relationship to implemented classroom practice. It was the intent, by collecting data on conscious experience at repeated intervals (to prevent memory distortion), to study how

the preservice teachers experience identity development in their natural environments – drawing equally on subjective and objective approaches to study complex phenomena. According to Hektner et al. (2007), “Experience is idiosyncratic in that it is related to the specific biological configuration of each individual, and it undergoes ceaseless changes according to the progressive increase in individual’s complexity” (p. 23). Single measurements do not allow for the capturing of the type and quality of experiences preservice teachers have in their field placement classrooms. A time-series design was initially proposed for my study in order to capture both qualitative and quantitative data representing the lived experiences of study participants during their Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum semester. In spite of persistent effort, it took 10 months to recruit study participants. Even after recruitment of participants, my access to them was restricted to two points in time—beginning at the seventh week of their Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum semester and again, at the concluding weeks of the same semester (weeks 14 through 15). The resulting time constraints determined my use of a pretest–posttest research design. Additionally, due to the administration of the edTPA at the research site, I was prevented from exploring preservice teacher classroom praxis by means of study participants’ self-video recordings as initially proposed for this study.

Recruitment of study participants were within the guidelines of the Rutgers University-Newark Institutional Review Board (IRB), the Montclair State University IRB, and the William Paterson University IRB. Emails describing my study were sent to the directors, department chairpersons, and program administrators at the Urban Teacher Education Program (UTEP) at Rutgers University-Newark (RU-N), William Paterson University College of Education (WPU), and Montclair State University Center of

Pedagogy (MSU). All responses to my study participant recruitment emails were supportive and encouraging. Once permissions to conduct my study were received from each of the teacher education program directors, I submitted required information and documentation to the IRBs at MSU and WPU. Finding, accessing, contacting, and receiving approval responses from the appropriate personnel for external IRB review was an unanticipated challenge to initial study participant recruitment efforts. In March 2019, I received an IRB approval notification from WPU while still awaiting a response from MSU. In April 2019, after not receiving any responses from potential study participants, I submitted an email to my dissertation committee chairperson providing a revised timeline for data collection. My dissertation committee chairperson approved the revisions made. Timelines for data collection had to be revised four times. In August 2019, after still not having received any responses from my recruitment efforts to date, a self-produced video detailing the purpose and activities included in my study, was sent to the program directors at RU-N UTEP, MSU Center of Pedagogy, and WPU College of Education. In September 2019, after conferring with my committee chairperson, I revised a major component of my study which required the deletion of the self-directed videotaping of the study participants' implemented praxis in their field placement classrooms. The director of field placement at WPU remained in contact with me brainstorming ways for me to recruit study participants from both Clinical I Junior Practicum and Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum. Finally, a professional development (PD) day, sponsored by the director of field placement (WPU), was held on October 25, 2019 for Clinical I and Clinical II teachers. I was invited to be the facilitator for one of the breakout sessions for this PD day. It was on that day that I conducted a focus group interview (FGI) and

administered the Norwegian Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (NTSES) and the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES). The second and final data collection occurred in December 2019 during the concluding weeks of the Clinical II semester. At that time, virtual interviews with each of the three remaining study participants took place. A second, final online administration of the NTSES and TSES occurred during the concluding weeks of the Clinical II semester as well.

Dissertation Research Design

My research question, “How does a preservice teacher’s sense of professional identity develop during the student teaching (practicum field experience) semester?” along with my research objective “to explore personal meaning and sense-making of teacher identity development for preservice (student) teachers in a traditional education program,” required more than one data collection method to answer the primary question and the ancillary questions. Resultantly, I chose to use both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. Using both qualitative and quantitative procedures enhances the robustness—increases the validity and reliability of what is to be measured as defined by the research objective and question(s). Additionally, triangulation of data collection procedures and data analysis ensures both the quality and authenticity of my study (Bush, 2007).

After looking at the methods that are most often employed in research on teachers and teaching, best-fit data collection and data analysis processes had to be chosen. Given the primary research question and the ancillary questions for my study, research procedures best suited to capture evidence for these questions would have to meet the

following criteria: occur in a “natural environment” and be representative sampling and capture individuals’ experiences (Beal, 2015; Cherubini & Oliver, 2009).

Sample and Research Setting

A purposive sample total of five (N=5) clinical student teacher candidates, all enrolled in the WPU College of Education BA in Secondary Education Subject Field (K-12) Program, voluntarily participated in the FGI, signing an informed consent form detailing the purpose, structure, and required primary activities of my study. These five study participants were in the final (8th) semester of their program. The five participating preservice teachers were assigned to secondary (high school) field placements. Four female and one male (all asked to identify themselves by their preferred pronoun) student teacher candidates participated in the initial study data collection phase (FGI). Only three of the five study participants completed all required activities in this study. One study participant did not complete the exit interview portion of the study. Another study participant never responded to any attempts at final data collection. For this study, the five student teacher participants’ names were replaced by an alpha numeric identifier known only to this principal investigator. Female study participant A01 sought certification in math. Male study participant A02 sought certification in history. Female study participant A03 sought certification in special education (secondary level). Female study participant A04 sought certification in English and female study participant A05 sought certification in special education (secondary level).

All five study participants were enrolled in Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum which is a 6.0 credit course. The course is described in the WPU catalogue (William Paterson University, 2020, Secondary Education, BA section) as “a more

intensive continuation of Clinical I.” In the Clinical II course, student teacher candidates are tasked with connecting theory to practice by “observing, teaching and reflecting on” their teaching in their assigned field placements. Student teachers are required to report to their field placements “five days per week [with a minimum of seven hours per day] to practice and demonstrate proficiency in the effective cycle of teaching and expectation of professional practice.” Student teacher candidates are mentored and observed at least eight times over the course of the semester by a “clinical educator” and a “clinical supervisor.” As a prerequisite for enrollment in Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum, student teacher candidates are required to have passed all associated ETS Praxis Subject Area Assessments towards certification in the subject area(s) of their choosing. Student teacher candidates are required to submit to edTPA self-selected video-taped segments representative of their practice in their field placement classrooms. Also, student teacher candidates are required to remit “additional fees” to enroll in this course. During the final (8th) semester, the Professional Learning Seminar II course runs concurrently with the Clinical II course. Student teachers are required to be enrolled in this course as well. In the Professional Learning Seminar II course, student teacher candidates are “supported” and “guided” by WPU faculty to meet the following objectives: (a) *discuss and reflect on* theory, their own practice, and current issues in education; (b) *prepare for their careers* through resume writing, practicing interviewing, etc.; (c) *gain a deeper understanding of* their field placement schools, the families and communities in which their field placement schools reside; and (d) *prepare for submission of the edTPA portfolio assessment* (William Paterson University, 2020, Secondary Education, BA section).

Three components comprise my research: focus group interviews (FGIs), two teacher self-efficacy scales, and an exit interview. Descriptions of each of the components are presented in the next section.

Research Components

Some phenomena are observable and quantifiable. Preservice teacher identity development is a phenomenon that is not—without the use of significant time and funding—directly observable. Given my primary and ancillary research questions, I was confronted with determining how to measure a phenomenon which is more cognitive in form than physiological (Harpe, 2015). I looked for instruments and methods most appropriate to explore, distill, and measure the phenomenon of developing a professional teacher identity. Additionally, I had to make sure that the collection and the analysis of data were aligned (Harpe, 2015). A re-presentation of the data collection and data analysis procedures for this study is found in Table 3.

Table 3*Data Collection and Analysis Procedures*

Primary Research & Ancillary Questions	Data Collection	Data Analysis
How does a preservice teacher's sense of professional identity develop during the student teaching (practicum field experience) semester?	Focus Group Interview Exit Interview NTSES (pre and post) TSES (pre and post)	Content analysis; coding Content analysis; coding Descriptive statistics Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test
What are the prevalent beliefs of the preservice teacher about becoming and being a teacher of record in an urban school?	Focus Group Interview Exit Interview	Content analysis; coding Content analysis; coding
What are the teacher education program effects on the preservice teacher's professional identity development? What program effects are continuous or discontinuous?	Focus Group Interview Exit Interview	Content analysis; coding Content analysis; coding
What are the field placement (school level) effects on the preservice teacher's identity development? What school level effects are continuous or discontinuous?	Focus Group Interview Exit Interview NTSES (pre and post) TSES (pre and post)	Content analysis; coding Content analysis; coding Descriptive statistics Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test
How does the preservice teacher's sense of professional identity development influence teaching praxis during the student teaching field experience practicum?	NTSES (pre and post) TSES (pre and post) Exit Interview	Descriptive statistics Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test Content analysis; coding

Focus Group Interview. Traditionally, the FGI is an in-depth, open-ended discussion that explores a specific set of issues on a predefined topic. There are 5-8 participants with a facilitator to guide discussion. FGIs became a tool for market researchers in the 1920s. Merton (1956) used FGI methodology for his seminal work in examining people's reactions to wartime propaganda. "Focus groups are a direct method of obtaining rich information with a social context" (Robinson, 1999, p. 905). Focus groups have been used to assess, to quantify the quality and outcomes of educational interventions (Robinson). The FGI methodology has been used in applied and summative research to determine program effectiveness; FGI has been used in action research for problem solving; and used to conduct formative evaluations for the purpose of program improvement (Robinson). For my study, FGI was used to attain research goals in a manner that is expedient, efficient, and cost effective (Kitzinger, 1994).

I chose to use a FGI protocol to collect data for the primary research question. The aim of my research is to explore study participants' collective and individual lived experience in becoming and being teachers. This is a study of a phenomena, not the study of a quantifiable object/thing. Resultantly, as the researcher, I must take on the role of participant observer. The FGI session was recorded digitally on video and an MP4 player was used for audio recording. Note taking was completed by a research assistant chosen specifically to complete this task. The session lasted 59 min 21 s. A pilot study using an FGI protocol had been conducted by this principal investigator on December 7, 2012. The FGI protocol used for my pilot study was revised for use in my current study to include an activity in which the study participants had to graphically "depict who you are as a teacher" and "depict the teacher you want to be/become" (see Appendix A for FGI

protocol). Having FGI participants represent their perceptions of their *actual self* (the professional teacher identity that currently prevails) and their *ideal self* (the professional teacher identity for which they are striving) using visual images allowed for more nuanced data collection given the primary research question (Beltman et al., 2015).

The intent of this FGI was to explore and distill the influence of a preservice teacher education program features on teacher identity development. I wanted to examine preservice teachers' images and perceptions of themselves as teachers at the outset of the Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum semester, and again at the close of that semester. The contributions of all FGI participants' responses were analyzed using two levels of analysis. Level I analysis included looking for emergent categories. Level II analysis involved interpretation of those emergent categories found in both what was said and graphically depicted by the FGI participants. Central to the development of preservice teachers' knowledge and professional identity are the processes of critical and analytical reflection. These processes should be evident/observable in their ability or inability to articulate their reflections on their development and practice.

The decision to have the FGI participants graphically depict their perceptions of their professional teacher identity development was made in order for this investigator to collect data on a complex phenomenon that is not directly observable. The FGI participants (N=5) were each given two sheets of 18 in. by 12 in. (45.7 cm by 30.5 cm) art pad paper. Participants were directed to label each of their two sheets of paper with their specified alpha numeric code and the label "Who I am as a Teacher" on the first and "Who I want to be/become as a Teacher" on the second sheet of paper. As anticipated, questions (from the FGI participants) arose as to the meaning of "depict": "Does that

mean you want us to draw? ... Or, can we write? ... Can we write and draw?” This investigator’s answer to these queries was simply, “Yes! I want you to depict—to graphically represent whether through drawings and/or words—your current professional teacher identity and then depict what you ideally want to be/become as a teacher—your future professional teacher identity.” The depictions were collected. Digital pictures (using a cellular phone camera) were taken of each of the 10 visual images submitted. Content analysis and inductive coding were carried out on both the text and drawings of each of the submissions to identify the unique key elements of each depiction and the frequency in which these unique key elements were represented. Identification of key elements found in all 10 depictions were also inductively coded (Beltman et al., 2015). The analysis resulted in eight categories of unique and non-unique key features with descriptions of each of the eight categories and the frequency in which these occur in all 10 FGI participants’ depictions of their perceptions of their actual (Who I am as a Teacher) and their ideal (Who I want to be/become as a teacher) professional teacher identities.

Pretests and Posttests. Zirkel et.al. (2015) assert that there is a “need for more phenomenologically based descriptive explorations of individuals’ subjective experience and how these experiences are shaped by the contexts in which they occur” (Zirkel et al., 2015, p. 3). To better understand the research problem, that of examining preservice teachers’ professional identity development and its influence on implemented classroom praxis, both qualitative and quantitative data collection occurred. By converging both qualitative and quantitative data, a more contextual, holistic, temporal portrayal of the phenomena of preservice teacher professional identity development and its influence on implemented classroom practice was achieved. Because of the nature of this study—exploring phenomenon that has a more cognitive form than physiological—I had to rely on proxy measures and study participant self-report (Harpe, 2015).

This study examined the relationships between preservice teachers’ professional identity development (using self-efficacy as a proxy measure), preservice teachers’ beliefs, acquired knowledge and skills, and implemented practices in their field placement classrooms. There is a small but consistent finding in the research literature that perceived efficacy in teaching practices not only positively influences teachers’ sense of accomplishment, it catalyzes the type and implementation of instructional practices (Martin et al., 2012). Additionally, it has been found that teachers with higher levels of self-efficacy are more inclined to implement multiple and varied instructional approaches to engage students (Martin et al.). For this study two instruments were used to measure the various dimensions of self-efficacy: the Norwegian Teacher Self Efficacy Scale (NTSES) long form and the Teachers’ Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) long form. Both of these measures of self-efficacy were administered at two points during the student

teaching practicum: (a) at the start of the Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum, and (b) at the completion of that semester. These two instruments were chosen because they allowed this investigator to derive quantitative measures of non-physical phenomenon. It is important to note that the NTSES (Appendix B) and the TSES (Appendix C) were used for the purpose of this study as measures of preservice teachers' perceived ability about their classroom praxis, not their intentions about implemented classroom practice (Berg & Smith, 2018).

The NTSES consists of six subscales: Instruction, Adapting Education to Individual Students' Needs, Motivating Students, Keeping Discipline, Cooperating with Colleagues and Parents, and Coping with Changes and Challenges. Each of these six subscales contains four items (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007). Different response categories are used for each of the six subscales. One of the advantages of the NTSES is that it is designed to be used with other scales. This will act to counterbalance a limitation that there is no common agreement as to how self-efficacy as a construct should be conceptualized and measured (Marsh et al., 2008).

The Teachers' Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES) has been used in many studies with preservice teachers (Berg & Smith, 2018). The scale was developed by Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998). The TSES is made up of three subscales: *Instruction*, *Classroom Management*, and *Student Engagement*. The long form, which was used in this study, consists of 24 items with eight corresponding items per subscale. The TSES uses a 9-point numerical rating, Likert-type scale with response types ranging from *Nothing* (1) to *A Great Deal* (9). Because, like the NTSES, the TSES has been found to measure a wide

range of skills associated with effective classroom praxis, it is considered to have a stable factor structure (Berg & Smith).

Given the study sample size ($N=5$), changes in pretest and posttest scores for the NTSES and TSES subscales, and changes in total scale scores for both instruments, were examined. The Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test was used to determine the level of significance of the changes in subscale and total scale scores.

Interviews. Final data collection included conducting semi-structured individual interviews with study participants (see Appendix D). The primary aim of this research study is to explore and describe preservice teachers' lived experience during the Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum semester. The goal is to have the study participants, via their own voices, to describe their lived experience in order to more fully understand the phenomenon of professional teacher identity development. Two study participants were interviewed in-person via Zoom meeting as this platform had audio, visual, and recording features allowing for MP4 recordings which were transcribed using NVivo transcription software. One study participant submitted her response to the individual exit interview protocol via a Word document. The two remaining study participants did not respond to my repeated requests to conduct their final interviews virtually, person-to-person. Additionally, neither responded to the option of submitting their responses to the individual interview protocol via Word document.

Research Data Protection and Reporting

A Non-Interventional/Methodological Research Protocol (HRP-503b) application was submitted to the Rutgers eIRB on October 16, 2018. Final approval to conduct my study was issued from the Rutgers eIRB on December 13, 2018. Initial data collection

took place on October 25, 2019. Initial data collection included conducting a FGI protocol and administering two surveys: the NTSES and the TSES. A second and final data collection took place from December 7-20, 2019.

For this study I was the primary steward for the data while they were collected, processed, and analyzed. All costs associated with this research study, including but not limited to the purchase of NVivo, were absorbed by this principal investigator. NVivo was built for qualitative and mixed methods research. The software infrastructure provides the appropriate data identification/categorization, storage, security, and means for sharing study findings. The data is stored in a secure (password protected) non-networked environment (personal laptop). Descriptive statistical analysis conducted on the NTSES and TSES were completed using Excel and SPSS.

Limitations

Initially, a time series design was proposed for this study. A sample size of 18 to 24 participants was proposed. Due to sample size and time constraints, a pretest-posttest design was implemented. An interrupted time-series design would have allowed for intervals of data collection—direct measures of identity development and emerging praxis over time. In essence, an interrupted time-series design would have allowed for a greater sampling of preservice teachers' lived experiences over the course of one or several semesters of study participants' teacher education programs.

In lieu of direct observation of study participants' field placement classroom praxis, my study relied on examining their praxis through the proxy of their perceived efficacy in their emergent praxis. Self-recorded videos of classroom praxis would have yielded more valid data. More direct measures of classroom praxis and preservice teacher

self-evaluation of the same, and the synchronous, direct measure of engagement in learning of the students in study participants' field placement classrooms, are needed.

In the next chapter, findings from the FGI, the NTSES and TSES, and findings from the exit interviews are presented.

Chapter 5

Findings

Limited research has been conducted to study the complex relationships between teacher identity development and the emerging practices of preservice teachers. Few, longitudinal mixed methods studies have been employed to do so. The purpose of this study is to explore and describe preservice teachers' lived experience in developing a professional identity and how that development is linked to their implemented classroom praxis during the Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum semester. It was the intent of this study to look at the propensity of teacher identity to change positionality as a result of individual level and contextual level influences. Additionally, this study briefly explored the linkages between teacher identity development and emerging classroom praxis.

Using qualitative and quantitative methods, this study sought to answer a primary and four ancillary research questions (repeated below):

Primary question: How does a preservice teacher's sense of professional identity develop during the student teaching (practicum field experience) semester?

1. What are the prevalent beliefs of preservice teachers about becoming and being a teacher of record in an urban school?
2. What are the teacher education program effects (non-causal) on preservice teachers' professional identity development? What program effects are continuous or discontinuous?

3. What are the field placement (school level) effects (non-casual) on the preservice teacher's identity development? What school level effects are continuous or discontinuous?
4. How does the teacher's sense of professional identity influence teaching praxis during the student teaching field experience practicum?

In order to answer the research question, an IPA approach was used. Data were collected at two intervals during the Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum semester: in October, 2019 and at the close of the semester in December, 2019. The specific methods of data collection used included a FGI protocol conducted in October, 2019; an initial administration of the NTSES; and the TSES. Both the NTSES and TSES were administered at the conclusion of the FGI session. Post administrations of the NTSES and the TSES were conducted online using Google Forms in December, 2019. Online versions of both scales were sent to each participant beginning the week of December 7. Participants were provided the period of time from December 7 through December 20 to complete and submit the second, final submission of the NTSES and TSES. Individual, virtual exit interviews were scheduled during the aforementioned timeframe using the Doodle poll platform. Once scheduled, these virtual interviews were conducted using the Zoom meeting platform. The exit interviews were recorded with the informed consent of participants. Recording the interview sessions allowed for the generating of transcripts so that content analysis similar to that performed on the FGI transcript could be completed.

In this chapter, descriptions of study participants are presented. In the second section of this chapter, findings for the FGI are provided. Brief details of my data analysis procedures are presented. After that, findings from the pre and post

administrations of the NTSES and TSES surveys are exhibited. The survey data bridge FGI findings and exit interview findings. Exit interview findings are presented in the final section of this chapter.

Given that data collection for this study was performed using three distinct methods in a pretest-posttest design, I anticipated hearing more cogent descriptions of study participants' praxis. I hoped to see significant increases in subscale and total scale scores for each of the two self-efficacy scales. I looked forward to seeing how these data sets would triangulate supporting theories about the linkages between self-efficacy and praxis. I expected to hear in study participants' exit interviews an increased awareness of the influences on their identity development. Finally, I wanted evidence of the strength of education program effects in refining study participants' actual identity to meet the expectations and standards of an ought professional identity.

Study Participants

Five student teacher candidates, completing their 8th semester in the Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum, were recruited during a half-day professional development (PD) day created and facilitated by the WPU Office of Field Experiences director. This study's FGI was presented as a workshop choice for that day (October 25, 2019). The PD day was held on the main campus of WPU.

The five student teacher candidates included four females and one male (all self-identified by choice of pronoun). All student teacher candidates were placed in high school classrooms by the WPU Office of Field Experiences. For my study, participants were given alpha-numeric identifiers to ensure confidentiality: A01, A02, A03, A04, and A05.

Study Participant A01 is a female who was in a high school history/social studies field placement. Participant A02 is a male student who was in a history classroom placement. Study Participant A03 is a female who was an English major with a focus in special education. Participant A03 had been in at least two different classroom placements due to her major and interest in special education. Participant A04 is a female who was an English major and taught English in a high school placement. Participant A05, also female, sought certification in special education, secondary level, and was placed in a field placement classroom with a cooperating teacher that had not, at the time of this study, completed his edTPA requirement for certification.

Focus Group Interview Findings

A focus group interview protocol (FGI) was created and used to explore participants' experience with identity development and its influence on their classroom praxis. The FGI protocol used is a revised version of an FGI protocol I created for my pilot study conducted in 2012. The FGI was chosen as one method by which I could explore and describe the phenomenon of becoming and being a teacher. Additionally, my belief that lived experiences are what constitute reality for preservice teachers; my belief that reality is co-constructed, shaped by individual experiences; and my belief that the descriptions of individual experiences must be told, must be heard through the unedited voices of preservice teachers, influenced my decision to use FGI, surveys, and interviews. The FGI session was recorded using both a digital voice recorder and video camera. NVivo was used to transcribe the audio recording as well as used to assist in the analysis of the FGI.

The first question I asked during the FGI—“When did you decide to become a teacher? What influenced you to make this decision?”—aligns with the first bulleted ancillary research question: “What are the prevalent beliefs of preservice teachers about becoming and being a teacher of record in an urban school?” A structured response protocol, serial testimony, was imposed on the participants to allow each participant’s voice to be heard without interruption or commentary. The serial testimony protocol was not used for subsequent questions. Participants were directed to expand upon their initial responses: Is there anything else you want to add to your story of what made you decide to become a teacher and what influenced you and anything else you may want to add that you had forgotten? Participants responded to this question and the rest of the questions and activities of the FGI without any one participant monopolizing time or discussion. I asked several follow-up questions: “Can you remember who you first told that you wanted to become a teacher?” “Did you have any naysayers?” “What did they say or did you have equal amounts of nay-saying and equal amounts of ‘go for it!’”? This FGI question aligns with the primary research question: “How does a preservice teacher’s sense of professional identity develop during the student teaching (practicum field experience) semester?”

Word Search Queries

The first step in my analysis included the cleanup of the FGI transcript. All inaccurate words were corrected. Repeatedly used, extraneous filler words such as “like” and “you know” were culled from the transcript. Utterances used by participants in moments of reflection and hesitation, e.g., “uhhh” and “hmmm,” were removed. Grammatical errors (e.g., subject-verb agreement, misused vocabulary, use of idiomatic

terminology) were not corrected in order to maintain the authentic representation of the study participants' voices. It was disconcerting to hear study participants' struggle to express themselves and very troublesome to see that they were unaware of their inability to respond cogently to questions.

Next, word frequency queries were run to see if any patterns or themes emerged from the FGI data. In analyzing participants' voices, I sought insight into the participants' perspectives on and sense-making about their identity development. Additionally, the Word Search Query feature ensured analytic rigor and guarded against researcher bias (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). Parameters were set in NVivo so that the most frequent 100 words, with a weighted percentage of more than 0.50%, having five or more letters, and exact word matches would be included in the query. Words such as "like," "the," and "a" (i.e., articles, prepositions, and pronouns) did not contribute to an understanding of participants' perspectives. These filler words, instead, point to a significant issue, that of the participants' limited ability to talk about their experience with identity development and its relationship to their emerging classroom praxis even as they are in their 8th semester of a teacher education program. Five word queries were performed as follows: (a) exact matches (e.g., talk); (b) exact matches with stemmed words (e.g., talking); (c) exact matches and their synonyms (e.g., speak); (d) exact matches with specializations (e.g., whisper is a type of talk); and (e) exact matches with more generalized associated words (e.g., communicate). Included in the word count for each query are the associated types of words described for queries b through e. Given the FGI protocol, I anticipated high frequency counts for exact and associated words:

identity, becoming, teacher, teaching, learning, modeling, student(s), classroom, education, curriculum, standardized tests, cooperating teacher, and lesson plan(s).

The word “teacher” was the most frequently used word with a weighted percentage of 1.58% at 55 occurrences during the FGI. Two other words, “really” (occurring 38 times) and “going” (used 37 times), came to the forefront. In order to determine the reasons for and significance of these word frequencies, additional text match queries were performed as described below. Other most frequently used words included people (34), teachers (33), think (32), education (31), teaching (22), thank (22), something (20), and things (19). Words less frequently used by participants included identity (6), learning (13), become (17), becoming (6), students (14), family (9), program (8), classroom (7), and college (6). A word cloud was generated, seen in Figure 3 “Exact Matches,” to portray the frequency and therefore prominence of the words used by study participants. While the term “identity” is used less often than anticipated, the term “teacher” is the most frequently and prominently occurring word. Unanticipated words such as “really,” “think,” “going,” “something,” and “thank” were observed and prompted the pursuit of additional word queries in an attempt to identify the contexts in which these words—and all other frequently occurring words—existed.

contextual level influences on their identity formation, and the linkages, if any, to their praxis.

Emergent Categories

With results from the word search queries (stemmed words, synonyms, specialized words, and generalized words) and results from the text search query (seeing where the frequently used words and their associated words are located in the FGI transcript) I discovered that the word “teacher” and its associated terms, “teaching” and “teach,” were found in participants’ responses and discussion about their education histories and experiences prior to enrolling in the WPU teacher education program. Two of the five participants brought to the teacher education program prior knowledge and nascent teaching skills. These influences must be accessed and assessed to determine how they influence professional identity development. Additionally, the word teacher and its associated terms were used by study participants to describe their experiences with teacher education programs, the influences on their choices to become teachers, classroom praxis, and, far less than anticipated or desired given the purpose of this study, their professional identity development.

As I continued my exploration of the FGI transcript, the word “really” and its associated synonyms, “actual” and “actually,” were found to be used by all FGI participants in their responses and discussion. In the context of the participants’ voices, really, actual, and actually were used as adverbs, as a point of emphasizing a matter of fact, in reality, an actuality—the sense-making of each of the participants’ experiences with becoming teachers. For example, Participant A05 uses really only once during the FGI session when she is repeating statements made by her former boyfriend in his

attempts to dissuade her from becoming a teacher. Similarly, as with the most frequently occurring word, teacher, the word really is found in participants' responses and discussion about their education histories, and experiences that allowed them to acquire some prior knowledge and nascent teaching skills. The term really is also used by study participants in commentaries about the teacher education program, the influences on their choices to become teachers, and classroom praxis. The process to identify emergent categories began with identifying the most frequently occurring words using word search queries; then (as a means to prevent decontextualization and bias) locating these words and their associated terms in the FGI transcript by means of text search queries. In a third step, I color-coded the most frequently occurring words and phrases in the FGI transcript. Resultantly, two categories of influences on participants' teacher identity emerged as follows: individual level influences and contextual level influences. The participants' articulation of contextual level influences was more prevalent than that of their articulation of individual level influences.

Individual Level Influences. Individual level influences include specific age and/or period in time, and experiences that allowed several of the study participants to acquire some prior knowledge and nascent teaching skills. Participants' responses that are categorized as individual level influences are presented below.

Participant A05 responded, "I believe I was about five years old when I decided to become a teacher. I was serious about this as well. I knew what I was going to do with my career." I didn't ask A05 to elaborate as I needed to maintain the integrity of the serial testimony protocol. Her commentary was delivered confidently and honestly. While not using the term passion or passionate, A05 presents herself as being passionate about

becoming and being a teacher, especially in urban schools, for high school alternative education students.

Participant A04 recounted, “I never thought about being a teacher, honestly, until I took a year off from graduating and transitioning into the adult world, if you will ... I was also subbing [substituting] so, it just kind of made sense that that was the path to go in.”

In her response, A04 reveals prior teaching experience as a substitute. Unlike A05, Participant A04 does not admit to active decision-making. She appears to have succumbed to becoming a teacher. Participant A03 recalled:

Well, I’d have to say it’s probably when I was in high school ... I always just naturally became that person that wanted to help ... And, I specifically knew that I wanted to go for the special education certification because of my brother. He’s severely autistic and he’s non-verbal.

Participant A03 uses the word “naturally” to describe her becoming a teacher as an inevitable, evolutionary process due to her desire to help others. It is interesting to note that A03 uses the word “help” in lieu of “teach.” Most notably, she is inspired to become a teacher of special education students because of her lived experience with an autistic, non-verbal brother.

Participant A02 ascribes his decision to become a teacher to his love for history:

Probably my senior year of high school was when it really cemented that I was at least going to school for history ... and then that kind of developed into well, how can I use this in a practical way to help me share this love that I have for the subject?

He uses the term “practical” to validate and anchor his decision. A02’s need for the validation of his identity development is seen in how he portrays his relationships with students, the friends of his students, and the in-service teachers at his field placement.

Participant A01 responded:

I had volunteered when I was 16 at a special needs camp and, I kind of didn't think I was going to like it at all. And I ended up falling in love with it. And from there I knew that I wanted to do something in the—working with people with disabilities. But the biggest influence was definitely the kids for me.

Participant A01 also has prior knowledge and nascent teaching skills—the quality and usefulness of which cannot be verified in this study. Without elaboration, A01 asserts that the children who attended the camp were the greatest influence on her decision.

Unfortunately, due to attrition, the degree to which the students in Participant A01's field placement classroom influenced her professional identity and praxis remains unknown.

Participants A04, A03, and A01 similarly express how their identities were initially shaped by their lived experiences. Participants A03 and A01, from each of their experiences, realized their desire to teach students who are in the special education population. Participants A04 and A01 both had experiences that required them to interact with children and youth in the work and role similar to that of a teacher. As found in the literature, some preservice teachers will come into education programs with prior knowledge and nascent teaching skills while all bring with them beliefs, perceptions, and images of what it means to become a teacher. Consequently, the critical questions for teacher educators and education programs are these: Given the preservice teacher's established beliefs, perceptions, and images of becoming and being a teacher, how do we verify the phase of identity formation? How do we assess the viability of the developing identity? How do we introduce an ought identity and equip a preservice teacher to navigate and filter individual and contextual level influences towards the goal of attaining an ought, professional identity?

Contextual Level Influences. Contextual level influences include education histories (i.e., teachers, athletic coach, professors); parents/family and friends; experiences with teacher education program(s); and the practicum field placement. All five participants made references to their education histories, their parents/family and friends, and to their teacher education program. Only three participants, A02, A03, and A05, make any reference to their field placements. Participants' responses that are categorized as contextual level influences are presented below.

Participant A05 recounted:

Maybe seventh, eighth grade. What influenced my decision were my teachers at that time. They sparked this um ... learning is why and for me is not just something that I have to do. And, it made me love being a student ... I guess my teachers ... umm ... that the teachers I have had at my previous schools influenced my decision.

Previously, A05 stated that she was 5 years old when she “decided to become a teacher.” In the response above, her decision to become a teacher is attributed to her middle school experience. For A05, will this aspect of her education history be a continuous influence or discontinuous? Will she be able to draw on and use the same or similar praxis to, in turn, spark a love for learning and being a student within the hearts and minds of the students in her field placement classroom? I only have A05's response choices on the pretest and posttest administrations of NTSES and TSES from which to surmise that her perceptions of self-efficacy in motivating and engaging her students in learning increased. Ideally, her participation in the exit interview would have yielded more substantive answers. Participant A05 attributes her education history as having influenced her decision. Participant A04 reveals not only prior experience as a coach but also reveals a detail about her education history:

This is my second degree. I started coaching at the high school and during my evaluation as a coach, the athletic director took that time to kind of push me in the direction and my response to him was, No. He told me to just take some time to figure it out. He checked in on me. Did you decide yet? Did you decide yet? Eventually I was like, fine. I started subbing and that's when I, like, kind of had a light bulb thought—this is what I want to do.

The confluence of several contextual influences determined A04's decision to become a teacher: timing—she was in the midst of a career change; and the continued prompting of an immediate supervisor who through his intentional interactions validated her “then” identity and praxis as a coach and insisted that she could assume another identity, that of teacher. Similar to A04, Participant A03 cites specific contextual influences on her decision to become a teacher:

After conversing with a lot of people and really understanding where my heart was. I knew that I wanted to end up in the special ed community, somehow ... So, that's my ... my future goal is basically, you know, taking what my high school teachers have instilled in me. The people that I really found to be very influential—teachers. People [teachers] that wanted to create engaging places for me to learn and to see how other people kind of interacted as well creating a safe environment for kids with severe special needs and disabilities like that.

Participant A03 accesses an affective response to her high school teachers' influence. She also highlights, without full awareness, three dimensions of praxis in her statement “create engaging places for me to learn”: (a) learning process arrangements; (b) physical space arrangements; and (c) behavior process arrangements.

Participant A02 describes the role his parents played in his decision to become a teacher:

My parents always encouraged kind of an interest in social studies. And we were always on trips to historical places throughout the country and such. Obviously, education was an easy conclusion to come to.

In this instance, Participant A02 attributes his decision to the trips taken to “historical places” with his parents. However, even though he uses the term “obviously,”

it is not in fact obvious that he would decide to become a teacher as A02 uses the term “education” instead of teacher. Later, in his response to what and/or who attempted to dissuade him from becoming a teacher, A02 describes his mother as seeing him “in a museum somewhere”—not as a traditional classroom teacher.

Similar to A02, Participant A01 does not specify becoming a teacher. She “landed on education”—a decision made by happenstance. It is interesting to note that A01 does not specify that she decided to become a social studies “teacher.” She, too, uses “education” in place of teacher:

I'm really bad at science. So, I knew I couldn't do speech and I couldn't do O.T. So, I landed on education. And, I just really love history so, I decided to go into social studies education.

The second ancillary research question “What are the teacher education program effects (non-causal) on preservice teachers’ professional identity development? What school level effects are continuous or discontinuous?” focuses on the influence of the teacher education program, the significance of its features, and the continuous or discontinuous effects of program features on identity. Comments were made by all FGI participants (A01, A02, A03, A04, and A05) about teacher education programs in general and about the specific education program in which participants were enrolled at the time of this study. By her own admission, A04 had been enrolled at MSU prior to enrollment at WPU. Brief comments and lengthier commentary were made throughout the FGI session without explicit questions asked by the FGI facilitator about teacher education programs. Participant A01 briefly commented on teacher education in her initial response to what had influenced her decision to become a teacher. Participant A01 describes her

experience with teacher education programs. She talks about their primary focus on preparing teachers for general education student populations:

I can say though that it's still not a confidence thing to become a teacher because working with that population of people, you don't really get that experience in college yet So, it's still kind of hard for me to pick Like when you ask, you know, when did you decide—I'm still deciding.

What is noteworthy here is that study participants are in their final semester. Even with her prior experience working with a special education population of students, A01 is still not confident in her potential, does not possess a strong identity because of her limited exposure to learning about teaching that population of students.

Participant A03, following comments made by A01, provides a lengthier commentary about the limited focus on and limited time spent learning about special education:

I will definitely say that I'm 110 percent in agreeing with [A01's] standpoint of the whole special education umm, realm not really being too much of a clinical exploration that is being given to us through this university at least. And their program which I kind of am upset about but at the same time glad that I was able to have the experience in the gen ed before I could just jump in especially because that's my next opportunity but, yeah,

I definitely agree with I feel like there will be a lot of a lot more people that would be more open to the idea if they had the opportunity to jump into that and see what it would be about.

To ensure a clear understanding of A03's comments, she was asked to clarify her commentary: "Could you explain? So, there would be more people who would be interested in becoming teachers if there was more of a channel to do special education?" An excerpt of A03's response is presented below (to guard against not understanding A03's comments, I remind the reader that A03 disclosed that she has a brother who is non-verbal and autistic):

Yeah, I guess more opening the door for special education because I feel like it's something that's so, umm ... closed off to a lot of you. I could never do that. I could never have any experience with that. It's like well if you try and you just see what it's like. For us, you know, we're all given the opportunity to try it out with student teaching but, we're not given the opportunity especially for people that haven't been given my circumstance of living it on a daily basis being able to have that opportunity to be with those people and see what they would be like in that situation.

While other participants referenced and expressed their experiences with the teacher education program in which they were enrolled at points throughout the FGI session, it was not until the conclusion of the FGI session that Participant A04, having been enrolled in the MSU teacher education prior to attending and completing the WPU program, describes her experience in both programs:

Umm, my first degree is from Montclair State. I was umbrellaed under the education program. Umm, I took a lot of courses of education majors. And I will say my experience from there to William Patterson—William Patterson is a lot more helpful ... because I was an education major the higher ups in the department had no need to see me ... and so I can say, [at] William Patterson [refers to director of the Office of Field Services], you see [her] all the time. So, I can say from Patterson, I am having a more pleasant program. And you know the faces of the higher ups. At Montclair, you didn't know anyone you went to and that's it.

What appears prominently in recounting her experience is A04's disappointment at not being recognized by those who were in the position to do so; as A04 states, "the higher ups in the department had no need to see me." Because she was completing studies in a department within the MSU College of Education and Human Services, Participant A04 expected to be seen and treated in ways that legitimized her identity as a student, more specifically, as a student in the MSU teacher education program. This is problematic as preservice teachers straddle the roles of student and teacher during the Clinical I and Clinical II semesters. The program features that often have a continuous detrimental effect are coursework and interactions with and exhibited behaviors of

teacher educators and field placement personnel. As the primary vehicle for what is learned or not learned by preservice teachers, coursework should be comprised of the tasks, activities, and events aligned with what preservice teachers will have to engage in as novice teachers. Professors, university supervisors, and field placement personnel must possess requisite competencies and execute exemplary praxis. In doing so, teacher educators co-facilitate the formation of viable professional identity and effective, emergent praxis.

During the 59-minute FGI session, Participant A02 referenced the WPU teacher education program only once. The reference was embedded in his response to the first question that asked participants to describe when they each decided to become teachers and what influenced their decisions. Participant A02 spoke positively about the WPU teacher education program: “And then once I was in college and I met professors who had this love and deep knowledge of the subject that kind of also bolstered and inspired the same enthusiasm about sharing with others as well.” A02 describes his professors as having a deep love for and knowledge of subject. Participant A02 is enamored with the act of teaching and the leading role of being a teacher. As will be seen in data to be presented, A02 envisions his ideal self as a compassionate, effervescent source of inspiration and a well-spring of knowledge. Participant A02’s image of his future professional identity appears to define his praxis as well. Note the use of the word “sharing” in the place of the word “teaching” in his commentary above. Later in the FGI session, Participant A02 describes the personal toll the program has had on him:

And the program I'm going through is incredibly strenuous. I haven't seen a lot of friends because of all the stuff that I've had to do and you know I've had to cut out hobbies and things just to get things done for this degree.

Participant A02 appears reluctant in committing to becoming and being a teacher. His stated goal is getting a degree. A02 does not talk about certification and licensure during the FGI or exit interview.

Participant A05's comments on her experiences within the WPU teacher education program are found at points throughout the FGI session. Again, while no explicit questions about teacher education programs were asked, Participant A05 submits emotion-filled descriptions of her experience in the WPU teacher education program. These are found in her response to a question about her perception of who she is, *now*, as a teacher: "I'm overworked exhausted because I feel like I am not learning as much as I should in my clinical practice. And, I'm terrified." Other study participants sat in silence neither confirming or disclaiming having had similar depth of feelings about what they are experiencing in the program. Part of their hesitation stems from anticipating my reaction to their revelations about any negative experiences they've had in the teacher education program. After all, in my introduction to the FGI, I revealed my past employ as a clinical instructor, field supervisor, and adjunct instructor at three northern New Jersey teacher education programs. Later on during the FGI and in her exit interview, Participant A03 shares at length her challenges with her cooperating teacher. Toward the end of A05's initial response about her teacher identity, she reveals a personal challenge and delivers what appears to be a redemptive comment about the program without attribution to any one program feature (e.g., coursework, professor, field placement):

And like I come from Jersey City and Newark. And, I know that in the education realm in the professional realm, we have to talk a different way. That's something that I struggle with a lot and I know that as a teacher I'm supposed to be able to teach my students, Hey this is how you speak and, how am I supposed to do that if I struggle with that, umm, myself? So, I am learning a lot of about different

teaching strategies methods about their students and how best to teach them. I'm like, you know, this is the teaching prep program.

It is in A05's commentary that an awareness of and references to the ought self and a link to praxis are made. Participant A03 is the only other one who unknowingly refers to an ought identity by linking it to her potential for employment and not to her potential for effective praxis.

During the concluding portion of the FGI session, participants A01, A03, and A05 made final comments on their teacher education program experience. Participant A01 seemed to want reassurance that she had not chosen the “wrong school [program]”:

I think we can all attest that this program has been one of the—I don't want to say worst things I've ever done but like stressful and like. I just feel like I have—sometimes I feel like I've no support and I feel like they want to set you up for failure and it's like all this stuff like I'm just curious. So, this is just education? It's just, okay—so it's like everyone who's, you know, but I just want to know that like it's not just William Patterson? Like, that I choose the wrong school. You know what I'm saying? Yeah, yeah, okay. So, it's a running theme.

Participant A01 also opined about the causes and consequences of changes being made to teacher education programs and highlights a potentially effective reform of preservice teacher education, namely, apprenticeship:

It all has to do with the changing legislation around education as well new programs with the implementation of edTPA, right, especially I think changed the entire landscape of how students finish their teacher preparation programs which then forces universities which I don't even think partially is their fault anymore that these things change so rapidly and so frequently they can't form a foundation to build off of to create programs for teachers to apprentice.

While Participant A03 had been one of the more articulate and seemingly positive voices, she revealed a level of frustration and concern with the WPU program:

Real quick—just to touch on it. I feel like it's really stressful on us at this specific point too and, I'm sure that other people before us would say it too is the fact that they have been messing around with the program while we were going through it. So, I don't know if you are completing proper courses which is also an added

stress. And then it was, Oh you have to get these number of observations or have this many, you know, observers coming to see you. Like it's just ... there were a lot of things that were unsure and we just didn't know and then it's true we ask the question. And I was just ... so it gets really confusing but I'm sure that there's other schools [teacher education programs] that are probably going to do the same thing.

After briefly describing the features of three teacher education programs in which I taught, Participant A03 responded, “It’s still comforting to know that it’s not just here [at WPU].”

Participant A03 concluded the FGI session with the following reference to knowing someone in the MSU program and the challenges faced there:

Just like I know someone who is going through [MSU]. They didn't have any help with their advisors either and I know that the advisory here [WPU] is just not that great but over there it's like a like 70 percent worse from my understanding.

In medieval Europe, teacher education was the primary function of the university (Labaree, 2008). The university, structured as a craft guild of teachers, offered a liberal arts education and upon successful completion of studies one would earn a masters or doctorate degree and the status of “Master Teacher” (Labaree). After some time, however, teacher education lost its prominence in the university and became a peripheral entity (Labaree). Despite research on how teachers learn to become teachers, the persistent model for teacher education programs remains a process-product model in practice. Rather than designing curricula content, scope and sequence, and apprenticeship-type instruction to meet the identifiable cognitive and affective needs of preservice teachers, policies and practice are derived from “experts” who are external to education.

The fourth ancillary research question for this study is “How does the teacher’s sense of professional identity influence teaching praxis during the student teaching field experience practicum?” The field placement is a feature found in most traditional teacher

education programs. It is the school and classroom(s) to which a student teacher candidate is assigned to teach. Teaching is performed by the student teacher candidate under the intermittent supervision of an assigned instructor affiliated with the program. The preservice teacher's praxis is under scrutiny, to varying degrees, by the assigned cooperating teacher who is the licensed teacher of record for a class or several classrooms in the field placement school. Only three participants, A02, A03, and A05, make any reference to their field placements during the 59-minute FGI session. Participant A05's poignant commentary, rendered in a tremulous voice, details her experience with her senior clinical practicum assignment:

So, I'm supposed to be—for my clinical practice—I'm supposed to be working with a teacher who has, I think is like three years of experience tenured and I'm with a fairly new teacher and I feel like I'm not gaining anything and this is definitely setting me up for failure. I just took this long break this is my first semester back to school and I'm with this is only his second year of teaching and he's completing his edTPA next semester. So, why would you want to do this to me, William Patterson?! You should have done better and done your research you know? Sorry! [looks down at table top while shaking head back and forth].

While field placements are assigned during the Clinical I Junior Practicum teaching is limited in scope and preservice teachers are on-site at assigned schools for approximately 8–12 hours per week. Field placement during the Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum requires student teacher candidates to be on-site and teaching on a full-time basis (5 days per week for 6–7 hours per day) for a period of 8 or 15 weeks during the first and/or second semester of the final year in the program. Also, preservice teachers are not guaranteed the same field placement school or classroom(s) during the Clinical I or Clinical II practicums.

Participant A02 references his field placement, briefly, at the beginning of the FGI session in response to the first question about what influenced his decision to

become a teacher: “So ... and then now that I'm actually doing it in the classroom, it's finally that confirmation that it was probably the right thing throughout the entire process.” Again, A02's weak commitment to becoming a teacher is evidenced in the words he chooses: “I'm actually doing it in the classroom.” I surmise that “it” refers to the act of teaching. My interpretation is supported by Participant A02's depiction of his actual self (current identity). A02 represents his actual identity as a house whose frame is composed of dotted lines and whose walls are transparent. It is also evident in A02's response that his current praxis confirms his choice to become a teacher.

Participant A03, with even more brevity than A02's or A05's references to their field placements, refers to her field placement in an effort to describe an attribute to her current identity: “The big one I wanted to emphasize was the word relatable. I find myself in my teaching a lot, umm, trying to be relatable to my kids because I primarily teach seniors.” For participants A01, A02, A03, and A04, establishing rapport with and being able to relate to and connect with their students appear to have priority over implementing effective praxis. This belief of needing to relate to students is often a distortion of the more substantive strategies for classroom management. This distortion occurs at three points: (a) in lectures in university classrooms; (b) in the formal evaluations and feedback given to preservice teachers by their university supervisors; and (c) in the interactions with preservice teachers assigned cooperating teachers. This distortion has an erosive, continuous effect that too often results in the arrested development of preservice teachers' ought identity and praxis. Study participants' limited discussion of their field placements is problematic especially since they had been in their assigned classrooms for 7 weeks up to the point of participating in the FGI session. It is

in the field placement where the ought-self and emerging praxis are forged—honed by observation of a master teacher’s praxis, feedback given, and formal evaluation of teaching performance conducted.

Included in each of the participants’ narratives about deciding to become teachers are significant events, experiences, and people that influenced their decisions. After having heard what had inspired the participants to become teachers, I asked if any of the participants had been dissuaded from becoming teachers: “Can you remember who you first told that you wanted to become a teacher? And did you have any naysayers? What did they say?” This question was asked in an attempt to collect data on whom these preservice teachers rely on to get confirmation of their professional teaching identity and to ascertain what negative influences may affect preservice teachers’ adjustment, modification, or refinement of their identities. In answering this question, study participants cited contextual level influences: family, teachers (past and present), “other people,” and teacher praxis. Included in participants’ responses is the content of the messages from family, teachers, and other people about choosing to become a teacher. The content of these messages includes pursuing a different role within education—other than becoming a teacher. For example, A05 was encouraged to become an administrator, a principal specifically. Participants A05, A02, and A03 cited monetary benefits as reasons given in attempts to dissuade them from becoming teachers.

Participant A05 described her primary dissuader:

Going to my boyfriend ... well, from my ex [boyfriend], he wanted me to go on the administrative side—principal. He’s like well teachers don’t make money if you really want to get paid this is what you have to do.

Participant A02 expressed:

I think that those people so much focus on money when they made that comment. I'm like, okay, you're smart ... Say you want to be a business teacher or something and you're passionate about marketing your business. Oh, why aren't you in something on Wall Street? You can make a ton of money doing that rather. Oh, you're into work with history degrees. It's like Oh you can make money with a history degree and it's like I don't care! I want to do this because this is what I care about. It doesn't matter if it's like, wherever, you know. I don't look at it so one dimensionally.

Participant A03 added, "People just don't think you're going to get a lot of money or you get too much money for what you do."

Interestingly, several of the participants reveal perceptions of the positionality of becoming and being a teacher in their responses about naysayers they've encountered. Beginning with Participant A02, he states that his mother "sees me in a museum somewhere." A02 goes on to tell what "some people think" about his suitability for the role of teacher:

Everybody in my family was supportive but my mom sees me in a museum somewhere ... she's still holding out ... So, it's never really the negatives. It's just more like, you know, some people think, oh you'll be better fit for a different type of work within it.

For Participant A01, her dissuaders asserted that she "could do more" and teaching is beneath her. There are other roles that are "better" than becoming and being a teacher:

I just want to say that the biggest naysayers for me were always people who said I could do more. Like it was always like you know like for me people always like teachings like beneath you like you can do something better than that which like I understand where they're coming from. But for me it was like ... it's not about what I'm necessarily capable of it's like what am I going to enjoy doing? So, I think that was a big part of the nay say.

Participants A02 and A04 briefly highlight the often negative perceptions held by others about becoming a teacher. Participant A04 uses the phrase "those conceptions of teaching" while A02 uses the terms "misunderstanding" and "stereotype":

I've caught things from other people when you discuss the climate around teaching at times. There's a lot of misunderstanding that people have about what a teacher is, what we do, of course the stereotype: Oh, you have the summers off ... you have all this free time during the day and you still get paid good money.

In the latter portion of his response, Participant A02 exhibits a sense of determination (resilience?) explicitly linked to his teaching identity in his response:

And, you know, you hear passing comments about how teachers are lazy or don't deserve whatever. It's so frustrating. But, at the end of the day, it's not really about what other people think. It's about the students so, I'm trying to keep that focus.

For A02, the students he currently teaches define his professional identity.

Similarly, and speaking immediately after A02, Participant A04 attempts to explicate other's perceptions about becoming and being a teacher:

On following up with that. You have to treat people that really don't know what they're talking about with a grain of salt because there are those conceptions of teaching. And they're always positive and negative and I feel like there's no happy medium. So, when you do tell someone, whether they're close to you or not, that you are going into teaching, you kind of have to prepare yourself for that: Okay. Or, well, that's nice. It's like him, [referring to A02], you know, what is really being said behind with the tone of what they're saying.

Participants A05 and A02 are the only ones during the FGI who use the terms “passion” and “passionate” in their responses. Participant A05 states in part, “I always had a passion for learning a passion for teaching.” Participant A02 responds similarly, “Everybody understands that history is what I'm passionate about ...” Additionally, Participant A02 uses “passionate” to argue that that is the type of teacher needed in education, “Wouldn't you want passionate teachers educating your kids?” Participant A02 concludes his response about dissuaders:

Why would you want someone—like say they pay a lot but you get some guy who doesn't really care about the education? Why is that—you want people who care about it. So why are you discouraging people who want to do it?

Passion is tied to fleeting, circumstance-based emotion that does not translate into substantive, effective praxis. Unfortunately, passion, being passionate, being relatable, are simplistic descriptions too often used as synonyms for relevant, authentic pedagogy.

Participants A04 and A03 are the ones who, apart from the depiction of teacher identity portion of the FGI, use metaphors in their descriptions of encounters with those who attempted to dissuade them from becoming teachers. The first metaphor voiced by A04 includes carrying oneself “like a shield up ... like tough skin.” The second metaphor A04 uses refers to being in education “as like the Thunderdome.” Participant A04 states:

You have to treat people that really don't know what they're talking about with a grain of salt because there are those conceptions of teaching. And they're always positive and negative and I feel like there's no happy medium. So, when you do tell someone, whether they're close to you or not, that you are going into teaching, you kind of have to prepare yourself for that: Okay. Or, well, that's nice. It's like him, [referring to A02], you know, what is really being said behind with the tone of what they're saying. You're a teacher. We have to kind of carry yourself ... kind of like a shield up. Like tough skin to get that backlash.

Referencing A04 during her response, Participant A03 contributes the following:

Going off of, you know, [A04's] overall point of just having the thick skin and being able to take everything with a grain of salt because everyone has a comment about anything, you know, so, but they're sticklers for teachers like, You're going to go into teaching, why? Like maybe because I want to work with kids you know maybe, maybe it's because I ... I want to teach people something, you know ... I don't know.

Immediately after A03's response, A04 goes on to state, “Oh yeah. I just kind of look at the educational realm as like the Thunderdome. It's like in my opinion, the strongest survive.”

As is evident in the preservice teachers' responses to explicit questions and open discussion, individual level influences (i.e., perceptions, knowledge, and skills) and contextual level influences (i.e., education histories, teacher education programs, and

field placements) can influence teacher identity development. For my study, contextual level influences are more prominent—at least, more prominently expressed in the study participants' responses, explanations, and commentary—than individual level influences. Preservice teachers are not required or provided the opportunities to consistently and systematically engage in self-reflection about their developing identities. Preservice teachers are not required or provided opportunities to engage in structured discourse about the linkages between their developing professional identity and emerging praxis. Resultantly, they may not be able to clearly identify and explicate the individual level influences on their identity development.

Teacher Praxis. Discussion about teacher praxis obliquely emerges in the participants' responses to a follow-up question that asked them to make assumptions about their fellow colleagues/teachers who tried to dissuade them from becoming teachers. I asked participants, "What is happening or what has happened to your colleagues' sense of who they are as teachers?" I wanted to ascertain study participants' cognizance of the concept of teacher identity. Interestingly, comments about teacher praxis are found in participants' responses. Participant A03 states:

I feel like there are two really ... Going off of, you know, touching on the base of the fact that everything's just changing. I feel like ... two major things that ... need to be pointed out is the fact that, a few years ago, teachers were looked at as if they were, you know, like a mayor, almost. There was so much respect behind, Oh, you're a teacher. You know everything. You are the know all, be all, end all, whatever. And parents weren't so quick to kind of jump at the gun and be like, you don't know what you're talking about! They wouldn't really challenge teachers like they do today.

A03 sums up her commentary with a mention of specific instructional style:

So just the idea of that respect that once was there. And those expectations off of what [A01] said that once was there. That's now, you know, either been taken

away or is changing. At the same time, you know, the change has now been focused more on student directive rather than teacher directive.

It is concerning that A03 doesn't use accurate terminology to describe student-centered and teacher-directed praxis. Additionally, it is problematic that, while attempts are made to improve preservice teachers' knowledge of effective praxis, teacher-directed praxis is observed too often in education program classrooms. Participants A04, A02, and A01's comments focus on teacher praxis as seen in their responses. Both A02 and A04 include references to current practice for measuring students' academic growth, the student growth objective (SGO). Participant A04:

Umm, we're coming in at a point where we have to do such a rigorous assessment to become teachers. So, we already know this. What we have to do is when it comes to SGOs, we're prepared to do the work behind it. Whereas, I know my CT [cooperating teacher] has been in it for 20 plus years. So, we came in at a different time where the workload was different. The effort behind the work was different. So, because it's already forming, they're still hanging on to what it was and not evolving with what it is now. So, I noticed that throughout my placements. It's like, Oh are you really getting into this? And I have said to a teacher, You're 25 years in. I'm coming in at a time and this is what I know, this is what I'm going to know. Period.

Again, it is problematic that study participants perceive what they are being taught is somehow evolutionary and new.

While not able to clearly articulate certain aspects of teacher praxis, A02 attempts to explicate a dichotomy in praxis: "There's two forces clashing at the same time."

Participant A02's complete response:

I think there's an imbalance with like how teaching is—the direction of it nowadays with ... simultaneously we're preaching that we need to have SGOs and all these like all data driven analysis of student learning which as we all know SGOs can be manipulated. So, we're just pumping out data that's not important or not really accurate. But then, simultaneously, we have this idea that the classroom needs to be more free-flowing and non—[quickly shifts speech]. There's two forces clashing at the same time the data force and the actual kind of like free flowing educational kind of sphere of things and I just, I think that battle that's

taking place in schools is a big point of stress because you have administrators who are trying to implement both at the same time and it doesn't work because they're completely contradictory to one another. And I think teachers getting caught in the middle of that are very frustrated because there's nothing for them to do—to either fix it or to do anything with what they're given.

This commentary by A02 provides clear evidence of his lack of conceptual understanding of praxis. Additionally, there is evidence of the lack of agency and locus of control regarding his perception of his praxis.

Participant A01, like A04, references time (past vs. present) as being a significant reason for in-service (veteran) teachers' attempts to dissuade preservice teachers from entering the work of teachers:

It's self-deprecating, it's deprecating. It's hard to be in a field where you're constantly told what you're doing wrong. And it's very rare to be told what you're doing right. And even when you're being told what you're doing right it's sandwiched in between things that you're doing wrong. And, so I think a lot of teachers tell me, Oh do you really want to do this? It's because they're usually older and they're usually teachers who for 20 years were great teachers and now with everything changing they're being told they're doing things wrong. And so that's deprecating for them. So, I kind of understand why they're doing they're saying the things they say because they're like it's such a thankless job that it's so hard to want someone else to be in it when it's so thankless.

Participant A05 does not talk about praxis in her response. Her commentary focuses on perceived changes in teacher-student relationships. Participant A05 references teacher praxis during the segment of the FGI when participants are asked to depict their present (actual) teacher identities and their future (ideal) identities. Findings from the identity depiction activity are presented in the next section.

Identity Development. Developing a professional teacher identity is a complex process not yet fully understood. I chose to explore and discover what individual level and contextual level influences facilitate professional identity development. My primary research question, how does a preservice teacher's sense of professional identity develop during the student teaching (practicum field experience) semester, was used to guide my exploration.

In my review of the literature on identity, there is consensus that professional identity development for preservice teachers is influenced by their own perceptions and images of teachers and teaching. A professional identity is also shaped by prior knowledge and skills acquired prior to enrollment in a teacher education program. Preservice teachers' education histories, experiences with education program features and, their practicum field placements in the Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum semester all have some type and magnitude of influence on identity. As evidenced in this study, professional identity development is influenced by the expressed messages and expectations of family, peers, and the in-service teachers they encounter. Having conducted an FGI pilot study in the fall of 2012, I refined the method by which to capture their perceptions and images of their developing identity. In a study conducted by Beltman et al. (2015), the authors used "drawing" as a data collection method. I chose "depiction" as the method for collecting data. Drawing is a more restrictive method in that the connotation, especially for teachers, is that of having to render visual, picture-type likenesses. Depiction is a method that allows for verbal and/or visual rendering of study participants' perceptions and images about their professional identity development.

Participants were asked to depict their actual teacher identities and their ideal teacher identities.

Directions for completing this activity were given as follows: Using 1 of the 2 sheets of blank paper before you, *depict who you are as a teacher*. Label the sheet of paper: “Who I am as a Teacher” (3 min). Using the second of the sheets of blank paper, *depict the teacher you want to be/become*. Label this sheet of paper: “Who I want to be/become as a Teacher” (3 min). Participants were directed to write their alphanumeric identifier at the top, right-side of both depictions. Time limits were given for the completion of each of the two depictions. This was done to ensure focused engagement and efficient use of limited time. After completing their depictions, participants were required to display and describe each of them in turn. Serial testimony protocol was used to ensure that all participants’ voices could be heard without fear of interruption or judgment. After coding of the depictions took place, digital photos of each of the depictions were taken. Some depictions included text but no images and vice versa. Consequently, neither text or images were privileged over the other. This was consistent with the given parameters of the task. The depictions were coded according to the text and/or images rendered in them, similar to the analysis conducted by Beltman et al. (2015). Participants’ depictions were grouped based on the content. This resulted in five categories for the first and second depictions with one new category emerging for the second depiction analysis. After coding the depictions, I reviewed the FGI transcript to ensure that my analysis was grounded in what participants said about their depictions. Both Table 4 and Table 5 include the dominant features of the categories, a description of

each category, and in how many categories a depiction could be placed. Digital copies of participants' depictions are included along with their commentaries.

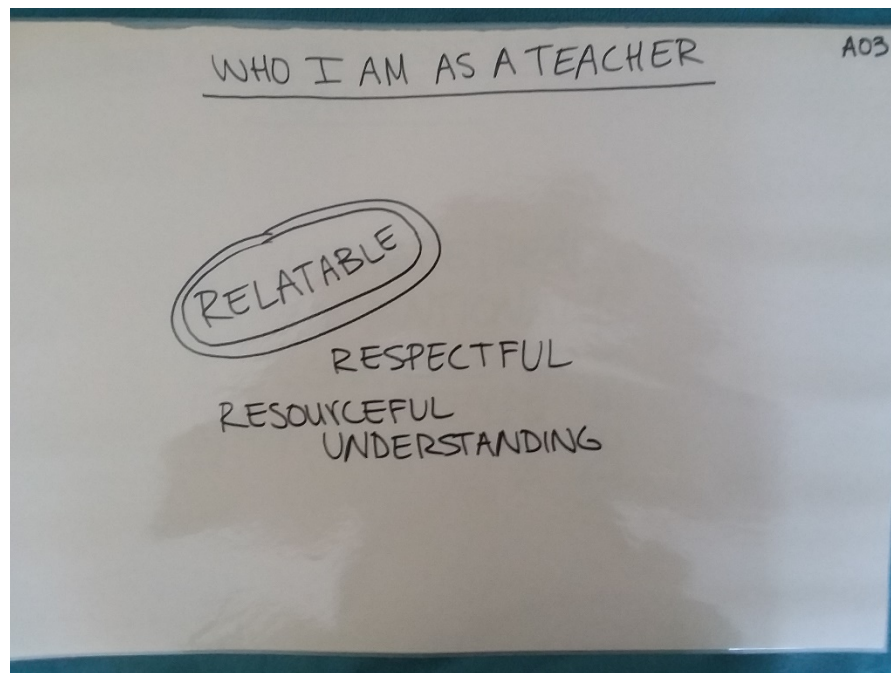
Table 4

Coding Categories, Descriptions, and Frequencies for Depiction 1 "Who I am as a teacher"

Category	Description	Frequency
Text only	Depiction includes only text; no images represented	2 (A01, A03)
Images only	Depiction includes only images; no text included	1 (A02)
Text and images	Depiction includes both text and images (graphics)	2 (A04, A05)
Metaphors	Depictions are represented by metaphor(s)	2 (A02, A04)
Teachers only	Depiction is of teacher only; no student representation included	5 (A01, A02, A03, A04, A05)

Participants A03 and A01 used text only to depict their current identities as teachers. A03 uses four words with the word "relatable" set slightly apart from the other terms and circled twice. A03 remarks in her presentation of her depiction (Figure 8):

It was hard for me to come up with stuff because I think it's hard for me to talk about who I am now vs. who I wanted to become because I have so many goals for myself but, I only was able to get down four words. A majority of them start with the word the letter "r" which I don't know why. The big one I wanted to emphasize was the word relatable. I find myself in my teaching a lot, umm, trying to be relatable to my kids because I primarily teach seniors.

Figure 8*Who I am as a Teacher: A03*

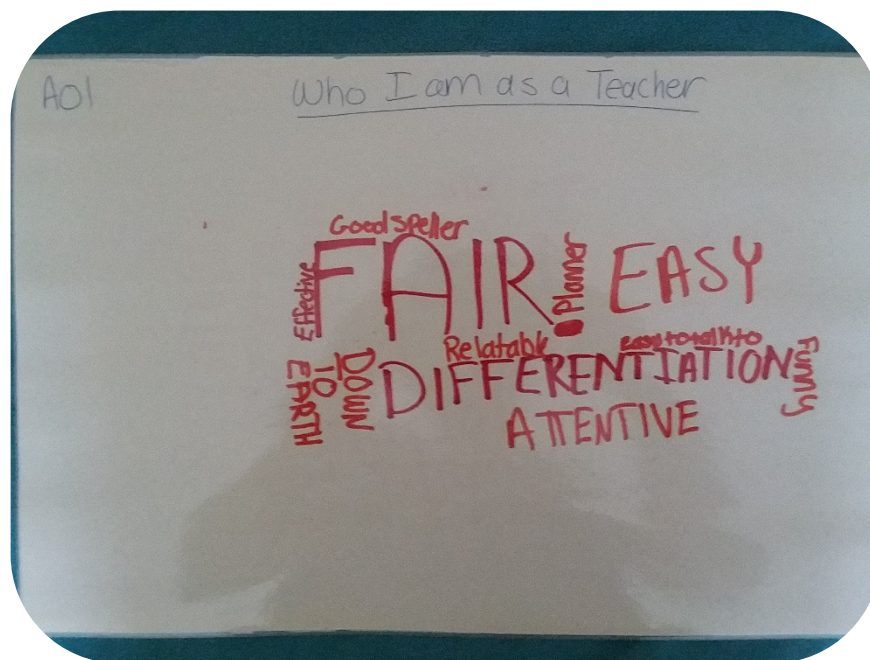
A03's identity appears to be influenced by her need for her interactions with the students she teaches to be relatable. What that looks like in her praxis is not expressed. What appears most prominently with A03 is the desire to have positive relationships with her students. She, in spite of a position of authority as teacher in her field placement classroom, does not feel she as yet can be respected as a teacher. This lack of confidence points to a limited sense of agency, locus of control, and self-efficacy—constructs that assist in the formation of professional identity. A03 states:

And then the other two were just respectful and understanding. Respectful in the way of me being respectful to everybody else not everyone being respectful towards me. I feel like I still need to get myself on my feet before I start saying respect me, respect me, you know what I'm saying? Like, I feel like I need to kind of respect the profession before I request respect.

Of concern, given the fact that this data was collected in the 7th week of the final semester, is A03's inability to depict her current (actual) identity.

Participant A01 also used text only in her depiction of her current, actual self as teacher. She chose to use a visualization tool, a word cloud. Word clouds allow for the display of words that are frequently used and/or have prominence of some sort. The terms she chose to depict her actual identity similarly appear to be influenced by her students. For example, the words “fair” and “easy” are prominent in her depiction (Figure 9). Initially, A01 refers to herself outside of her teacher identity using the term “person.” A01 resumes referring to herself as a teacher later on in her description. A01 describes her depiction:

So, I did a word bubble like one of those word bubbles like where you put all your emails and a thing and you put the biggest words you say the most. So, I think I'm pretty fair. I think even if I don't like you—which I think that's one of my not great strengths as a person. If I don't like you, I'm really bad at hiding it which, I know, is an impression I might have to change that [sic]. But even the students who know that I'm not a fan of them, I'm always fair with them. I think I'm though, like really, I think the bigger one is that I'm super easy. I think I'm an easy teacher because I feel like how am I gonna [pauses] Oh my God, I'm blanking on the word right now! Not display but, like, how am I gonna give you a bad grade when, like, I'm still learning how to even create an assessment that properly and fairly grades you? So, I know I'm a really easy teacher right now which I think is a disservice but, that's about it. Yeah.

Figure 9*Who I am as a Teacher: A01*

In her presentation, A01 does talk specifically about an aspect of praxis, namely, student assessment. However, in her depiction of her current, actual teacher identity, A01 has “differentiation” prominently displayed (although a little less prominently than “fair” and “easy”). Interestingly, the word “effective” appears to be adhering to the word “fair” in her depiction. These two words highlight an acquired vocabulary of praxis terminology but do not necessarily reflect knowledge and skill with implementation. These two terms were not expressed in her presentation of her depiction. It is interesting, however, to see (and to have heard) A01’s self-critique about her “easy” praxis being a “disservice.” This critique highlights A01’s awareness of a need for change or growth as a teacher.

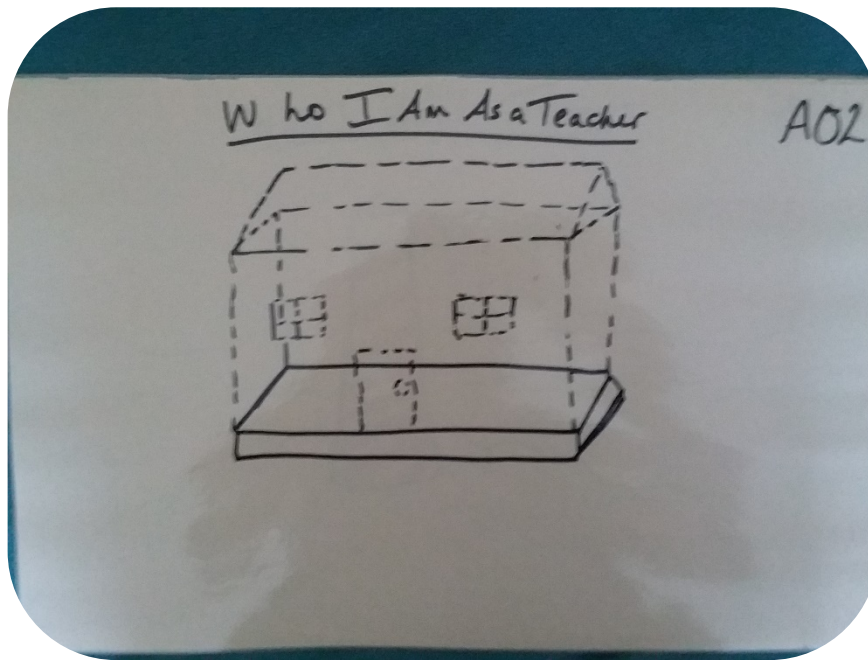
In the Table 4’s coding category, *Images only*, we find A02’s depiction of his actual teacher identity. He has depicted a house using solid lines to represent a foundation and dashed, disjointed lines to represent the frame (Figure 10). Resultantly, A02’s

depiction was also included in the category, *Metaphors*, as can be justified in his description of his first depiction:

So, for mine I put—I thought it was pretty clear—I put, like, a house. Yeah, a foundation. The foundation is solid. Well, not solid but it's there. It's present. And then the rest is whatever it's gonna be. But the plans are to build a house. Whatever it is. I guess my career is the house for who I am as a teacher whose foundation is present because I graduated and got the basics at least to the point, hopefully, you build the rest of the house throughout the years.

Figure 10

Who I am as a Teacher: A02



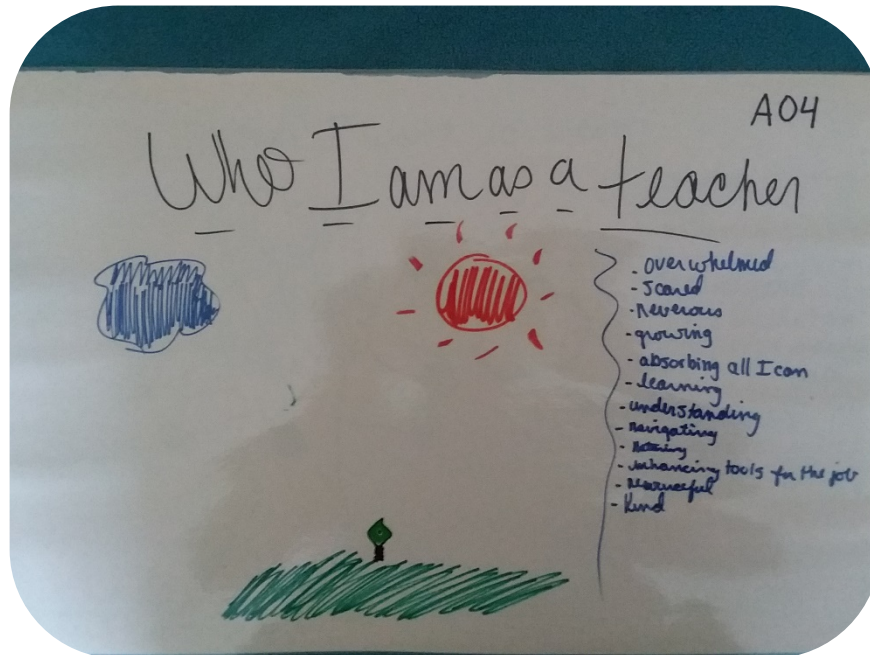
For A02 there appears to be a recognition that his identity is still being built up, developed. Interestingly, the solid foundation represents what he will earn (“graduated”) and what he has learned (“the basics”) on which his identity is being framed. A02’s identity is not yet solid. However, he deems his preparation for being a teacher as solid—not changing.

Participants A04 and A05 use both text and images to depict their identities.

Participant A04's depiction (Figure 11) was also coded in the category, *Metaphors*.

Figure 11

Who I am as a Teacher: A04



Whereas monochromatic text and images are present in A01, A02, and A03's depictions of how they perceive their actual teacher identities, participants A04 and A05 use a mix of colors. The terms "overwhelmed" and "scared" are prominent and found in both A04 and A05's renderings. Participant A04 describes her depiction:

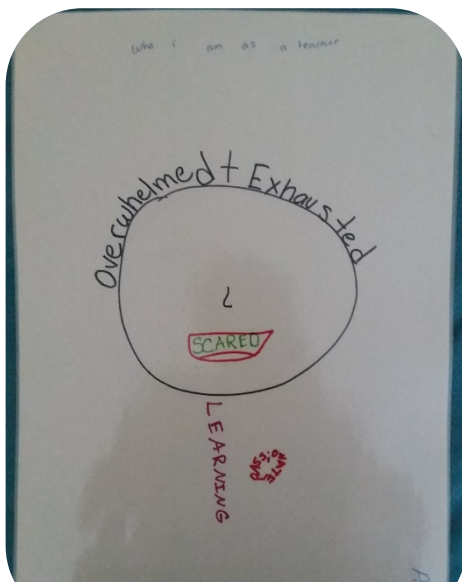
I kind of drew a picture at first, and I drew it as a little leaf. It just shows the sun, cloud, grass and in this big picture. I'm just this big in it. And it's hard to say, when you're just one leaf, the direction you want to go in. And the thought of that kinda, again, is overwhelming. I got scared and nervous. You're growing, you're trying to absorb everything, you're learning, you're understanding the environment you're in, you're trying navigate growth with the angle what you want to do nurturing enhancing tools for the job respectful kind to all—kind of going back to being that little leaf in the big picture of everything.

Participant A05 rendered in text, image, and verbal description a poignant and disquieting depiction of her actual teacher identity (Figure 12). Participant A05 declares:

So ... who I am now as a teacher? I'm overworked exhausted because I feel like I am not learning as much as I should in my clinical practice. And, I'm terrified. When, like, it's my turn, like, when I know the first year we're gonna have a mentor. But that first year, I'm scared that I'm not going to have no clue what to do. So, I'm scared and I put the word scared around the mouth So, I am learning a lot ... of about different teaching strategies methods about their students and how best to teach them. I'm like, you know, this is the teaching prep program [voice trails off].

Figure 12

Who I am as a Teacher: A05



Initially, Participant A05 expresses dissatisfaction with a program feature, the “clinical practice.” Later in her commentary, A05 appears to make a reversal and claims, “I am learning a lot ...” This commentary, however, may not be contradictory. More than likely, A05 is making a distinction between her satisfaction with course content versus the practicum field placement. The clinical course consists of full-time work in a

field placement classroom with a cooperating teacher, university supervisor, and one's Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum Seminar instructor. All three of the persons inhabiting these roles are required to observe, mentor, instruct, and evaluate a student teacher candidate's praxis. Too often, given the number of persons, there is a lack of collaboration and cohesiveness in the supervision and evaluation of student teachers. There is an overabundance of conflicting messages and student teacher candidates, whose identities are still evolving, are not able to distinguish and apply effective praxis for the students they teach. Additionally, even with the promise of a mentor, A05 expresses intense fear about her novice year as an in-service teacher.

In the coding category, *Teacher only*, all five participants' depictions of their current identity are coded because students and other artifacts are absent from their depictions. Participants A03, A05, and A01 reference students in their verbal explanations while participants A02 and A04 make no mention of students in their verbal explanations. Noticeably absent in both depictions and verbal descriptions are common teaching and learning artifacts, e.g., classroom space, furniture, students, textbooks, and technology.

The second part of the FGI identity activity required participants to depict (in the same manner as for the first part of the FGI activity) their ideal (future) teacher identity: *Depict the teacher you want to be/become*. Interestingly, coding categories remained the same as for the first part of the FGI identity activity. Additionally, frequency of participants' depictions is categorized the same as for the first part of the activity, as seen in Table 5.

Table 5

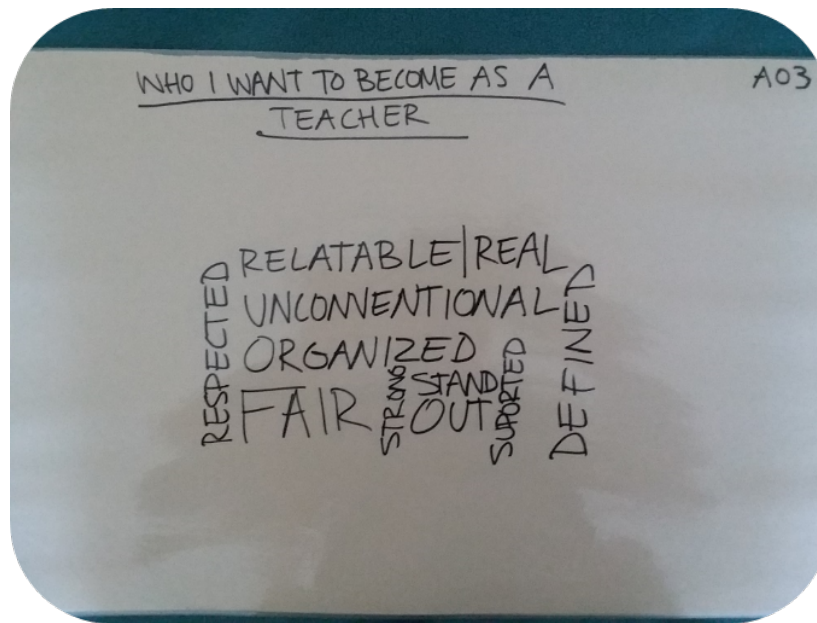
Coding Categories, Descriptions, and Frequencies for Depiction 2 “Depict the teacher you want to be/become”

Category	Description	Frequency
Text only	Depiction includes only text; no images represented	2 (A01, A03)
Images only	Depiction includes only images; no text included	1 (A02)
Text and images	Depiction includes both text and images (graphics)	2 (A04, A05)
Metaphors	Depictions are represented by metaphor(s)	2 (A02, A04)
Teacher only	Depiction is of teacher only; no student representation included	5 (A01, A02, A03, A04, A05)

Participants A03 and A01 produced depictions that are coded *Text only* as per the description. Participant A03 references both identity and praxis in her rendering (Figure 13).

Figure 13

Who I want to Be/Become as a Teacher: A03



Participants A03 and A01 both use word clouds to depict who they want to be/become as a teacher. “Fair” is the most prominent word present in A03’s word cloud. The term “unconventional” is prominent and, in her oral presentation, is associated with “stand out.” While not as prominent, “stand out” is used immediately after “unconventional” in A03’s presentation as a phrasal verb to express her desire to be distinct from her colleagues “in a good way”; and as an adjective to describe her ideal identity as of exceptionally good quality. It is evident in her depiction that inner strength, courage, and external support are needed for her to “stand out.” A03 makes clear references to her ideal identity in the presentation of her depiction.

I did a similar thing to what [A01] did with hers. Because I am an English major, I work with words so this is just what I did. But A couple of the words cause some of them were new. I added respected instead of respectful from before. I kept relatable. I added real. I want to be unconventional. **I want to stand out.** But, you know, at the same time I've been told that in the teaching profession you

want to stand out but like stand out in a good way. You know what I'm saying? You don't want to start making other people feel like you're creating more work for them **by being the best of the best** because then your co-workers start to hate you. This is what I've been told. This is what I've been told! If you stand out and you make yourself look like you've got everything that's going on and you got all of your stuff together it's gonna make other people that don't, you know, start to come at you a little bit. Okay, so. But I'm not going to let that scare me so that's why I wrote the words “stand out” and I know I want to be supported. **I want to be strong, fair, defined. I just want to be, you know, an overall have my stuff together type of teacher you know.** Oh, “organized” was another one in there I want to be organized [laughs]. So, yeah.

At the end of her presentation, A03 states, “I want to be strong, fair, defined.”

A03 was asked to explicate “defined”. In doing so, A03 talked more seemingly aware of potential identity:

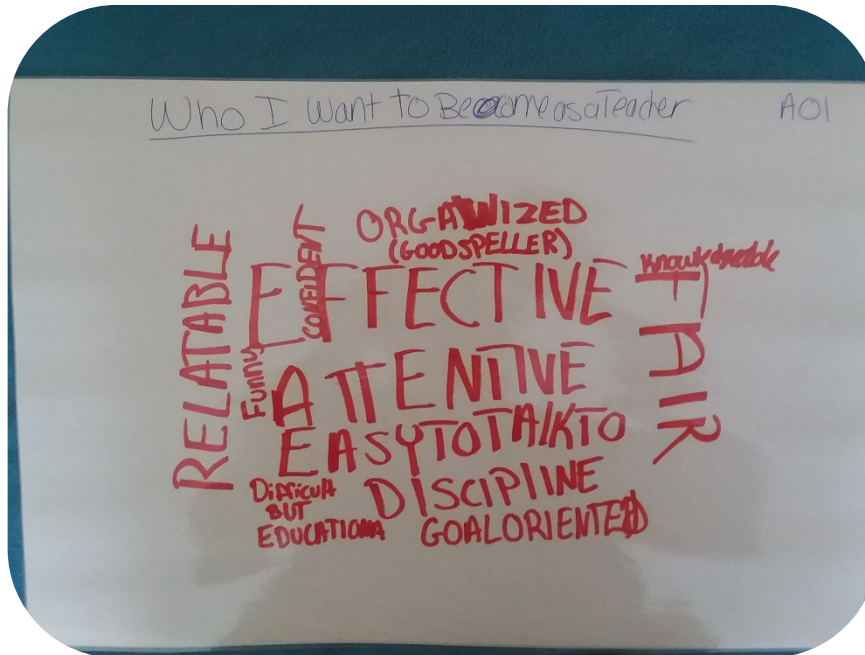
I guess when I say the word defined I feel more so like I want to know my purpose as a teacher you know at that point because clearly I mean considering we look at this one and I only got four words there means I don't really know exactly what my defined purpose is as a teacher right now in this moment. Obviously, that's going to, you know, be more prevalent as I continue going through the journey of becoming a teacher. Going and getting different jobs and stuff and just exposure, I guess. I'm hoping that once I become a true teacher and know that I'm where I want to be at that point, I will have a defined purpose.

Participant A01's depiction, also a word cloud, contains text only (Figure 14).

The words “relatable,” “fair,” and “organized” hold prominence in both A01 and A03's depictions. (Note: participants A01 and A03 were seated apart from each other at separate tables). The term “effective” has the most prominence in A01's depiction. “Attentive” and “easy to talk to” are also emphasized. It is fascinating to observe that, even in an ideal (future) phase of identity, “confident” is written quite small, in a vertical orientation, and symbiotically attached to “effective.”

Figure 14

Who I want to Be/Become as a Teacher: A01



In her oral presentation, A01 doesn't refer to herself as being a teacher—novice or otherwise:

I created another the word bubble but has like almost double the words and one of the bigger things is that effective is one of my big things. Organized is important. I still struggle with that and umm, fair, I still want it to be like one of the bigger parts of it because I think it's really easy to be unfair with students because there's some that give you problems. And it's really easy—"well now, you don't get to do that!" So, I don't want to be the person.

Participant A02's second depiction is coded in two categories, *Images only* and *Metaphors* (Figure 15). In his depiction, A02 represents his ideal identity as a lighthouse—providing both enlightenment and guidance to the students he will teach. In A02's oral presentation, it appears that his role is to be more than a dispenser of facts. It also seems that providing guidance is not part of his current identity or work. A02 wants to be what he perceives as "more so than just a teacher"—alluding to having a greater

breadth and depth of a role as teacher. A02's ideal self is able to provide guidance to his students "to help them through tough times."

Figure 15

Who I want to Be/Become as a Teacher: A02



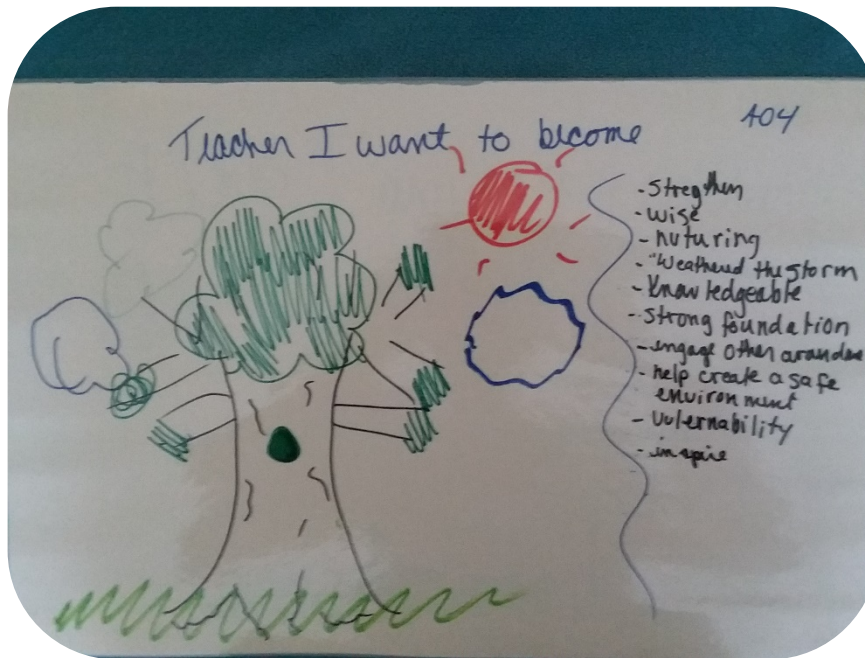
Participant A02 expresses in his explanation of his depiction of a lighthouse:

I drew a lighthouse this time. Yeah. So, I hope to kind of enlighten my students and, I was gonna draw little boats as my students out on the water. Kind of give them some guidance but I don't do that. Do they turn to me for more than just like, oh, I don't know, Why did Henry the eighth seek an annulment? you know. I just want to be kind of something to help them through tough times more so than just a teacher.

For her depiction of who she wants to be/become as a teacher, Participant A04's renderings are coded in the category, *Text and images*. Participant A04's second depiction (Figure 16) is categorized in *Metaphors*.

Figure 16

What I want to Be/Become as a Teacher: A04



A04 expresses identity growth (development). Interestingly, A04 uses the term “vulnerability” to describe an attribute of her ideal teacher identity. While vulnerability connotes a state of potentially being exposed to harm or danger, for A04, vulnerability is associated with the greater potential of being able to face and withstand the challenges and difficulties that accompany being a teacher. She alludes to being a source of protection, “strength, wisdom, nurturing” for her future students. While not articulately, A04 alludes to also having the agency, in her ideal identity, to create a “safe environment.” Participant A04 explicates the following about her depiction:

For my final picture, I drew a tree to go from that little leaf to a tree. The tree for me, in my opinion, symbolizes strength, wisdom, nurturing, weathering the storm because of all the seasons when a storm does come, what do animals usually do? They come to the tree for, umm I'm blanking, uhh ... for support kind of house them from what's scary going on around them. Strong foundation, I drew roots.

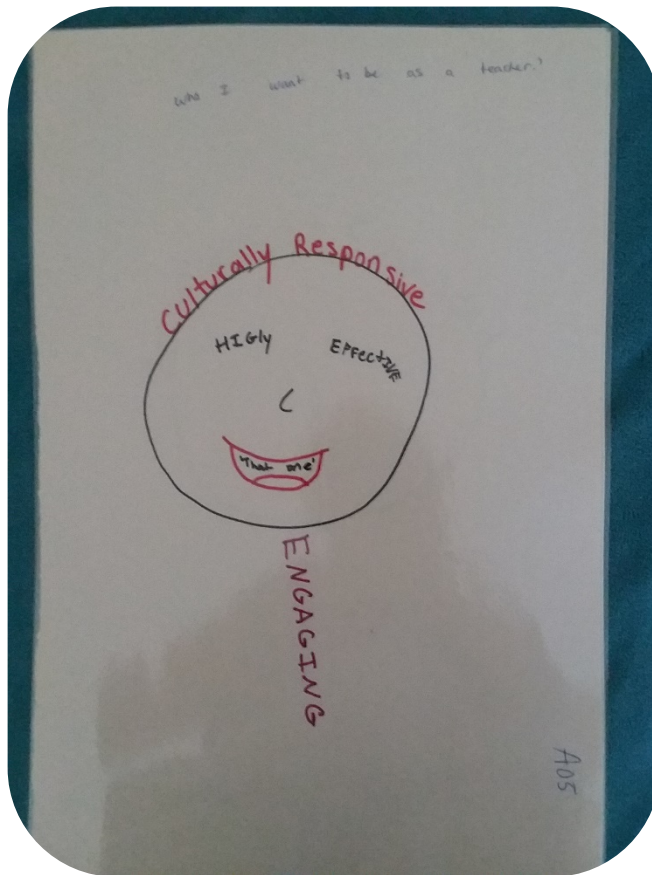
The tree helped create an environment. And in a tree, you kind of see this vulnerability by just looking at it with that vulnerability you see that strength and kind of engage the environment you're in and help create that safe environment.

Participant A05's depiction is coded in the *Text and images* category (Figure 17).

Explicit reference to praxis is what distinguishes A05 from the other participants. Unlike her first depiction, which was unsettling, A05's second depiction appears more positive although, like the other participants, rudimentary. While "culturally responsive" is prominently placed on top of (as if a type of covering) of the figure she rendered, A05 uses only the word "responsive" in her oral presentation. It appears that being responsive for A05 involves both identity and praxis: having "the same high expectations" of all students and planning for "engaging student-centered activities." A05 also refers to specific courses in the education program from which she learned the significance of having high expectations of all students.

Figure 17

Who I want to Be/Become as a Teacher: A05



Participant A05 describes her ideal identity rendered in her second depiction as such:

So, one major part of who I want to become as a teacher is hopefully responsive. I know I think it was last week a week before so my CT [cooperating teacher] he told me that with something he said that the non-honors group: Don't do something with them because they're not able to do that. And I remember you told me I don't have that expectation of them like you know you have the same high expectations for all your students. And I think that was something that I'm like, wait a minute! I remember hearing about this at my Methods and Seminar classes.

It was observed that, in A05's first depiction, the image had no defined eyes. In her second depiction, the image's eyes were created using the words "highly" (right eye)

and “effective” (left eye). Participant A05 was asked by the FGI facilitator to explain.

Additionally, A05 was asked by the facilitator, “what do you mean by [using the term]

‘engaging’”? Participant A05’s response:

Just stepping away from ... umm, okay, prior to seventh grade, all my teachers—it was they teach us at the smart board. We write down notes and we have a test. And that was it. I really want to write engaging student-centered activities. I want them to step away from my class thinking, Hey, you know, even though I'm learning, this is fun. I could relate to this. We could talk about different perspectives. I just want to—my big thing is, umm, the process of learning different things. This is something that it's cool. That's what I mean.

While not included in their depictions, all five participants’ oral presentations contained references to students. Their references to students, however, were quite narrow, focusing primarily on desired teacher-student relationships, e.g., “relatable,” “fair,” “nurturing,” and “inspire.” In both their depictions and verbal descriptions of their current teacher identities, study participants appear to have loosely defined actual and ideal identities. What is most disconcerting is the absence of talk about an ought identity. In their responses and in open discussion, study participants were woefully inadequate in talking about their praxis as implemented in their field placements. Additionally, study participants either talked rudimentarily or did not talk about educational concepts that enhance or hinder effective praxis. After reading through the FGI transcript, what became apparent to me was the absence of study participants’ references to an ought identity. Even though I did not explicitly ask participants to depict an ought-self, it struck me that study participants made no references to a professional identity as sculpted by the expressed expectations of their teacher educators; defined by content and performance standards set by the education program; and refined by the students in their field placement classrooms.

Unexpectedly, at the close of the FGI session, participants expressed unsolicited, sincere gratitude for having the opportunity to speak—to be asked questions about themselves and their experience with becoming teachers. Study participants expressed the most gratitude for being given the opportunity to speak freely without judgment from me or their peers. They expressed gratitude for the opportunity to describe their experiences prior to and during enrollment in the teacher education program. Participants seemed especially grateful for being given the opportunity and space to depict their actual and ideal identities. Identifying, accessing, depicting, and reflecting on identity formation and classroom praxis are not routine activities in teacher education program curricula. This may have dire consequences for viable professional identity development and effective, emerging classroom praxis.

The FGI was used as an approach to explore a small sample of preservice teachers' sense of their professional identity development during the Student Teaching semester. To that end, NVivo was used to conduct an initial semi-automatic content analysis. This allowed for a focused, less biased and meticulous coding-based content analysis to be carried out afterward. Insights into participants' perceptions of developing professional identity were revealed in spite of study participants' grievous inability to coherently, knowledgably, accurately, and comprehensively express a recognition and understanding of their actual identity and its influence on their praxis in their field placements. A sense of identity is present in varying degrees as expressed during the FGI session but not at all remarkable enough to withstand the complexities of teaching in urban (or even other) classrooms. Even those participants who possessed some prior knowledge and nascent skills from having worked with youth (A01 volunteered at a

special needs camp and A04 was an athletic coach) did not (were not able to?) bring forth relevant educational concepts and the possible implications for their current or future praxis. The most disquieting finding is that, even in the final semester of their education programs when certificates of completion and achievement are distributed, study participants' self-images remain salient while perceptions of identity and agency in praxis remain woefully inadequate to meet the needs of students and the complexities and daunting challenges inherit in the work of teachers and teaching.

Survey Findings

In addition to exploring preservice teachers' sense of their developing identity, I wanted to explore the linkages between their identity formation and its influence on their praxis as implemented during the Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum field placement. Initially, I proposed collecting data on praxis by means of study participants' self-recorded video of their teaching in their field placement classrooms. Unfortunately, the edTPA is used at WPU (and at MSU and RU-UTEP) as a high-stakes, final performance assessment for preservice teachers. Student Teacher candidates are required to submit self-recorded video segments of specific lessons taught in their field placement classrooms. Because of misguided policy and contractual agreements with the sponsors of the edTPA, I was prevented from collecting data on my study participants' praxis. The NTSES and TSES were chosen to measure study participants' perceived ability about their praxis (Berg & Smith, 2018). The NTSES and TSES contain validated subscales that are composed of a series of Likert-type questions that when combined describe various dimensions of teachers' praxis. Therefore, the data from these two instruments were treated as Likert-type data without assuming normality in the data.

Discussion and interpretation of study participants' pretest and posttest response choices and corresponding subscale scores are presented for the NTSES Instruction subscale and corresponding TSES Instructional Strategies subscale (Figure 18) as well as for the NTSES Adapting Education to Individual Students' Needs subscale and corresponding TSES Student Engagement subscale (Figure 19). Following the presentation of the subscale response choices, I give an overview of the change in NTSES and TSES subscale and total scale scores. In the final section of the NTSES and TSES findings, I present data about the significance of the observed changes in scores for both scales.

Figure 18

NTSES Instruction Subscale and TSES Instructional Strategies Subscale Items

<i>NTSES Instruction Subscale Items</i>	<i>TSES Instructional Strategies Subscale Items</i>
1. Explain central themes in your subjects so that even the low-achieving students understand.	7. How well can you respond to difficult questions from your students?
8. Provide good guidance and instruction to all students regardless of their level of ability.	10. How much can you gauge student comprehension of what you have taught?
12. Answer students' questions so that they understand difficult problems.	11. To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?
16. Explain subject matter so that most students understand the basic principles.	17. How much can you do to adjust your lessons to the proper level for individual students?
	18. How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies?
	20. To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?
	23. How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?
	24. How well can you provide appropriate challenges for very capable students?

In Figure 18, the NTSES Instruction subscale items 1, 12, and 16, and the TSES Instructional Strategies subscale items 7, 10, 11, 20, and 24, require a basic level of understanding of subject matter content. NTSES item 8 and TSES items 17, 18, and 23 represent a fundamental understanding of instruction.

In Figure 19, the items on the two subscales displayed reflect the core performances of effective praxis. NTSES Adapting Education to Student's Individual Needs subscale items 5, 11, 18, and 23; and, TSES Student Engagement subscale items 1, 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, and 14 measure participants' degree of self-efficacy about more complex instructional approaches. NTSES Adapting Education to Student's Individual Needs subscale items 18 and 23, along with TSES Student Engagement items 1, 4, 6, 9, and 12 describe aspects of praxis that promote students' social-emotional growth, motivation, and executive functioning.

Figure 19*NTSES Adapting Education Subscale and TSES Student Engagement Subscale Items*

<i>NTSES Adapting Education to Individual Students' Needs Subscale Items</i>	<i>TSES Student Engagement Subscale Items</i>
5. Organize schoolwork to adapt instruction and assignments to individual needs.	1. How much can you do to get through to the most difficult students?
11. Provide realistic challenge for all students even in mixed ability classes.	2. How much can you do to help your students think critically?
18. Adapt instruction to the needs of low-ability students while you also attend to the needs of other students in class.	4. How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work?
23. Organize classroom work so that both low- and high-ability students work with tasks that are adapted to their abilities.	6. How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work?
	9. How much can you do to help your students value learning?
	12. How much can you do to foster student creativity?
	14. How much can you do to improve the understanding of a student who is failing?
	22. How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?

The NTSES and TSES were first administered in October, 2019. Study participants had completed 7 semesters (3.5 years) of coursework including the Clinical I Junior Practicum. Seven weeks had transpired between pre- and post-administrations of both the NTSES and TSES. I had hoped to see, for all participants, increases in the NTSES Instruction and Adapting Education to Individual Students' Needs subscale scores and increases in the TSES Instructional Strategies and Student Engagement subscale scores. I anticipated seeing very little or lower scores on the NTSES Motivating Students, Maintaining Discipline, and Coping with Changes and Challenges subscales. I anticipated seeing the similar downward trending scores on the TSES Classroom

Management subscale. What follows is a closer examination of each study participant's pretest and posttest response choices for the NTSES Instruction and Adapting Education to Individual Students' Needs subscales and the TSES Instructional Strategies and Student Engagement subscales.

Pretest and Posttest Response Choices. In administering the NTSES and TSES, study participants were asked to reflect on their self-efficacy beliefs about their praxis. Preservice teacher participants' individual pretest and posttest response choices on the NTSES Instruction and Adapting Education to Individual Students' Needs subscales and TSES Instructional Strategies and Student Engagement are presented in Tables 8, 9, 10, and 11. The purpose for pre- and post-administrations of the NTSES and TSES were for (a) data triangulation and (b) to discover to what extent experiences during the field practicum influenced their self-efficacy beliefs about their praxis. The results are unique, to a degree, to individual study participants.

As seen in Table 6, Participant A02's pretest and posttest response choices show very little variation. It is interesting to note, however, that response choice *Absolutely certain* (7) for the NTSES Instruction subscale is found in item 12. This supports A02's assertions made during the FGI and during his exit interview where he posited that he wants to be the type of teacher that focuses on student's individual needs: making sure that each student understands the subject matter; and, just as important to A02, being able to discern when a student doesn't understand subject matter material. During the exit interview, Participant A02 states, "I'll go out of the way to make sure [the] student understands it."

Table 6*NTSES Instruction Subscale Responses (Pretest and Posttest)*

NTSES Instruction Subscale Items	Participants' Response Choice									
	<i>Not certain at all (1), Quite uncertain (3), Quite certain (5), Absolutely certain (7)</i>									
	A01		A02		A03		A04		A05	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
1. Explain central themes in your subjects so that even the low-achieving students understand.	5	-	5	5	5	7	7	5	5	5
8. Provide good guidance and instruction to all students regardless of their level of ability.	5	-	5	5	3	7	7	5	5	3
12. Answer students' questions so that they understand difficult problems.	5	-	5	7	5	5	5	5	5	5
16. Explain subject matter so that most students understand the basic principles.	5	-	5	5	5	7	5	5	5	5
SUBSCALE SCORES	20	-	20	22	18	26	24	20	20	18

Participant A03's posttest response choices show very moderate increases on the NTSES Instruction subscale. However, her response choice for item 8 is *Absolutely certain* (7). During her exit interview, A03 cites as her greatest area of strength in her praxis is her ability to establish rapport with the students she teaches. Participant A03 cites how the in-service teachers at her field placement school remarked how A03 was "rare," when compared to other preservice teachers, for being able to develop such good rapport with students. In her exit interview, Participant A03 provides a lengthy account of how she was able to help students overcome what A03 termed a "stressful day." A03's posttest response choice may also be an indicator of the experiences, beliefs, and

perceptions borne of her work with and empathy toward special needs students.

Participant A03 attributes the influence of “a few specific professors” on her ability to use different instructional strategies to meet the different needs of the students she taught during the field placement practicum.

For Participant A04, there are two downward trending response choices for items 1 and 8 on the NTSES Instruction subscale. There are no changes in response for items 12 and 16. By her own admission during the exit interview, A04 state that the students—often deemed difficult by her more seasoned colleagues—were a challenge to both her identity and praxis. In her comments, A04 stated that the students she taught challenged her actual and ideal selves: “The students challenged me—who I thought I was [actual self] and who I thought I was going to be [ideal self] in the classroom.”

For Participant A05, a posttest response choice of *Quite uncertain* (3) for item 8 stands out amid no changes in response choices for other NTSES Instruction subscale items. Without benefit of an exit interview, it can be posited that A05’s response is indicative of the continuing fears and frustration she voiced during the FGI. A05 spoke candidly and poignantly about her limitations, her struggle with not having the speaking ability expected of a teacher, and her greatest challenge: “I feel like I’m not learning as much as I should in my clinical practice.” Participant A05 also talked about feeling like she was being set up for failure because she had been assigned to a cooperating teacher that didn’t have at least three years teaching experience and who had not taken the edTPA.

In Table 7, the pretest and posttest response choices for the TSES Instructional Strategies subscale are presented. For participants A02, A03, and A05, there are no

remarkable changes in response choice on this subscale. There is a downward trend in response choice for item 24 for A02, A03, and A05. Participant A04 provided no response to this item. The subscale item implies a teacher's work with those students who perform academically beyond their chronological peers. Unfortunately, due to an excessive reliance on grade level delineations and low expectations for the academic achievement of African American, Native American, ELL, and special needs students, teacher education program coursework tends to be narrowly focused on facilitating preservice teachers to use their efforts on those students who are deemed more likely to perform well on standardized tests. When encountered in their classrooms, preservice, novice, and many seasoned teachers are not able to provide effective instruction to these populations of students.

Table 7*TSES Instructional Strategies Subscale Responses (Pretest and Posttest)*

TSES Instructional Strategies Subscale Items	Participants' Response Choice									
	<i>None at all (1), Very little (3), Some degree (5), Quite a bit (7), A great deal (9)</i>									
	A01		A02		A03		A04		A05	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
7. How well can you respond to difficult questions from your students?	6	-	7	7	7	7	9	7	6	6
10. How much can you gauge student comprehension of what you have taught?	7	-	7	8	6	7	9	7	4	5
11. To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?	7	-	6	7	6	7	9	8	8	7
17. How much can you do to adjust your lessons to the proper level for individual students?	6	-	6	5	6	8	7	8	6	6
18. How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies?	7	-	6	5	7	7	8	8	6	6
20. To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?	7	-	5	6	7	7	8	8	6	6
23. How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?	6	-	5	5	7	7	6	8	7	8
24. How well can you provide appropriate challenges for very capable students?	6	-	7	6	8	7	8	-	7	6
SUBSCALE SCORES	52	-	49	52	54	58	64	53	50	47

As seen in Table 7, for Participant A02 there is a slight decline in self-efficacy for subscale items 17 and 18. In his exit interview, A02 talks about the challenge to “create a dynamic, creative learning environment” and his desire to develop the ability to come up with new ideas for teaching the students he will encounter.

There is a downward trend in response choice for TSES Instructional Strategies subscale items 7, 10, and 11 for Participant A04. Her posttest response choices support the very specific, targeted areas of praxis in need of improvement cited by A04 in her exit interview. She spoke of needing to improve “speaking too fast.” Additionally, A04 asserted that she needed to improve “transitions within the lesson, activity building, picking what information goes on the PowerPoint [for lectures].”

The posttest response choices for the NTSES Adapting Education to Individual Students’ Needs subscale, presented in Table 8, show a slight increase in self-efficacy for participants A02, A03, A04, and A05. Participant A02 moves from a pretest response choice of *Quite uncertain* (3) to *Quite certain* (5) on the posttest response for item 18. This may be indicative of his perception of himself as a teacher who meets the individual needs of the students he teaches. For the same item 18, opposite pretest and posttest responses are recorded for Participant A05. There appears to be a decline in her perception about her ability to differentiate instruction according to the varied needs of the students taught. As can be observed, there are no response choice changes pretest to posttest for item 18 for participants A03 and A04. This is indicative of A04’s assertion during the exit interview that “difficult students challenge me in the classroom and during my lessons.” For Participant A03, there is no response choice change for NTSES

Adapting Education to Individual Students' Needs subscale item 18 as she anticipates having more freedom, once in her own classroom, to spend time thinking of "different strategies and different routines [she] could implement" as asserted during her exit interview.

Table 8

NTSES Adapting Education Subscale Responses (Pretest and Posttest)

NTSES Adapting Education to Individual Student's Needs Subscale Items	Participants' Response Choice <i>Not certain at all (1), Quite uncertain (3), Quite certain (5), Absolutely certain (7)</i>									
	A01		A02		A03		A04		A05	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
5. Organize schoolwork to adapt instruction and assignments to individual needs.	3	-	5	5	5	7	5	7	3	3
11. Provide realistic challenge for all students even in mixed ability classes.	5	-	5	5	3	5	5	5	5	7
18. Adapt instruction to the needs of low-ability students while you also attend to the needs of other students in class.	5	-	3	5	7	7	5	5	5	3
23. Organize classroom work so that both low- and high-ability students work with tasks that are adapted to their abilities.	3	-	5	7	5	7	5	5	5	5
SUBSCALE SCORES	16	-	18	22	20	26	20	22	18	18

Effective praxis positively influences and results in student engagement in learning. Dimensions of student engagement include behavioral engagement, emotional engagement, and cognitive engagement (Chapman, 2003). The items on the TSES

Student Engagement subscale briefly survey aspects of all three dimensions of student engagement. The TSES Student Engagement subscale items are aligned with the NTSES Adapting Education to Individual Students' Needs subscale items as effective praxis consists of adapting curricula, instruction, and assessment to meet individual student's cognitive and social-emotional needs. A teacher's knowledge and decision-making will promote, enhance, or inhibit student engagement in learning. Pretest and posttest response choices for the TSES Student Engagement subscale are presented in Table 9.

In Table 9, Participant A02's data show little variation in pretest and posttest response choices. Except for the slight downward trending posttest response choice of (6), Participant A03's data is similar to that of A02. On items 9, 12, 14, and 22, response choices are downward trending for Participant A04. During her exit interview, A04 describes the challenges faced with the "difficult students" she taught. For Participant A05, two contrasting response changes occur from pretest to posttest as seen for items 4 and 9. Without benefit of an exit interview, it cannot be determined what Participant A05 experienced during her field placement that resulted in her pretest response choice of (2) for both items 4 and 9 and her response choice of *Quite a bit* (7) and *Some degree* (5) for item 4 and item 9, respectively. It can only be surmised that A05's response choices are indicative of an increased sense of self-efficacy in her praxis as it positively influences students' engagement in schoolwork.

Table 9*TSES Student Engagement Subscale Responses (Pretest and Posttest)*

TSES Student Engagement Subscale Items	Participants' Response Choice									
	<i>None at all (1), Very little (3), Some degree (5), Quite a bit (7), A great deal (9)</i>									
	A01		A02		A03		A04		A05	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
1. How much can you do to get through to the most difficult students?	3	-	5	5	7	7	5	7	5	7
2. How much can you do to help your students think critically?	4	-	5	6	8	6	7	7	7	5
4. How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work?	5	-	5	5	7	6	6	7	2	7
6. How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work?	6	-	7	7	8	8	6	7	6	7
9. How much can you do to help your students value learning?	5	-	6	7	7	7	9	8	2	5
12. How much can you do to foster student creativity?	7	-	5	5	7	8	8	7	8	9
14. How much can you do to improve the understanding of a student who is failing?	6	-	5	6	6	8	8	7	3	5
22. How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?	5	-	4	5	6	6	8	6	3	6
SUBSCALE SCORES	41	-	43	47	56	56	57	56	36	50

Change in Scale Scores. An analysis was completed comparing results for each subscale and total scale score for each of the participants. This was done to look for trends even within the small study sample. No statistical significance is being attributed to this analysis of data. The NTSES is comprised of six subscales with four items in each subscale for a total of 24 items. The range of scores for any one subscale is 4–28. The maximum score for each subscale is 28. The NTSES total scale score is 168. Table 10 includes subscale and total scale data for the NTSES. Table 11 provides subscales and total scale data for TSES. Participant A01’s data is missing as she did not participate in posttest data collection.

Table 10

NTSES Subscales and Total Scale Scores

Participant		Subscales						Total Scale Score (168)
		I	A	MS	MD	CCP	CCC	
A02	Pre	20	18	12	14	16	14	94
	Post	22	22	14	16	22	14	110
A03	Pre	18	20	22	24	22	22	128
	Post	26	26	28	26	24	24	154
A04	Pre	24	20	18	22	18	18	120
	Post	20	22	20	22	22	18	124
A05	Pre	20	18	12	12	14	14	90
	Post	18	18	24	14	12	10	96

Note. NTSES subscale abbreviations: I = Instruction; A = Adapting Education to Individual Student’s Needs; MS = Motivating Students; MD = Maintaining Discipline; CCP = Cooperating w/Colleagues and Parents; CCC = Coping w/Changes and Challenges.

Looking at the NTSES total scale scores, all participants show an increase with participants A02 and A03 showing the greater increase in total scale scores, +16 points and +26 points respectively. However, a look at changes in NTSES subscale scores is warranted. While there is an increase from pre to posttest Instruction subscale scores for participants A02 and A05, Participant A03 shows the greater increase by +8. Participant A04's Instruction subscale posttest score shows a decrease of -4. It is revealing that there is very little overall increase in participants' perceptions about their ability to provide basic instruction to their students. In reviewing the NTSES Adapting Education to Individual Students' Needs subscale, participants A02, A03, and A04 show slight increases in their scores. It is concerning that there is no change in for Participant A05. Given her frustrations with her field placement cooperating teacher, and given the population of students (high school alternative education), the lack of increase in the subscale score is not surprising.

An unanticipated increase in score (+12) for Participant A05 on the NTSES Motivating Students subscale is a hopeful sign that she perceives that she has been effective in motivating her students. This was a goal for A05 as seen in her depiction of her ideal self. Items found in the Motivating Students subscale include statements (not shown in Table 10): 10. Wake the desire to learn even among the lowest achieving students; 21. Motivate students who show low interest in schoolwork. Given that all study participants, during the FGI session, focused primarily on being teachers that can relate to, be fair to, be nurturing, and inspiring to their students, it was unanticipated that post scores on the Motivating Students subscale did not increase more than they did.

No significant increases in scores occurred on the NTSES Maintaining Discipline subscale. While participants A02, A03, and A05 each have score increases of +2, Participant A04's post score remained the same as her pre score. Some of the NTSES Maintaining Discipline subscale items include (not shown in Table 10): 6. Maintain discipline in any school class or group of students; 9. Control even the most aggressive students; 14. Get students with behavioral problems to follow classroom rules; and, 19. Get all students to behave politely and respect the teachers. Maintaining discipline, as defined and expected by field placement school administrators, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors, tends to be the primary focus of teacher preparation. Unfortunately, in traditional teacher education programs that have an urban mission, the emphasis on maintaining discipline overshadows learning about all other critical elements of effective praxis. Preservice teachers, prior to their field placements, are too often steeped in learning about traditional norms for students' classroom behaviors. Unfortunately, the norms touted for maintaining classroom discipline are rooted in deficit paradigms about students (and their parents and communities). The reforming or fixing of students' behaviors and attitudes is paramount. Punitive measures are always on hand and too often used to cajole and threaten students into exhibiting desired behaviors in the classroom. Preservice teachers are very rarely exposed to or taught about those classroom rituals and routines that are essential to establishing a disciplined classroom—a classroom in which the teacher consistently models and interacts with her students in the very ways that facilitate her students in becoming disciplined about and engaged in learning. Preservice teachers are not exposed to learning about rituals and routines that when implemented lead to (a) the prevention of students' non-productive behaviors; (b)

allow for effective intervention when students' non-productive behaviors arise; and (c) result in restoration, starting with a clean slate for students when needed to resume the display of productive behaviors.

The greatest increase in pretest to posttest score on the NTSES Cooperating with Colleagues and Parents subscale occurred for Participant A02 (+6). This increase in self-efficacy score is supported by A02's exit interview in which he listed building connections and becoming a part of the school community as a triumph in his field placement. Participant A02 seemed to love the socialization aspect of teaching stating in his exit interview: "I love talking with everyone." The average difference in pretest and posttest total scale scores for all participants is +11.5.

The same analysis was performed for the TSES, shown in Table 11. There are three subscales with eight items per subscale. The range of scores per subscale is 24-72. The total TSES scale score is 216.

Table 11*TSES Subscales and Total Scale Scores*

Participant		Subscales			Total Scale Score (216)
		IS	CM	SE	
A02	Pre	49	42	43	134
	Post	52	47	47	146
A03	Pre	54	58	56	168
	Post	58	59	56	169
A04	Pre	64	58	57	179
	Post	53	60	56	169
A05	Pre	50	27	36	113
	Post	47	47	50	144

Note. TSES subscale abbreviations: IS = Instructional Strategies; CM = Classroom Management; SE = Student Engagement.

It is observed when comparing pretest and posttest subscale and total scale scores on the TSES subscales that there are no remarkable increases in scores. It must be noted that one item posttest score, on the Instructional Strategies subscale, is missing and was treated as such in this analysis for Participant A04. Participant A05's post scores on the Classroom Management and Student Engagement subscales are noticeably higher, +20 and +14, respectively. However, her score decreased slightly on the Instructional Strategies subscale. There were 7 intervening weeks between pretest and posttest administrations of the TSES. While A05's scores show a +20 point and a +14 point increase for the Classroom Management and Student Engagement subscales respectively, there is a slight decrease (-3 points) in the Instructional Strategies subscale posttest score. I wanted to determine if the changes in pretest and posttest subscale and total scale scores

on the NTSES and TSES could be considered statistically significant. Given my data, what was the most appropriate test to use? These issues are addressed in the next section.

Significance. The purpose for administering the two self-efficacy scales was to begin to explore if there was any correlation between self-efficacy in praxis and professional identity formation. If there was a positive change, i.e., an increase in subscale and total scale scores on both the NTSES and TSES, what was the magnitude, the significance of the change? A null and an alternative hypothesis were derived as follows:

H_0 : The median of differences in subscale and total scale scores between pre- and post-administrations of the NTSES is 0 and the TSES is 0.

H_1 : The median of differences in subscale and total scale scores between pre- and post-administrations of the NTSES is not 0 and the TSES is not 0.

The Wilcoxon signed-rank (related samples) test was chosen to determine and compare the significance of the differences in the pre- and post-administrations of the NTSES and TSES. The data I collected are ordinal data from Likert-type scales and collected from a small sample. My data was not treated as having a normal distribution. Therefore, a nonparametric test was chosen for the analysis. The Wilcoxon signed-rank test assesses whether the difference in pre and post total scale scores has a median rank of zero. The test statistic is the sum of the ranks of the values from the pre and post administrations. The p value was set at $p=0.05$. The confidence interval (CI) was set at 95%. The results of the Wilcoxon signed-rank test (related samples) yielded the following for the NTSES: $Z = -1.826$, significance (2-tailed) = .068. The results of the Wilcoxon signed-rank test (related samples) yielded the following for the TSES: $Z = -$

1.604, significance (2-tailed) = .109. Resultantly, the median of the difference in scores between the pre and post administrations of the NTSES is 0. The median of the difference in scores between the pre and post administrations of the TSES is also 0. Therefore, the null hypotheses is retained. Even though there were 3 positive ranks for the TSES (TSES median post > TSES median pre) and 4 positive ranks for the NTSES (NTSES median post > NTSES median pre), no statistical significance can be attributed to the increases in scoring (as represented on the TSES and NTSES) in the preservice teachers' perceptions about their efficacy of praxis.

Preservice teachers, because of their unforgiving positioning as both students and novice teachers, reside in a theoretical state regarding some cognitive processes: analyzing, critical evaluating, and problem solving. Unfortunately, their identities are underdeveloped and ill-defined as they are not exposed to effective praxis and have not had adequate time to develop their praxis. Additionally, preservice teachers are too often not propelled by contextual and individual influences to attain a level of professional application in their praxis (Sutherland et al., 2010).

Exit Interview Findings

Individual, virtual exit interviews were scheduled beginning the week of December 8 through December 20, 2019. Doodle poll was used to schedule the 30 minute interviews. To accommodate study participants, multiple choices were presented as to the virtual platform they preferred to use (e.g., Google Meet, Skype, Zoom meeting). Participants A02 and A03 scheduled and completed in-person, virtual interviews using Zoom on December 10 and December 17, 2019, respectively. These were recorded with permission from these participants. Participant A04, due to end-of-semester program

requirements, was not available to conduct an in-person, virtual interview. To ensure A04's participation, she was given the option to submit her written answers in a Word document. Participant A04 consented to do so and was sent the exit interview protocol via email. Participant A04 submitted the completed interview protocol on December 20, 2019. Unfortunately, even after initial positive responses to my requests to schedule an exit interview, and having scheduled an interview, Participant A05 did not show up to the interview and did not respond to requests for rescheduling. Participant A01 did not respond to any requests for her participation in final data collection. Transcripts were produced for A02's and A03's exit interviews. Content analysis similar to that performed on the FGI transcript was completed for the exit interview transcripts.

The Exit Interview Protocol was developed to capture data for my primary and three of my ancillary research questions (Figure 20). Exit interviews were conducted 7 weeks after the FGI. Participants had been in their field placement classrooms and the Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum seminars for a total of 15 weeks. In the exit interviews, I asked direct questions about study participants' developing professional identities, the influences on identity development, and the effects of this development on their emerging praxis.

Figure 20*Research Question and Exit Interview Protocol Alignment*

Research Questions	Exit Interview Protocol
What are the teacher education program effects (non-causal) on preservice teachers' professional identity development? What program effects are continuous or discontinuous?	1. Teacher education program: What influenced your teacher identity development here and, how was it influenced? What were the most significant influences (from your teacher education program) on your teaching?
What are the field placement (school level) effects (non-causal) on the preservice teacher's identity development? What school level effects are continuous or discontinuous?	2. Field assignment and experience: What influenced your teacher identity development here, and how was it influenced? What were the most significant influences (from your field assignment and experience) on your teaching?
How does the teacher's sense of professional identity influence teaching praxis during the student teaching field experience practicum?	3. What, in your opinion, are your areas of strength with regards to teaching? 4. What, in your opinion, are your areas in need of improvement/growth?
How does a preservice teacher's sense of professional identity develop during the student teaching (practicum field experience) semester?	5. What have been your triumphs in becoming and being a teacher? 6. What have been your challenges to becoming and being a teacher? 7. What are next steps for you?

I performed word frequency and text search queries on each of the participants' exit interview transcripts. First, I looked for words and phrases that appeared unique to each individual's lived experience in the Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum. In an effort to minimize redundancy, I looked for how these words and phrases were used by each participant in their responses. Then I looked for words and phrases in context that had meaning relevant to the ancillary and primary research questions (Figure 21). This resulted in the coding categories: *program effects*; *field placement effects*; *praxis*; and *identity development*. In a final step, I identified general and unique themes of lived experience for each participant that are (a) unique to an interview; (b) found in two of the

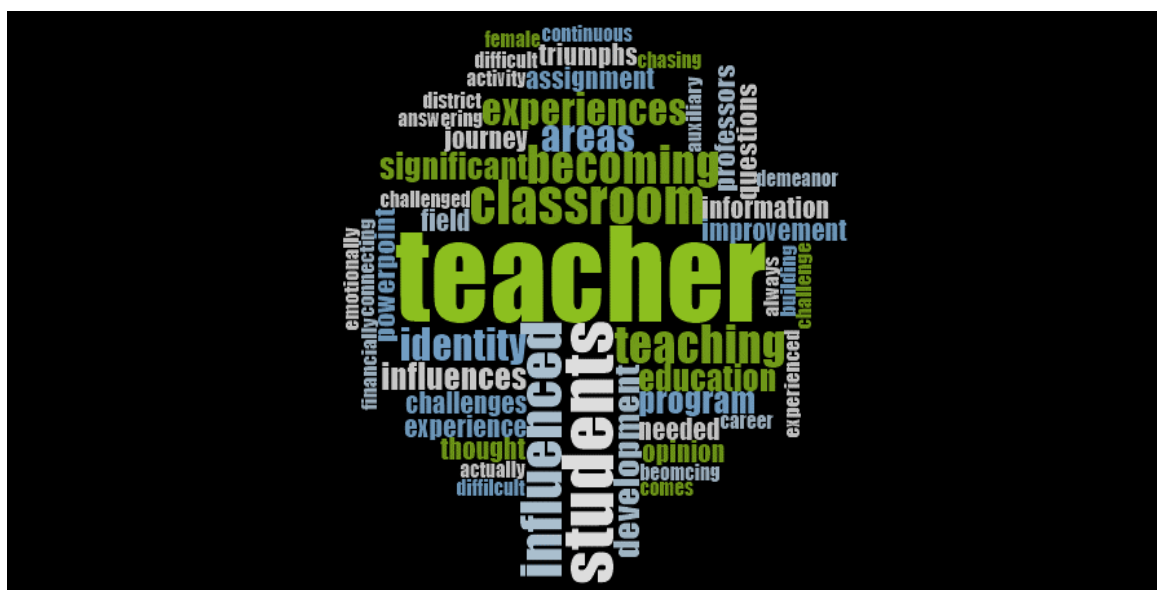
three interviews; and (c) discovered in all three of the interviews. The results of the analyses of the exit interviews are presented in turn for participants A04, A02, and A03 in the following word cloud figures and descriptions.

Participant A04

Figure 21 shows the word cloud output for the exact word match frequency query for Participant A04. The words “detail” and “accuracy” were deleted from the list as these are words that appear in the questions posed on the interview protocol. The word “teacher” appears most prominently with a count of 15 and a weighted percentage of 7.77 (parameter: most frequent 50-word display). Unfortunately, using the text search query, it was found that the word count for teacher and teaching are the result of the wording of the questions on the interview protocol, not attributable to usage by Participant A04. Two other prominent words can be seen (count and weighted percentage appear in parentheses): students (8; 4.15%) and classroom (6; 3.11%).

Figure 21

Exact Word Match: A04



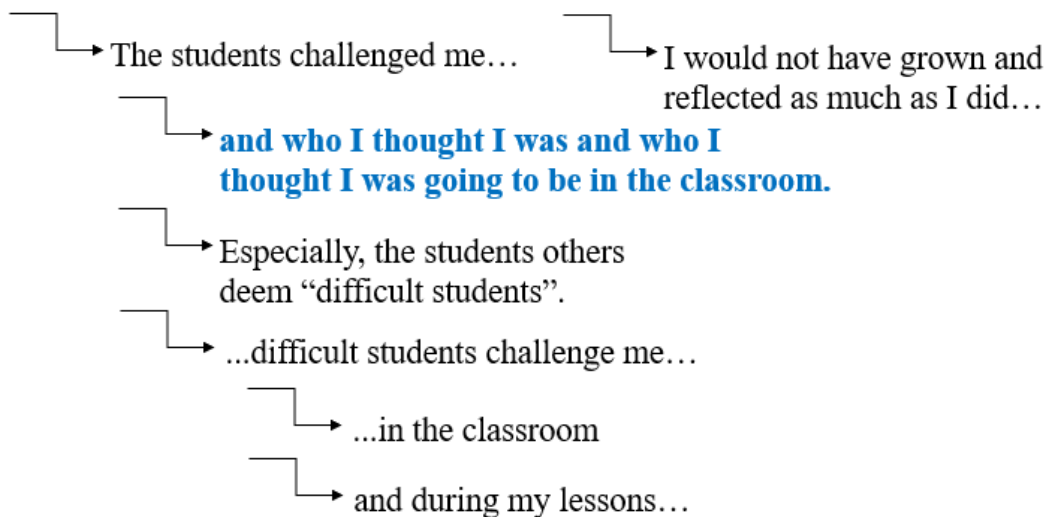
Program Effects. For Participant A04, the influences on her professional identity development are first and foremost attributed to two distinct individual level influences: “My teacher identity was influenced by my personal experiences” and citing an influencing script/driver: “And I heard a quote that I always try to incorporate into my classroom, my teaching, and my rapport with my students—‘Be the person you needed at that age’.” Contextual level influences include “the experiences and the people I have come to meet through my journey in becoming a teacher.” The program effects that can be considered continuous are characterized as “significant influences” by A04 in the following statement: “The significant influences from my education program that influenced my teaching was my professors. Being female, I had strong, independent, women as my professors, who inspired me to have the same demeanor in and outside the classroom.” It appears that the professors with whom A04 identifies are those that are female, have agency, and are consistent in their deportment whether interactions occur inside or outside university classrooms. No indication of any other program effects, e.g., male professors, courses, activities/events, or peers, is made by A04 as to having influenced her identity development.

Field Placement Effects. Given the prominence of the word “students” in all five word search queries, Participant A04 asserts that the students she taught in her field placement (high school, history) were “the main influence to my teacher identity development.” A diagrammatic representation of the statements expressed in A04’s interview transcript is presented in Figure 22.

Figure 22

Field Placement Influences on Identity: A04

A04: The students were the main influence to my teacher identity development.



It is observed, in the bold blue text, that the students A04 taught challenged her actual identity (“who I thought I was”) and her ideal identity (“who I thought I was going to be”). Additionally, even though A04 posits that others (teachers in the school building) consider the students she taught as “difficult students,” A04 goes on to use the same descriptor, “difficult,” in describing where and when those students posed a challenge for her. Participant A04 describes students posing a challenge to her identity development in two of the four distinct dimensions of a teacher’s praxis: physical space arrangements (“in the classroom”) and in learning process arrangements (“during my lessons”). It appears that for A04, the students taught in her field placement have a continuous effect. Interestingly, there is no discussion of the effects of the cooperating teacher, clinical (university) field supervisor, administrator(s), or parents.

Praxis. Words and phrases were identified and coded according to four dimensions of teachers' praxis: (a) learning process arrangements; (b) physical classroom arrangements; (c) behavior arrangements; and (d) learning materials/resources arrangements. Participant A04 asserts four distinct strengths that characterize her praxis: "My areas of strength[s] are my presence in the classroom, my classroom management, connecting with students, and my continuous reflecting." The first area of strength cited about her praxis, "my presence in the classroom," demonstrates a linkage between identity and praxis: "my presence" as a teacher and "in the classroom" denote physical classroom arrangements. Direct observation of A04's implemented practice would have yielded a more comprehensive understanding of what her presence entailed—how does A04 orchestrate and conduct all or some of the praxis dimensions? Classroom management and connecting with students are also cited as strengths and are classified in the behavior arrangements dimension of praxis. Finally, A04 asserts that her continuous reflecting is a strength. What needs to be ascertained is about what does A04 continuously reflect on regarding her praxis and/or her identity?

Four very specific aspects of her praxis in need of improvement are expressed by A04: "My areas in need of improvement are speaking too fast, transitions within the lesson, activity building, and picking what information goes on the lecture PowerPoint—putting too much information on the PowerPoint." Each of these are classified in the learning process arrangements category. It is of interest that these areas of praxis in need of improvement are targeted, narrow. Additionally, what is expressed by A04 are considered foundational, elemental aspects of teaching history. Lesson planning, stated as

“activity building,” is too often a point of praxis with which preservice teachers struggle far into their novice years of teaching and beyond.

Identity. Participant A04 cites past and present personal experiences, a script/driver, and the metaphorical use of the term “journey” to describe her lived experience in becoming a teacher: “My triumphs in becoming a teacher is actually becoming a teacher. This has been a journey for me that I did all by myself, emotionally, financially, and graduating is just a goal that I have been chasing for 7 years.”

All of what A04 expresses are considered individual level influences that she attributes to her actual (current) self. Both in her statements above and below, A04 ascribes her identity development to something she’s done “all by herself” and as something that is innate: “Being a teacher is, I have come to find out, a part of who I am, it comes naturally to me.” There are no references to the education program or other contextual level entities as to their influence on A04’s actual teacher identity. Contrastingly, as A04 acknowledges her continued development, note that her assertions are cast in the future tense and she cites contextual level influences: “The challenges to becoming and being a teacher will be the experiences I face with students, parents, and the district.” Participant A04 acknowledges that the contextual level influences (students, parents, and the district), labeled as “experiences” (and used as a synonym for “challenges”), will shape her identity. However, there is no expressed indication that A04’s praxis will be shaped as well: “but these experiences are needed to shape who I am as a teacher and learn from what I experienced.” When asked about next steps for her, Participant A04 responded simply, “finding a job and start my career.”

specialization of the word “write”) that are associated with change are think, drive, inspiration, appreciate, dynamic, describing, standing, etc. During the exit interview, I attempted to get clarity, to probe, and even to redirect with additional questions. As seen in Figure 23, “students” and “seeing” have more prominence in the word cloud. The word “students” is concentrated in A02’s response to the probing question, “You mention that you’re inspired by greatness seeing your colleagues [teach]. What constitutes ‘greatness’”? Participant A02, in response to my question about what constitutes greatness, stated: “I definitely think seeing that passion.” All generalized words associated with the word seeing are found in the continuation of A02’s response to my question.

Program Effects. Similar to A04, Participant A02 asserts that his professors were significant in their influence on his identity development. He cites that his professors were passionate and driven and these qualities, among others, helped him to understand his job as an educator. A02 states:

I would say probably I think the biggest thing was the was the professors that I had at the university seeing people with that passion and drive for education and teaching students and showing that a real care and love for ... for ... the craft and seeing that was kind of a motivator and definitely inspiring in my development of my own my own identity.

Participant A02 continues by asserting that his professors helped him to understand his job as an educator:

It was the understanding of my job as an educator what I'm supposed to do to really help my students in the best way possible and seeing my professors at William Patterson was probably the biggest thing that influenced the identity of being dependable, knowledgeable, caring especially, and focused on the student

as the individual not the whole class or, you know, just getting the information out but focusing more on helping the student specifically.

In his response, A02 uses the term “the identity” not “my identity” and then proceeds to use adjectives to describe attributes of what he perceives to be an ideal teacher identity (“dependable, knowledgeable, caring”). Very rarely are preservice teachers facilitated and challenged to mine their developing identities and therefore, like Participant A02, do not have the ability to cogently describe their emerging identity and praxis. For example, for A02, is “helping the student” the same as “teaching the student”? In continuing his response, A02 does touch upon an aspect of praxis, student-centered teaching: “focused on the student as the individual not the whole class.” This teaching philosophy can be considered a continuous program effect as it was also expressed by A02 during the FGI. As will be seen in the rest of this analysis, Participant A02 is beguiled by the notion of being more “than just a teacher” in order to provide enlightenment, guidance, and “to be kind of something to help them through tough times more so than just a teacher.”

Field Placement Effects. In his field placement (high school, history), A02 hesitated before responding, stating that “it’s hard to pin down specific things.” After a few seconds, A02 completed his response thusly (included below in its entirety with no edits):

I think seeing the other teachers there that really care and enjoy the teaching. It's the same thing—you're inspired by greatness. You know when you see a good teacher, it's something that stands out to you and it becomes a notable part of your experience especially as a young teacher myself. It's very easy for me to watch on and see this is a good teacher. This is something I should try to emulate and then someday make my own. And, at the school that we're at, they all show that excellence and they show that passion every day no matter what. And it's really inspiring and they really—that's an influence on us as well. And of course having that kind of firsthand experience with the students every single day and having

them look up to you as their teacher, that also changes my perspective and my identity when it comes to this [pauses] profession as being kind of solidified as this is, this is who I am, this is what I'm doing and, I'm happy with it. I'm happy with it.

Participant A02 asserts that he can identify a “good teacher.” He attempts to describe a good teacher’s praxis—“they all show that excellence”—however, there is no cogent description. There is no specificity as to what about praxis (“excellence”) is to be emulated. In fact, A02’s praxis is future oriented, cast in the future tense: “and then someday make my own.” Additionally, while there is no specificity as to his identity, A02 appears to be content with what he perceives to be his identity as evidenced in his statement, “This is who I am, this is what I’m doing, and I’m happy with it. I’m happy with it.” A probing question was asked of A02: “You mention that you’re inspired by greatness that you see in your colleagues. What constitutes greatness?” In his response, A02 talks very enthusiastically about a teacher’s praxis at his field placement. He lists affective domain aspects, “passion,” “enthusiasm,” “energy,” with no reference to cognitive domain aspects, e.g., knowledge of subject matter or great lesson plans. Participant A02 consistently uses descriptions of demeanor and attitude to describe the identity and praxis of the in-service teacher at his field placement: “fun,” “energetic,” “kind of dynamic,” “he doesn’t take anything too seriously.” Interestingly, A02 gets close to describing at least two praxis dimensions, learning and behavior process arrangements, in the statement, “He’s not very regimented with, let’s say, you know, this is the procedure every single day.” It is worth noting that this lack of regimentation was observed by and resonated with Participant A02 as most schools and classrooms in urban contexts, due to school “reform” measures, are regimented. Participant A02’s unedited response:

I definitely think seeing that passion. I was in a class today with one of my one of the other teachers in the school and, he brings this enthusiasm and this energy to the classroom every time that every time I watch him that it's just kind of contagious. It's this, it's this kind of fun and an energetic kind of dynamic classroom where he doesn't take anything too seriously. He's not very regimented with, let's say, you know, this is the procedure every single day. But the students understand—it works and, I'm not too sure how it works the way it does but it does work and the students respond really well to his energy and his and his enthusiasm and everything. And he just—it looks like he's having fun up there and I think that is transferable. Like the students recognize that, I recognize that, and I see that as something that I look up to that, you know, you don't want to bore the students you want to keep it dynamic and you want to keep it entertaining and fun for them to really enjoy learning the information. And I see that in him especially.

For A02, praxis is an enigma (i.e., “it”) and, it appears that praxis is entertainment. These are perceptions, beliefs, and misconceptions that too often result in unnecessary and preventable floundering in both identity development and emerging praxis.

Praxis. When asked to describe his areas of strength with regards to his teaching, at least four areas are posited by A02 that are listed here with the corresponding praxis dimension in parenthesis: (a) relatability with students (behavior arrangements); (b) caring for the subject matter he teaches (learning process arrangements); (c) individual student focus (learning process arrangements); and (d) enthusiastic, dynamic delivery attached to his willingness to “try new things” in the classroom (learning process arrangements).

Relatability with students is cited at the outset of Participant A02's unedited response to the question about delineating the areas of strength in his praxis:

I think—this one is going to go away with time for sure—but I think the age gap between me and the students, currently. I get the jokes and I can relate with the silly jokes and the humor and all that because, you know, my sister is only a few years younger than me she just graduated high school and I have students that are close in age to her so, I understand the dynamic. And, I have a younger sister

who's 10 years younger than me. So, I see the whole range of ages and you know the things that they're interested in and all that so that relatability is a strength. But, of course, I think that will go away as I, as I become a more mature adult, I guess we could say, but, yeah, I think that's one thing.

Even though relatability as a quality of both praxis and identity is peppered throughout A02 and other participants' responses in both the FGI and exit interviews, it is not something that is perceived to be continuous for A02, especially. As per A02, maturity (aging) is the determinant that will erase the perceived strongest area of praxis and identity, i.e., "a more mature adult." It is noteworthy to observe that A02 does not use the phrase, "an experienced teacher," or makes any other reference to a teaching identity in his response.

A02's "care about the material," i.e., love for history as a subject, is weakly linked with his praxis, learning process arrangements specifically, and his individual student focus as seen in the second portion of his response:

But also, I think my I do care about the material as well. So, I do focus on making sure that each student understands. And if I—'cuz I'm sure you've seen this before—when you teach someone something, you can see when it doesn't land. And, I really think I can key into that and pick up on it and really try and, I'll go out of the way to make sure that student understands it, specifically, if they have a question about something. Because, odds are they aren't the only one with the same question. So, if someone—it happened today—someone asked a question. I tried to give an answer. They still don't understand. So, I said, okay, we're going to take a few minutes and go through this in class so everybody kind of saw the process and maybe someone completely understands it or someone understands it just a little bit better. But, taking that time I think was one of my strengths and knowing, okay, I should take the time and explain this a little bit better with the students. Yeah ... and umm.

Near the conclusion of his response, Participant A02 finally describes, very briefly, an example from his implemented praxis (that occurred on the day of his interview). In comparing A02's more lengthy description of the praxis of a teacher at his field placement school and his brief description of his own praxis, it is disheartening to

observe the marked difference. A02's description of his own praxis is so much less dynamic and narrower than the description of the other teacher's work.

Even though it is not reflected in his description of his own praxis, A02 states that he tries to be enthusiastic, dynamic, and is willing to try new things:

[Pauses] umm ... I do try to bring quite a bit of enthusiasm. You know, I try and make it a dynamic and, I'm not willing or I'm not scared of trying new things. I'm always willing to try new things. So, like that colleague that I mentioned just before, he's always—today he was doing something crazy! They had these big sheets of paper laid out and they were doing like an operation type thing where they were making body parts off like kings and queens and stuff and like it was ... it was this whole, you know, artistic thing that was happening in class.

In continuing his description, A02 appears to contradict his earlier statement, “you know when you see a good teacher,” with not knowing and not being able to cogently describe what was taking place during A02's observation of his colleague:

I'm not even too sure exactly what he was doing but he's always doing things that are just new. And he thinks of them and he just tries to integrate them into the classroom and he's always willing to try things that seem crazy! He sees what works and sees what doesn't work and he's not scared of, say, awesome flops—he's not scared of that, you know. So, I think I've picked up on that as well and, I'm willing to try all those new things in my classroom as they, you know, as I find them or come up with them or whatever. I want to find new things to do with the kids.

Similarly, to Participant A04's expressed sentiments, praxis—praxis that engage students in learning—is a future entity, a future goal. Resultantly, a critical question arises: After 15 weeks of the clinical practicum, why hasn't this been accomplished? Why are identity development and emerging praxis almost imperceptible?

In an attempt to explore if and how identity might be linked to praxis as perceived and understood by Participant A02, the following probing question was asked, “What would you say about the teacher that you describe [who is] willing to try new things? You said several times that he's not scared. Where do you think that courage to dare to do

something different comes from?” At the outset of his response, A02 provides a description about how to connect with students, especially with history subject matter, using an instructional strategy other than lecture. It appears that connecting with students for A02 may be synonymous with being relevant and somehow making subject matter content interesting. Though A02’s response to the probing question again highlights his inability to describe praxis cogently, he does touch upon learning process arrangements (text in **bold**) and materials/resources arrangements (underlined text):

I think it ... [pauses] part of it, I think, is really trying to connect with the students in a way because **it's easy to stand up there and just give a lecture about something**. And it's the easier option but it's not necessarily the most interesting option. And it's oftentimes, depending on the subject, especially history—it's the one where you'll lose the most students if you're just standing there and, you know, kind of rattling off information.

You'll see them glaze over and, you know, the jaw will drop, the eyes will start drooping, and chaos, chaos ensues. But I think that he [his field placement colleague] sees that he's seen that before and he doesn't want that. He wants to see all of his students with this connection and this this interaction with the material whether it's, you know, cutting something out in paper I don't ... I don't know or, you know, sticking a picture to the wall. It's—**they're still interacting with the material in some way**. So, I think he's always trying to keep that interest in the—rather than having them zone out completely if **they're interested in even the procedure of what they're doing, they're still interested in the material in some way**. So, I think it's a desire to keep the students engaged that motivates him to do that because **if he knocks it out of the park then the students learn an incredible amount of information and learn a lot more about, you know, whatever the subject was**. But I think that **the students actually being engaged in the material** is what actually motivates them the most because it's easier not to do that as a teacher. But, **it's better for the students for you to go out of your way and try new things in hopes that it would engage them at least a little bit more**.

In his response, “material” takes on two different meanings. In the first instance, material stands for paper, some form of adhesive, and a picture that is adhered to a wall. In the second instance, the use of “material” refers to subject matter. A critical question arises from the last portion of A02’s response: Why is engaging, effective praxis going

out of one's way to try new things as a teacher "in hopes" that one would be successful in engaging students in learning?

In a final attempt to explore if and how identity might be linked to praxis as perceived and understood by Participant A02, the following probing question was asked, "Do you see yourself as having a particular level or the same level of courageousness [referring to his field placement colleague]?" A02's responds accordingly:

Ummm, I would hope. But I think it's, uhh ... I think I'm still a little bit hesitant. I'm still not comfortable in my own skin when it comes to, you know, being the teacher yet. So, I'm trying to, you know, dip my toe in the water and take baby steps toward that kind of reckless abandon and try new things. And it's inspiring so it's definitely going to motivate me. Seeing a classroom like that that works so well and so enthusiastically. But as of right now, I'm still trying to just maintain and manage the basics, I guess.

As can be observed in his response, praxis is linked to identity for A02. As he is "not comfortable" being a teacher, he chooses to be deliberate ("dip my toe in the water") and in time ("take baby steps") seeks to achieve a perceived style of praxis ("reckless abandon") that will allow him to be creative, innovative in the classroom ("try new things").

In his response to those areas of his praxis that are in need of improvement, A02 provides commentary on the ability to try "new things" and to have the courage to do so. For reasons not delineated, A02 understands the work of a teacher as "to go out and really come up with these new ideas." Unfortunately, even upon receipt of a degree and provisional teaching certification, A02 (similar to A05, A04, and A03) recognizes that his confidence and competence as a teacher lie outside of the purview of the education program and field placement school even after having spent approximately 4.5 years enrolled in a traditional teacher education program. In A02's own words:

I think that the ability to come up with new things and to try new things and have that courageousness, as I just mentioned, I think that's the biggest thing. Umm, to go out and really come up with these new ideas.

A disquieting link between identity and praxis—as A02's lived experience with the phenomenon of becoming and being a teacher—is discernable in the final portion of his response about areas of his praxis in need of improvement:

The creativity that's involved with being a teacher was mind blowing for me. I still can't really cope with that because it's, I don't know, I think it was maybe the idea of college—being at a lecture every day and doing that. I got used to that. So the idea of creating a dynamic lesson where there is, you know, colors and cutting things out, and creating things and, you know, handing the classroom to the students and all of these different things, I think that's the hardest thing for me to kind of wrap my head around—trying to create an environment that facilitates that. And then also just the classroom management day to day stuff. I still kind of have a hard time with that. It can be difficult at times to, to, I don't know, keep the kids, keep the kids managed in the best way. I'm still having trouble with that. They can wind up talking and drifting away out of the lesson at times and, I want to nail that down and get the handle on that as well.

It is observed in A02's response that one of the continuous (influencing) features of the teacher education program on his praxis is the instructional strategy most often used by his professors, lecturing (“being at a lecture every day”). His lived experience within the program has stymied his praxis. In addition to struggling with learning process arrangements, A02 describes having great difficulty with both physical space arrangements (“trying to create an environment”) and behavior arrangements (“keep the kids managed in the best way. I’m still having trouble with that.”).

Identity. A02's identity development is negligible as evidenced by what he expressed about his actual identity during the FGI:

So, for mine I put—I thought it was pretty clear—I put, like, a house. Yeah, a foundation. The foundation is solid. Well, not solid but it's there. It's present. And then the rest is whatever it's gonna be. But the plans are to build a house. Whatever it is. I guess my career is the house for who I am as a teacher whose

foundation is present because I graduated and got the basics at least to the point, hopefully, you build the rest of the house throughout the years.

Participant A02's negligible identity development is also apparent in his response during the exit interview. Participant A02 was asked to describe his triumphs in becoming a teacher. He responded:

I think the biggest triumph that I can, I can probably speak for any of my colleagues who you'll be speaking to later today is the completion and passing of the edTPA assessment. Because that was, that was a wild ride from start to finish. And, I just think the triumph is finishing the program really. I mean we've went through so much. I mean it's an entire degree so, it's four and a half years at this point. I think that was the biggest thing is just you know sticking to that and doing it all from start to finish. I'm really proud of that but within the classroom specifically, I think it's the building of the connections and really integrating myself as a part of the school community. I really love being at the high school that I'm at. And, I love talking with everyone and meeting the students and I've had students bring their friends who I've never seen before in the school into the classroom and say oh this is Mr. D I would like to introduce you to Mr. D. It's moments like that I think that those are the really big like that I think that those are the really big like triumphant moments of being a teacher.

It is observed that A02's stated goals of completing the teacher education program requirements, graduating, and getting "the basics" have been attained. Additionally, making connections with students and the school community as perceived by A02 have been attained. Of significant concern about A02's response is that there is no mention of teaching, students' learning, and/or their academic achievement. When asked about next steps for him, Participant A02 posited the following:

Wow! I was actually just talking about this today. The first thing I've focused on now is I'm going to be applying to teach abroad and I'm going to be—my goal is to teach in Japan for a few years. And, after that, perhaps come home maybe find some kind of international school job over there. I'm not too sure but the immediate next step is just finish up the semester, see how these applications go for that teaching in Japan and carry on with that.

identity, and its associated words is negligible. Exact match word queries with specializations and generalizations were performed. It is observed that for all of the word queries performed, the words “personal” and “relate” are prominent. Some of the words associated (having specialized and generalized meanings) with “personal” include words describing ethnicity and nationality, i.e., African, American, Hispanic, white. Curiously, the word “stupid” is contained in that list. It is not surprising that “relate” has a high frequency count as the word relatable was used in A03’s depictions of who she is and who she wants to be as a teacher. However, the associated generalized words appear to be woefully misplaced and disconnected to the word relate. To more fully explore in what contexts these and other identified high frequency words are used by Participant A03, text search queries were performed. While some aspects of A03’s lived experience in becoming a teacher are unique to her, other aspects appear similar for all study participants.

Program Effects. As did participants A02 and A04, Participant A03 cited her professors as having had significant influence on her identity development. A03 states:

I definitely would start out with the professors that I had. A few specific professors that I had within the program really had shown me through their ways of teaching us how different strategies could be used and different formats of instruction and through their kind of showing us how to do it. I found that what worked best for me as a student didn't necessarily work best for the person sitting next to me and that was even at the collegiate level. So, it was something really interesting to see.

It is noteworthy that A03 includes commentary on the praxis of her professors as positively influential. Participant A02 provides a contrasting perspective as he states that, because his professors primarily employed lectures, this inhibited his ability to be creative in his field placement classroom. As is the same with the other study

participants, A03 does not include other program features such as courses, course assignments, assessments, and performance evaluations as having influenced her identity development. Consequently, those program features can be considered discontinuous influences. However, continuing in her response, A03 cites her experience within her field placement (a program feature) as having influenced her current (lingering) identity as a student and as having a lasting influence on her emerging (future) teacher identity.

She states with an intonation of pride and accomplishment:

But, in my student teaching experience I didn't have the most, how do I say—it wasn't the traditional experience just because the relationship that I had with my specific educator [cooperating teacher] was very unlike what a lot of other people in my program have experienced. Her [sic] and I we got very close very quickly and then there were some situations where she kind of popped off on me. And, I kind of learned through those experiences how I had to stand up for myself and kind of believe in myself in the way not only as a as a student but as a further educator and as a professional. So, I felt that I kind of talked myself through those experiences how to really conduct myself in certain circumstances that I had never been through before.

To further an understanding of Participant A03's response, a probing question was asked as follows: "How did your sense of identity as a teacher influence your decision and your ability to stand up for yourself?" Participant A03's unedited response is presented here:

I might run a little bit into the special ed realm with this but I noticed that a lot of the special ed students they aren't very used to advocating for themselves when it comes to the specific modifications and adaptations that they are required and entitled to in their IEPs. And I found that in the circumstances where I kind of felt I needed to stand up for myself. I felt almost like I was in child shoes in that way of having to stand up and say you know what, this is wrong. I should be getting something else you know and putting myself in that situation really made it easier for me to relate back to the students that I had in the special ed realm and how I was able to, you know, kind of pick out where they were having certain struggles and how I could then help them in that particular form in the classroom.

In parsing A03's response to the probing question, it was fascinating to hear what identity she chose to use to stand up for herself and how, in turn, A03 linked it to her praxis. She chose to identify with, from an empathetic stance, special education students, who "aren't very used to advocating for themselves." A03 cloaked herself with a student identity, "I felt almost like I was in child shoes." A03 did not use her emerging teacher/professional identity or even a mature/adult identity. At the conclusion of her response, one can observe how A03 links how her empathetic (student) identity can influence her classroom praxis: "how I could then help them [students] in that particular form in the classroom."

Field Placement Effects. In the fourth and fifth word frequency queries, the words "personal" and "relate" are prominent. As can be seen in the latter part of her response, A03 begins her use of the word relate: "Putting myself in that situation really made it easier for me to relate back to the students that I had in the special ed realm." Establishing relationships, being relatable, is a mainstay of A03 identity and praxis as expressed during the FGI and the exit interview. Included in A03's response to the influence of the teacher education program on her identity, she cited having a relationship with her cooperating teacher that "was very unlike what a lot of other people in my program have experienced. Her and I, we got very close very quickly." Additionally, A03 describes how she established relationships with the school and district level administrators due, in part, to physical proximity:

I when I first started there, I was around a lot of the administration quite quickly. I had met the vice principal very quickly and became very close with her considering that she was the supervisor for my teacher at the time. And also, the classroom is a place where it's right across from the board office. So, I saw the superintendent very frequently too. So, I was able to interact with both of them and when I was talking to the other students in my program, they are all saying

how, Well, I've never met the superintendent. I am not very that close with administration. And, I couldn't relate because I was around these people constantly. I was always talking to them. So I felt that, you know, getting that experience in in that school and having those relationships within that school was very priceless to me because I got to see and have the conversations of what those people are looking for and future employers like employees should say and also in the idea of what they're expecting from the teachers that are coming in as new teachers. And, when those conversations to me were, you know, they were priceless.

Of note is how A03, by her own admission, used the relationships she established to get information about the type of teacher(s) the administrators at her field placement were seeking to hire. This behavior points to a (conscious or subconscious) recognition of A03's ought self—her future, employable identity.

Praxis. One of the aims of this study is to explore and elicit study participants' perceptions about the linkages between identity development and their emerging praxis. Participant A03's unedited response to the question, "What, in your opinion, are your areas of strength with regards to teaching?" is as follows:

That's a good question. And, you know, I found that through my most recent experience you know ... in the most recent semester of student teaching, I found that how quickly I can have a particular rapport with the students is ... I've been told through multiple of the teachers in the school as being very rare and how the students—they come up to me and they want to talk to me and they want to be it [sic]. And how a lot of the other student teachers that had been entering into the school, they didn't have that same relationship and it wasn't observed as quickly. So, not only being able to, you know, establish a specific rapport with the students but also being that friendly face that isn't necessarily coming off as, you know, a friend. So, I think being able to distinguish that specific line of I'm a professional but at the same time I can relate to these students. I think is really important especially because I was working with seniors at the time. Because I'm so close in age with them, I think it's like a four or five year gap, you know, I listen to the same music as they do watch the same TV shows, you know, and once we started figuring out that I had those same experiences in my own personal life, I think the kids were like, oh she's really cool. She's a really good friend. And then it's like, I'm not your friend I'm your teacher and, you know, we still have to establish that line. And I was able to do that quite successfully with the with this group. But I also understand too that it might be different with a new group of students in another year.

It is quite concerning that the only dimension of praxis referred to is the behavior process arrangements under which having a rapport with students may be classified (see the three concluding sentences in the block quote above). It is troublesome that A03 recognizes the discontinuous nature of this dimension of her. Looking back at Figure 24, one can see evidence in A03's response as to the prominence of the words "personal," "students," and "relate." The beginning of A03's response, "That's a good question," can be interpreted as such: She has not been asked that question even in the throes of the last semester of the Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum, and, unfortunately, she does not possess the competence to answer the question, even after having passed the edTPA and met all other requirements for graduation and received a degree. Continuing the analysis of A03's initial response, an unsettling yet all too often occurrence is observed—the reinforcement (norming) of limited, ineffectual praxis by in-service teachers, in this instance, "teachers in the school." When compared to participants A02 and A04, Participant A03 similarly cites her age as a strength—not in praxis but in ensuring her ability to garner rapport with the students she taught.

In an attempt to redirect Participant A03 toward describing any linkage between her developing identity and her emerging praxis, A03 was asked to explain how she was able to maintain the professional stance, "I am your teacher. You are my student." To prevent distortion of the meanings for A03 in her response, it is presented unedited and in whole immediately following my analysis.

In her response, A03 attributes the influence of her cooperating teacher ("clinical educator" is the term used by A03), who has "20 years of experience." Also included in her response is a description of praxis that can be classified under the dimension of

learning process arrangements. Unfortunately, another very specific occurrence of the reinforcement (norming) of limited, ineffectual praxis by in-service teachers, in this second instance, “my clinical educator because she’s a teacher of 20 years of experience,” is included in A03’s response. It is another example of a continuous influence on and reinforcement of ineffective praxis. Even though Participant A03 asserts that the relaxation techniques (“relaxing activities”) she implemented “affected their learning,” she is not able to explain how her students’ learning is impacted (see underlined text). Towards the conclusion of her response, A03 attempts to describe linkages between her emerging identity, her praxis, and the praxis of her professors in the teacher education program. (see underlined text). Participant A03’s response is presented here unedited in its entirety:

I think that the rapport I was able to kind of have that but the respect level was more influenced by my clinical educator because she's a teacher of 20 years of experience and she was able to show me how you can read the student's body language and you know if they're going through a stressful day why don't we give them half the period to kind of relax a little bit. Let's do some, you know, relaxing activities or, you know, I got used to having them stretch during class, you know, especially with the kids who are coming in in the morning and I know that they looked at it originally like, Oh this is so boring ... so stupid ... why are we dancing? Like, What... why don't we get any instruction. **Once they actually did it, I think they started to realize how much it really, in fact like, it affected their learning and how they felt more awake and more alive and more refreshed and well-being** ... [shifts to her own learning] ... able to learn the strategies in the classroom, bringing them into the class or how, I should say, learning them from the University, bringing them into the classroom and then a mixture of the observations I had with my clinical educator, I think those were really good mixture for me and then allowing myself to be the ... the professional yet personal not being afraid to show that personal side of myself but still wanting that level of respect and the level of professionalism within the students. I don't know if that makes any sense but, it's kind of a mixture of all three myself plus the clinical educator and within my teachings of from William Patterson.

Compared to A02 and A04, Participant A03 is more elucidating in her response regarding the areas of her praxis in need of improvement. A03 manages to address all

four dimensions of classroom praxis with “how I run the classroom.” She continued in her response emphasizing her need to improve the establishment of routines: “I guess I’m having more of an idea of what kind of routines I’d like to put into the classroom.” The establishing and implementation of routines is classified under the behavior process arrangements dimension of classroom praxis. Keeping her students on schedule by teaching them time management skills is also cited as a desired goal for improvement.

Participant A03 states:

Yeah, I definitely believe that my areas of improvement could be how I tend to run the classroom which I guess having more of an idea of what kind of routines I'd like to put into the classroom and different things like that I think are really important in order to keep the students on schedule and to have them be aware of, you know, time management skills and things like that.

Participant A03’s response contains a primarily future-oriented praxis that is more aligned with an ought self/identity than that of an actual self/identity. In A03’s own words (a continuation of the response above):

So, I would definitely want to spend more time thinking of different strategies and different routines that I could implement into my own classroom. Considering I've been in someone else's classroom for the past two years. Being able to establish my own classroom, I can only imagine, is going to be very difficult for me. But, once I have that freedom, I think I'll definitely be able to run with it.

Participant A03 brings forth a concept that appears inextricably linked to her identity and praxis—the concept of freedom. As perceived by A03, freedom from being “in someone else’s classroom” will give rise to being able to establish her own classroom. This perception signals the need to more deeply mine the depths of the elements of A03 and other preservice teachers’ identity: locus of control and agency. For A03, the field placement, i.e., being in someone else’s classroom, has prevented freedom to “run” (manage) her own classroom. There is at least one truth and one fallacy tied to

this perception. The stark realization (a truth) as expressed by A03: “Being able to establish my own classroom, I can only imagine, is going to be very difficult for me.” A fallacy accompanying A03’s perception is that what she doesn’t know and/or understand about her praxis currently, she will be able to know and/or understand in the future.

As per the procedure used for participants A02 and A04, Participant A03 was given the opportunity to expound upon her perceptions of her praxis and simply asked, “Anything else?” A03’s unique, candid, unanticipated response is:

The only other thing that I would say is just, you know, wanting to come up with different more diverse activities that, you know, relate more to, I guess, culturally diverse activities. Because I have worked in classrooms—I mean, I came from a classroom that was predominantly white. So, I grew up on that and then working in a classroom that was more predominantly Hispanic and African-American I think was very different. But I wouldn't really know how to work with a classroom that has either all three or a mixture of maybe five different cultures. I think I'd have a little bit of trouble and I'd have to do a lot more research as to how I would want to run a classroom like that.

In this response we find both an individual level influence and contextual level influence on A03’s identity and praxis. Data about her education history (individual level influence) emerges: “I mean, I came from a classroom that was predominantly white. So, I grew up on that.” Contextual level influences on A03’s praxis include the composition of her field placement classroom: “and then working in a classroom that was more predominantly Hispanic and African-American.” In comparing the study participants’ desired improvements in their praxis, Participant A02 wants his praxis to be characterized by being able to come up with new things, i.e., creative, dynamic activities for the goal of having a classroom that is entertaining and not dominated by a singular instructional strategy (lecture). Participant A04 posits very specific improvement goals, which are similar to A02’s goals in that she wants to improve upon “activity building.” No

acknowledgement of class composition demographics, beyond the discussion of age, is made by participant A02 or A04. Contrastingly, Participant A03 identifies ethnic and racial demographics (she refers to them as “cultures”) in her current field placement classroom and acknowledges that her praxis must be such that it addresses these “different cultures.” A critical question arises from A03’s admission that “I really wouldn’t know how to work with a classroom that has either all three or a mixture of maybe five different cultures.” Does A03 not know “how to work with” the students because of their cultural diversity or because of the limitations of her emerging praxis? Two additional critical questions arise from A03’s admission: “I think I’d have a little bit of trouble and I’d have to do a lot more research as to how I would want to run a classroom like that.” What was not learned (by A03)? What was not taught during the 8 semesters (4 years) of the education program? To explore an answer to the latter critical question, I asked the following probing question during A03’s exit interview:

Do you think any of your coursework lent itself to possibly understanding or studying your culture, the culture of a classroom, and then the culture in terms of ethnicity within the classroom?

Participant A03 answered:

It's funny you ask that because I had my first English methods class was based off of—it was supposed to be based off of how to teach English but the teacher decided that she wanted to make it more about culturally responsive teaching, which I thought was great. But the way that she went about teaching it, it became very confusing for me. So, I would definitely have to review that but other than that, surprisingly, that was the only time that I really was brought around this whole idea of culturally responsiveness in the classroom. Yeah, that's something that I would have liked to have a little bit more of a, of an interaction with during my schooling. But, other than that, you know, at least I was exposed to it, right?

Another misconception about praxis, similar to the misconception highlighted previously, is found in A03’s response about “culturally responsive teaching.” She states

that she “would definitely have to review that.” Quite troubling, given the time and financial resources invested and expended by those becoming teachers, is the commentary found in the concluding portion of A03’s response. The sentences to which I refer are highlighted in yellow. Unfortunately, observing and experiencing this type of impaired praxis is too often a continuous, debilitating influence on preservice teachers’ emerging praxis and identity.

Identity. In responding to the interviewer’s directive, “talk to me about your triumphs in becoming and being a teacher,” Participant A03 cited several contextual level influences, i.e., cooperating teacher, edTPA, rating of overall experience with the education program, and adulation from her students. She also made a brief mention of identity linked loosely to praxis: “I did the job that I was supposed to do and I learned a lot from it and that I was able to pull through.” A03’s unedited, complete response is:

I felt that ... I didn't really ... I guess when I define the word triumph, I think more of overcoming some pretty interesting obstacles and then being very thankful for it afterward. And I and I can think of two specific experiences. I mean one just as I said before the interactions and the ... the relationship that I had with my clinical educator throughout the past year has been very back and forth. She had a lot of personal business that she was working with and she didn't want to bring it into the classroom but, unfortunately, her attitude started coming into it and she started kind of projecting some of her anger and her frustration and anxiety onto me considering I worked with her on a daily basis. So coming over something like that and feeling like I couldn't really approach her with issues that I was having was very difficult for me because I looked at her like she was a mentor, you know, I should be able to go to her and ask her the questions that I have and, and, and start to have that professional relationship. But, unfortunately, it wasn't really happening as often as I would like. So, coming across something like that and being able to, you know, get through the semester and get through edTPA and all of that stuff and come out very ... I feel like as much as people in my position would say, you know, oh this this really kind of crapped out on you—you didn't really have the best experience. You know, I like to think of it as, you know, you can learn from the negatives too and, I learned a lot about myself personally and I learned a lot about myself professionally and the fact in the fact that I was able to overcome these things and figure out what a working relationship could potentially be for me because not everything's going to be so

great. So, having that and then being able to end my semester with student letters of, you know, all we loved you please come back that. It was really one of those things that I felt you know as much as I went through some really tough stuff throughout the semester with this school and with this teacher, it clearly didn't show to the students and I clearly put a poker face on and I kept working through it and I did the job that I was supposed to do and I learned a lot from it and that I was able to pull through.

When asked about next steps in her journey to becoming and being a teacher, A03's response, when compared to A02 and A04's responses, was delivered with resolute enthusiasm and confidence:

I have a job lined up for myself as a teacher's aide at a special needs program in the [provides the name of the school district]. I'm going to be working at what they call [the] program as a TA with one of their teachers just to kind of get an idea as to what the curriculum is in a strictly special ed community. And if it's something that I like hopefully they will take me on in September as a full-time teacher. And, if not, I would be more than happy to go back to gen ed and sub until I find a job. So, that's basically the scenario right now.

Of note is the fact that participants A02, A03, and A04 will not be immediately becoming teachers of record in their own classrooms by choice. Might this be a consequence of an underdeveloped ought professional identity?

Summary

This study explores and describes preservice teacher professional identity development and the linkages to classroom praxis as implemented in the assigned field placement classroom via the interpretive phenomenological analysis of the preservice teachers' lived experiences becoming and being teachers. While primarily a qualitative study, quantitative data were collected for the purpose of data triangulation. The sample for this study consisted of an initial five preservice teachers enrolled in the final (8th) Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum semester of a traditional teacher education program housed in a northeastern university. One study participant dropped out of the

study. Data collection took place at the beginning of the Fall 2019 semester (week 5) and again at the close of the Fall 2019 semester (weeks 13–15). A Focus Group Interview (FGI) was used to collect data at the outset of this study; two self-efficacy scales were administered at the outset of the study (pretest) and again at the conclusion of data collection (posttest); and an individual exit interview was conducted during weeks 14–15 of the Fall 2019 semester. The FGI was employed to explore the preservice teachers' identity formation status: What are the current and future perceptions about their identity and the work to be performed as a teacher in their current field placement classrooms and beyond? Both the NTSES and TSES were administered at week 5 (pre) and at week 13 (post) to measure any change in the preservice teachers' perceptions about their praxis in their field placement classrooms. Finally, individual exit interviews were conducted to explore the study participants' identity formation status and the changes, if any, in their perceptions about their identity and its influence on their praxis. The findings of this study are presented below:

- Study participants were able to identify and acknowledge individual level influences (i.e., images/perceptions, prior knowledge, and skills) and contextual level influences (i.e., education histories, teacher education program, and the practicum field placement classroom) on their identity formation. Study participants were not able to cogently describe their identity formation or aspects of their emerging praxis. While each study participant possessed and was able to describe their ideal professional identities, negligible linkages to their praxis were made. The inability to cogently

describe emerging praxis was observed for all study participants at the outset and conclusion of this study.

- There remains a chasm between two contextual level influences under study: teacher education program and a feature of the teacher education program, the field placement practicum. Either one or both of these influences can debilitate or catalyze identity formation and resultant praxis. Study participants did not provide cogent descriptions of the knowledge and skills acquired that informed their emerging praxis.
- Study participants' perceptions of self-efficacy about their emerging classroom praxis were measured using the NTSES and TSES. These two scales were administered in the beginning and at the concluding weeks of their Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum semester. No significance can be attributed to the changes in subscale and total scale scores for both instruments. While similarities exist in response choices for certain subscale items, certain response choices are unique to each study participant.
- Preservice teachers are not required to and therefore not given the access and opportunity to critically reflect on and give voice to their identity development and concomitant praxis. The Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum experience is dependent upon the competence and capacity of the field placement school and cooperating teacher. While all of the participants cited their professors as having a positive influence on their identity formation, Participant A02 alluded to his professors' predominant style of instruction, lecture, as inhibiting his ability to be creative in his field placement classroom.

Participant A03 described a taxing experience with her cooperating teacher and asserted that when she attains “the freedom” that comes with having her own classroom, she will be able to manage her students as she envisions.

Participant A04 attributes her identity development and emerging praxis to the students in her field placement classroom. Unlike Participant A04 but similar to Participant A03’s experience, Participant A05 describes troubling experiences with both the education program and her field placement.

- The preservice teachers in this study, while at the outset of this study were able to depict both an actual (current) professional identity and an ideal professional identity, they were not able to cogently articulate their understanding of their praxis, the status of their professional identity formation, and the linkages between their identity formation and implemented praxis. While not asked to explicitly describe their ought-selves during the FGI, study participants’ references to their ought professional identities are noticeably absent.

A discussion of these findings, recommendation for future research, and conclusion are presented in the next chapter.

Chapter 6

Discussion and Conclusion

Extant literature on teacher identity development, teacher education, teacher knowledge, teacher quality, teaching quality, and student engagement were reviewed. These research topics can be divided into two broad categories with two different but potentially complementary focuses: (a) studies focused on teacher qualifications and (b) studies focused on teacher competencies. Research on teacher education, teacher quality, and teaching quality tends to focus on attainment of qualifications (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Darling-Hammond et al., 2005; Dolan, 2010; Goe et al., 2008). Research with a focus on teacher competencies is found in studies on teacher professional identity development, teacher knowledge, and student engagement (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2007; Beijgaard et al., 2013). I found that limited research has been conducted to study the complex relationships between teacher identity development and the emerging praxis of preservice teachers. To address this gap in extant research, I conducted a study using an IPA approach to explore the linkages between preservice teacher identity development and emerging praxis. In concert with that exploration, I examined the influence and significance of teacher education program components on preservice teacher identity development and emerging praxis. Specifically, I was interested in discovering the type and magnitude of influence of the field placement practicum (the classrooms to which my participants were assigned) on my participants' identity formation and their implemented classroom praxis.

In the next section of this chapter, a discussion of the key findings for my research question is presented. Following that segment, the implications of this study are

presented. Finally, a description of the limitations of this study, a recommendation for future research, and the conclusion complete this chapter.

Preservice Teacher Professional Identity Development

Black Box Conceptualization

The primary research question for this study asked, “How does a preservice teacher’s sense of professional identity develop during the student teaching (practicum field experience) semester?” My findings indicate that the black box metaphor, the conceptual framework for this study, holds true. The developing preservice teacher identity is an open system in which complex interactions occur between individual and contextual level influences and identity formation. In the studies reviewed that attempted to define the construct, there is consensus that professional identity development is not fixed. Identity development is ongoing and influenced by both personal and contextual factors (Dillabough, 1999; Goodson & Cole, 1994; Samuel & Stephens, 2000).

Participants in my study were able to identify and acknowledge individual level influences (i.e., images/perceptions, prior knowledge, and skills) and contextual level influences (i.e., education histories, teacher education program, and the practicum field placement classroom) on their identity formation. Preservice teacher identity is continuously being shaped and reshaped through interactions with others, and identity is shaped by interpretations (as mediated by personal attributes) of those experiences (Gee, 2000; Geijsel & Meijers, 2005; Sutherland et al., 2010). Sutherland et al., in their examination of preservice teachers’ professional identity development, found that even with limited contact with schools and classrooms (during the student teaching or clinical phase of their teacher education programs), preservice teachers undergo a developing,

more complex understanding of teaching and create images of themselves as teachers. In their analysis of the data from their research, Sutherland et al. found continuous growth in their study participants' engagement with knowledge about teaching. Contrastingly, in my study, participants were not able to cogently describe their identity formation or aspects of their emerging praxis. While each study participant possessed and was able to describe their actual and ideal professional identities, negligible linkages to their praxis were made. The inability to cogently describe aspects of emerging praxis was observed for all study participants at the pretest and posttest intervals of my study.

Lauriala and Kukkonen (2005) present three dimensions of identity formation: (a) actual self: the identity that currently prevails; (b) ought-self: the professional identity recognized by society or other external group as the goal for becoming and being; and (c) the ideal self: the identity set by the individual as a target for achievement. Findings from the FGI and exit interviews indicate that preservice teacher participants in this study possess an actual professional identity—one that currently prevails. Evidence is presented to support that the preservice teacher participants possess an ideal identity—a professional identity that is set by the preservice teacher as a target for achievement.

Preservice Teacher Education Program Features

My research indicates that teacher education program features have continuous (persistent, lasting) and discontinuous (interrupted, short-lived), enhancing and inhibiting effects on professional identity development and emerging praxis. The edTPA is an example of a program feature that has a discontinuous and potentially inhibiting effect on both professional identity development and praxis because of its design and implementation, not its intent. The edTPA is an example of teacher education policy that

has unintended consequences. The flaws with the edTPA begin with the fact that it is an externally prescribed task (i.e., a one-size fits all approach) that is implemented at the end of the Student Teaching Practicum semester—a preserved snapshot of a preservice teacher's current performance with no predictability of future effectiveness. Another flaw is that the edTPA is externally evaluated for the purpose of issuing or denying a degree, certification, and, eventually, licensure. My study, in contrast, uses multiple, inquiry-based tasks, i.e., FGI and individual interviews; identity depictions and surveys of self-efficacy, agency, and locus of control. Additional inquiry-based tasks include preservice teachers' submissions of video-recordings of their field placement praxis along with self-evaluations of their video-recorded praxis. Experience sampling method would be used to measure student engagement in preservice teachers' field placement classrooms. These inquiry-based tasks, used over intervals of time, can serve to distill a preservice teacher's identity formation and its enhancing or inhibiting influence on emerging praxis. The inquiry-based tasks can serve as diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments of the viability of a preservice teacher's ought identity and emerging praxis. The collected data can be internally evaluated by teacher educators, university supervisors, and field placement cooperating teachers. Preservice teachers will be expected and required to access their data for evaluating their acquisition and application of knowledge and refinement of skills.

The practicum field placement, a teacher education program feature and contextual level influence, wields significant influence in the shaping of the study participants' professional identity formation in a narrow, delimited way as expressed by each of the study participants. Study participants attributed the desire to have rapport, to be relatable, to have empathy for, to connect with the students they teach as being most

influential in their professional identity development. This can be considered a continuous field placement (school level) effect. What appears to be a discontinuous field placement level effect is an awareness of their students' cognitive/academic needs.

Study participants expressed that the professors in the teacher education program were influential in their identity development. Participant A02 specified that his professor(s) inspired his love for history. Participant A03 attributes "a few specific professors" to influencing her identity development and emerging praxis. However, A02 attributes his inability to be creative, to implement a dynamic classroom praxis, to "I think it was maybe the idea of college being at a lecture every day."

An Arrested Ought Identity Development

All five study participants expressed perceptions about and presented descriptions of their actual and ideal selves during the FGI. The three participants that remained in the study to its conclusion showed evidence that some negotiation between the actual and ideal self occurs. A particular identity (self), even after 15 weeks in their field placements, remained for each of the participants. Participant A02 retained an ideal self with very little change in the perception of his actual self. Participant A04 retained her actual self. Participant A03, when compared to A02 and A04, comments less about her professional identity and its development. Instead, A03 expressed more about her perceived future agency as a teacher.

The negotiation between actual, ideal, and ought identities is mediated by perceived self-efficacy in emerging praxis as implemented in the field placement classroom. However, study participants' ability to make sense of their professional identity development during the Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum semester was

found to be at levels that were unexpectantly naïve and simplistic. Curiously, study participants' initial perceptions and depictions, as exhibited during the FGI and exit interviews, lacked any reference to their ought selves. The onus of the presentation of the ought self/identity and the facilitation of the development of the same is the responsibility of two features of the teacher education program: (a) coursework and (b) the assigned field placement. Ought identities are the identities recognized by society or external group, in this circumstance, the preservice teacher education program. An awareness of and the only reference to an ought identity was made by Participant A03 in her exit interview. She referred to an ought identity only as it related to her future employability. No other references to an ought identity occur in any of the data analyzed from the FGI and exit interviews. What is the reason for this omission? Study participants, at the time of my study, had two defined identities: actual and ideal identities which they were able to depict. However, there seemed to be a lack of awareness of an ought identity. Of the three identities, the ought identity is the one that must be co-constructed with the facilitation of the teacher education program, especially the field placement practicum feature of the teacher education program. The ought identity is borne of the preservice teacher's knowledge and skills at meeting the cognitive and social-emotional needs of her students in the field placement classroom. The ought identity stems from the modeling of effective praxis of teacher educators, university supervisors, and the field placement cooperating teacher. The ought identity has to be the identity that leads negotiations between a preservice teacher's actual and ideal identities.

An ancillary research question is asked: "How does the [preservice] teacher's sense of professional identity influence teaching praxis during the student teaching field

experience practicum?” Accordingly, in A02’s commentary about his praxis, he speaks about trying “new things” when he becomes a teacher of record. Participant A02 asserts that he can recognize “a good teacher” and heralds the work of a colleague at his assigned field placement. However, A02’s professional teacher identity and praxis reside in the future.

Participant A02 characterized engaging praxis as “reckless abandon.” This is a position, for A02, in which a teacher is “not scared” and “where [a teacher] doesn’t take anything too seriously.” For A02, it takes courage to carry out the work of a teacher. While he describes a “great teacher” as having “passion, enthusiasm, energy [that’s] contagious,” the description of his emerging praxis is much less dynamic. This can be attributed to limited facilitation in forming a clearly defined ought self. Furthermore, as evidenced in the exit interviews, study participants were not able to critically evaluate their developing identity and its influence on their praxis. Study participants were severely limited in their ability to describe either effective or ineffective aspects of their emerging praxis. In their responses to direct questions about their identity development and its influence on their praxis in their field placement classrooms, study participants were only able to discuss their sense-making of what it means to become a teacher from a personal perspective. Theories, concepts, and related terminology associated with professional identity and praxis were absent. Study participants were not able to discuss their developing identities and the influence they had on their praxis using basic, relevant pedagogical concepts. While study participants identified and acknowledged individual level and contextual level influences on their professional identity, they provided no insight into the interactions between these influences, their developing identity and,

ultimately, the influence on their praxis. It is evidenced at both pretest and posttest intervals of this study that there exist severe limitations of study participants providing basic descriptions about their sense-making of the experience of becoming a teacher and doing the work of a teacher. Absent from study participants' commentaries during the FGI and exit interviews was the ability to analyze, critically evaluate, and problem solve around issues of praxis as it relates to their developing identity. The most emphasized dimension of effective praxis, behavioral process arrangements, was expressed very narrowly by study participants.

While individual and contextual level influences on identity development were expressed by study participants, this study uncovered no significant shifts in self-efficacy about praxis between pre and post intervals of data collection. Findings for this study indicate that there is an arrested development of the ought self for the study participants. This arrested development of the ought self can and will inhibit the effectiveness of an emerging praxis.

Implications

My study findings confirm existing theories about professional identity formation. Identity is constructed, deconstructed, and reconstructed from one's lived experience (Tsui, 2007). Identity is negotiated among the ought self, actual, and ideal self (Lauriala & Kukkonen, 2005). Preservice teacher identity formation and emerging praxis are codependent and are iterative in development (Beijaard et al., 2005).

Triangulation

The strength of my study lies in its theory triangulation, data triangulation, and methods triangulation (Hales, 2010). Multiple theories are accessed to create this study's

conceptual framework and approach to research. An IPA approach requires theory, data, and methods triangulation. Qualitative and quantitative methods are used to collect and analyze more than one data source for this study. The phenomenon of what it means to become a teacher requires multiple investigators. This is one of the limitations of my study. Additionally, study participant depictions of their actual, ideal, and ought identities should have been required as part of the pre- and post-study data collection.

Generalizability

Given the focus of my study, generalizability was not a goal. However, it can be argued that there is a greater need in teacher education to study the experiences of individual preservice teachers to more fully understand the phenomenon of becoming a teacher. Teacher educators, recasting roles as action researchers, would not only increase the number of persons who can investigate the phenomenon of preservice teacher identity development and its linkage(s) to emerging praxis, but also catalyze professional identity development and facilitate effective, emerging classroom praxis. Additionally, and just as significant in improving preservice teacher education, this would allow teacher educators to take initiative in making policy and in providing research-informed data to policy makers.

Preservice Teacher Education

Burke (1980) posits that preservice teachers begin with an identity standard, an ideal self as teacher that is used to shape their professional identity. This identity standard, founded on perceptions, beliefs, experiences, and acquired knowledge about becoming and being a teacher, serves as a criterion for assessing the verification of a preservice teacher's developing professional identity. However, when a preservice

teacher is not facilitated to actively engage in shaping their ought identity, an arrested development of both identity and praxis ensues. The ought self, which should serve to regulate negotiations among the actual and ideal selves, is either flawed, faint, or non-existent due to the continuous or discontinuous, enhancing or inhibiting, effects of individual and contextual level influences. Currently, teacher education programs passively collect data from multiple sources throughout a preservice teacher's enrollment in an education program. These sources, however, do not include preservice teachers' voices—their stories about and interpretations of their lived experience becoming and being teachers. There is a dire need to collect more relevant data at more frequent intervals promoting a move from passive to real-time data collection and analysis and the co-construction of preservice teachers' ought identity. Teacher educators, in order to design and implement more effective programs, need to collect and analyze data about preservice teacher identity formation to learn more about the types and magnitude of the influences on and linkages to praxis. Teacher educators, university supervisors, field placement cooperating teachers, and other personnel must have access to and actively access data about preservice teachers' identity formation at reasonable intervals. These data analytics will lead to greatly improved operational insights to refine program features to meet the individual and collective learning needs of preservice teachers. Data analytics will yield a more precise predictability regarding a preservice teacher's potential to flourish or flounder; to flounder then flourish; or to fail in her quest to become a teacher. The research and technology exist. The will to shift paradigms about preservice teachers, their praxis, and the object of their praxis is what must be leveraged.

Preservice Teacher's Voice

In my study, the construct of teacher's voice was used more extensively than in Sutherland et al.'s 2010 work. In their research, teacher's voice consisted of preservice teachers' postings to a compulsory online forum. Participants were assigned readings and had to respond. In my study, preservice teacher participants were given multiple opportunities through an FGI, an activity that required the depiction of their actual and ideal identities, pretest and posttest administrations of two self-efficacy surveys, and individual interviews to explore and describe their developing professional identity and emerging praxis. The findings indicate that while study participants expressed and depicted actual and ideal images of themselves as teachers, their inability to describe an ought self led to their inability to cogently articulate basic tenets of effective praxis.

Limitations

Study Design

Initially, a time series design was proposed for this study. A sample size of 18 to 24 participants, enrolled in each of three teacher education programs located in the Northeast, was proposed. Due to sample size and time constraints, a pretest-posttest design was implemented. An interrupted time-series design would have allowed for intervals of data collection—direct measures of identity development and emerging praxis over time. In essence, an interrupted time-series design would have allowed for a greater sampling of preservice teachers' lived experiences over the course of one or several semesters of study participants' teacher education programs.

Direct Measurement of Preservice Teacher Praxis and Student Engagement

Unfortunately, the required administration of the edTPA as a culminating assessment of preservice teachers' performance precluded the collection of data on implemented field classroom praxis and field classroom students' engagement in learning as a result of study participants' praxis. In lieu of direct observation of study participants' field placement classroom praxis, my study relied on examining their praxis through the proxy of their perceived efficacy in their emergent praxis. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to capture, analyze, and describe the data. Central to the development of preservice teachers' professional identities, their acquisition of knowledge about and implementation of effective praxis is inextricably linked to their ability to understand and coherently express professional identity image(s) and corresponding classroom praxis (Sutherland et al., 2010). Thus, especially for preservice teachers going into urban school contexts, their ability to critically and analytically reflect on and coherently converse about the dual, iterative, co-variant processes of professional identity development and the development of effective, emergent praxis is imperative.

More direct measures of classroom praxis and preservice teacher self-evaluation of the same, along with the synchronous, direct measure of engagement in learning of the students in study participants' field placement classrooms, are needed. Included in the initial proposal for this study was the direct measure of classroom praxis via study participant self-video of classroom praxis in concert with self-evaluation of the effectiveness of praxis using the Thoughtful Classroom Teacher Effectiveness Framework (Strong, 2011), which would have procured data for this study that goes beyond reliance on the self-reported description of experience with the phenomenon

under study. Initially proposed for this study was the measure of the effectiveness of preservice teachers' emerging praxis via the collection of data on student engagement—the direct measure of concentration, interest, and enjoyment (Shernoff, 2013) of those students being taught by the preservice teacher study participants in their field placement classrooms. The method proposed was experience sampling method (Shernoff). The inclusion of these direct measures of emerging classroom praxis and student engagement in learning within an interrupted time-series design would significantly elevate the internal validity of this study.

Measures of Preservice Teacher Agency and Locus of Control

The regulators of professional identity development are self-efficacy, agency, and locus of control. Self-efficacy, the measure of the perceptions and beliefs a preservice teacher has about her ability to be effective in bringing about required and desired outcomes from her praxis, was measured in this study using the NTSES and TSES. It is not enough to measure self-efficacy regarding preservice teachers' praxis. Because of the complexity of identity development, preservice teachers' agency and locus of control must also be measured using similar methods, e.g., scale, survey, questionnaire, as was used in this study to measure self-efficacy.

Teacher agency has been studied in the examination of job satisfaction, job performance, occupational stress, and, for the purpose of education for sustainable development (Laurie et al., 2016; Swee & Beasy, 2019; Toom et al., 2015). Preservice teacher agency has been studied using subject specific frames and studied for particular student populations (Bridwell-Mitchell, 2015). Teacher agency has also been studied in the context of school reform. Buchanan (2015) explored teachers' perceptions of

themselves as professionals in the midst of school reform efforts in urban school contexts. Moore (2008) conducted a study to examine the impact of identity and agency in facilitating teachers to become change agents/agents of change in urban school settings. Kayi-Aydar (2015) analyzed interview data to explore the agency and identity formation of three English as a Second Language (ESL) preservice teachers. Her findings suggested that identity formation influenced perceptions of agency. Kayi-Aydar also found that teacher identity and agency are affected by the use of formal and informal power by individuals and/or groups in a school context. My purpose for measuring preservice teacher agency would have been aligned with Kayi-Aydar's purpose. However, my perception and working definition of teacher agency categorizes the construct as a regulator of preservice teacher professional identity development.

A functioning definition of agency to which I ascribe is the belief a teacher may have about her own free will and the choices she can make without being restricted by factors such as the intellectual capacity of her students; the expectations of her colleagues; and the perceived power her immediate supervisors and other administrators wield. Perceptions of agency are linked to preservice teacher identity formation and praxis in that agency can determine the choices a preservice teacher makes about curricula implementation, instructional strategies implementation, and choices about assessment of students' learning.

Locus of control is made up of the beliefs and perceptions a preservice teacher may have about what type and magnitude of power (control) she wields to attain the required and desired goals and outcomes of her classroom praxis. A preservice teacher who has an internal oriented locus of control believes that the success or failure of her

praxis resides within the efforts she exerts. A preservice teacher with an external oriented locus of control believes that failure to achieve required and desired outcomes of praxis are a result of external situations and circumstances that are beyond/external to her control or power she wields. Too often, teachers default to blaming external factors for their inability to implement effective praxis. As identity formation is occurring and praxis is emerging, it is imperative that teacher education programs facilitate preservice teachers' in identifying locus of control and agency to ensure the honing of effective praxis. Minute pretest to posttest changes are seen on the NTSES Coping with Changes and Challenges subscale (Table 10). Items on this subscale include the following statements: 4. Successfully use any instructional method that the school decides to use; 17. Manage instruction regardless of how it is organized (group composition, mixed age groups, etc.); 20. Manage instruction even if the curriculum is changed; and 24. Teach well even if you are told to use instructional methods that would not be your choice. These item statements describe decisions made and policies enacted by school and/or district administrators, and/or state level personnel. In urban school contexts, these policy changes are made frequently—often perceived as arbitrary and capricious by teachers as filtered through their sense of locus of control and agency. Preservice teachers must be given opportunities at reasonable intervals over the course of, at minimum, the Clinical I Junior Practicum and Clinical II Student Teaching Practicum semesters, to assess their sense of agency, locus of control, and self-efficacy to guard against arrested identity development and to ensure competent, even though emerging, classroom praxis. Given the purpose and significance of my study, agency and locus of control should have been measured using the same methods (i.e., scales, surveys) as used to measure self-efficacy.

Working in tandem with preservice teachers, teacher educators and the education programs in which they serve must become aware of individual and contextual level influences that impact self-efficacy, agency, and locus of control as these constructs can enhance and/or inhibit the development of a competent professional identity and accompanying effectual, emerging praxis.

Recommendation for Future Research

Further research is needed to explore the linkages between professional identity formation, emerging praxis, and student engagement in learning. Therefore, it is imperative to capture more of the process of how professional identity development occurs for preservice teachers at critical points in time.

A more robust study should be conducted using more frequent data collection intervals, which would expand the use of multiple measures over a longer period of time to more accurately capture changes in study participants' identity development, implemented praxis, and influence on students' engagement in learning. To that end, a time-series research design would be optimal. There are several advantages and disadvantages of the time-series design (Bordens & Abbott, 2002; Shadish et al., 2002; Brown, 2010; Bernard, 2012; Creswell, 2013; Campbell & Stanley, 2015). Advantages of this study design include not having both time and logistical constraints of an experimental design. The study can be tailored while maintaining the validity of the design. The research can be carried out in natural settings allowing study participants to identify and participate in their identity formation; engage in reflecting on changes in self-efficacy, in agency, and locus of control; and increase knowledge about and hone skills regarding their praxis. With multiple measures used, it may be less difficult to

determine and control for confounding variables. Threats to validity can be identified and addressed to minimize their effects.

In addition to administering the NTSES and TSES, similar types of measures of agency and locus of control would be administered. To measure changes in emerging praxis, preservice teacher study participants would video, self-evaluate, and exhibit their implemented practice at intervals over the course of both the Clinical I and Clinical II semesters. Another advantage is the use of experience sampling method (ESM) to gather data from the students taught by preservice teachers in their field placements. The use of ESM procedures will allow for the exploration of the “how” and, potentially, the “why” about the relationships that may exist between preservice teachers’ identity development, emerging praxis, and students’ engagement in learning from the perspective of those whose voices are even more rarely heard in educational research—students.

Disadvantages inherent in this research design, as proposed for future studies, include lack of random assignment which reduces internal validity and limits generalizability (Shadish et al., 2002; Bernard, 2012). The research goal is to describe experiences with phenomenon as it occurs for a small, purposive group of individuals (Creswell, 2013) over a delimited course of time. Another identified disadvantage is that statistical analyses may be rendered meaningless if preexisting influences/variables are not identified (Bordens & Abbott, 2002; Bernard, 2012; Campbell & Stanley, 2015). In order to mitigate this, multiple measures as described will be used to collect data. Additionally, phenomenon will be observed without manipulation of variables.

Conclusion

Engaging preservice teachers in their professional identity formation and facilitating their understanding and implementation of effective classroom praxis must become the focus of teacher education programs. Identity is dynamic and is shaped by individual and contextual level influences prior to and during enrollment in a teacher education program. My study demonstrates that teacher identity prescribes teacher praxis and teacher praxis describes teacher identity. It appears that teacher education program features—professors, coursework, university supervisors, assigned field placements, and cooperating teachers—leave an indelible imprint on the developing identity and emergent praxis of preservice teachers. To that end, teacher education programs must reframe their program goals and objectives and must recast their approaches to the educating of preservice teachers (Sardabi et al., 2018). Given the findings of my study, there is a need to intentionally and systematically improve our approaches to preservice teacher education, especially for but not limited to, traditional teacher education programs that have an urban school focus (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2007). The design of and methodology used in this study conforms to the intent of and methods used in improvement science. It is imperative that preservice teachers be given voice and opportunity to actively participate in their professional identity formation over the course of time during enrollment in a teacher education program. A clinical apprenticeship of greater duration than what currently exists in teacher education programs must be provided especially for, but not limited to, those preservice teachers seeking to work in urban public schools. Teacher education programs must edit/revise their program logic models to reflect more accurately the inputs, outputs, and outcomes that ensure the

facilitation of preservice teachers' professional identity development and competent emerging praxis. Expediency can no longer drive teacher education policy and practice.

Our greatest contribution is to be sure there is a teacher in every classroom who cares that every student, every day, learns and grows and feels like a real human being.

~Dr. Donald O. Clifton

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Appendix A

Focus Group Interview (FGI) Protocol

I. Introduction

A. Thank you for taking the time and making the effort to participate in this focus group interview. I am Paulette Blowe and I'll be moderating/facilitating this focus group discussion. That simply means I'll be asking you questions about the topic of discussion and ensuring that we use our time together productively and efficiently. My colleague, Melanie Speller, will be working along with me to ensure that we accurately capture your ideas, thoughts, and opinions on the topic of discussion.

B. For reasons uniquely your own, you have chosen to become a teacher. You have in mind a particular image of what it means to be a teacher and, you have in mind what you plan to be as a teacher – your teacher identity. My research involves studying how your teacher identity develops over the course of the student teaching practicum and how your identity development may influence your practice in your field placement classroom and how that implemented practice, in turn, may influence your students' engagement in learning. My research also focuses on getting a better understanding of how contexts/environments (e.g., your classes, field experiences, and the schools in which you will eventually be employed) influence your teacher identity development.

C. Let's begin by having each of you introduce yourselves. We're going to be on a first name basis, so please tell us your name! Please note that we are not trying to

achieve any kind of consensus within this group, but rather, we want to hear all different points of view. You are different people with different experiences and, you will likely have different points of view to share. I ask that you speak freely, honestly, and sincerely about your varied experiences in becoming teachers. Please be respectful of your colleagues during this discussion, avoiding side conversations and dominating the discussion. The information that you share with me, today, will be used only for the purposes of my research. In my final report, you will not be identified by name or recognized in any other way. My colleague has also pledged confidentiality through the signing of our Pledge of Confidentiality form. We will take 3 minutes now to, have you sign and date both the Pledge of Confidentiality form and page 5 of the Consent to be a Part of a Research Study forms (found in your manila folder). Thank you so much for doing so.

II. Opening Question (conducted using serial testimony protocol)

1. The first part of this focus group interview will be conducted using serial testimony. That simply means that each of you will share, in turn, with no commentary or interruption from me or any of the other participants: When did you decide to become a teacher? What influenced you to make this decision?

III. FGI Questions

Now, I'll begin asking you questions. In essence, you will continue to tell us your story about your teacher identity development. In this portion of the focus group interview, you may answer at will. I ask each of you to be aware of time and other

participants' voices: we want to hear all voices (if possible) for all questions asked. Don't step on each other's voices and be aware of the amount of time you use in answering the questions posed. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers – just your answers based on your perceptions and experiences thus far.

2. Using 1 of the 2 sheets of blank paper before you, depict who you are as a teacher. Label the sheet of paper: "Who I am as a Teacher." (3 min)

3. Using the second of the sheets of blank paper, depict the teacher you want to be/become. Label this sheet of paper: "Who I want to be/become as a Teacher."

4. Why did you choose this [specific university teacher education program]?

5. What is your definition of a highly qualified teacher?

6. What will it take, in your opinion, for you to become your definition of a highly qualified teacher?

What else do you think is important that I should know...?

IV. Closing & Dismissal

Thank you so very much for your willingness to participate in this focus group interview. I look forward to completing the exit interview with each of you as well. This can be done virtually (online) along with the 2nd administration and completion of the Norwegian Teacher's Self-Efficacy Scale (NTSES) and the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES).

Appendix B

Norwegian Teacher's Self-Efficacy Scale (NTSES) (long form)

Norwegian Teacher's Self-Efficacy Scale (NTSES)		Your answers are confidential.			
<p><u>Directions:</u> Please indicate your opinion about each of the questions below by marking an "X" in any one of the four responses in the columns on the right side, ranging from (1) "Not certain at all"; (3) "Quite uncertain"; (5) "Quite certain"; (7) "Absolutely certain".</p> <p>Please respond to each of the questions by considering the combination of your current ability, resources, and opportunity to do each of the following in your present position.</p>		(1) Not certain at all	(3) Quite uncertain	(5) Quite certain	(7) Absolutely certain
1.	Explain central themes in your subjects so that even the low-achieving students understand.				
2.	Get all students in class to work hard with their schoolwork.				
3.	Cooperate well with most parents.				
4.	Successfully use any instructional method that the school decides to use.				
5.	Organize schoolwork to adapt instruction and assignments to individual needs.				
6.	Maintain discipline in any school class or group of students.				
7.	Find adequate solutions to conflicts of interest with other teachers.				
8.	Provide good guidance and instruction to all students regardless of their level of ability.				
9.	Control even the most aggressive students.				
10.	Wake the desire to learn even among the lowest-achieving students.				
11.	Provide realistic challenge for all students even in mixed ability classes.				
12.	Answer students' questions so that they understand difficult problems.				

Norwegian Teacher's Self-Efficacy Scale (NTSES)		Your answers are confidential.			
<p><u>Directions:</u> Please indicate your opinion about each of the questions below by marking an "X" in any one of the four responses in the columns on the right side, ranging from (1) "Not certain at all"; (3) "Quite uncertain"; (5) "Quite certain"; (7) "Absolutely certain".</p> <p>Please respond to each of the questions by considering the combination of your current ability, resources, and opportunity to do each of the following in your present position.</p>		(1) Not certain at all	(3) Quite uncertain	(5) Quite certain	(7) Absolutely certain
13.	Collaborate constructively with parents of students with behavioral problems.				
14.	Get students with behavioral problems to follow classroom rules.				
15.	Get students to do their best even when working with difficult problems.				
16.	Explain subject matter so that most students understand the basic principles.				
17.	Manage instruction regardless of how it is organized (group composition, mixed age groups, etc.).				
18.	Adapt instruction to the needs of low-ability students while you also attend to the needs of other students in class.				
19.	Get all students to behave politely and respect the teachers.				
20.	Manage instruction even if the curriculum is changed.				
21.	Motivate students who show low interest in schoolwork.				
22.	Cooperate effectively and constructively with other teachers, for example, in teaching teams.				
23.	Organize classroom work so that both low- and high-ability students work with tasks that are adapted to their abilities.				
24.	Teach well even if you are told to use instructional methods that would not be your choice.				

Appendix C

Teachers' Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale (TSSES)

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale¹ (long form)

Teacher Beliefs		How much can you do?								
Directions: This questionnaire is designed to help us gain a better understanding of the kinds of things that create difficulties for teachers in their school activities. Please indicate your opinion about each of the statements below. Your answers are confidential.										
		Nothing	Very Little	Some Influence	Quite A Bit	A Great Deal				
1.	How much can you do to get through to the most difficult students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
2.	How much can you do to help your students think critically?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
3.	How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
4.	How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
5.	To what extent can you make your expectations clear about student behavior?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
6.	How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
7.	How well can you respond to difficult questions from your students ?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
8.	How well can you establish routines to keep activities running smoothly?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
9.	How much can you do to help your students value learning?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
10.	How much can you gauge student comprehension of what you have taught?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
11.	To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
12.	How much can you do to foster student creativity?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
13.	How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
14.	How much can you do to improve the understanding of a student who is failing?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
15.	How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
16.	How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
17.	How much can you do to adjust your lessons to the proper level for individual students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
18.	How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
19.	How well can you keep a few problem students from ruining an entire lesson?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
20.	To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
21.	How well can you respond to defiant students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
22.	How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
23.	How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
24.	How well can you provide appropriate challenges for very capable students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)

Appendix D

Exit Interview Protocol

Exit Interview Questions

1. Teacher education program: What influenced your *teacher identity development* here and, how was it influenced? What were the most significant influences (from your teacher education program) on your teaching?
2. Field assignment and experience: What influenced your *teacher identity development* here, and how was it influenced? What were the most significant influences (from your field assignment and experience) on your teaching?
3. What, in your opinion, are your areas of strength with regards to teaching?
4. What, in your opinion, are your areas in need of improvement/growth?

Auxiliary/Optional Questions

5. What have been your triumphs in becoming *and being* a teacher?
6. What have been your challenges to becoming *and being* a teacher?
7. What are next steps for you?