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Abstract

Concern that practical realities in classrooms will 'trump' theories has led some universities to design residency teacher education programs that maximize coherence between university coursework and field experiences. Yet, some research suggests that student teachers can learn from dissonance. This qualitative case study of one cohort in an urban teacher residency program that sought to maximize coherence asks how the apprentice teachers experienced connections between university and the field. Although apprentices experienced dissonance, they nonetheless expressed coherent philosophies aligned with university values. Coherence was something that individual apprentices constructed for themselves as they developed a personal 'style' or way of teaching in a program that welcomed their prior identities. Coherence was achieved through early development of a personal professional identity, not perfect alignment between field and university.

Key words: theory practice relationship, student teaching, education courses, cooperating teachers, teacher education programs, professional identity

Coherence, Dissonance, and Personal Style in Learning to

Teach

I do have my own style. We all have. Last quarter it was 'I'm

learning how to teach.' This quarter it's 'This is how I teach.'

(apprentice teacher Frida,[1] Interview 03-21)

The shift from 'how to teach' to 'how *I* teach' neatly captures the

process we investigated in a qualitative study of an urban residency

teacher education program. We asked how apprentices (i.e., student

teachers) were learning to teach in a program that sought to maximize

'coherence' between field-based learning and university coursework. In

a case study of one cohort (the 'we' to whom Frida referred), we asked

how the apprentices experienced connections between theory and

practice. We learned that they encountered moments of dissonance

despite the program's best efforts, yet nonetheless described their

own ways of teaching as coherent, not confused—and also as aligned

with university values. Intriguingly, the coherence was something that

apprentices constructed for themselves at an individual level, albeit

with support from the university, as they developed a personal 'style.'

Coherence between Field and University

Concern with dissonance between the 'two worlds' of theory and

practice (Feiman-Nemser & Buchman, 1985) has preoccupied many

teacher educators. They worry that conflicting messages create

'confusion over which goals and mediating practices to follow' (Grossman, Smagorinsky & Valencia, 1999, p. 12), or even disrupt student teachers' reflection and self-confidence (LaBoskey, Kubler, & Richert, 2002). Worse, teacher educators worry that practical realities in classrooms will 'trump' theories offered by the university (Grossman, Ronfeldt, & Cohen, 2012, p. 322), such that 'some new teachers succumb to the traditional school culture' (Cochran-Smith, Villegas et al., 2015, p. 113). One concern is about conflicting pedagogies, with schools seen as promoting 'traditional transmission teaching' whereas universities promote 'constructivist views of learning' (Cochran-Smith, Villegas et al. 2015, p. 111) and 'ambitious' teaching for 'deep understanding' (Thompson, Windschitl, & Braaten, 2013, p. 575). Another concern focuses on social justice, with university educators fearing that pre-service teachers will 'emerge from student teaching with various unintended negative learning about kids, communities, and instruction' (Anderson & Stillman, 2013, p. 45; cf. Cornbleth, 2010). Recognizing that teaching equitably requires teaching for deep understanding (Cochran-Smith, Shakman, et al., 2009; Grossman, McDonald, et al., 2008), programs like the one we studied were concerned with both rigor and social justice in field settings (cf. Matsko & Hammerness, 2014).

Coherence or lack of coherence between the university and the field may refer to 'structural' coherence between practice and theory

(Do learning opportunities support the ideas and values?) or to 'conceptual' coherence (Are key ideas and values shared?) (Grossman, Hammerness et al., 2008). In this study, we focus first on structural coherence at the program level, that is, whether learning opportunities in the field aligned with university ideas and values. We then shift to the individual level, asking how apprentice teachers *experienced* structural coherence or lack thereof, and specifically whether they experienced conceptual coherence for themselves, through internally consistent ideas as opposed to confusion and through practice aligned with their own ideas.

Programs Designed to Enhance Coherence

In response to concerns about lack of structural coherence, some teacher education programs have worked explicitly to align university teaching with experiences in the field (Grossman, Hammerness et al., 2008; Zeichner, 2010). One approach has been the development of teacher residency programs, in which preservice teachers are immersed in a mentor's classrooms from the beginning of their coursework and coursework is tightly integrated with clinical practice (Guha, Hyler & Darling-Hammond, 2016). Programs that call themselves *urban* residency programs are further designed to recruit and train teachers committed to working in high-poverty settings in cities.

As studies of teacher residencies have grown, a few have asked how student teachers experience the programs' supposedly tighter connections between university and field, although no consensus has yet emerged. In their description of Montclair's program, program designers argued that change is most likely to occur when there is coherence across programs (Klein et al., 2016, p. 262). However, a study of the LEE program in Wisconsin focused on the inevitability of dissonance (Gatti, 2016), while a third study of a different residency program noted that residents learned what *not* to do from observation in the field (Kolman, Roegman & Goodwin, 2015).

What about Learning from Dissonance?

Learning what *not* to do in a residency program is a jarring idea, given the push for coherence. Yet evidence from other kinds of programs suggests that novices sometimes do learn from 'tensions' between university coursework and field experiences (Anderson & Stillman, 2013, p. 52; Cochran-Smith, Villegas et al., 2015, p. 11), including learning what not to do from observing certain mentors' practices (Anderson & Stillman, 2011). Some studies record a delayed response to dissonance. A case study of novice teacher 'Donna' indicated that when student teaching she conformed to two mentor teachers whose approaches did not align with the university's, but returned to some of the university's lessons once she was teaching in her own classroom (Grossman, Smagorinsky & Valencia, 1999).

Similarly, novice teacher 'Susan' went back to lessons learned at the university once teaching in her own classroom (Smagorinsky, Cook et al., 2004). Reports of learning from tensions thus raise interesting questions about programs that have been painstakingly designed for coherence between university and field. Might beneficial tension be excluded (Hammerness, 2006)? If there *is* dissonance, how do students experience it?

Research Questions

We explored the question of learning from coherent and dissonant experiences in a study of UCLA's urban residency program, IMPACT (Inspiring Minds through a Professional Alliance of Community Teachers) in its 2009-2014 iteration. We looked specifically at the experiences of one cohort within the program, focusing on these questions:

a) How did the apprentice teachers in this particular cohort experience coherence in this program?

b) Was there tension in spite of the program design? If so, how did the apprentices experience the dissonance?

c) Given those experiences, how did apprentices integrate, if they did, learning in the field with learning through university coursework?

Conceptual Framework: Learning, Identity and Style

Understandings about learning, identity, and style proved to be important as we carried out and analyzed the research. Regarding learning, as suggested by studies just cited, we recognized that dissonance could sometimes stimulate learning. In fact, this idea appears in Piaget's notion of disequilibrium and also in activity theory's notion of contradictions (Gatti, 2016; Roth & Lee, 2007). However, it is worth asking under what circumstances dissonance stimulates learning. How do student teachers learn from dissonance? How much dissonance is too much to lead to productive learning? Does prior preparation or current support matter?

Other questions about learning came from the sociocultural view of learning as increasing participation in a community of practice, which in turn 'involves the construction of identities' so that learning means 'becoming a different person' (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 53). However, in this study, we had to ask into *which* community or communities apprentice teachers were moving—the university program's? their particular cohort? the children and mentor in their field placement classroom? Which new identity or identities, then, were they taking up? We also recognized that learners bring previously established identities and experiential knowledge to the situation; they do not join communities of practice as 'blank slates.' Thus we also had

to ask how apprentices integrated prior identities with the new identities they were developing.

The word 'identity' appears frequently in the literature on learning to teach (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Three different kinds of identity mattered in this study. First, it turned out to be important to pay attention to the apprentices' ethnicities, home languages, races, gender, sexual orientations, and social classes. Olsen refers to these as a teacher's 'cultural identity' (2008, p. 4), a term we adopt cautiously, mindful that cultures are dynamic, that identities intersect, and that labels can obscure a person's unique experiences. Second, there is professional identity as a teacher—the 'collective aspect of a teaching identity' (Danielewicz, 2001, p. 12) that makes practitioners 'feel like a teacher' (Nias 1989, Ch. 9). Third is a *personal* professional identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009), the answer to the question 'What kind of teacher do I want to be?' (Meijer et al., 2011, p. 116; cf. Danielewicz, 2001, p. 48). Personal identity as someone who teaches in a particular way turned out to be crucial to our analysis.

We use the word 'style' in this study not as a technical concept but rather as a colloquial term that the participants introduced. When 'style' appears in the literature on teaching, it takes a variety of meanings, ranging from 'strategies' (e.g., Borko & Mayfield, 1995) to broad approaches like learner-centered instruction (e.g., Tabulawa, 2013). Our participants used 'style' as a synonym for 'the way I teach,'

contrasted with the way my mentor or others teach, and they seemed to imply a degree of consistency across settings. As we will show, they linked style to personal professional identity and assumed it was informed by a philosophy for teaching.

Methods

To study experiences of coherence and dissonance, we analyzed data collected as part of a larger study of the IMPACT cohort led by the first author, Kathryn Anderson-Levitt, and carried out with ten graduate researchers, including co-author Jenna van Draanen. The cohort's faculty advisor and field supervisor—co-author Helen Davis—had invited us to do the study and contributed her insider perspective to this analysis. All other researchers, three of them former teachers, were affiliated with the university but outsiders to the program.

Of the nine apprentices in the cohort, we focus here on the six for whom we had apprentice consent to be interviewed and observed, plus mentor consent to observe the field placement. Team members audio recorded two semi-structured interviews of 25–65 minutes each with the six apprentices at the beginning and at the end of the winter term. This paper also draws from fieldnotes on six meetings of the cohort's core seminar and observations of two other university courses; observations in field-placement classrooms (21 one-hour visits); observations of two group workshops with apprentices and mentors; the faculty advisor's notes from intake interviews with

apprentices; and 46 of the advisor's clinical observation notes on apprentices' student teaching throughout the year. We also analyzed the six participants' masters' theses, which documented the first 5–6 months in their first teaching job.

Team members performed ongoing analysis (Bazeley, 2013), beginning in the first round with deductive codes from the literature on what novice teachers learn (e.g., classroom management), and how they learn (e.g., interaction with mentors). We soon added codes that emerged from fieldnotes (e.g., learning from the cohort). At weekly team meetings, we discussed the coding from our diverse perspectives (Erickson & Stull, 1997; Creese & Blackledge, 2012) and revised the codes. The three co-authors of this paper conducted a second round of analysis focused on coherence, comparing apprentices' comments about what they were learning from coursework and from experiences in placements in interviews and seminar discussions. The team checked case studies of each apprentice with the apprentice, and also checked interpretations with the program's two other faculty advisors.

The Residency Program

IMPACT, the setting for this study, was an 18-month postgraduate teacher residency program in which apprentice teachers earned teaching credentials and a master's degree, funded by the first round of U.S. Teacher Quality Partnership Grants. IMPACT was an 'urban' program in the sense that it prepared teachers to serve in

public schools in a large city, and specifically in 'the lowest-resourced and underserved schools' of the city (UCLA Center X, 2016). Most students in the schools served lived in poverty and were students of color; many were English Language Learners. The program explicitly aimed to prepare educators committed to 'asset-based social justice' (Kawasaki, Nava-Landeros & Francois, 2017). It also made explicit—for example, in grids for assessing student teaching—that pedagogical rigor and high expectations were part of a commitment to equity (Quartz, Martinez, & Kawasaki, in press). Like other 'strong residency programs' (Guha et al., 2016, p. 5), IMPACT recruited candidates meeting high academic standards, placed them in schools for a full year, then followed them during their first year on the job. It offered apprentices a $10,000 stipend in exchange for teaching in high-need schools for three years post-certification.

Crucially for this study, IMPACT was designed to maximize coherence between the university and the field in several ways. First, apprentices spent at least 20 hours per week in a public school classroom while simultaneously taking 12–15 hours of university coursework each term. Second, apprentices moved through the program in cohorts, and each cohort's faculty advisor served in a dual role, teaching the cohort's core seminars while also supervising the group's student teaching. Importantly, this meant that in the core seminars the apprentices learned theory and discussed student

teaching experiences under the guidance of their advisor, who had seen them in the field and worked with their mentors. Third, program staff had recruited mentors on the basis of recommendations from principals and peers to serve as positive models in urban settings, and at least five of the ten mentors for the elementary cohort were teachers of color. Fourth, the entire group of mentors and apprentices came together in mentor-led monthly workshops. Finally, the university offered mentors intensive training in coaching (although not all mentors for this cohort were able to participate).

While not related to structural coherence between field and university, it also turned out to be important that IMPACT was designed as an 'identity-based program,' as the advisors described it. At an orientation early in the year, advisors acknowledged the importance of racial/ethnic, linguistic and other cultural identities by introducing the notion of 'funds of knowledge' (González, Moll & Amanti, 2004). They not only urged apprentices to respect children's funds of knowledge, but also encouraged apprentices to draw on their own knowledge as part of their repertoire for teaching. Later, in a fall term 'Identity course,' apprentices explored their own intersecting gender, ethnic, class and other identities guided by an instructor using the methods of Intergroup Dialogue (Gurin, Nagda, and Zúñiga, 2013).

Findings

Apprentices and Their Field Placements

The program recruited apprentices who expressed commitment to social justice. As this section will make clear, for some recruits this could mean a general concern for equity inside the classroom, whereas the program's philosophy, that 'transformative work must tackle head on the deep social inequalities manifest in schools,' was ultimately focused on changing the system. In contrast to many U.S. teacher education programs, this program attracted many students of color. Table 1 summarizes the six apprentices' social class and ethnic or racial identities and their prior experiences, as apprentices described them in intake and later interviews; the six were typical of the larger group of nine except that Latina apprentices were slightly under-represented.

[Insert Table 1 about here]

Abby, Beth and Gina came from middle-class backgrounds. One of two white, middle-class women in the larger cohort of nine, Abby entered the program with experience as a Montessori teacher and a passion for human rights sparked by study in Latin America. Beth, a daughter of immigrants, learned about inequality during a two-year teaching internship in Korea. She entered the program with a broad goal to 'help the community somehow' and belief that 'education should be for the whole child.' Gina, a suburban daughter of

immigrants from the Philippines, was used to being 'different,' that is, considered neither Latina, Asian nor white. She entered the program passionate about injustices and interested in 'changing things' thanks in part to an undergraduate sociology course.

Eva, Frida and Irma came from less affluent backgrounds. Eva, who was working-class and Hispanic although she had attended an affluent secondary school, had worked in a community organization and as a teacher's aide in the local public school district. Her 'aversion to cutting kids down' had developed from her own experiences in elementary school. Frida had experienced school as a 'safe haven' as a child, and had originally been dissuaded from an early desire to become a teacher by her father. A biracial woman (white and Mexican), she had worked in the toy business until she decided she wanted to help children, not exploit them, and returned to college for a degree in child development. Irma, as a Salvadoran and Black child, had attended a mostly Black school, a mostly Latino school, then a mostly White school—experiences inspiring her interest in 'diversity and culture.' A high school teacher got her involved with community organizations, and she sought to 'return to the community.'

Table 2 identifies each apprentice's fall and winter elementary field placement. This particular cohort was pursuing a double credential in early childhood education and in elementary education, but we focus on the elementary placements. Apprentices began the

program with an early childhood placement in August and September. In the fall, they spent three months in their first elementary placement, and in winter three months in a second elementary placement, shifting from lower grades to upper grades or vice versa as required by the credential, and thus trading placements with one another, as Table 2 illustrates. In spring, apprentices went to a second early childhood placement, and the following fall they started their first jobs, completing their inquiry-based master's theses by January. The table also identifies moments of dissonance described in the next section.

[Insert Table 2 about here]

Moments of Dissonance in Field Placements

In spite of program efforts, apprentices experienced moments of dissonance in four placement classrooms of the six we followed.[2] On the one hand, apprentices judged two classrooms to be well aligned with university values, Ms. Leal's and Ms. Simon's. Irma described how Ms. Leal included all the students, and also challenged students to think: 'Ms. Leal has this wonderful thing where it's like, "Can you take a risk?" It's not even like, "Do you know the answer?" but just like, take a risk, even if you're wrong' (Interview 02-13). Ms. Simon, as Abby described her, likewise modeled methods taught at the university: 'Everything we talked about—"Try this, try that"—I'm able to do in the classroom and able to see my teacher doing.' Abby also emphasized an alignment in values, saying, 'I think this teacher really has the same

values I have, and she puts the values into action. … Because what brought me in to education was concerns for human rights.' (Interview 01-24).

On the other hand, other mentors drew a range of gentle critiques, summarized in Table 2. We are not reporting here on ordinary instances of a problematic placement, but only on apprentices' explicit comments about a mismatch with university values. Importantly, the comments reflect neither the views of program designers nor external measures of mentors' teaching, but only judgments made by apprentices midway through their program. Thus Abby criticized her fall-term mentor, Ms. Ortiz, for her approach to discipline as well for as her 'dry' use of the district basal (Interview 01-24). Ms. Ortiz's classroom was challenging because her principal had assigned her many first graders identified with 'behavioral problems,' and as her winter-term apprentice, Beth, put it, there were 'a lot of emotions in the classroom' (Interview 01-22). Meanwhile, Frida greatly appreciated how Ms. Kurtis treated her as a colleague, but thought that the second graders in this classroom 'could be doing more' and 'need academic rigor' (Seminar Fieldnote 02-26).[3] Meanwhile, Gina appreciated the confidence and energy of Mr. Quentin, but she said of his sarcastic sense of humor, 'It's working for me to be completely different,' while she felt that his response to

conflicts between students was a 'mismatch with what I've learned at the university' (Seminar Fieldnote 02-26).

The strongest reactions were Irma's and Eva's comments about the mentor they worked with respectively in fall and winter terms, Ms. Perez. Citing Ms. Perez's classroom management system as an example, Irma said, this is 'what I won't do as a teacher' (Interview 02-13). Ms. Perez had posted on the bulletin board a paper caterpillar whose body transitioned from green to yellow to red. In a version of the 'rainbow' management system, she has marked students' names on clothespins and would move a student's name from the green end down to the red end when they behaved badly. Eva likewise critiqued this system, and also criticized Ms. Perez's strict adherence to the district pacing plan and her insistence that Spanish should never be used during English Language Development time. Eva also recognized Ms. Perez's strengths— 'She cares about the students, she cares about their culture, she validates the language, she can identify with them'— but added that, 'as far as constructivist education and all the stuff that we're learning ... I wouldn't say that she matches up with that' (Interview 03-04).

Each placement was distinctive, then, but apprentices saw four out of these six mentors as disconnected in some way from university values, and each apprentice experienced at least one placement judged as mismatched in some way.

Coherence Nonetheless

Style, or 'the way I teach.' Although each of the apprentices experienced some dissonance between university and field experiences, they did not express confusion or hesitation. Rather, at least five of the six articulated clear statements by the seventh month of the program about how they taught now and would teach in their own future classrooms. For instance, Abby said, 'The way I'm learning to teach is so social. I don't know if there is any other way to teach' (Interview 02-28); she later referred to her approach as 'relationship-based teaching' (Interview 03-21). Gina said, 'When I'm lesson planning I get really caught up in … a very constructivist theory, like I really want [the students] to come up with the knowledge'; she added later that she also wanted 'to make the lesson make sense for their context, so, definitely a lot of culturally relevant pedagogy' (Interview 03-07). Eva likewise vigorously affirmed her own way of teaching, saying, 'I'm always gonna be the teacher whose kids do not line up straight. … I wanna stay committed to my role as a facilitator and not like a dictator' (Interview 03-04).

In describing how they taught, some apprentices (including Frida, quoted in our epigraph) used the term 'style.' The faculty advisor had introduced the notion of 'developing a style' during orientation, then re-introduced the concept when teaching the core seminar in winter, when the apprentices had moved to their second elementary

placement and were encountering a new model. As the advisor explained,

> As you get more and more experience, you know your style. It may be different from your mentor…. For example, when you do something you really like, that engages you, whereas if it's your mentor's and not yours, it may not work for you. (Seminar Fieldnote 02-26)

In talking about what 'engages you,' she underlined that teaching involves the whole person, so that what works for one teacher might not work for another. Like Frida, Irma used the word 'style.' When we asked about her teaching philosophy, Irma said, 'I have a tendency to be very nurturing in my teaching style.' Both the faculty advisor and her mentor had agreed that she 'used the whole critical hope and love,' and she thought in response, 'Yeah, good you guys see that' (Interview 03-11). Note that like Eva's word 'always' Irma's word 'tendency' implied consistency over time.

Beth did not talk as explicitly about style and in the advisor's judgment was least clear about the way she taught. However, Beth did assert her philosophy firmly, saying, 'Vygotsky is critical to my teaching and I think that everything I do is central to that philosophy…. I truly believe that it is not just the teacher who is the expert, but the students who are the experts, too' (Interview 03-04).

Enacting 'the way I teach' in the mentor's classroom. In two cases, we witnessed apprentices not only talking about their own way of teaching but enacting it in the face of mentor practices they did not think aligned with their values.

Eva found a way to resist Ms. Perez's management system to which she, as Irma before her, objected. Since she joined the classroom, she said, the students who had moved down on the rainbow caterpillar's body because of behavior problems 'don't really get an opportunity to move back up.' She felt she should not directly upset the management system that had been in place all year, 'so the way that I've gotten around it,' she said, 'was like, 'Ohhh, I forgot.' That, she explained, was the way she infused 'socially-just consequences' into her placement classroom (Interview 03-04).

Meanwhile, Frida endeavored to offer a lesson that was more rigorous than what she saw her mentor teacher doing in their second-grade classroom, as she described to her cohort in seminar:

I'm not speaking bad about my mentor, but I see a lot of things that the kids could be doing more. I push them hard. I push them very hard. And maybe I was too strong in this instance. I know that they need academic rigor. (Seminar Fieldnote 02-26).

Her experiment did not go well: 'I had two kids crying because it was too hard' (Seminar Fieldnote 02-26). In response to the crisis, Frida followed the second graders to lunch and talked with them about it,

then in further sessions of the same lesson, worked to 'dial down' the activities. Nonetheless, Frida continued to align herself with the university's commitment to rigor, teaching another five-day lesson several weeks later that again the children found too difficult and again she had to 'dial down' (Interview 03-21). These two cases are noteworthy because there are only a few examples in the literature of student teachers differentiating themselves to this degree from mentor teachers while student teaching (e.g., Lane, et al., 2003).

Coherence as Personal Accomplishment

Apprentices' statements about how they taught were not only coherent, but personalized. Apprentices were selective about what they adopted from the field and from coursework, and they linked teaching style to a philosophy of teaching that was personalized to each individual's strengths.

Table 3 offers an overview of the personal accomplishment of coherence. The first column notes each apprentice's early goals, influenced by the prior experiences discussed above. The second column previews theories from coursework salient to each apprentice, to be discussed below. The third column summarizes apprentices' self-described style or way of teaching, as described in the previous section. The last column previews apprentices' philosophies after several months on the job, to be discussed below.

[Insert Table 3 about here]

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Selective learning. As their response to moments of dissonance revealed, apprentices adopted practices from field placements selectively. They did adopt many classroom management techniques from their mentors but, as shown, Irma and Eva rejected the rainbow caterpillar. Apprentices likewise adopted many pedagogical methods from the field but, again, selectively. For instance, Frida said, 'I adapt to my own style. I take components out of the *Teacher's Edition*, and add my own: opening move, pair-share, materials to be used, discussion' (Interview 03-21).

Likewise, apprentices took up university theories selectively. Given the fears that field practice would trump theory, we were surprised at how enthusiastically all six apprentices embraced theories taught in university coursework. What also struck us, though, was that each apprentice cited a distinct set of theories or courses as a personal inspiration. We have already quoted Gina citing constructivism and culturally relevant pedagogy and Beth citing Vygotsky. Although Irma said that she preferred the practical methods classes, she cited Jeffrey Duncan-Andrade and bell hooks as influences, and she said of the Identity course, 'That one helped A LOT. That was an amazing course, because we talked about everything that touches upon social justice' (Interview 03-11). Abby spoke at length about how the Identity course helped 'middle class white people' (like herself) 'confront the privilege' (Interview 02-28). Frida cited multiple theories, including Vygotsky,

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and said 'A lot of work on theories—Freire, … CGI [cognitively guided instruction]—opened up my philosophy on teaching' (Interview 03-21). Frida also argued for the value of theory in general, saying, 'If there's something I can change about this program, it'd be to lessen the time in the field and dig more into theories' (Interview 01-27).

Like Abby and Irma, Eva cited the Identity course, saying it gave the apprentices 'the language' for 'all these gut feelings' (Interview 03-04). Like Frida, she also talked about the value of theories in general, saying,

> As a whole, my program has really opened my eyes and given me language to think about my feelings as a teacher instead of just me saying like, 'Love your kids, love your this,' WHOOAA… Neo-Vygotskyism, … that's really what it is, right? (Interview 03-04).

The metaphor that courses gave apprentices 'language' seems particularly apt, since the program helped them specify and nuance the broad goals with which they entered the program.

Personalizing teaching philosophy. Apprentices and their advisor usually used the concept of 'style' to refer to practices, linking those practices closely to a personalized philosophy of teaching. In winter term, the faculty advisor assigned an essay on teaching philosophy, a common assignment that can encourage development of a professional identity (Danielewicz, 2001). However, rather than

encourage a single philosophy congruent with the university's entire approach, the advisor encouraged individualization. She explained in seminar that apprentices should 'ensure the link is clear between the practices you use [and] where it's coming from' in 'a document that shows "this is who I am as a teacher" and "I believe this about how students learn''' (Seminar Fieldnote 02-12). In other words, there had to be a theory ('where it's coming from') behind their philosophy, while their philosophy reflected their personal professional identity ('who I am as a teacher') and contributed to their practices, that is, their personal teaching style.

The cohort of apprentices whole-heartedly agreed with personalizing practice and philosophy. In the same seminar session, they had pressed the advisor to identify each cohort member's unique strength and philosophy. In the ensuing discussion, they sometimes pre-empted her, saying about a classmate, 'She's amazing with language!' and responding to Beth's tentative claim that she liked 'democracy' with a chorus of 'Yes! Yes!' (Seminar Fieldnote 02-12).

Philosophies in the first job. When the apprentices moved into their first jobs as teachers with their own classrooms, all but one continued to express philosophies we had heard them express before, albeit with refinements. They expressed these philosophies in their masters' theses, in which they described their students, discussed how

they had responded to a teaching challenge, and reflected on their current teaching.

All the former apprentices had found jobs in Title I schools, most of them in high poverty neighborhoods with largely Latino student bodies (although Gina was teaching in a multi-ethnic magnet school that attracted middle-class students too). In at least five cases, the philosophies they expressed after 5–6 months on the job echoed their earlier philosophies, nuanced in response to classroom realities. Thus in Eva's new job teaching preschool, she was still 'in a position to practice Love Pedagogy with impunity' (Thesis, p. 22), although she also now recognized 'that there must be structure' and had sought behavioral management support from the school psychologist (p. 47). When Frida began teaching sixth-grade English and Social Studies, she continued to cite neo-Vygotskian thinkers and Freire, introduced Socratic Seminar-style discussions, and continued to argue for 'academic rigor and high expectations.' However, she now added that 'it's important to really understand the academic level students are at' (Thesis, p. 13). In Irma's new job teaching sixth-grade English and History, she continued to cite critical hope and love, saying of her students, 'I try to see them as my own relatives,' which makes it 'much more difficult for you to give up hope' (Thesis, p. 31). Gina maintained at least part of her prior philosophy, dropping reference to constructivism but still focusing on her students' cultures in her very

multi-ethnic classroom; like Eva, she had also learned to set limits. However, in Beth's case it was harder to see continuity in her philosophy. In teaching a combined second–third grade where several students had 'severe socio-emotional needs' (Thesis, p. 12), she sought to establish a 'loving classroom environment through the use of … community building strategies' (Thesis, p.13). Although she cited an essay about love that she had written early in student teaching, we had missed that theme in our fieldnotes on her experiences in the residency program.

Meanwhile, Abby's case showed philosophical continuity but perhaps less commitment to university values. In her new job teaching third grade, Abby continued to assert that 'genuine learning is only possible through relationships,' but she described three boys in her class as having 'impulsive, destructive, and even violent tendencies.' This contrasted with the way Beth, Eva, Gina and Irma worked to create structure for their students without slipping into deficit language.

The Program's Role

Reading down each column in Table 3 makes personal differences across the apprentices visible, and reading each apprentice's case horizontally reveals in many cases how an apprentice's early goals were reflected in her teaching style and philosophy. Yet if conceptual coherence at an individual level was a

personal accomplishment, the program nonetheless played a crucial role in making it happen. Reading Table 3 horizontally also reveals that university coursework introduced new ideas and new language. For example, while Beth began with concern for the whole child, which may have contributed to her interest in democracy and later in community-building, she found new ideas in coursework—Vygotsky, the student as expert, and community of learners. Eva's early 'aversion to cutting kids down' clearly persisted in her reaction to her mentor's management system but, as Eva said explicitly, university theories like the 'pedagogy of love' provided a language for her prior feelings. Frida's undergraduate degree in child development influenced her thinking, but Frida also embraced theories learned in the program; for example, she wrote in an essay that CGI helped her see how to push for 'cognitive rigor.'

Not only coursework content but also the structure of the program encouraged apprentices to resolve tensions between field and school in a personalized way by inviting them to draw on their identities and prior experiences. The program encouraged personal style by validating apprentices' cultural identities during orientation and in coursework, especially in the Identities course. The cohort's advisor reinforced the message by offering the concept of 'style.' In addition, the cohort of apprentices, brought together by the program structure and strongly bonded over their common experiences,

encouraged one another to value the distinctive strengths of each member. Together, the program as a whole, the advisor, and the cohort gave each apprentice permission to become the kind of teacher that fit who she was already.

Discussion

Coherence through Identity

We have shown that dissonance did occur for members of this cohort of apprentices despite the program's strong efforts to align field and university, but did not lead to confusion. Rather, encouraged by certain practices of the program, by their advisor, and by their cohort mates, each apprentice made the program coherent for herself. In contrast to the literature on field–university alignment, we came to see coherence at the individual level as developed not solely by the structural coherence of the program but also by the individual apprentices, each in a somewhat different way. The 'style' or way of teaching that each developed was a set of practices that worked for her and drew on her prior experiences, including those shaped by her 'cultural identities.' It expressed a personal philosophy of teaching grounded in theories gleaned from university coursework. This study thus suggests that coherence was achieved through early development of a personal professional identify, not perfect alignment between field and university.

Alignment with University Values

Moreover, the apprentices almost always developed ways of teaching that aligned with the university's philosophy. They did not give in to what they saw as low expectations and inequitable behavior management, and thus this study offers a 'sorely needed' case of 'successful efforts to disrupt' the danger of 'succumbing' (Cochran-Smith, Villegas, et al., 2015, p. 113). In fact, they did not even delay expressing and sometimes enacting university values until they had their own classrooms, in contrast to the cases of 'Donna' and 'Susan' cited earlier (Grossman, et al., 1999; Smagorinsky, et al., 2004). When apprentices encountered moments of tension between field and university, they used them to practice university perspectives, suggesting that, at least under the right circumstance, perfect coherence is not necessary and not even necessarily desirable (Hammerness, 2006).

Importantly, the idea that coherence lies in personal style means that an apprentice did not adopt the whole of what the university taught any more than she adopted the whole of her mentors' practices. Personalization entailed a risk: a prospective teacher could have developed a style in conflict with the university's vision. However, that did not happen in this case, with the possible exception of Abby, and in fact this study, like larger longitudinal studies of novice teachers

(e.g., Grossman, Valencia, et al., 2000; Grisham, 2010), suggests that teacher education programs actually do have a positive impact.

Dissonance in the Right Circumstances

Several circumstances, we posit, encouraged apprentices to align with university values in this program. First, the apprentices' original values, based on their experiences before they entered the program, aligned with the university's commitment to social justice. They had chosen the university fully aware of its commitment to social justice, and the program directors had selected candidates who were committed to equity. Second, because the program had specially recruited mentors, there may have been less dissonance between field and university than in an ordinary teacher education program. (Recall that even while criticizing her mentor, Eva acknowledged that the mentor cared about the students and validated their language.) Third, the cohort of apprentices was an important community of practice, and apprentices' identity as social justice educators within the cohort may have assumed greater importance than their identities within placement schools. The cohort community dynamic and the supervisor's role within it seemed to mediate dissonance and support alignment with university values. We see recruitment of apprentices and mentor teachers and mediation of tensions by program faculty and the cohort as some of the 'right circumstances' within which aspiring teachers could learn to teach for equity and rigor even when field

placements did not entirely live up to university ideals. These circumstances made possible the kind of 'socially contextualized intellectual resolution' that let tensions be productive in this case (Smagorinsky, Cook et al., 2004, p. 22).

Our research has limitations, of course, for we followed only six apprentices (albeit the majority of the cohort) and only through the first months of their first job. We cannot generalize beyond this cohort in this program for this period of time. However, other educators designing residency programs may find certain lessons from this case study transferable (Lincoln & Guba, 1985); the study may suggest how recruitment or mediation of learning might help student teachers in their programs learn from dissonance between university and field.

Disclosure

The authors had no financial interest in the research.

Endnotes

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[1] All proper names of apprentices, mentors, and schools are pseudonyms.

[2] We did not ask about Mr. Jimenez's or Ms. Min's classroom.

[3] Quotes from the core seminar, which was not audio recorded, are taken from detailed fieldnotes.