REFLECTIVE COACHING: TENSIONS AND TRANSFORMATIONS FROM
TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES

By

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This is dedicated to my father, Hank, who left me too soon. I thank him for being
the angel by my side through this journey,
and motivating me with love and dreams and memories.

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Educational research has identified the continuing development and learning of

teachers as key to improving the quality of schools in the United States, and as a result,

creating effective professional development for educators has become integral in school

improvement and reform. One such model being implemented in schools is

instructional coaching, in which coaches provide support, feedback, and intensive,

individualized professional learning alongside teachers to improve instruction. In the

recent era of accountability in schools, a potential tension in current coaching contexts

is related to emphasis on teacher evaluation using specific instructional frameworks

(e.g. Marzano, 2007; Danielson, 2009). This culture of evaluation with immediate focus

on desired teaching behaviors may create experiences that are more consistent with a

directive coaching approach in which the coach directs the teacher towards desired

instructional goals. However, many researchers advocate for coaching relationships that

are reflective, safe, non-evaluative, and geared toward a partnership in learning

between the coach and teacher. The juxtaposition of reflective and directive coaching

goals and approaches needs to be investigated to further research on the effectiveness

of these coaching stances in classroom contexts. My research examined teachers'

perspectives of this professional development, and investigated teachers' experiences

of a reflective coaching approach based upon Knight's (2007) partnership philosophy of

coaching. The research questions guiding this study were: (1) What do teachers

experience when engaging in a coaching cycle facilitated by a coach trained in a

reflective coaching approach? and (2) What elements of a reflective coaching approach

do teachers perceive as contributing to their learning and change in practice?

This constructivist-based research study used audio-taped interviews of teacher

participants, and employed Hatch's (2002) interpretive analysis method to highlight

teachers' perceptions and elements of this coaching approach that impacted teacher

learning. Results reflected themes specific to teachers' levels of experience and

dispositions, and suggested reflective coaching as beneficial towards teacher learning

and change in practice. Teachers viewed this reflective coaching process as a vehicle

that provided personalized support, critical examination of teacher practices,

collaborative learning, and transformation of teacher beliefs, knowledge, and practice.

Specific elements of this coaching approach, such as the coaching conversation, data

display, and the coaching relationship, most contributed to change in teacher learning

and practice. Tensions for teachers highlighted within this approach included an expert-

novice coaching stance and the use of teacher evaluation as a coaching lens. Overall,

this research sheds light on the complexity of coaching, and provides important

implications related to the positioning and sustainability of instructional coaching for

those designing professional development, and areas for future research in an effort to

support the learning and development of teachers.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In 1983, according to a report written by the National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) entitled *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform,* the American public educational system had lapsed into a state of disrepair, stating that "…the educational foundations in our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a nation and a people" (p. 5). According to educational scholars and historians (Berliner & Biddle, 1995; Darling-Hammond, 1997; Marzano, 2003a; Ravitch, 2003), the effects of this report were the most profound and far reaching in our country's educational history, and considered by some to be the primary source of public education's decline and the catalyst for the next three decades of school reform (Marzano, 2003a; Nichols, Glass, & Berliner, 2006).   As a result, our nation's public school system entered an era of accountability, in which high-stakes testing, standardized curriculum, teacher evaluation, and improved student achievement became the foci of schools. Dianne Ravitch (2010) summed up this shift in the purpose of schooling: "In short, accountability turned into a nightmare for American schools, producing graduates who were drilled regularly on the basic skills but were often ignorant about almost everything else" (p. 210).

In the current climate of high-stakes accountability in American school systems, many programs have been identified to create systematic change, and while constant implementation of reform programs occurs, researchers and educators continue to question if these "one size fits all" policies will indeed create the changes needed for student success. Michael Fullan (2007), a renowned scholar on school change and reform, grapples with this dilemma:

The issue of central interest . . . is not how many new policies have been approved or how many programs have been developed, but rather what has actually changed in practice . . . as a result of our efforts, and how do we know when change is worthwhile? What can teachers, administrators, or policymakers do when they know something is wrong in our schools? (p. xi).

Fullan (2007) describes a comprehensive framework for positive school change that includes fundamental elements such as collaborative teacher learning, capacity building, strong leadership, internal and external accountability, and active, teacher-centered models of quality professional development.

Of all the factors that have been researched and proven to contribute to positive effects on student learning, those factors relating to the teacher and instruction are most conducive to creating significant improvement in classrooms (Barry, 2012; Danielson, 2009; Fullan, 2007; Knight, 2007; Marzano, 2003a). In his research on school effectiveness, Marzano (2003a) identified three levels of factors related to positive effects on student success and achievement: school-level factors (school policies, a challenging curriculum, a safe environment, parent and community involvement, collegiality and professionalism, and effective feedback); student-level factors (student background, home environment, learned intelligence, motivation, and background knowledge and experiences); and teacher-level factors (instructional quality, classroom management, and curriculum design). The researcher provided evidence that teacher-level factors are most likely to positively affect student achievement.

As Fullan (2007) maintains, at the core of any educational change or initiative, lies the classroom teacher: "Educational change depends on what teachers do and think- it's as simple and as complex as that" (p. 129). Due to the unparalleled interest and rising external pressure to promote accountability and school reform, teachers'

professional learning has become paramount for impacting student success. Federal

resources (such as Title I, School Improvement Grants, and Race To The Top funding)

require that school districts design and implement a "comprehensive, powerful, job-

embedded professional development plan," signifying the belief in the importance of

producing quality educators as vital to improving student performance (Dana, Thomas,

& Boynton, 2011, p. xxi). Research has shown that previous traditional forms of

professional development are marginally effective (Bush, 1984; Fullan, 2007; Knight,

2007) and discount teachers' learning needs. Lieberman (1995) supports this notion of

the necessity of strong teacher learning models, stating that teachers, who are expected

to teach their students with differentiation and individualized instruction, are often

denied these learning necessities when engaging in their own professional learning.

According to Knight (2007), the worst consequence of overreliance on traditional

forms of professional development is that poorly designed training can "erode teachers'

willingness to embrace *any* new ideas" (p. 2), and thus teachers are often blamed for

resisting change. Instead of stand-alone conventional workshop models of professional

development, many educational scholars have agreed the most effective professional

development is that which provides new information, content or strategies (often given

in workshops) combined with the necessary follow-up and support of modeling, practice,

and feedback created through job-embedded learning opportunities for teachers

(Barkley, 2005; Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2009; Guskey & Yoon, 2006; Killion &

Harrison, 2006; Knight, 2007). Job-embedded professional development that directly

relates to the challenges teachers face in the classroom and is provided by people

familiar with those contexts will help create enhanced teacher learning, instruction, and

thus, increase student achievement (Deussen, Coskie, Robinson, & Autio, 2007; Guskey, 2000; Taylor, 2008). Among the many models of job-embedded professional development such as professional learning communities, practitioner research, and lesson study groups, school-based coaching is considered the most promising for changing teacher practice (Knight, 2007).

The essence of coaching is changing teacher practice to increase student learning, and by offering support, feedback, and intensive, individualized professional learning, coaching provides a way to improve instruction in schools. Barkley (2005) states:

> Coaching provides a vehicle by which to achieve goals, improve strategies, and make a difference for students and colleagues. With coaching, teachers discover . . . how to reflect on their teaching in ways that add value to their methods and an enhanced level of professionalism. (p. 4)

Coaching has been proven to positively impact teacher attitudes, teaching practices, and teacher efficacy (Cornett & Knight, 2009). While many models of coaching are being implemented widely in schools, there are many questions as to *what* coaching is, *who* should be coaching, and *how* coaching impacts teachers' practice (Borman & Feger, 2006; Cornett & Knight, 2009).

According to the literature, coaches can support instructional improvement in a multitude of ways, including: observing lessons and providing feedback to a teacher; modeling effective teaching techniques and strategies; effectively using assessment data to provide interventions; conducting professional development to help introduce new strategies; developing and monitoring school improvement goals; and designing systemic and organizational changes to improve student achievement (Bean, Draper, Hall, Vandermolen, & Zigmond, 2010; Denton & Hasbrouck, 2009; Deussen et al., 2007;

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Dole, 2004). Because of this myriad of tasks that can be associated with coaching, this professional development model can mean different things in different schools (Denton & Hasbrouck, 2009). While the impact of coaching on teacher instruction has been studied in the literature, the multitude of models, goals, theories, and outcomes cause researchers to call for a clearer picture of this job-embedded professional development model (Borman & Feger, 2006; Cornett & Knight, 2009; Duessen et al., 2007; Knight, 2007, 2009).

One approach to coaching that has provided evidence of improvement in teacher practice is instructional coaching (Barkley, 2005; Cornett & Knight, 2009; Knight, 2007; Kowal & Steiner, 2007). Instructional coaches are onsite professional developers who work collaboratively with teachers, empowering them to incorporate research-based instructional methods into their classrooms (Knight, 2007; Knight & Cornett, 2009). Instructional coaches and the teachers they coach are in a trusting, non-evaluative relationship with shared goals of learning together, improving instruction and increasing student achievement (Knight, 2006). While the literature on coaching indicates that instructional coaches engage in a wide variety of activities and roles (Borman & Feger, 2006), many researchers concur that coaches need skills in three key areas: strong interpersonal skills, content-specific instructional expertise, and sensitive communication skills (Borman & Feger, 2006; Killion & Harrison, 2006; Kowal & Steiner, 2007).

Coaching and Accountability

Within the coaching literature, studies have focused on specific models of coaching (Cornett & Knight, 2009; Costa & Garmston, 1997; Deussen et al., 2007; Kowal & Steiner, 2007; Veenman & Denessen, 2001); different theoretical frames in

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which coaching is derived and which predicates how coaches position themselves to teachers (Borman & Feger, 2006; Deussen et al., 2007; Dozier, 2006; Ippolito, 2010; Knight, 2007; Kowal & Steiner, 2007; Neufeld & Roper, 2003); and coaching stances and behaviors in order to determine how to best meet teacher needs in learning (Bean et al., 2010; Cantrell & Hughes, 2008; Dozier, 2006; Heineke, 2013; Ippolito, 2010; Knight, 2007). With increased pressure on teachers to improve instruction and increase student achievement in varied school contexts, many researchers have specifically examined coach roles and responsibilities, and how these coaches create change in teacher instruction (Deussen et al., 2007; Ippolito, 2010; Neufeld & Roper, 2003; Walpole, McKenna, Uribe-Zarain, & Lamitina, 2010; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010; Veenman & Denessen, 2001).

Within the current educational climate, coaching and evaluation are often tied together (Tschannen-Moran & Tschannen-Moran, 2011). Thus, a growing body of research is investigating the relationship between coaches and teachers, and how the effectiveness of coaching is impacted by teacher accountability in the classroom. Ippolito (2010) categorized two distinct coaching models named as directive and responsive coaching, and studied the tensions between supporting teacher goals (responsive) and encouraging specific practices (directive). Duessen et al. (2007) referred to different coaching stances as directive and reflective, and studied these stances within literacy coaching models. Heineke (2013) found that during one-on-one sessions, coaches tended to take the dominant approach with teachers and initiated the majority of exchanges during coaching conversations. Coburn and Woulfin (2012) also found that coaches who influenced teacher learning and teacher change did so through

authoritative stances, using such techniques as pressuring and persuading to push teacher growth.

Yet according to other researchers, for coaching to be successful, coaching relationships must be reflective, safe, non-evaluative, and geared toward a partnership in learning *between* the coach and teacher (Borman & Feger, 2006; Dozier, 2006; Knight, 2007, 2009; Tschannen-Moran & Tschannen-Moran, 2011). A coaching stance in which the coach and teacher engage in the process of inquiry about instructional practices that support and improve student learning is found to promote teacher efficacy and instructional effectiveness (Bean et al., 2010; Knight & Cornett, 2009; Joyce & Showers, 1996).

Gaps in the Literature

Due to coaching being a widely implemented method of job-embedded professional development, the literature is replete with suggestions for future coaching research that further examines and describes specific models, theories, and elements of coaching (Borman & Feger, 2006; Cornett & Knight, 2009; Teemant, Wink, & Tyra, 2011; Walpole et al., 2010). According to Guskey (2000), evaluating the effectiveness of professional development is essential in guiding school reform in an era demanding greater accountability, especially when accountability is focused so squarely on teacher performance.

The current state of coaching research is largely descriptive, and researchers have called for more empirical evidence of coaching effectiveness (Cornett & Knight, 2009; Marsh, McCombs, & Martorell, 2010). The insurgence of coaching implementation in schools, despite the lack of empirical evidence linking coaching to increased student achievement, creates a crucial need for rigorous research to analyze,

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describe, and critically assess this professional development model (Knight, 2005, 2009). Russo (2004) states that better school-based coaching research is needed with emphasis on teacher understandings of this process, stating that "teacher surveys and evaluation studies have thus far lagged far behind the interest in and implementation of coaching programs" (p. 4). There is also a call in the literature for researchers to better understand how complex relationships between coaches and teachers relate to change in teacher practice (Deussen et al., 2007; Ippolito, 2010; Marsh et al., 2010; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010) and examine both the variation in how coaches position themselves to teachers, and the tone and content of their interactions with teachers (Borman & Feger, 2006; Deussen et al., 2007; Killion, 2009; McKenna & Walpole, 2008; Veenman & Denessen, 2001).

One potential tension in current coaching contexts is related to recent emphasis on teacher evaluation using specific instructional frameworks (e.g. Marzano, 2007; Danielson, 2009). This culture of evaluation and assessment with immediate focus on desired teaching behaviors may create expectations or experiences that are more consistent with directive coaching. This poses a dilemma for teachers and coaches using a reflective coaching model because of the juxtaposition of coaching approach and expected outcomes, and thus needs to be investigated to further research the effectiveness of coaching (Heineke, 2013; Ippolito, 2010). Studies focusing on teacher perceptions of coaching are also cited as essential, investigating which coaching activities teachers find most valuable, and the relationship between what coaches do and what teachers change (Bean et al., 2003; Deussen et al., 2007; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010). Thus, more research is called for investigating the teacher's

experience of the coaching process and how coaching is interpreted and understood from a teacher perspective (Cornett & Knight, 2009; Morgan, 2010; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010).

Statement of Purpose and Research Question

As determined from the literature on instructional coaching, there is a need to focus on how coaches and the teachers they coach understand the tension and balance of specific coaching behaviors, how these coaching relationships contribute to teacher learning, and what elements of these coaching approaches contribute to changes in teacher practice (Bean et al., 2010; Borman & Feger, 2006; Cornett & Knight, 2009; Dozier, 2006; Heineke, 2013; Ippolito, 2010; Knight, 2007; Neufeld & Roper, 2003).

Therefore, the purpose of my study was to examine and understand how teachers experience coaching with a reflective (teacher-driven) approach, and what, if any, factors of this coaching approach contribute to teacher learning and change in practice. With this goal in mind, two research questions were addressed:

1. What do teachers experience when engaging in a coaching cycle facilitated by a coach trained in a reflective coaching approach?

2. What elements of a reflective coaching model and approach do teachers perceive as contributing to their learning and change in practice?

Study Significance

I conducted this study to further the current research on instructional coaching and its effect on professional learning in schools. With the emphasis of job-embedded professional learning to promote growth in teachers' experiences, beliefs, and practices, more research is needed on teachers' perceptions of this process. An understanding of how teachers' construct meaning from these reflective coaching experiences may suggest opportunities to further enhance coaching as professional development in

current settings with the potential to create powerful teacher learning and change in practice, and contribute to classroom reform efforts.

This study adds to the professional literature of coaching by studying the ways in which specific coaching approaches are implemented within different contexts with teachers possessing different skills, knowledge and dispositions.   This research also describes how teachers view these coaching and instructional frameworks and the challenges that occur when evaluation is simultaneously connected to these frameworks. This study also contributes to the discussion on various coaching and teaching roles and relationships that potentially foster improved teacher instruction, and provides examples of directive, reflective and balanced coaching approaches, as well as the tensions that occur within coaching cycles. Finally, this study contributes to the literature by exploring a concept not currently present in coaching literature. While there is research showing that instructional coaching impacts teachers' beliefs and practice within their classrooms, this study provides evidence of the impact of reflective coaching not only on teachers, but a transformation beyond that which encompasses students, peers, and schools. Findings from this research are relevant to coaches, teachers, researchers and policymakers interested in this method of professional development.

Definition of Terms

The terms defined below provide a foundation for the language used in this dissertation:

Balanced Coaching: a coaching approach in which both directive and reflective/responsive stances are used, often within the same coaching session (Heineke, 2013; Ippolito, 2010).

Coaching Approach: A coaching approach is defined as a combination of a coach's thinking (philosophies) and doing (behaviors). This includes (1) how a coach uses the model (skill set, steps and practices), and what principles a coach incorporates to guide the coaching process (directive, reflective, balanced) (Heineke, 2013; Ippolito, 2010; Killion, 2009; Knight, 2007).

Coaching Frame: The coaching frame refers to the specific instructional or programmatic framework (e.g. Marzano, 2007; Danielson, 2009 or Common Core State Standards) the coach and teacher use to guide the coaching focus, observations, data collection, and interpretation of information within the coaching process.

Coaching Lens: A coach's lens is an amalgamation of: (1) the coaching approach, (2) the coaching frame, and (3) personal characteristics that the coach engages to identify and interpret information within the coaching cycle (background knowledge, prior experiences, what the coach deems as important in both coaching and teaching, and what that coach can focus on in that time and place).

Coaching Model: a predetermined set of practices used for instructional coaching in different contexts.

Directive Coaching: a coaching approach in which the coach assumes the role of expert, and is assertive about what instructional practices a teacher must implement within the coaching process (Deussen et al., 2007; Ippolito, 2010).

Praxis: Knight (2007) defines praxis as "the act of applying new ideas to our own lives . . . in which teachers have the ability to explore, prod, stretch, and recreate whatever they are studying" (p.49). Within this study's framework, praxis is defined as the improvement of teacher practice by (1) reflecting during and after teaching occurs,

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(2) creating action towards improvement based on this reflective learning, and (3) engaging in continuous cycles of reflection and action.

Reflective Coaching: a teacher-centered coaching approach, in which a coach focuses on teacher self-reflection, allowing the teacher's and students' needs to guide the coaching process (Dozier, 2006; Ippolito, 2010).

Teacher capacity: teacher capacity refers to the perceived abilities, skills, and expertise of teachers to grow, progress, or improve (www.edglossary.org).

Teacher identity: To define teacher identity, teaching must first be understood from a sociocultural lens in which teaching is not merely a cognitive or technical procedure but a complex, personal, and social set of embedded processes and practices that concern the whole person. A teacher's identity thus reflects that "whole person across social contexts, which continually reconstructs their views of themselves in relation to others, workplace characteristics, professional purposes, and cultures of teaching" (Olson, 2008, p. 4).

Transformation: Transformation means the "re-evaluating of prior worldviews and developing a different frame of reference from which to examine the world" (King, 2004; p. 162). Within this study, teachers experienced a transformation that resulted in deep change of tacitly acquired frames of reference (teaching identity) that determined, filtered, and predicated the way they thought, felt, decided, and acted (Marsick & Mezirow, 2002).

Organization of this Dissertation

The chapters that follow illustrate how teachers experienced a reflective coaching approach as professional development, and what elements of this approach were instrumental in their learning and change in practice. Chapter 2 sets the stage for

exploring my research questions by reviewing the literature on job-embedded

professional development; the models, theories, roles and responsibilities affiliated with

instructional coaching; the impact of coaching on teacher practice, efficacy, learning,

change, and transformation; and the empirical research on coaching relationships and

teacher perceptions of coaching. In Chapter 3, I describe the theoretical perspective of

constructivism guiding this research and the research methods related to participant

selection, data collection, data analysis, trustworthiness, and limitations. In Chapter 4, I

describe the context where this research took place as well as give historical

background of the policies that impacted this research. This includes the local district

context, as well as the larger state context. The research findings are presented in

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 and are organized based on the research questions. The first

research question regarding teachers' experiences with the reflective coaching

approach is addressed in Chapters 5 and 6 which present individual vignettes and

analysis of each participant. The second research question regarding specific elements

of this coaching approach and model that contributed to teacher learning and change in

practice is addressed in Chapter 7.   Finally, Chapter 8 discusses the key findings of this

research and considers the implications of this research for educators and researchers

interested in coaching as professional development.

CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Drawing on a constructivist tradition of research, this study was designed to understand how teachers experienced and made sense of a reflective coaching approach, and how they perceived that this approach impacted teacher learning and change in practice in classrooms. Situated within a climate of evaluation and accountability within schools, this research focused on the elements of this method of job-embedded professional development and how teachers experienced the process. Research questions were designed to explore the multifaceted rudiments related to coach and teacher relationships, the coaching approach and model, and the outcomes of coaching. Therefore, the foundation for this study lies in literature pertaining to the need for coaching as professional development; the relationships between teacher learning, change and growth within this professional development model; theoretical and empirical studies examining coaching and its impact on teaching and student outcomes, and the contextual factors related to coaching and its impact.

In this chapter I review the literature surrounding school-based coaching. First, I examine the current climate of schools and discuss the origins and development of the job-embedded professional development movement as well as specific types of teacher learning within that movement. I then introduce coaching and describe theories and models of coaching, coaching roles, responsibilities, and relationships, and the impact of coaching on teaching and student learning. Finally, I share empirical research that has been conducted on coaching elements and approaches, and relay how my study contributes to this growing research body.

The Era of Accountability

> Over the past generation, a split has occurred between professional educators and the public officials who control the purse strings. In effect, there are two competing paradigms of education reform at work simultaneously and not always harmoniously. Professional educators and their allies in higher education continue to focus on inputs, whereas policymakers representing the public seek accountability for results. (Ravitch, 2002, p. 16)

As Dianne Ravitch, noted educational historian and policy expert states above, the American public school system is immersed in an era of accountability and standards-based reform, of which policymakers, district and school leaders, teachers, students and parents are grappling with issues involving teacher quality and performance, student assessment and achievement, equality and equity within schools, and the most diverse student population in the world.

With the passing of The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2000, known as *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB*),* school systems became focused solely on school reform, and were required to implement significant changes in their educational programs (Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009; Ravitch, 2006). According to Nichols, Glass, and Berliner (2006), the goal of NCLB was ambitious, and appeared costly. NCLB policies aimed to bring all students up to a level of academic proficiency within a 15-year period through a system defined by sanctions and rewards that would be applied to schools, teachers, and students in the event they did not meet these goals. The vision of our nation's educational reform agenda required teachers to be accountable for their teaching, and construct new classroom roles and expectations regarding student outcomes (Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin, 1995). Increased accountability for school systems placed a heavy burden on school and

district administrators to improve teacher quality as well as provide consistent evidence of improved student achievement. As Killion and Hirsch (2012) stated:

> The introduction of standards-based education held great promise. Yet today, more schools than ever fall short of meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) . . . and the decline in the past five years in the percentage of schools meeting AYP provides evidence that more must be done to improve student learning. (p. 6)

As a result of NCLB, teachers and teacher performance came under heavy fire and have been the focus of school change and reform for the last two decades (Danielson, 2009; Darling-Hammond, Amerein-Beardsley, Haertel, & Rothstein, 2011; Marzano, 2007). Research showing that student learning is affected by a considerable number of variables such as school size, class size, administrative organization, social and economic factors of the student's home environment, and school climate is abundant (Anderson, 1982; Centra & Potter, 1980; Darling-Hammond, Wise, & Pease, 1983; Darling-Hammond et al., 2011). However, the emerging consensus of policymakers placed teaching quality as the key component to school success, and thus the direct relationship between teacher quality and effectiveness and student learning was focused upon in depth (Danielson, 2009; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Darling-Hammond et al., 2011; Fullan, 2007; Goodlad, 2004; Hallinger, Heck, & Murphy, 2013; Marzano, 2003; Sanders, Ashton, & Wright, 2005; Weglinsky, 2000). Danielson (2009) states, "The single most important factor under the control of the school influencing the degree of student learning is the quality of teaching. Thus, a school committed to the improvement of learning must be equally committed to improving the quality of teaching" (p. 3).

With a broad shift from issues of finance and program management to specific concerns about the quality of teaching and teachers, teacher learning and evaluation

assumed increased importance (Darling-Hammond et al., 2011; Hallinger et al., 2013;

Walsh, 2012). Evaluation systems that previously treated all teachers equally with

regard to ability, pay scale, and experience were demonstrated to do little to help

teachers improve or support personnel decision-making (Darling- Hammond et al.,

2011; Walsh, 2012). Due to the introduction of required evidence of student

improvement based upon standardized testing with NCLB, value-added models (VAM)

of teacher evaluation were introduced which included measures of student growth in

learning to determine teachers' effectiveness in the classroom (Darling-Hammond et al.,

2011; Hallinger et al., 2013; Walsh, 2012). With the creation of Race to the Top (RttT)

federal educational grants in 2010, federal policies required educators to develop and

implement "rigorous teacher evaluation systems that assess teacher effectiveness using

student learning as at least one of the multiple measures" in combination with "job-

embedded professional development" (Coggshall, Rasmussen, Colton, Milton, &

Jacques, 2012, p. 1). But as these researchers point out in their evaluation, these

policies made no explicit connection between teacher evaluation and continued teacher

growth and development, thus leaving the method of implementation between these

concepts unclear for school leaders.

The link between teacher evaluation, teacher learning, and improved student

outcomes was claimed, but lacked coherence with inconsistent policies and little

definition or direction for district and school leaders. Principals and other evaluators

lacked the specific training and knowledge to identify areas of needed development for

teachers from evaluations, and thus were inept in providing recommendations for

teacher growth and instructional improvement (Goe, Biggers, & Croft, 2012).

Continuing this inconsistency was the fact that little research identified how teachers learned, or in which ways teachers should be taught new instructional strategies to effectively improve their practice (Coggshall et al., 2012). Thus, the investigation into teacher professional learning was essential to improve teacher quality in the classroom.

A New Paradigm of Professional Development

Many scholars identified the continuing development and learning of teachers as key to improving the quality of schools (Desimone, 2009; Putnam & Borko, 2000), and as a result, creating effective professional development for educators has become integral in reforming schools and improving student learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman & Yoon, 2001; Guskey, 1995). In recent years, more than 40 states have adopted standards calling for effective professional development for all educators accountable for results in student learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009) in response to research pointing to teacher quality impacting student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Guskey, 2000).

As professional development has moved to the forefront of school reform, a growing body of research on effective professional development models focused on best teaching practices and improved student results has taken shape (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). Traditional professional development opportunities, often in the form of one-stop workshops, conferences, university courses, or lectures conducted by experts in the field (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996; Knight, 2007) were falling far short of creating powerful teacher learning. These conventional forms of professional development became increasingly unpopular with educators because workshops were led by unconnected outside experts, provided one-size-fits-all strategies to use, and offered no follow-up or support for classroom implementation

(Killion & Harrison, 2006; Russo, 2004). According to Russo (2004), what these traditional models of professional development lacked was the close connection to teachers' classroom work.

These transmission models of professional development were criticized for lack of respect of teachers' knowledge and skills, lack of connection to daily classroom practice and student learning, and lack of sustainability and impact on school improvement (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Fullan, 2007; Killion & Hirsch, 2012; Knight, 2006; Weglinksy, 2000). Thus, Learning Forward (formerly the National Staff Development Council) advocated for a powerful new definition of professional development based upon "a comprehensive, sustained, and intensive approach to improving teachers' and principals' effectiveness in raising student achievement" (Hirsch & Killion, 2009, p. 12). By offering internal school support and intensive, sustained professional learning, many researchers advised that job-embedded professional development would improve instruction, and thus contribute to improved learning outcomes for students and school wide improvement (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon & Birman, 2002).

In our current educational climate with the recent adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) by 46 states in 2010 and Race to the Top policies and funding, professional development researchers caution against traditional professional development approaches. These scholars argue that comfortable, familiar approaches to professional learning such as short-term awareness building sessions or one-time workshops on implementation will fall far short of the intense, practical, content-focused professional learning needed to realize the promise of all students (Killion & Hirsch,

2012). In the next section, specific features of quality professional development as described in the literature will be presented, as well as a definition of job-embedded professional development.

Job-Embedded Professional Development

While research that has demonstrated a causal link between professional development and student achievement is scant (Guskey & Yoon, 2009), there are several examples of effective elements of professional development outlined in the literature (e.g. Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2001; Darling- Hammond et al., 2009; Desimone, 2009; Garet et al., 2001; Guskey, 1995; Knight, 2004, 2006, 2007; Webster-Wright, 2009). In Weglinky's (2000) analysis of National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) data, he asserted that professional development was a key factor in predicting student achievement. By studying data gathered from more than 15,000 math and science teachers in which teacher inputs (i.e. years of experience, postgraduate education, and number of undergraduate hours in the subject taught), teaching practices, and professional development were measured variables affecting student performance, students in classes that were taught by teachers who received professional development in working with different student populations outperformed their peers by 40% on the NAEP (Weglinksy, 2000).

Additionally, in their research synthesis of professional development, Guskey and Yoon (2009) determined that workshops or training combined with follow-up learning sessions was essential to the success of professional development effectiveness:

> Educators at all levels need just-in-time, job-embedded assistance as they struggle to adapt new curricula and new instructional practices to their unique classroom contexts . . . and virtually all of the studies that showed positive improvements in student learning included significant amounts of

structured and sustained follow-up after the main professional
development activities. (p. 497)

While research has stated that there is no single approach to effective professional

development that produces consistent results (Guskey & Yoon, 2009; Desimone, 2009),

there are certain features that are considered essential for teacher and student learning

and growth.

Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) established benchmark characteristics

for this new paradigm of effective professional development that must "focus on

deepening teachers' understanding of the processes of teaching and learning and of the

students they teach" (p. 82), which are as follows: (1) It must engage teachers in

concrete tasks of teaching, assessment, observation, and reflection that illuminate the

processes of learning and development; (2) It must be grounded in inquiry, reflection,

and experimentation that are participant-driven; (3) It must be collaborative, involving a

sharing of knowledge among educators and a focus on teachers' communities of

practice rather than individual teachers; (4) It must be connected to and derived from

teachers' work with their students; (5) It must be sustained, ongoing, intensive, and

supported by modeling, coaching, and the collective solving of specific problems of

practice; and (6) It must be connected to other aspects of school change.

In 2011, Learning Forward created specific standards for professional learning

that would "increase educator effectiveness and results for all students" (Killion &

Hirsch, 2012, p. 8). These standards encompass research and evidenced-based

practices that define the critical attributes of effective professional learning to build

educator capacity and increase student results, and are divided into seven categories:

learning communities, leadership, resources, data, learning designs, implementation, and outcomes (Killion & Hirsch, 2012).

Echoing these standards, the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (Croft, Coggshall, Dolan, Powers, & Killion, 2010) described the essential elements of job-embedded professional development (JEPD), as well as the necessary conditions and supports needed for this professional learning to occur. According to their issue brief, Croft et al. (2010) define job-embedded professional development as, "teacher learning that is grounded in day-to-day teaching practice and is designed to enhance teachers' content-specific instructional practices with the intent of improving student learning" (Hirsch, 2009, as cited in Croft et al., 2010, p. 2). JEPD is a shared, ongoing process that is rooted locally, aligned with state standards and local education agency and school improvement goals, and makes a direct connection between learning and application, requiring active teacher involvement in cooperative, inquiry-based work (Croft et al., 2010).

Theories of Teacher Learning within Job-Embedded Professional Development

Inquiry-driven, learner-centered methods of professional development, such as professional learning communities (PLCs), critical friends groups (CFGs), practitioner research, lesson study groups, and school-based coaching, are considered the next generation of professional development to reform schooling and promote student achievement. These methods of professional development promote the creation of opportunities for teachers to engage as learners, build practical pedagogical knowledge, and co-create new ideas of practice in context in a collaborative setting (Nelson & Slavit, 2008; Putnam & Borko, 2000).

Specific types of knowledge are created and utilized within these professional development formats. Marilyn Cochran-Smith and Susan Lytle (1999, 2009) differentiated between these types of knowledge crucial for successful professional development, stressing that by incorporating knowledge *for, in* and *of* practice, professional development can lead to positive and real change for teachers and students. Knowledge-*for*-practice is referred to as formal knowledge and theory for teachers produced by university-based researchers in order to improve teacher practice. Knowledge-*in*-practice is considered practical knowledge that is embedded in classroom practice and is relayed by expert teachers in order to deepen knowledge and expertise from those that exhibit best practices in the classroom. It is knowledge-*of*-practice that is the focus of reformists to create change in classrooms. This type of knowledge cannot be dispersed into formal or practical knowledge definitions, but is instead generated by teachers themselves who use their classrooms as internal investigation sites to create local, context-specific research and theory, and connect that with larger social and political issues (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009).

Framed with these types of knowledge, Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009) described a grounded theory of action known as *Inquiry as Stance*, which positions the role of practitioners and practitioner knowledge as "central to the goal of transforming teaching, learning, leading, and schooling" (p. 119). For these authors, the concept of stance is taken not in the literal sense of body posture, but instead defined as the "position teachers and others who work in inquiry communities take towards knowledge and its relationship to practice" (p.120). This concept of Inquiry as Stance thus refers to a comprehensive perspective of teachers in the way they "see" and interpret knowledge,

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enact practice, and develop intellectually. These scholars situate that this stance

provides an inquiry-based grounding for teachers within changing cultures of school

reform (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999).

Before the job-embedded professional movement took hold, Schon (1983)

theorized two specific types of reflection within the professional learning of teachers

described as reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. Reflection-in-action is

"thinking on our feet," in which teachers look to experiences, connect those with

feelings, and theorize that practice *within use* (Smith, 2001, p.4). In other words,

teachers are reflecting on strategies, theories, and actions while they are teaching and

adjusting their teaching because of this reflection. Teachers use this information to

build new understandings and inform actions in a situation that is unfolding. As Schon

(1983) describes,

> The practitioner allows himself to experience surprise, puzzlement, or
> confusion in a situation which he finds uncertain or unique. He reflects on
> the phenomenon before him, and on the prior understandings which have
> been implicit in his behavior. He carries out an experiment which serves to
> generate both a new understanding of the phenomenon and a change in
> the situation. (p. 68)

Reflection-on-action is reflection that occurs after a teaching encounter has happened.

The act of reflecting after the fact allows practitioners to explore the encounter that took

place, and develop questions and ideas about those activities (Smith, 2001).

It is the relationship between reflection in and on action that is most significant.

When teachers reflect in action, they draw on theories, metaphors, and images, but

those processes cannot be repeated. As teachers think and act, questions arise that

cannot be answered in the present. Reflection on action then allows teachers to "draw

upon the processes, experiences and understandings generated through reflection in

action. In turn, things can be left and returned to" (Smith, 2001, p. 150). Therefore, Schon encouraged teachers to reflect constantly, and from these reflections both during and after teaching, change in practice would occur.

Reflection is also tied to the concept of praxis, which is often linked to Paulo Freire (1970) and has many implications for teacher learning. Freire defined praxis as "the reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it" (p. 36), and situated this concept within the revolutionary ideal of struggle and critical action. Within Knight's (2007) coaching framework, he defined praxis as "the act of applying new ideas to our own lives, in which teachers have the ability to explore, prod, stretch, and recreate whatever they are studying" (p.49). Gadotti (1996) explained praxis as a unity between practice and theory, in which the consequence of action is thought about through the theory framing that action. While many theorists have determined what praxis can be, this concept is considered a pillar in inquiry-based learning for teachers.

Another aspect of deep teacher learning explored in the literature is the concept of transformation, but the theory and definitions vary. Transformation has been defined as many things within educational literature. King (2004) defined transformation as the "revaluating of prior worldviews and developing a different frame of reference from which to examine the world" (p. 162). Transformative Learning Theory (Mezirow, 1991; Cranton, 1994; Kitchenham, 2008; Taylor, 1998) refers to "learning that results in deep change or a transformation of our tacitly acquired frames of reference, composed of sets of assumptions and expectations, that determine, filter, and often distort the way we think, feel, decide, and act" (Marsick & Mezirow, 2002, p. 1). Transformative learning is a way of processing, examining, questioning, validating, and revising perceptions of

our experiences as adult learners. In order for adults to change or transform their thinking, they must problematize their meaning perspectives and critically reflect on assumptions supporting that problematic belief (Cranton, 1994). Within the realm of professional development and teaching, this transformation means a change or adaption of a person's teaching identity, and thus, through that change of thinking and being, a change in acting, or practice, results. The teacher uses a completely different frame of reference to view the world, and often adds greater complexity and new lenses to previously held ideas.

Reorganizing professional development to adhere to these fundamental shifts in teacher learning and practice has created great interest in new models that focus on improving teaching, teacher learning and student learning and are explicitly tied to teachers' ongoing work (Neufeld & Roper, 2003). With the continued emphasis on teacher evaluation and improved student achievement in schools, the connection of providing job-embedded learning and collaboration to create change and improve instruction is essential (Coggshall et al., 2012; Goe et al., 2012). One such model that links the evaluation-based need of teacher development to methods for improved instructional outcomes is school-based coaching, which is being implemented widely in school districts' across the country (Borman & Feger, 2006; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Knight, 2006; Neufeld & Roper, 2003).

Coaching as Professional Development

Coaching has been identified as a "form of inquiry-based learning characterized by collaboration between individual, or groups of, teachers and more accomplished peers that involves professional, ongoing classroom modeling, supportive critiques of practice and specific observations" (Poglinco, Bach, Hovde, Rosenblum, Saunders &

Supovitz, 2003, p. 1). According to this general coaching definition from Deussen et al.

(2007), coaches are:

> Skilled teachers or former teachers who step out of their classrooms to help teachers become more thoughtful and more effective in their instruction, and work side-by-side in the classroom, providing job-embedded professional development through observing, modeling, providing feedback, and planning lessons according to the needs and goals of individual teachers. (p. iii)

In schools, both evaluation and professional development, such as coaching, are needed, but often the connection between the two is blurred. Evaluation should not be a prelude to coaching, and coaching should not be a consequence of evaluation, but yet, this often is the case (Darling-Hammond et al., 2011; Tschannen-Moran & Tschannen-Moran, 2011). Tschannen-Moran and Tschannen-Moran (2011) advocate for a serendipitous balance of evaluation and coaching, in which evaluation guarantees that all teachers meet standards of competent performance, and then coaching invites teachers to grow beyond those minimums to more fully realize their potential and improve student learning. These authors call for a coaching model that is teacher-centered, in which the coaches take off the expert hat and put teachers in charge of their own professional learning.

In the literature, coaching has been heralded as effective professional development that promises to improve instruction in schools (Knight, 2006; Neufeld & Roper, 2003) as well as create positive outcomes in combination with other professional learning strategies (Bean et al., 2010; Deussen et al., 2007; Walpole et al., 2010). Tschannen-Moran and Tschannen-Moran (2011) describe the current accountability-based school climate and teachers' needs within schools:

> Teachers and school leaders alike yearn for schools that embody more adaptive responses, open communication, collaborative relationships, and

a culture of learning that extends beyond the students to include all stakeholders . . . to that end, schools are increasingly looking to coaching and other relationship-based professional development strategies to improve the skills and performance of teachers and school leaders. (p. 12)

While coaching has been mentioned in the literature for over three decades, empirical research on this professional development model is described as "thin to non-existent" (Killion & Harrison, 2006, p. 12) and results of the impact of coaching on teaching has been promising, but still needs further exploration (Borman & Feger, 2006; Cornett & Knight, 2008; Killion & Harrison, 2006; Knight, 2007).

The Evolution of Coaching in U.S. Schools

In 1969, frustrated with incapacity to transform new teachers' practices, two Harvard university supervisors, Goldhammer and Cogan, borrowed the term 'clinical supervision' from the medical profession, and created a model of professional development that incorporated a combination of classroom observations, planning, and reflection (Krajewski & Anderson, 1980). This process included a pre-observation conference, classroom observation, data analysis and strategy, conference, and post-conference analysis, and involved a face-to-face relationship between the supervisor and teacher (Krajewski & Anderson, 1980). While this model was helpful in terms of providing new pathways for transforming teacher practice, many of the new teachers felt that it was too evaluative and felt pressure to conform to supervisor's expectations (Krajewski & Anderson, 1980). During the 1970s and 1980s, researchers and educators began to express their frustration with traditional, disjointed forms of professional development, and called for more long-term, job-embedded professional development opportunities for teachers (Denton & Hasbrouck, 2009).

Considered to be the seminal research on coaching, Bruce Joyce and Beverly Showers (1982) explored the promise of peer coaching as ongoing professional development to increase effectiveness of instruction. These researchers argued that coaching provided companionship, feedback, prompted the analysis of application of knowledge to instruction, and encouraged teacher modification to meet students' needs when practicing new methods of instruction. In their initial groundbreaking study, Joyce and Showers formulated a hypothesis that coaching, following the initial training of teaching strategies, would result in greater transfer of knowledge and skill implementation than training alone, and this hypothesis was confirmed (Showers, 1982; Showers, 1984). These researchers also determined that when coaching accompanies the presentation of theory, demonstration and practice, much more of what is learned is transferred into teachers' classroom practice (Showers, 1982).

From this research, Showers (1985) theorized that coaching had several purposes.   First, coaching should build communities of teachers who continuously engage in the study of their craft. This sentiment is echoed in the literature (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2001; Knight, 2007; Neufeld & Roper, 2003) and aligns with effective professional development strategies. Secondly, coaching should develop a common language and set of common understandings necessary for collegial study of new knowledge and skills, creating a discourse for common practice and inquiry into instruction.   Finally, coaching should provide a structure for follow up to training that is essential for acquiring new teaching skills and strategies.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, coaching had only a limited implementation in schools (Denton & Hasbrouck, 2009), in the form of reading specialists and teachers

funded by Title I federal funding to provide follow-up coaching support to classroom teachers (Dole, 2004). Beginning in 1999, the U.S. government passed the Reading Excellence Act (REA), which granted funds to help low-income schools improve reading instruction and provide early intervention to children with reading difficulties (Denton & Hasbrouck, 2009). Reading coaches were provided to scaffold instruction directly to students, and work with teachers to improve reading instruction.

With the passing of NCLB in 2000 and the reauthorization in 2002, the Reading First Initiative (RFI), with similar goals to the REA, provided explicit funding for coaching "to provide sustained and effective professional development support to teachers" (Denton & Hasbrouck, 2009, p. 154). As NCLB federal funding provided the opportunity for coaching as job-embedded professional development in subject areas such as math and science, the literature relays the immense disparity in the different forms of coaching models and the lack of consistent coaching theory and empirical research to prove coaching effectiveness (Denton & Hasbrouck, 2009). With the roles and definitions of coaching unspecified in context, the rush to implement coaching before strong theoretical models or well-defined job descriptions were in place caused a great deal of confusion related to the effectiveness of this professional development (Deussen et al., 2007).

Coaching Theory

Coaching has been framed in several theoretical contexts within the literature with regard to teacher learning, teacher change, and specific coaching stances and epistemologies. In their literature review on instructional coaching, Borman and Feger (2006) describe theories that relate to coaching roles and teacher change. They report that several studies position coaching as a consultative, collaborative exchange, where

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knowledge is co-constructed between coach and teacher. This coaching stance is evident with studies framed with sociocultural theories of learning (e.g. Gallucci, Van Lare, Yoon, & Boatright, 2010; Heineke, 2013; Teemant et al., 2011) where teachers and coaches frame learning as a social, shared process (Vygotsky, 1978). The authors' report other coaching stances stemming from a behavioristic knowledge transfer from expert to novice, such as cognitive apprenticeship (Costa & Garmston, 1997) or using coaching to confront and remediate specific performance issues in the implementation of large-scale professional development efforts (Russo, 2004). Knight's (2007) theoretical framework for instructional coaching, referred to as the partnership approach to professional learning, comprises seven principles that create a foundation of collaborative learning between the coach and teacher.   These principles are grounded in disciplines such as adult education, business, psychology and cultural anthropology and synthesized from concepts of knowledge transfer, knowledge development, and human interaction from theorists such as Paulo Freire and Michael Fullan (Cornett & Knight, 2009).

Theories of teacher change are also represented within coaching literature (Veenman & Denessen, 2001; Zwart, Wubbels, Bergen & Bolhuis, 2007), grounded in the proposition that changes in practice are more likely to take place after positive student outcomes occur (Guskey, 1995). This theoretical framework therefore postulates a coaching focus on enhancing teacher practice directly related to student learning outcomes in order to change teacher beliefs (Borman & Feger, 2006).

Coaching Models

There are a variety of coaching models, and even more ways in which coaching has been enacted in various milieus within school systems (Taylor, 2008), but a general

consensus of what coaching entails is evident in the literature. Borrowed from two worlds interrelated to education, coaching derives from the world of athletics and also from research on the transfer of skilled training (Joyce & Showers, 1996) and is geared towards the increase of effectiveness and acceptability of staff development (Kowal & Steiner, 2007; Knight, 2006; Taylor, 2008). Within coaching literature, there have been studies both on specific models of coaching (Cornett & Knight, 2009; Costa & Garmston, 1997; Deussen et al., 2007; Kowal & Steiner, 2007; Veenman & Denessen, 2001) as well as different theoretical frames with which coaching is derived and which predicates how coaches position themselves to teachers (Borman & Feger, 2006; Deussen et al., 2007; Dozier, 2006; Ippolito, 2010; Knight, 2007; Kowal & Steiner, 2007; Neufeld & Roper, 2003).

Cornett and Knight (2009), in their literature review of over 250 studies on coaching, discuss the most prevalent models studied: cognitive coaching, peer coaching, literacy coaching, and instructional coaching. All of these coaching models have specific features and goals, yet have similarities such as the deep respect for professionalism of teachers, emphasis on dialogic conversation, and acknowledgement of the importance of student learning (Cornett & Knight, 2009).

Cognitive Coaching. Cognitive coaching is a process developed by Arthur Costa and Robert Garmston (1984) as a way for principals to support teachers' thinking and self-directedness (Ellison & Hayes, 2009). Though categorized as behavioristic in theory by Borman and Feger (2006), this model of coaching is defined as a process in which the thought process of teachers are what drive practice, and is not rote or directive, but instead uses structures for supporting the teacher's own planning,

reflecting, and problem resolving (Ellison & Hayes, 2009; Costa & Garmston, 1997). This type of coaching has been linked with increased student outcomes, growth in teacher efficacy, and impact on teacher thinking in ways that cause more complex, reflective practice (Edwards & Newton, 1995; Ellison & Hayes, 2009).

Peer Coaching. Peer coaching, in which teachers provide modeling and practice to fellow teachers, has been researched (Blase & Blase, 2006; Bush, 1984; Joyce & Showers, 1982; Poglinco et al., 2003; Showers, 1982, 1984; Truesdale, 2003) and proven to enhance teacher learning. Joyce and Showers (1996) proved that members of peer coaching groups exhibit greater long-term retention of new strategies, and more appropriate use of new teaching models over time. Their research also stated that peer coaching contributed to higher student outcomes whose teachers were peer-coached (Showers, 1984). The principle of peer coaching is based on peer coaching study teams planning and developing curriculum and instruction in pursuit of shared goals (Joyce & Showers, 1996). Therefore, peer coaches omit verbal feedback in exchange for common planning and analysis of data, and escape the evaluative or supervisory intentions sometimes affiliated with coaching. According to their peer coaching framework, Joyce and Showers (1996) advocate that peer coaches must consent to practice whatever change is being implemented, support one another throughout the process, and collect data about implementation and the effects on students. Other peer coaching studies (Ponglinco et al., 2003; Zwart et al., 2007) argue that this type of collegial professional development can help improve teacher practice through experimentation, observation, reflection, the exchange of professional ideas, and shared problem-solving.

Literacy Coaching. The essence of literacy coaching is similar to content coaching, which is described as the focus for teachers on relevant, important, rich content in order to improve learning (Toll, 2009). Literacy coaching, which is heavily focused on in the literature due to Reading First federal funding (Bean et al., 2010; Cantrell & Hughes, 2008; Deussen et al., 2007; Ippolito, 2010; Heineke, 2013; Neufeld & Roper, 2003; Poglinco et al., 2003; Toll, 2009), emphasizes the development of students' reading and writing strategies (Cornett & Knight, 2009). As defined by the International Reading Association (2004), a literacy coach is anyone who supports teachers in their daily classroom literacy instruction, and involves and array of behaviors including modeling, book studies, informal conversations, and examination of data (Cornett & Knight, 2009; Dole, 2004). With such a broad definition of responsibilities, literacy coaching looks different from context to context, which is noted in several literacy coaching studies (Cantrell & Hughes, 2008; Duessen et al., 2007; Poglinco et al., 2003; Neufeld & Roper, 2003) and considered a hindrance when considering coaching effectiveness on teacher instruction.

Instructional Coaching. Instructional coaching focuses on providing appropriate supports to teachers so they are able to implement scientifically-proven teaching practices in the classroom (Cornett & Knight, 2009; Kowal & Steiner, 2007; Knight, 2006, 2007, 2009). According to Kowal and Steiner (2007), three broad categories of skills are necessary as an effective instructional coach: pedagogical knowledge, content expertise, and interpersonal skills. These authors examined several case studies of individual coaching programs and teacher surveys, and determined of these three categories, interpersonal capabilities was the most frequently

mentioned characteristic, and was ranked higher than both content and pedagogical skills by coaches themselves. These researchers added that specific research on "specific techniques and competencies that contribute to more effective coaching" was greatly needed and could contribute to better preparation for coaches and definitions of effective coaching models (p. 13).

In their literature review of over 40 studies on instructional coaching, Borman and Feger (2006) state that activities most often associated with instructional coaching include: demonstrating and modeling lessons, observing instruction, co-teaching and co-planning lessons, providing feedback and consultation, promoting reflection, and analyzing student work and progress. While these activities are generally viewed as similar in the literature, the authors caution that while many researchers write of instructional coaching with a normative, fixed definition that is shared, there does not appear to be one in the literature. Differences in structural variation of instructional coaching, such as time allotted, voluntary verses mandatory participation, and organizational context of coaching appear widely throughout the literature.

Knight's (2007) partnership approach to instructional coaching is prevalent in coaching literature (Barry, 2012; Borman & Feger, 2006; Cornett & Knight, 2009; Knight, 1998, 2004, 2007; Knight & Cornett, 2009; Kowal & Steiner, 2007) and was created from several interrelated elements of professional development and research, including (a) the development and study of the theoretical framework for this approach, (b) a teacher survey on modeling, (c) teacher interviews and feedback, (d) teacher implementation, and (e) the iterative development of instructional coaching model over several years (Cornett & Knight, 2009). In these studies, this model has shown

significant differences of improvement in teacher satisfaction and engagement over traditional instructional coaching models (Knight, 2004). Because Knight's (2007) partnership philosophy of coaching formed the foundation for the coaching approach studied in this research, this philosophy will be described in more detail in the next chapter within this study's theoretical framework.

Joyce and Showers (1996), Barkley (2005), and Denton and Hasbrouck (2009) discuss other models of coaching such as technical coaching, collegial coaching, challenge coaching, and team coaching, stating that these different models vary in terms of focus, from concentrating on innovations in curriculum and instruction (technical and team coaching) to an aim more at improving existing practices (collegial and challenge coaching). Neufeld and Roper (2003) discuss ways in which coaches can support instructional improvement within systems by being a change coach, which supports whole-school organizational improvement, or a content coach, which focuses more exclusively on improving teachers' instructional strategies is specific content areas, such as mathematics or literacy. While both of these types of coaching models support whole-school improvement, these coaches also adjust their roles and responsibilities in light of progress or changes at their schools or districts. These coaching roles are therefore fluid and dependent upon system-wide support and collaboration. A further description of coaching roles and responsibilities found in the literature will be discussed in the next section.

Coaching Roles and Responsibilities

Within coaching literature, description of what coaches *do* are so disparate and varied that many researchers claim coaching to be a non-uniform intervention of professional development (Bean et al., 2010; Borman & Feger, 2006; Coburn & Woulfin,

2012; Cornett & Knight, 2008; Duessen et al., 2003; Nuefeld & Roper, 2003; Poglinco et al., 2003; Russo, 2004). In his review of school-based coaching, Russo (2004) states,

> Despite the apparent promise and newfound popularity of school-based coaching, experts say school leaders should think carefully before hopping on the coaching bandwagon. First, there are tremendous variations in what people call "coaching"- educators should be clear about their goals and expectations before making an investment in any type of coaching initiative. (p. 3)

In a study of the coaching model implemented in America's Choice Schools done by the University of Pennsylvania (Poglinco et al., 2003), researchers reported that coaches felt that a lack of description and clear definition of their roles made their jobs more difficult, contributed to misunderstandings with school administration and teachers, and created tensions within their coaching beliefs. The authors noted that an important lesson from the study was "a caution for researchers not to assume that 'coach' means only one thing- having a coach is not a uniform intervention . . . because there is a difference between being a coach and *doing coaching*" (p. 5).

Because of the myriad of tasks that can be associated with coaching, there is a further need to develop and describe coaching roles, responsibilities, activities and purposes. Specific to research on literacy coaching, many studies have focused on coaching activities (Deussen et al., 2007; Ippolito, 2010; Neufeld & Roper, 2003; Walpole et al., 2010; Veenman & Denessen, 2001). Deussen et al. (2007) analyzed how coaches allocated their time across tasks and understood and described the focus of their work, and distinguished five categories of coaches: data-oriented (facilitating the connection between data and instruction), student-oriented (work directly with students), managerial (keeping school systems such as meetings and paperwork running), teacher-oriented working with individual teachers, and teacher-oriented working with

groups of teachers (providers of direct professional development to teachers). These researchers determined that coaches with a teacher-oriented focus were the most engaged with the work of teaching and learning, and required the most professional development in this area. Another significant finding was that coaches who were worked individually with teachers spent less time focusing on data, while coaches who performed group coaching spent a significant portion of their coaching time focusing on data and assessments.

Killion and Harrison (2006) articulated the encompassing sphere of coaching by describing 10 different roles that coaches fill in their work, adding that some coaches fill all 10 roles. These roles are: data coach, resource provider, mentor, curriculum specialist, instructional specialist, classroom supporter, learning facilitator, school leader, catalyst for change, and learner. While these researchers advocate a balance of these roles, they also acknowledge that firm definitions of coaching roles are programmatic issues that many coaching programs fail to address. Multiple factors influence the balance among roles. They include coaches' job descriptions, their role expectations, the goals of the coaching program, the goals of a school's improvement plan, the context in which they work, the time of the school year, the experience of the coach, and the experience of the teacher (Killion & Harrison, 2006).

Bean et al. (2010) who studied Reading First coaches and how they rationalize and distribute their coaching time, discovered that coaches divided their time in order of importance to their coaching goals: working with teachers, planning and organizing that supported work with teachers, management or administrative tasks, school-related meetings and outreach to parents and community, and working with students in

assessment and instruction. Within these findings, the researchers also determined

that of these roles, coaches were most concerned with solving students learning

problems and less concerned with general improvements in teacher pedagogy, pointing

to the role of these literacy coaches as more student-centered than teacher-focused.

But Bean et al. (2010) also warned researchers about labeling coach behaviors:

> Categorizing coaches has its limitations. The process obscures the in-depth analyses of what coaches are actually doing within each broad category- the specifics of how and why they work with individual teachers, work on school-related activities, or plan and organize for their work. (p. 109)

These researchers claimed that from the tremendous variation of rationales coaches

gave for their work, coaching is indeed situational, and the school, district, context, the

nature of the teachers of the school, and coaches beliefs "profoundly affected the

decisions each coach made about how to spend their time" (p. 109).

Contextual Factors That Support Coaching

How does coaching fit in schools as professional development? In a book

chapter on instructional coaching and teacher leadership, Taylor (2008) examined a

chain of instructional improvement which juxtaposes instructional coaching with five key

factors that could moderate or influence the effect of coaching on school culture and

improvement: instructional leadership distribution, alternative instructional guidance,

larger school and district reform and policy, professional community norms, and

supporting resources. Of these five contextual components, Taylor advocates

supporting resources as the most important for coaching effectiveness, which he

defined as time, training, expertise, and support. Taylor advised that without these

elements, coaches would be unsuccessful. With the addition of complementary

leadership, coordinated professional development, and coherent reform policies,

coaches can effectively produce professional development and learning that will alter school culture and create change (Taylor, 2008). This causal chain relating professional development to student achievement has been the focus of many research studies (Bean et al., 2010; Deussen et al., 2007; Elish-Piper & L'Allier, 2010; Ross, 1992; Sailors & Price, 2010; Showers, 1982, 1984). Ippolito (2010) echoed these recommendations, stating the explicit sharing of leadership roles among teachers, coaches and principal collaborative relationships created the most positive gains from coaching.

In a study examining coaches' relationships to school leadership, power, and policy, Coburn and Woulfin (2012) highlighted the political roles of coaching with relation to teacher practice. Findings highlighted the difficult positioning coaches often face by fluctuating between school leadership, policy reform and supporting teachers' self-directed learning. The researchers stated that coaches interacted with teachers in political ways, involving assertion and negotiation of power in attempts to push or coax teachers to respond to policy by pressuring, persuading, and buffering teachers. Researchers suggested that coaches played a "gatekeeping" role, providing both advice and pressure and using both educative and political roles. This echoes school reform literature in which scholars advocate giving pressure and support to achieve instructional effectiveness (Fullan, 2007; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996).

Poglinco et al. (2003), in their study of America's Choice literacy coaches, cited the degree of administrative support to the coach by the principal as a critical facilitator or barrier to coaching effectiveness. The authors' related findings that the more the principal took ownership of the coaching model, and translated that tenure into specific

school-level action and follow-up with teachers, the easier the coach's job became. Ertmer et al. (2005) mirrored these findings, stating that administrative support at the district and building level was in important factor, and obstacles arose when a principal did not understand the coaching project, or conflicted with the coaches' on their perceptions of coaching purpose and goals. Many researchers noted that coaching must be combined with positive administrative leadership in order to be successful. If coaches are forced to balance the tension of "gatekeeping," the trust and rapport developed with teachers could be hard to accomplish.

The Impact of Coaching on Student Achievement

In an increasingly accountability-based climate in education, all professional development is ultimately measured by the end goal, which is improving student achievement in schools. To date, the findings regarding coaching and the impact on student achievement are mixed. Some researchers' caution that coaching is not a uniform intervention (Deussen et al., 2007; Poglinco et al., 2003) and thus, creating a study that "employs rigorous methodologies that could establish a causal link between coaching and student achievement" is problematic (Deussen et al., 2007, p. 7). Linking coaching to student outcomes is complex for several reasons. First, there are many factors that are likely to impact student achievement at any given time. Secondly, limitations on teacher and student data involve difficulty with self-reporting and the ability to track impacts of individual teachers and coaches. And finally, demonstrating the "causal chain" from professional development to student achievement with scientific methodology presents tremendous challenges for researchers due to varying school context, coaching models and roles, and leadership support (Garet et al., 2008; Kowal & Steiner, 2007).

Proponents of coaching argue there is good reason to expect that coaching can improve instruction, and therefore improve student achievement if implemented properly (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Knight, 2004; Neufeld & Roper, 2003; Showers, 1984). Of the studies reviewed, eight claimed a perceived link between coaching and student achievement (Bean et al., 2010; Elish-Piper & L'Allier, 2010; Deussen et al., 2007; Ross, 1992; Sailors & Price, 2010; Showers, 1982, 1984; Swartz, 2005), while only one study reported coaching had no correlation to improving student achievement (Garet et al., 2008).

The majority of studies cited focused on influences of literacy coaching and student reading achievement. In studies cited earlier in this paper, Ross (1992), Showers (1982, 1984), and Sailors and Price (2010) reported student achievement was higher in classrooms of teachers who had more contact with coaches.   In Bean et al., (2010), this mixed-method study investigated the work of 20 Reading First coaches in Pennsylvania to determine how coaches distribute their time and rationale for their work, and what relationships exist among coach qualifications, coach activities, and student achievement. The researchers detailed seven significant findings relating to coach qualifications, teacher perceptions, and student achievement. Time spent coaching teachers appears to be related to improvements in student achievement, but the researchers advise that this finding is not causal in any way. As stated in the discussion of the findings, "We found significantly higher percentages of proficient students and lower percentages of at-risk students in schools identified as receiving more coaching versus those receiving less coaching" (p.108).

Swartz (2005) established that literacy coaching contributed to achievement gains in reading in grades K-4 more than either a traditional professional program or a highly prescriptive reading program. This meta-analysis, which considered data regarding special needs students, English language learners, and Native American students, was conducted as a program evaluation for the Foundation of California Early Literacy Learning Model. The researcher analyzed information from publicly reported accountability measures, self-studies conducted by participating schools and districts, and student testing. Elish-Piper and L'Allier's (2010) investigation of the relationship between literacy coaching and student reading achievement in grades K-1 also reported positive outcomes of coaching on achievement. These researchers examined how literacy coaches spent their time and explored the relationship between the amount and content of coaching and student reading achievement at both the teacher level and the grade level. Findings indicated that the amount of time coaches spent observing in classrooms predicted student achievement gains in some classrooms. However, the authors cautioned that this information was self-reported, and that most coaches indicated they spent the majority of their time with new or weaker teachers, which possibly contributed to student gains in those classrooms. This research suggests that coaching might be most effective if directed towards teachers who need the most assistance in certain instructional areas.

Impact of Coaching on Teacher Practice

Does coaching impact teacher effectiveness in the classroom? With the purpose of coaching stated as "empowering teachers to incorporate research-based instructional methods into their classrooms" (Knight & Cornett, 2009, p. 2), many research studies have sought to answer this question. Looking across the sample of literature reviewed

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in this chapter, there were several categories of research regarding coaching and teacher efficacy, coaching roles and relationships, coaching and teacher leadership, and coaching and teacher learning and change.

Coaching and Teacher Efficacy

Due to potential links between teacher efficacy and student achievement being advocated as a means for school improvement (Ross, 1992), it is not surprising that studies that examine the impact of professional development strategies on teacher efficacy are widely called for in the literature (Cantrell & Hughes, 2008). As defined by Bandura (1997), self-efficacy is "the belief in one's abilities to accomplish desired outcomes, powerfully affect people's behavior, motivation, and their success or failure" (as cited in Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009, p. 230). Within Cornett & Knight's (2009) literature review on coaching, several cognitive coaching studies are cited to positively affect teacher efficacy (Alsieke, 1997; Edwards & Newton, 1995; Smith, 1997) yet these studies are criticized by the authors for lack of rigorous means of investigating and experimental methodologies.

Other studies have substantiated this same claim within their findings. For example, Cantrell and Hughes (2008) investigated the effects of yearlong professional development with coaching on sixth and ninth grade teachers' individual and collective efficacy for teaching literacy. This mixed-method study used statistical results from survey data from a sample of 22 teachers from eight schools, as well as qualitative interview data. Findings reported that teachers experienced growth in personal, general, and collective efficacy for literacy teaching over the course of a yearlong professional development project involving on-site coaching. "Coaching appears to provide support for teachers as they gain mastery experiences with new techniques . . .

which are the most important sources of information that contribute to a sense of efficacy" (Cantrell & Hughes, 2008, p. 120).

Both Neufeld and Roper (2003) and Galm and Perry (2004) studied the growth of instructional capacity, which researchers define to include teacher self-efficacy as a component, through coaching as professional development, examining both student achievement and teacher effectiveness. These longitudinal, mixed-method studies focused on student assessment scores and interview data with findings that supported coaching to positively affect both teacher effectiveness and student achievement. Content-specific instructional coaches were deployed to low-performing schools in Corpus Christi, Texas and San Diego, California through funding provided by the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation. These researchers found that, "Coaching has had a powerful and positive impact on the cultures of collegiality and collaboration, and on their commitment to improving their instruction" (Neufeld & Roper, 2003, p. 29).

In another example, a similar quasi-experimental study measuring the potency of specific professional development formats on self-efficacy during the implementation of new literacy instructional strategies, Tschannen-Moran and McMaster (2009) reported similar findings regarding positive effects of coaching on both teacher efficacy and strategy implementation. Four treatment groups based upon four different professional development formats (workshop, workshop plus modeling, workshop, modeling and practice, and all the previous professional development models with the addition of follow-up coaching) were used on a cluster sampling of 93 primary teachers (K-2) from nine schools in five different public school districts. Descriptive statistics were computed for each treatment group, and findings stated that the most powerful

professional development format, which included the combination of workshop, modeling, practice and follow-up coaching sessions, increased teachers' self-efficacy for both reading instruction and implementation of new literacy instructional strategies.

When reviewing the literature on coaching, only one study specifically examined coaching in relation to implementing strategies for educating diverse student populations and teacher efficacy. Teemant, Wink, and Tyra (2011) evaluated a performance-based coaching model intended to improve pedagogy and classroom organization for educating diverse learners. This coaching model promoted the use of the Standards for Effective Pedagogy (Tharp, Estrada, Dalton & Yamauchi, 2000 as cited in Teemant et al., 2011), which comprised five principles developed by the Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence considered essential for teachers working with diverse learners. Using a sociocultural lens, researchers used a descriptive, quantitative and longitudinal method to evaluate to what degree the fidelity and with what patterns coached teachers enacted the five principles from the Standards Instructional Model. The researchers' theoretical implications stated that following:

> The efficacy of coaching in general, and instructional coaching in particular are supported . . . and instructional coaching had a significant, positive, and generally linear impact on teacher growth across several cycles. Instructional coaching, therefore, leads to significant teacher change and provides 'existence proof' of teacher change in an area that has received limited attention to date. (p. 691)

Findings also included the importance of combining coaching with concrete and sociocultural performance targets, as well as evidence that coaches possess requisite, deep and nuanced understandings of coaching targets as well as personal attributes in order to accelerate growth of teacher performance. This study's importance resonates with the increasingly diverse student population in schools, and demonstrates the

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importance of coaching to prepare teachers for diverse populations with scientifically-based teaching strategies.

Not all research reviewed found a positive correlation with coaching and teacher efficacy. Ross (1992) studied the relationships between student achievement and teacher efficacy through interactions with assigned coaches in a sample of 18 middle school history teachers in 36 classes implementing a specific innovation in a Canadian middle school. Among the researchers hypothesis' was the correlation that "coaching and teacher efficacy would interact such that high-efficacy teachers would benefit more from coaching than low-efficacy teachers" (p.53). Using descriptive statistics, standardized student assessments, and open-ended questionnaires to measure efficacy, the researcher determined that the hypothesis was not confirmed. According to Ross, there was no interaction between coaching, teacher efficacy, and achievement. The author revealed this lack of correlation might be due to the fact that the coaching model examined in the study did not have peer observation, which is considered an integral piece of coaching behavior.

With similar findings, Gutierrez, Crosland and Berlin (2001), in a mixed-methods study, analyzed coaching videos, surveys and interviews of both teachers and coaches, and found that most coaching experiences did not help teachers to change their classroom activities and lessons in substantive ways. These researchers stated that coaching did not help the teachers understand when or how to choose one instructional strategy over another. In an international study in The Netherlands, Veenman and Denessen (2001) found that while teachers who had been coached expressed higher levels of confidence in teaching, they were not rated as more effective over those who

had not received coaching. While these studies show no connection with coaching to teacher efficacy, they do highlight positive attributes of the coaching process to teacher learning.

Coaching and Teacher Learning

As mentioned previously, Joyce and Showers (1982, 1984, 1995, 1996) seminal research on peer coaching examined teacher learning and application of professional development on the implementation of new teaching strategies.   In a quantitative randomized-control study, Showers (1982) provided 17 teachers with a workshop on three models of teaching, and then randomly assigned teachers to work with a coach. Findings revealed that non-coached teachers were less likely to implement the teaching strategy verses coached teachers. As a follow up, Showers (1984) studied the effects of coaching on student achievement with 21 teachers using similar study parameters. Findings from this study were even more significant due to student achievement scores from classrooms where teachers had been coached being higher than those teachers that had not. When reviewing this research, Joyce and Showers (1995) stated that when a combination of professional development components (theory, demonstration, practice, feedback, and coaching) are combined to create an intensive learning experience, then transfer, knowledge acquisition, and skill development are extremely high.

In a study by Sailors and Price (2010), two models of professional development were used on 44 teachers from grades two through eight in Texas to learn and teach their students cognitive reading strategies. This quantitative study, using a multilevel pretest-posttest comparison group design and modeling analytical strategy, determined the effects and the full intervention group (teachers who were coached during strategy

implementation) outperformed the partial intervention group (workshop only) in all teacher observations and student achievement measures. The authors discussed, however, several limitations to their study, including non-random sampling of volunteer participants to which stipends were offered, and no causal explanation of classroom gains due to coaching.

Knight and Cornett (2009), after completing their rigorous literature review on instructional coaching, determined that very little empirical evidence from studies supported the best practices stated for a variety of coaching approaches. The authors therefore investigated three claims of the reviewed coaching literature: (1) the extent to which teachers' use of new teaching practices could be encouraged through instructional coaching, (2) the effects on the quality of use of a new teaching routine when supported by instructional coaching, and (3) if effects of instructional coaching persist following termination of instructional coaching supports. Their empirical study, examining 50 teachers in six middle and two high school classrooms in an urban school district in Kansas, used mixed-methods to study a scientifically-based teaching routine, and whether instructional coaching used as an intervention increased the rate and quality of teachers' implementation of this teaching practice. The researchers reported two significant findings: (1) Teachers who were supported by an instructional coach used the teaching routine more than teachers who only attended the professional development workshop; and (2) Teachers who were supported by an instructional coach demonstrated observable teaching practices of high quality implementation for more frequently than those teachers not supported by a coach.

Heineke (2013), in her study on coaching discourse, examined the structural patterns of coaches' conversations with teachers, and reported that coaches dominated the conversations by initiating 70% of the exchanges and more than 80% of the suggestions for later actions. This study's findings also stated support for the effectiveness of coaching on teacher learning, providing sources of evidence within coaching discourse analysis. Coaching episodes with goals aimed at teacher learning provided specific patterns of discourse such as more teacher talk in which teachers were able to pause and reflect on their practices and actions. The researcher claimed that with less teacher talk, the potential for teacher learning is decreased in a coaching session.

Coaching and Teacher Change in Practice

A considerable amount of educational literature focuses on the theory of change, the change process, and the promotion of teacher learning through change in beliefs, behaviors, and cognition (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Fullan, 2007; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996; Guskey, 2002; Killion & Roy, 2009; Knight, 2007, 2009). As Knight (2007) stated,

> Change is difficult because it requires us to change our habits and create new routines. If teachers are emotionally fatigued by the pressing immediacy of their professional lives, overwhelmed by innovation overload, is it any surprise if they are not quick to pick up a practice and make it routine in a classroom? (p.5)

Providing personalized support such as coaching to teachers through the change process can have positive results, and is a critical aspect of professional development programs commencing reform (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996). Researchers agree that practices which provide follow-up support, modeling, and feedback can aid in bringing about the needed changes in teacher practice to improve student achievement (Barkley,

2005; Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2009; Joyce & Showers, 1996; Killion & Harrison, 2006; Knight, 2007, 2009).

In an international study examining the learning processes of teachers who took part in peer coaching, Zwart et al. (2007) characterized change in teacher learning under four domains: the personal domain, the domain of practice, the domain of consequence, and the external domain. Using Guskey's (2002) model of teacher change as a lens, in which professional development is linked to change in teacher practice only after seeing improvement in student learning outcomes, the researchers determined that patterns of change within reciprocal peer coaching do not have to necessarily include coaching activities, meaning teachers were not motivated to change by professional development activities or by the prospect of changes in student learning outcomes. Teacher learning seemed to start anywhere, and various pathways emerged to show that teachers underwent more cognitive changes than behavioral changes.

The subject of teacher transformation as a result of coaching is scarce in the literature. Most recently, in her mixed-methods study of instructional coaching for teachers of diverse learners, Teemant (2014) defines transformation as "significant quantitative growth in the use of the instructional model" (p.583) measured through instructional coaching interventions with urban elementary teachers. This longitudinal study investigated 36 urban teachers who participated in a 30-hour training and then seven coaching cycles after this training, and examined the efficacy and sustainability of outcomes from instructional coaching. This researcher found that these teachers experienced pedagogical transformation, and patterns of sustainability and attrition.

According to Teemant (2014), teachers' reported that their instructional practices became more sociocultural, their feelings of efficacy increased and they "became different teachers" (p. 596) who were less controlling and more welcoming of student participation as a result of instructional coaching.

In a qualitative study investigating the impact of literacy coaches on teacher change of values and beliefs, Vanderburg and Stephens (2010) analyzed the interviews of 35 teachers who participated in a statewide professional development effort in South Carolina focusing on literacy coaching in study groups to promote new reading strategies and practices. These researchers reported that from literacy coaching, teachers made a direct link from three aspects of the study group (collaboration, support, and knowledge base) to changes they made in their beliefs and practice. Of the changes discussed, teachers reported they first changed their beliefs, and then implemented change in their practice to include: a willingness to try new practices, use authentic assessments, to implement a more student-centered curriculum, and change beliefs based upon literature and resources provided by their coaches (Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010).

Similar to Guskey, when examining differentiated coaching techniques, Kise (2006) created a framework for coaching based upon the following assumptions: (1) Teachers form their practices around what they do best, (2) Their strengths are related to their own personalities and learning styles, (3) Their personalities and learning styles drive their core educational beliefs, and (4) Changing their teaching practices means changing those core beliefs. As a result of these assumptions, Kise (2006) created a process to coach teachers based upon their teaching beliefs and styles, which

comprises drawing a hypothesis about the teacher's natural style, identifying teacher beliefs, identifying the problem that teachers want to solve in their classroom, and then creating a coaching plan to fit those needs.

Coaching and Teacher Leadership

York-Barr and Duke (2004) define teacher leadership as "the process by which teachers, individually or collectively, influence their colleagues, principals, and other members of school communities to improve teaching and learning practices with the aim of increased student learning and achievement" (p. 287). In addition, Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) identify three broad functions of teacher leadership: leadership of students or other teachers, leadership of operational tasks, and leadership through decision-making and partnerships. It is this first function area in which coaching falls. Teachers who take on the role of coach are often viewed as sharing leadership with district office leaders, principals, and school administration (Galluci et al., 2010; Taylor, 2008). There is also evidence that coaches can act as mediators between district reform efforts and classroom practice (Galluci et al., 2010). Blase and Blase (2006), when studying peer coaching and consultation, concluded that peer consultation, which is a form of teacher leadership in which teachers give peer support to one another, heightened self-efficacy and reflection, as well as fostered improvement through collaboration within teacher practice.

Being a peer coach can position teachers in a complex web of challenges in which leadership is required to create change, resulting often in unwanted responsibility for teachers taking on a coaching role. Knight (2007) cautioned that when taking on the role of coach, avoiding leadership can be tempting, but costly. As he compared coaching leadership to recent leadership studies, he stated:

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When it comes to coaching, a different concept of leadership is more appropriate. Coaches need a paradoxical mix of humility and ambition, a desire to provide service that is at least as powerful as the drive to succeed, a deep understanding of the emotional components of leadership, and a recognition that a good leader must first be an effective teacher. (p. 197-198)

Other studies of both school and teacher success cite the value of teachers supporting teachers, and conclude that peer consultation, coaching, and teacher collaboration enhance teachers' self-efficacy and encourage a bias for action (Poekert, 2012). As York-Barr and Duke (2004) stated, "When accomplished teachers model effective instructional practices, mentor new teachers, and collaborate with colleagues . . . they break down teacher isolation and help create a more professional work environment" (p. 259). Coaching is intertwined with teacher leadership in that it can create teacher leadership as powerful professional development, but also be an outcome of teacher leadership through collaborative teacher learning and study (Murphy, 2005; Poekert, 2012).

It is important to note that while many studies reviewed for this chapter examined the impact of various coaching models on teaching, few empirical studies focus specifically on teacher perceptions and evaluations of coaching models and their effectiveness. Primarily in coaching literature, teacher perspectives are reported through teacher surveys, yet according to researchers (Bean et al., 2010; Deussen et al., 2007; Heineke, 2013; Horne, 2012; Ippolito, 2010; Knight, 2007, 2009) the importance of valuable teacher insight into coaching models, approaches, and specific coaching elements is needed to further examine the effectiveness of this professional development. The next section examines the small subset of empirical studies related

to teacher perceptions of coaching, coach-teacher relationships, and gaps in the literature presented within this research.

Research on Coaching Relationships and Teacher Perceptions

Due to the increased importance of teacher knowledge and insight into professional development models called for in the literature, a recent focus on teacher perceptions of coaching has taken shape in a small but growing subset of coaching research. These studies have focused on the actions and relationships of coaches with teachers (Bean et al., 2010; Coburn & Woulfin, 2012; Deussen et al., 2007; Ippolito, 2010), coaching discourse (Heineke, 2013), and coaching behaviors that changed teachers' beliefs and practice (Morgan, 2010; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010). There is a call in the literature for researchers to better understand how complex relationships between coaches and teachers relate to change in teacher practice (Deussen et al., 2007; Ippolito, 2010; Marsh et al., 2008; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010) and examine both the variation in how coaches position themselves to teachers, and the tone and content of coach interactions with teachers (Borman & Feger, 2006; Deussen et al., 2007; Killion, 2008; McKenna & Walpole, 2008; Veenman & Denessen, 2001).

Teacher Perceptions of Coaching

In a study investigating teachers' perceptions of literacy coaching, Vanderburg and Stephens (2010) sought to understand what teachers deemed most helpful from their coaches, and identify which teacher beliefs and practices changed because of their coaching experience. Citing to fill the gap in literature about "what coaches do and what teachers change" (p. 143), these researchers examined 35 teacher interviews from a previous coaching study (Stephens et al., 2011) in which authors focused on the impact of a three-year, K-5 Reading Initiative in South Caroline (SCRI) on teacher practice.

Using negative case analysis based upon the first study's focus, the authors' theorized that teacher perceptions of coaches could be identified through reverse patterns in the data, speaking about benefits of coaching and changes in their practice.

In their findings, Vanderburg and Stephens (2010) stated that teachers described the benefits of coaching as (1) Creating ways for teachers to collaborate, (2) Providing teachers with ongoing support, and (3) Exposing teachers to research-based teaching practices. Teachers reported changes such as willingness to try new strategies, using authentic assessments, and changing beliefs with provided resources from their coaching experience. The researchers also described the climate of literacy coaching reported within South Carolina schools:

> There is sometimes the tendency for coaches to try to get teachers to do particular things that the administration has deemed necessary and for teachers to be evaluated by their coach against those goals. In this study, coaches did not evaluate, but instead supported, encouraged, facilitated, demonstrated, and were accessible, and helped with a wide range of tasks. It seems reasonable for more schools and states to consider providing teachers with this kind of support that facilitates growth. (p. 157)

While this study supports the notion of positive collaboration between coach and teacher to create change within teacher beliefs and practice, the authors cite several limitations to their research. Due to the fact that this research study focused on a previous study in which research questions did not intentionally focus on the coach's role, specific limitations of the protocol questions not addressing this study's aim may have yielded different responses regarding teacher beliefs and perceptions. In addition, all teachers who were interviewed were volunteers, and responses from non-voluntary participants might have yielded different responses. Finally, coaches within this literacy initiative coached teacher study groups. Thus, focusing on individual coach-teacher connections was recommended for further study.

In a qualitative dissertation study focusing on the impact of job-embedded coaching on teacher practice, Morgan (2010) analyzed interviews and reflective journals of 11 teachers and three instructional coaches serving Title I elementary schools in Tennessee. This study's findings reported that factors that promoted coaches' influence included: (a) Teachers being active participants in the coaching process and in their own professional development, (b) Teachers willing to disclose their area of need, (c) Teachers and coaches being reflective and engaging in true dialogue, and (d) Coaches' demonstrating actions and possessing traits of what teachers perceived as an effective coach. The author also stated barriers to the coach-teacher relationship such as teachers' unwillingness and lack of investment in the process, and time constraints related to the coach's multitude of responsibilities. Though this study presents strong evidence of the value of coaching, the lack of rigorous description of research methodology, specifically data analysis procedures and evidence within the data set, obscures the relevance of these findings.

Coach-Teacher Relationships

Fundamental distinctions of coach-teacher relationships and coaching stances, termed as *responsive/reflective* coaching, and *directive* coaching, are described in the literature (Deussen et al., 2007; Dozier, 2006; Heineke, 2010; Ippolito, 2010; Killion, 2009; Knight, 2007; Steiner & Kowal, 2007) but specifically researched in only one study (Ippolito, 2010). *Reflective/responsive coaching* is based on coach-teacher relationships where the focus is teacher-centered, and engages both the coach and teacher in self-reflection (Ippolito, 2010). This approach allows the teachers' and students' needs to guide the coaching process, and creates a co-learning approach between the coach and teacher based upon inquiry into specific practices (Knight, 2006,

2007; Killion & Harrison, 2006). Coaches who use a reflective approach attempt to have teachers initiate the instructional conversation, and use cognitive techniques in order to move a teacher forward (Costa & Garmston, 1997; Deussen et al., 2007; Knight, 2007). Directive coaching is characterized by coaches who act as experts and assert themselves when working with teachers in particular ways. These coaches provided direct recommendations or sometimes mandates about needed teacher changes, or explicit directions or remediation in an area of instruction (Deussen et al., 2007).

Based on research on coach-teacher relationships, Joellen Killion (2009) described coaching stances that she coined as "coaching light" and "coaching heavy," in which the difference is in the coaches' perspective, beliefs, role decisions, and goals, rather than in what coaches *do*. Coaching light refers to "coaches being accepted, appreciated and being liked by their peers," (p. 22) while coaching heaving includes "high-stakes interactions between coaches and teachers, such as curriculum analysis, data analysis, instruction, assessment, and personal and professional beliefs and how they influence practice" (p. 23). While coaching light is similar in nature to reflective coaching, with commonalities such as coaches providing support, building relationships in which the coach is the advocate for the teacher, and providing resources to boost teacher confidence and trust, Killion (2009) states that this approach does a disservice to coaching because the coach cares more about the building of the relationship than the improvement of teaching and learning. Instead, she advocates coaching heavy as a preferred method to create teacher learning:

> Coaches ask thought-provoking questions, uncover assumptions, have
> fierce and difficult conversations, and engage teachers in dialogue about

their beliefs. This requires coaches to step out of their comfort zone, and ask their teachers to do the same in order to build teacher competence, capabilities, and courage to accomplish their goals. (p.24)

While Killion acknowledged the importance of the coaching relationship, she advocated for a more pressured coach-teacher interaction in order to produce teacher change in practice.

In a landmark study of Reading First coaches in five states (Alaska, Arizona, Montana, Washington, and Wyoming) commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education, Deussen et al. (2007), examined two research questions: (1) Who becomes a reading coach? And what background, skills, and qualifications do coaches bring to their jobs? And (2) How do coaches actually perform their jobs? How do they spend their time, and what do they see as their focus? (p. 2). This study collected survey data from 203 Reading First schools in five states, and researchers interviewed 77 coaches and more than 300 K-3 teachers at 77 schools. Using both a cluster analysis and a qualitative analysis, Deussen et al. (2007) categorized coaches as data-oriented, student-oriented, managerial, and teacher-oriented. Pertaining to coaching approach and focus, the authors were the first to describe directive and reflective coaching techniques according to both coach and teacher perceptions.   Directive coaches relayed goals including concern for fidelity of implementation of core reading programs, as well as remediation for teachers who were noted with weaknesses by either a coach or principal. Teacher perceptions of this approach were reported as mixed: some teachers did not appreciate being told what to do, while other teachers were thankful for direct, explicit messages from their coach.

Findings from Deussen et al. (2007) also revealed that coaches who took more of a reflective approach had teachers initiate conversations, and many used cognitive

coaching techniques to move teachers forward. However, in some cases, reflective coaches avoided providing direction in an attempt to minimize conflict. The authors conceded that many coaches used a balanced approach of both reflective and directive techniques with success, stating, "Coaches in this category tended to care very much about the teachers with whom they were working and had genuine respect for them, which helped them develop effective professional relationships with teachers" (p. 20).

Focusing more on coach roles and stances, Heineke (2013) examined the dichotomy of dominant and responsive coaching discourse by analyzing coaching conversations, and the factors involved in negotiating the tensions of specific coaching stances between coaches and teachers. Framed from a sociocultural perspective, this study engaged an interpretive discourse analysis on four coach/teacher dyads, in which the researcher examined audio-taped coaching conversations and both coach and teacher interviews to determine (a) In what contexts one-on-one coaching discourse occurs, and (b) What is the nature of that discourse between reading coaches and teachers during that conversation. Findings stated contextual factors such as roles and responsibilities of the reading coaches, the relationship between coach and teachers, and mandated testing emerged as prevalent in coaching conversations. Patterns of discourse went from coach dominance, to progressiveness in which coach and teacher both "stepped up" to extend talk, to responsiveness in which the coach let the teacher lead within conversations.

Overall, coaches were shown to dominate coaching conversations. Coaches who were responsive were defined as being sensitive, answering teachers' questions, and acknowledging their remarks. Yet within coaching episodes that could be labeled

directive (coach-led), Heineke (2013) stated that coaches were indeed responsive to teachers questions and feelings, stating that this complex relationship cannot be explained by a binary of directive or responsive, but an amalgamation of coaching approaches:

> A given episode of coaching could include one stance or multiple stances from various points along the coaching continuum, depending on the situation and the coaching goals, thus allowing the coach to scaffold in response to a teacher's zone of proximal development. (p. 429)

The author consequently advocated for the value of coaches to be aware of and use the complete continuum of coaching stances in order to best fit the needs of professional development for differing teachers, and called for more research on coaching stances that will best meet various needs, contextual factors, and coaching goals.

In the one study focusing specifically on directive and responsive coaching behaviors and coach-teacher relationships, Ippolito (2010) examined literacy coach perspectives in a qualitative study of nine coaches in an East Coast public school district. The purpose of the focus group interviews was to probe about responsive coaching (described as coaching for teacher reflection), directive coaching (described as coaching for the implementation of a particular practice), and balanced coaching (described as a combination of both stances) in interviews containing elementary, middle and high school literacy coaches with varied coaching experience. Observations of coach-teacher interactions were also conducted in eight of the nine participants. Using a constant comparative analysis method, the author identified three ways in which literacy coaches negotiated the tension between supporting teacher goals and encouraging particular literacy practices.

Ippolito (2010) reported that coaches shifting between responsive and directive moves within a single coaching session simultaneously supported and challenged teachers, and coaches viewed these two necessary approaches as integral in the same improvement effort. Secondly, the use of protocols to balance responsive and directive moves in coaching "force(s) transparency by segmenting elements of the conversation who boundaries otherwise blur: talking and listening, describing and judging, proposing and giving feedback" (p. 174). Finally, sharing leadership roles in order to align teacher, coach, and principal goals helped balance coaching roles by creating foundational supports for coaching efforts, and coaches, teachers and principals were continually working to build collaborative relationships.

As Ippolito (2010) stated, coaches continually searched for circumstances and mechanisms to provide the right amount of pressure and support while not damaging coach-teacher relationships. There was also a connection of coach experience and context related to these findings: coaches with more experience, or coaches positioned in schools in which trust and rapport with teachers has already been established, may be better positioned to provide a balance of responsive and directive coaching. This author echoed Fullan's (2007) suggestion of providing "combined pressure and support" (p. 160) in order to influence teachers' instructional practice. Ippolito (2010) called for further research regarding teacher perceptions of these coaching stances, and advocated for rich descriptions of how both coaches and teachers understand the balance of responsive and directive coaching moves, and how these moves impact teacher instruction.

Conclusion

The use of coaching as effective professional development to improve teacher learning and instruction, create positive outcomes for teachers and students, and ultimately improve student achievement, is well examined in research literature. This promising approach for accelerating professional learning in schools is supported by both educators and researchers, but often with descriptive and exploratory evidence and development due to the newness of these approaches (Cornett & Knight, 2009). While there is limited and mixed evidence of coaching on student achievement, the literature reviewed provided support of the power of coaching on teacher efficacy, improved teacher instruction, and the use of coaching in conjunction with hybrid forms of professional development to further enhance teacher learning and implementation of promising practices. Researchers also stated that initial accounts of coaching models and their effectiveness on teaching are valuable and needed. Coach and teacher feedback, informal data gathering, and the integration and testing of ideas help solidify future areas of research, and provide a vivid picture of this prevalent yet capricious model of professional development (Knight, 2004).

There is no study in the literature that specifically examines *teacher perceptions* of a specific coaching approach (directive, reflective, or balanced), nor is there specific information provided by teachers about which approach is the most suitable and helpful in evaluation-based settings. Thus, this study will contribute to the growing body of research by filling that gap. By examining teacher perceptions of a reflective coaching model based upon Knight's (2007) partnership coaching theory, this study seeks to contribute to the body of research on teacher learning, coaching, and effective professional development.

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CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODS

As determined from the literature on instructional coaching, there is a need to focus on how coaches and the teachers they coach understand specific coaching behaviors and stances, how these coaching relationships contribute to teacher learning, and what elements of these coaching approaches contribute to changes in teacher practice (Bean et al., 2010; Borman & Feger, 2006; Cornett & Knight, 2009; Dozier, 2006; Heineke, 2013; Ippolito, 2010; Knight, 2007, 2011; Neufeld & Roper, 2003). Related to this focus, a growing tension in current coaching contexts is the emphasis on teacher evaluation using specific instructional frameworks (e.g. Marzano, 2007; Danielson, 2007), and the incorporation of these evaluative frameworks into teacher professional development (Knight, 2006, 2007, 2009; Ross, 2011; Tschannen-Moran & Tschannen-Moran, 2011). This culture of evaluation with immediate focus on desired teaching behaviors may create expectations or experiences that are more consistent with a direct, prescriptive coaching approach (Coburn & Woulfin, 2012; Duessen et al., 2007; Ippolito, 2010), thus creating a dilemma for teachers and coaches regarding the purpose and outcomes of coaching, and the conflict related to reflective (teacher-driven) and directive (coach-driven) coaching goals and behaviors (Ippolito, 2010).

Therefore, the goal of my research was to analyze and determine how teachers experienced coaching from a *reflective* (teacher-driven) coaching approach, and what factors of this coaching approach teachers perceived to have contributed to teacher learning and change in practice. An understanding of how teachers construct meaning from reflective coaching experiences may suggest opportunities to further enhance coaching as professional development in current settings with the potential to create

powerful teacher learning and change in practice, and contribute to classroom reform efforts.

While the majority of coaching research has focused on the coach (Borman & Feger, 2006; Cornett & Knight, 2009) including coach attributes and experiences in facilitating professional development, to truly explore these tensions and factors, it is important to examine the coaching process from a teacher's perspective. Without the deep knowledge and insight of teacher experiences, research on coaching cannot adapt to contextual factors and specific teacher needs. In an effort to portray teachers' experiences of a reflective coaching process, this project will use qualitative methodology to provide insight into the meanings constructed by teachers (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Patton, 2002). Several studies have examined teacher perceptions of coaching using quantitative surveys, questionnaires, or mixed-method approaches (Bean et al., 2010; Cantrell & Hughes, 2008; Marsh et al., 2010; Sailors & Price, 2010; Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009; Walpole et al., 2010), yet these portrayals did not convey the complexity of the teachers' experience, nor did they describe teachers' transformations in their classrooms from engaging in coaching.

Qualitative researchers seek to understand and interpret how participants in a social setting construct the world around them (Glesne, 2006), and qualitative methods provide a "means whereby social contexts can be systematically examined as a whole, without breaking them down into isolated, incomplete, and disconnected variables" (Hatch, 2002, p. 9). This methodology allowed me to build a multifaceted, holistic representation by analyzing the participants' detailed perceptions, observing their interactions with their coaches, and honoring and sharing these individual perspectives

(Cresswell, 2003; Patton, 2002), thus adding an important component to the literature. In this chapter, I describe the methodological decisions for this study which include: research questions, theoretical framework, research context and setting, participant selection, role and positionality of the researcher, data collection, data analysis, and techniques employed to strengthen the trustworthiness of the findings of this research.

Research Questions

The purpose of my study was to examine and understand how teachers experience coaching from a reflective approach, and determine what these teachers perceive as features of this coaching approach that contributed to teacher learning and change in practice. With this goal in mind, two research questions were addressed: (1) What do teachers experience when engaging in a coaching cycle by a coach trained in a reflective coaching approach? and (2) What elements of a reflective coaching approach do teachers perceive as contributing to their learning and change in practice?

Theoretical Perspective and Conceptual Framework

A concept central to this research is that effective professional development must "focus on deepening teachers' understanding of the processes of teaching and learning and of the students they teach" (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995, p. 82).   This premise is rooted in research claiming that professional development should enable teachers to become leaders of their own learning, have a voice in the process, and use self-direction to guide learning practices (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2001; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Webster-Wright, 2009). Thus it is imperative to explore teachers' learning experiences and examine their voices, their choices, and the autonomy this professional development provided. The desire to understand teachers' perceptions of reflective coaching provided the basis for the epistemology, theoretical perspective,

data collection methods, and analysis that were utilized in my research. The next sections will articulate this study's research perspective with its purpose and design, and state the ways in which this study is an interconnected unit (Koro-Ljungberg, Yendol-Hoppey, Smith, & Hayes, 2009).

The epistemological stance that undergirds this research is taken from the constructionist paradigm, believing that "All knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context" (Crotty, 1998, p. 42). Knowledge is not discovered, but instead constructed as a dynamic process in which an individual's understandings and experiences play a central role. From a constructionist perspective, "different people may construct meaning in different ways, even in relation to the same phenomenon . . . and subject and object emerge as partners in the generation of meaning" (Crotty, 1998, p.9). Researchers with a constructionist stance attempt to understand by interpreting individual meaning, and search for potential richer meaning of experiences by mutually engaging in the process of knowledge construction (Crotty, 1998; Hatch, 2002; Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, 2011).

Evolving from the constructionist paradigm, the theoretical perspective of constructivism served as a guiding framework for my research. Constructivism emphasizes the *individual's* meaning making, and the focus on the individual's interaction with the world (Crotty, 1998; Guba & Lincoln 2005; Hatch, 2002). From this perspective, Hatch (2002) stated that "multiple realities exist that are inherently unique because they are constructed by individuals who experience the world from their

vantage points" (p. 15). Within this study, I was interested in the experiences and understandings of individual teachers engaging in the coaching process, as well as their varying perceptions of what they learned.

Knight's (2007) Partnership Coaching Approach

The instructional coaching approach developed at the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning by James Knight (2007) incorporates many processes of learning in collaboration with specific components of coaching. Knight's (2007) theoretical framework for instructional coaching, referred to as the partnership approach to professional learning, comprises seven principles: equality, choice, voice, dialogue, reflection, praxis, and reciprocity. These principles are grounded in disciplines such as adult education and cultural anthropology and synthesized from concepts of knowledge transfer, knowledge development, and human interaction (Cornett & Knight, 2009).

According to Knight, the seven theoretical principles he identified provide "a conceptual language for how instructional coaches interact with other professionals in the school" (Cornett & Knight, 2009, p. 4).   Knight's basis of partnership, in which all partners benefit from the success, learning, or experience of others and are rewarded by each individual's contributions, posit the instructional coach's position to be learning *alongside* collaborating teachers (Knight, 2007). Thus, learning about each teacher's strengths and weaknesses enable a coach to collaborate with teachers as well as define the coach's skill in using the new teaching practice. Based upon Knight's seven partnership principles focusing on the elements that are deemed "reflective" in stance by coaching literature (Deussen et al., 2007; Heineke, 2013; Ippolito, 2010), this theory of coaching was used as the definition of reflective coaching to frame this study.

This coaching framework guided my understanding and interpretation of this research process and my research questions, and provided the common language with which to analyze teachers' experiences of the reflective coaching process. This study took place during a year-long professional development initiative of instructional coaching. Although I did not study the professional development experience itself, it is important to describe both the conceptual underpinnings of this experience and the coaching framework that represents what I define as a reflective coaching model. This particular professional development initiative, coaching framework, and context will be described more in depth in Chapter 4.

Participant Selection

Participant selection was based on the purposeful strategy of criterion sampling (Glesne, 2006; Patton, 2002). As this study's focus was on the experience of teachers who were coached in a reflective approach, the goal of participant selection was identifying teachers who shared this experience and other key characteristics (Hatch, 2002; Patton, 2002). My study was situated in the Sunnyside County School District (a pseudonym) due to this district's partnership with the Lastinger Center for Learning to provide multi-year coach training and support. This district was chosen because it provided a rich context to study teacher experiences with this coaching model, and coincided with the timeline necessary for this study's completion. The district will be described further in Chapter 4.

Because I studied teachers coached with a reflective approach, I first needed to verify that coaches were fully certified by the Lastinger Center in this approach. Before teacher participant recruitment, I needed access to the coaching certification videos from the Lastinger/Sunnyside coaching cohorts to review, interpret, and verify a

reflective coaching approach was used by coaches. These coaching videos were created by coaches in order to be viewed and certified by Lastinger facilitators, and consisted of a 10-15 minute videotape of the coach and teacher engaged in the reflective coaching conversation, which are described further in the methods section. I recruited coaches to request their cooperation and use of their video, as well as asked them to provide access and contact information on the teachers they coached.

I contacted coaches directly in the Lastinger/Sunnyside Instructional Coaching Cohort (2013-2014) during a follow-up session in April of 2014, and gave a brief presentation about the goals and purpose of my research, and the responsibilities of both coach participants and teacher participants.   I was upfront about my goals of analyzing and understanding this coaching approach through a teacher's perspective, and explained my need for the use of the coaches' certification videos to choose teacher participants as well as the need for coaches to ask teachers if they would be interested in participating, and provide contact information.   I asked for volunteers from both cohorts (school-based and peer coaches) in order to get a maximum variation of teachers for my teacher participant pool, and received interest from 17 coaches who contacted their teachers for initial interest, and their teacher partners tentatively gave permission.

From these 17 coaches, I then reviewed and interpreted coaching videos using the same rubric used for certification (Ross, 2011), shown as Appendix A, and drew from knowledge and experience I have gained as a Lastinger coaching facilitator and gleaned from an extensive review of coaching literature to determine specific coaches who were reflective in approach. After choosing reflective coaches, I then used

preferred criteria for the selection of teacher participants based on the coaching

conversation videos. I examined videos to determine teachers who: (1) were being

coached in a reflective model; (2) were participating actively in the coaching

conversation with their coach, (3) were articulate in their responses when asked

questions or engaged in dialogue, (4) were reflective about their practice during the

coaching conversation, and (5) had varying experience in different grade levels and

content areas. These criteria were used to create a maximum variation of participants

by including teachers with different content areas, grade levels, and various years of

experience in the classroom (Patton, 2002).

Based on verification of the reflective coaching approach and the teacher

participant criteria, eight coaching pairs were contacted and six coaches and teachers

agreed to participate. My decision to use six teacher participants in the interview study

was based both on providing a diverse sample with teachers from different backgrounds

and with different knowledge and experience levels, and on providing information-rich

cases representing the multiple realities that contributed to rich dialogue about reflective

coaching (Patton, 2002).

Participation in this study was both time intensive and required participation

outside of school-regulated hours. Teachers were asked to participate in three one-

hour face-to-face interviews, as well as correspond through email for member-check

interviews after each initial interview and after initial analysis of data, with some

interviews occurring during the summer break when teachers were not in school. A

stipend of $50 for coaches (for use of their coaching videos and providing teacher

contact information), and $200 for teacher participants was offered to reimburse

teachers for time outside of school required for participation. The source of this funding was provided by the Lastinger Center for Learning to enable the research to take place.

These six teacher participants included five females and one male who self-identified as Caucasian and Latina, ranging in age from 24 to 48 years of age, and having between one to 10 years of teaching experience. The demographic characteristics of these participants are described in the next section, in which teachers, schools, and the school district are assigned pseudonyms to protect anonymity and confidentiality. These participants are also discussed in depth through vignettes in Chapters 5 and 6.

Jake is a high school social studies teacher and was in his first year of teaching during this study. Jake had never had any educational experience, and was hired initially to coach high school football at Sunny Acres High School after having recently won a Division II NCAA football championship in 2012. Sunny Acres HS has a largely affluent student body, with a small percentage of minority students and less than 20% on free and reduced lunch. Because of Jake's lack of traditional teacher preparation, he was required to obtain his teaching certification during his first year of teaching. Jake teaches several subjects in grades 9-12 including World Religions, World Geography, Economics, Ancient and US History, and was assigned a completely new set of classes during his second semester of teaching.

Sarah is a 4th grade elementary teacher in her third year at Sunny Oakes elementary school, which is a Title One math and science magnet within her district. Sarah's classroom is made up primarily of minority students, and a large percentage of students in her classroom have learning or emotional disabilities, are English-language

learners, and are on tiered interventions for academic support. In Sarah's first year of teaching at Sunny Oakes, she taught second grade, and received the Rookie of the Year teaching award from her district with accolades and praise. As a result of her classroom success, Sarah was put in fourth grade to help boost writing scores on the Florida State writing assessment (FCAT writes).

Celina is a second year middle school social studies teacher as Sunny Dale Middle School, considered one of the best middle schools in the state of Florida. Celina went through a traditional teacher education program at a local university, and just "fell in" to teaching. Celina teaches five standard classes of 8th grade history and one advanced class, and the majority of her students are diverse with "behavioral problems". She has several students with disabilities in her classes, and about one-third of her 60 students are on tiered interventions for academic support.

Nicole is a 4th grade teacher in her fourth year of teaching at Sunny Valley elementary school. Nicole had recently transferred to the Sunnyside School District after three years of teaching in a professional development school (PDS) affiliated with a northern Florida university. Coming from a Title One PDS previously, Nicole was adjusting to the affluence of her new elementary school, and also adjusting to a different school culture not resembling the collaborative learning environment she had enjoyed previously. Nicole has her ESOL endorsement, and recently finished her Masters degree in Educational Leadership. Her classroom ranged in student learning with gifted students, students with learning or emotional disabilities, and students with tiered intervention for academic support.

Dianne is a national board certified teacher in 4th grade at Sunny Mountain Elementary School, and was in her eighth year of teaching during this study. This was Dianne's first year teaching fourth grade to the gifted cluster of students, and had previously taught Kindergarten and second grade. She completed her Masters degree in Curriculum and Instruction with a math emphasis, and would like to become an instructional coach within the next few years. She has worked at Sunny Mountain for her entire teaching career, and has seen many programmatic and administrative changes.

Sally is the Language Arts Department Chair and teacher in her eighth year of teaching at Sunny River Alternative Education School. This school educates 80 students in grades 6-12 who have been removed from their zoned school for academic, behavioral, or criminal offenses. Students have been diagnosed with emotional and behavioral cognitive disabilities (EBD) including ADD/ADHD, autism, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia. The majority of students live in foster or group homes, and receive full benefits from the state during school hours including meals, clothing, and emotional counseling and support. This school is set on a new campus and housed within six separate buildings. Each classroom has no more than ten students, with one teacher and one instructional aide. Classrooms are designed with boundaries for safety and security of both students and teachers, and are monitored heavily by surveillance equipment.

Data Collection

For this study, a variety of data sources were used including coaching videos, teacher interviews, and reflective researcher analysis memos. In accordance with the constructivist assumptions of my research questions, I employed a qualitative interview

study design (Hatch, 2002) in which the primary source of data was formal, semi-structured interviews. Because my research focused on teacher perceptions of the reflective coaching process, using interviews provided a path to "encourage informants to explain their unique perspectives on the issues at hand, and listen intently for special language and other clues that reveal meaning structures informants use to understand their worlds" (Spradley, 1979, p. 123). For each participant, I conducted three interviews and a member-checking interview, in which the first three interviews were face-to-face, and the last interview was conducted by email due to proximity and availability of participants. Within these interviews, I emphasized flexibility to create interactive interviews and shared responsibility of learning with participants (Glesne, 2006; Hatch, 2002). Once participants were selected, I conducted a 60-minute background interview intended to establish rapport and trust with the participant, and collect data on the teacher's background, previous experiences with coaching, and school context. Interview protocols are in Appendix B.

After the school year ended, I conducted the second interview, which was 60-75 minutes, and focused on teacher experiences of the entire reflective coaching cycle. Within this interview, I prompted the participant with three specific examples taken from their coach's coaching video (to be described in the next section) to determine teacher understanding and interpretations of the coaching experience. After initial data analysis of emergent themes, I conducted a third interview in person in order to strengthen the trustworthiness of the study by asking participants to verify, clarify and add to my interpretations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).   Finally, after data analysis was completed, participants were sent summaries of their experiences by email, and asked to comment

and add their personal interpretations. Examples of comments gathered from member-checking included participant clarifications of classroom descriptions, personal interpretations of findings related to their stories, and confirmation of my interpretations of their experiences.

A second source of data were the coaching videos created for the Lastinger Coaching initiative involving coaches and the teacher-participants in the last phase of the reflective coaching cycle. Each video lasted 10-15 minutes, and showed the coach and teacher engaged in a reflective coaching conversation. These six videos were used to capture aspects of the reflective coaching cycle and played back to participants during the second interview, in order to provide both powerful stimulus for participants during interviews as well as provide data for initial analysis during the interview phase of this study. During interview two, participants watched small excerpts from the video chosen to illustrate specific focus points regarding the reflective coaching approach, and discussed their own perspectives and interpretations of the behaviors and interactions on tape (Glesne, 2006; Hatch, 2002). For example, I showed Sally an excerpt in which her coach brought up new strategies for implementation, and I asked: "When [your coach] presented you with this information, what were you focused on? Why?"

As mentioned previously, I first viewed the coaching conversation videos to establish the reflective nature of the coaching conversation and the coaching process, and during that viewing I recorded my interpretations regarding specific reflective components based upon literature. From those initial interpretations and data from participants' first interviews, I created analysis memos for each participant to be

incorporated into the second interview protocol for further discussion and to be interpreted during the last phase of analysis.

A final data source was my research journal and analytic memos (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Hatch, 2002) which were also used as an analysis strategy. After each encounter with coaches (during Lastinger/Sunnyside follow-up sessions), facilitators, participants, or data, I recorded ideas and reflections as well as noted patterns that emerged (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Hatch, 2002). These reflections included thoughts on analysis, method, ethical dilemmas and conflicts, my state of mind and assumptions as the researcher, points of clarification, and thoughts regarding research dilemmas (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Glesne, 2006). Analytic memos provided data regarding changing thoughts and interpretations throughout the research process. This data element also contributed to the trustworthiness of the study by establishing an audit trail to ensure methodological soundness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Data Analysis

Interpretation is about giving meaning to the data and making sense of social situations by generating explanations for what is going on within them (Hatch, 2002). With the intent of focusing on the experiences of each teacher being coached and his or her perceptions of reflective coaching, data were analyzed using procedures of qualitative interpretive analysis (Hatch, 2002; Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). These procedures were chosen to enable me to inductively analyze each participant's experiences, attitudes, and patterns of learning from the perspective (Hatch, 2002; Glesne, 2006). Three phases of analysis occurred in this study. The first level of analysis occurred continuously during data collection, considering each of the six participants individually. The second and third levels of analysis occurred after

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completion of data collection and during member-checking processes, and looked both within and across participant data sets. Each phase will be described in detail in the next sections, with examples of how this analysis was performed.

Phase One: Individual Participant Analysis During Data Collection

The first phase of data analysis occurred within data collection, and was a continuous process. The process of interweaving data collection and analysis helped me cycle back and forth between "thinking about the existing data and generating strategies for collecting new, often better data" (Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, 2014, p. 70). This made analysis an ongoing enterprise that allowed me to see blind spots within my data sources and research questions.

Within this first phase for each participant, I listened to first interviews and transcribed important notes, comments, and thoughts that I felt pertained to interview questions, research questions, participant background, beliefs, and experiences. I then highlighted chunks that I felt were relevant, and wrote an initial researcher reflection, posing questions and ideas about participants and their experiences. I then viewed the coaching conversation videos for each participant, reviewing my highlighted notes and reflections from the first viewing of the video (during verification of coaching approach) as well as notes I had written during interview one and looked for specific examples to discuss with participants during interview two. I incorporated these perceptions and questions about specific segments of the video as well as participant views, beliefs, and practices mentioned, and wrote Interview two protocols for each participant. I completed this phase by writing a summary of data thus far for each participant. After all second interviews were completed, I transcribed each interview in full, and then followed the same process of reading the entire transcript, determining core content and

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meaning, and highlighting important chunks of data related to emerging themes, ideas, and teacher perceptions related to my research.

As with interview one data, I wrote a reflection incorporating my current perceptions and reflections of salient themes and quotes about the coaching cycle and conversation from interview two, and created questions and prompts based on those interpretations for Interview three protocols. I was hesitant to begin first cycle coding in this phase because so many pieces of new information were being given in each interview, and I did not want to limit my interpretations to restrictive coding during this process. Thus, I continued to write narrative reflections in my researcher memos to completely capture my thoughts, and encourage new formulation of ideas from questions suggested from my analysis method: (1) How did I personally relate to the participants or their experiences thus far? (2) What was significant about their responses and ideas? (3) What is my global understanding thus far related to my research questions? and (4) What are thoughts on interview questions, observations, and problems I've encountered, and changes or directions that need to be pursued? (Hatch, 2002: Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, 2014). After the completion of third interviews and the data collection process, I then moved to the second phase of my analysis, initial and focused coding of the entire data set.

Phase Two: Initial and Focused Coding for Individual Data Sets

This interpretive process was about making inferences, developing insights, attaching significance, refining understandings, drawing conclusions, and extrapolating lessons (Hatch, 2002). To begin phase two of my interpretive analysis, I reviewed the entire data set for each participant individually, which included: transcripts from all three interviews, researcher memos after each phase of initial analysis (after initial video

screening, interview one and second video screening, and after interview two), interview

protocols for all three interviews, and my researcher journal with field notes and

reflections during the entire research process. Using only interview transcripts at first, I

used a more deliberate process of reducing themes to words or phrases which were

codes representative of my impressions and initial interpretations determined from my

research questions and conceptual framework.

By using elemental and affective coding such as in vivo, descriptive, emotion and

values coding (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014) I tried to capture salient

interpretations of participant experiences. As often as possible, I used in vivo coding,

which comprised direct quotes or phrases from participants, in order to let the

participants' experiences speak for themselves. For each participant, I created between

65-112 initial codes. However, I realized this method was problematic because it

fragmented the data set, and participants' words seemed to lose meaning in the

process. I then went back through initial analysis documents for each transcript, and

instead of coding, wrote brief summaries based on chunks of data from each

participant. This led me to decipher data in larger, more thematic units (paragraphs and

sections), and allowed me to better recognize emerging patterns within the data set. I

then condensed these summaries into fewer categories. After creating initial and then

condensed summaries based on participant experiences, I read my researcher memos

from each phase, and completed the same analysis process.

From these condensed summaries, I wrote a fourth researcher memo for each

participant that provided the most salient summaries for each research question,

identified pieces of data not related to these questions or other important themes, and a

comprehensive interpretation of the participant's entire data set based on all analysis and my thinking answering the following two questions: (1) What is my perception of this data as the researcher? and (2) How has performing this level of analysis validated or changed my perceptions of this participant's experience? (Hatch, 2002). From this newest set of clarified memos, the inductive process of analysis and interpretation led to contextualization in which my interpretations were firmly grounded in the contexts being studied, and were represented within the data. After this comprehensive process was completed, I then sent the fourth researcher memo which included salient themes and patterns related to each research question and the summary of each participant's comprehensive experience of reflective coaching by email to each participant for member-checking purposes. This email asked participants to provide feedback and their interpretations, and also challenge any of my interpretations they might disagree with. Once this feedback was gathered, I proceeded to phase three of my interpretive analysis.

Phase Three: Interpretive Analysis Within and Across Participant Data Sets

After feedback from participants was gathered, I began to write vignettes for each participant through the iterative process of refining and clarifying interpretations in order to convey the understandings constructed, clarify what they mean in the contexts of my study and research questions, and represent what is captured in the data (Hatch, 2002). Each vignette included important information about participants and then summarized their coaching experience, and started the discussion and presentation of findings that are described in Chapters 5 and 6 using specific pieces of data. This process not only substantiated my interpretations, but helped me put my thoughts into a story for an audience that is unfamiliar with my research. From the writing of these vignettes and

further analysis of elements across participant data sets, I then wrote summaries detailing themes regarding coaching model elements gathered across participants experiences that were relevant to my second research question, and those findings are presented in Chapter 7.

Within these findings chapters, participants' words are presented verbatim and can be identified within the text by codes which are described in Figure 3-1. As an example, the code J2, 14-16 should be interpreted as Jake, interview 2, lines 14-16.

Researcher Positionality Statement

It is important to describe and reflect on my role as principal researcher in this study, as well as understand my educational background, experience, and relationships related to this research. Prior to being a doctoral student at the University of Florida, I had several years of experience teaching in K-12 classrooms, both at public and private schools nationwide (Arizona, Kentucky, Ohio, and Florida).   In addition, I have been an administrator and have coordinated and implemented professional development in early childhood and elementary school settings. My previous experiences with coaching, in which I was both a teacher being coached, and coaching as a peer coach working with colleagues, were based upon a model that was directive and what I considered to be limiting. As a teacher receiving coaching, I was perplexed by the strategies used, and felt no trust or rapport with my coach. As a coach, I was positioned as the expert, and the teacher was to be taught basic strategies and given resources, and I then evaluated his or her pedagogy and gave areas for improvement. As a coach, I was dissatisfied with my coaching skills, my lack of training and knowledge regarding coaching, and my inability to facilitate true improvement in the classrooms in which I coached.

Thus, as a doctoral student at the University of Florida, I learned about job-embedded professional development models such as practitioner inquiry, professional learning communities, lesson study, and instructional coaching. Within these learner-driven, student-centered models of professional learning, I discovered new ways to cultivate teachers' understanding of their instructional practice. I have researched the impact of instructional coaching within online learning teacher education programs, pre-service teachers, and teachers in the field. I have been the instructor of an online instructional coaching course for the University of Florida's job-embedded graduate program, and I am a facilitator with the UF Lastinger Center Instructional Coaching Team. I helped create resources and tools for Lastinger coaching cohort participants and immersed myself in coaching and teaching literature regarding coaching theories, roles, and aims. It is from these experiences, as well as facilitating Lastinger Coaching Institutes across the state and working with teachers in every context, that my interest in this specific research topic was established. This extensive knowledge and experience of instructional coaching informed the lens that I brought to this work.

As I conceptualized and conducted this research, I strived to actively participate following my constructivist assumptions as a researcher (Hatch, 2002; Spradley,1979). My roles as researcher in this study comprised several parts: researcher, observer and interpreter. As a researcher, I tried not to engage in this research with bias towards this reflective model and approach, and continually examined the research process and monitored my own personal reactions to what was being discovered (Hatch, 2002). When viewing the coaching videos, I was an observer and an interpreter, detailing specific reflective components of the coaching conversation and guiding participants to

open-ended reflections about their experience. As a constructivist interviewer and researcher, I explored and interpreted participants' perspectives of their coaching experiences, and co-constructed understandings of what happened in the research context (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Hatch, 2002). I developed meaning with participants through reviewing interpretations (member-checking) and gained their feedback and reactions by presenting written summaries of emerging themes, and invitations to revisit the research process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Hatch, 2002).

Trustworthiness

An important element of qualitative study design is the attention to enhancement of credibility, transferability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba,1985; Patton, 2002). Within the data collection process, credibility was addressed through data triangulation (Hatch, 2002; Patton, 2002). By using four sets of interviews per participant and observations of participant interaction with coaches, the individual meaning making of each participant was comprehensively represented within the data. By cross-examining interviews, analysis memos, and video interpretations of each participant and then across participants, I provided a detailed and balanced picture of findings worthy of my participants.

Within the data analysis process, member-checking and audit reviews were methods used to enhance credibility regarding findings and interpretations of the data sources (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Internally, member-checking was used throughout the analysis process to provide the opportunity for participants to assess constructions of understanding, and give them an opportunity to correct errors and challenge wrongly-perceived interpretations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Externally, audit reviews to bolster the study's credibility and rigor were implemented regularly with my committee chair, an

experienced researcher. As chapters were constructed, my committee chair provided

feedback to ensure findings were supported by data and were sound in nature. This

constant review provided honest challenges to my research process and biases as a

researcher, and allowed me to test theories that emerged throughout the process

(Glesne, 2006). For example, when conceiving the metaphors of coaching used to

present findings, our discussions caused me to rethink, revisit, and continuously build

these metaphors by having to provide evidence within the data for my analysis and

rationale. In addition, members of my doctoral committee assessed the quality and

rigor of these research methods and analysis before, during and after the study's

completion.

To promote transferability, thick, rich descriptions were used in order to provide

extensive written detail that would allow the reader to enter the research context, and

provide a framework for understanding the research and determining its value for his or

her specific context and situation. By using purposeful sampling and maximum variation

of participants (Patton, 2002), the widest possible range of information for this

description was possible (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Finally, to address confirmability, I

employed reflexivity as a researcher by continually reflecting on my beliefs and

assumptions regarding the research topic. An audit trail of raw data (videos, field notes,

transcriptions), data reduction and analysis products (memos, summaries, and journal

entries), data reconstruction and synthesis products (codes, themes, findings and

conclusions), process notes (methodological, analytical, and trustworthiness notes) and

materials relating to intentions and dispositions (prospectus, proposal, and expectations

of intentions of research) were collected within a reflexive research journal and analytic

files (Glesne, 2006) in order to increase the trustworthiness of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Study Limitations

A key limitation in this research is the fact that the primary investigator and interviewer was influential in the creation and implementation of this coaching approach. As a member of the Lastinger Instructional Coaching Team, I collaborated with fellow researchers and faculty members regarding the framework, approach, materials, and implementation of the Lastinger Coaching Initiatives throughout the state of Florida. Though I was not a facilitator in the Sunnyside County School District initiative, the context in which this study took place, it is assumed that both coaches and teachers involved in this study were influenced by power dynamics inherent in the researcher-participant relationship based on my affiliation with this work. These participants therefore may have felt the need to report only good news about this approach.

This power dynamic of the researcher-participant relationship may contribute to the Hawthorne Effect, in which participants believe their performances were changed because they were being interviewed and observed. To alleviate this effect, I gathered all data after the coaching initiative had concluded, and did not overstep my boundaries regarding participants' time and dedication to this research. All interviews and correspondence were scheduled at participants' convenience, and I tried to establish trust and rapport as much as possible by providing resources and words of encouragement and appreciation during interviews and meetings.

A second limitation stems from the self-reporting of information from teaching participants. There was no externally reliable data to show whether teachers were doing what they reported in their classrooms with the exception of the coaching video.

This study was concerned with the development and implementation of a coaching approach, and thus depended on teacher feedback through interviews and the integration and testing of ideas presented within the literature on coaching. As discussed in the literature (Borman & Feger, 2006; Cornett & Knight, 2009), randomized experimental studies on instructional coaching need to be conducted to further enhance understandings of the impact of this approach with coaches, teachers, and students.

Finally, the scope of this research did not directly address the impact of professional development on teacher practices through the examination of student achievement. While impact studies are important because of the role they play on shaping educational practices and policy, it is important to gauge the effectiveness of this professional development model by honoring the perspectives of all stakeholders within the lens of research.

Participant Pseudonym:	Participant Code:
Celina	C
Dianne	D
Jake	J
Nicole	N
Sally	Sal
Sarah	Sar
Data Source Code:	
Participant Code, interview 1-3, and lines within interview transcript.	

Figure 3-1. Data coding identification

CHAPTER 4
BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the context in which this research took place. The first aspect of this description is a brief historical background of teacher evaluation and professional development in the State of Florida to provide readers a better understanding of the educational policies and practices occurring before and during this study. The second dimension of this description will explain the Lastinger instructional framework and Knight (2007) coaching model and how this model was implemented through a professional development initiative in the district in which this study occurred. Finally, the teacher evaluation system used in this district will also be explained in order to shed light on another important component related to this reflective coaching experience for both teachers and coaches within this study. The district in which this study took place is called Sunnyside County School District, which is a pseudonym to protect anonymity of the district as well as provide participants' confidentiality in their responses.

Professional Learning and Teacher Evaluation

This research study took place in a large public school district in central Florida, serving over 80,000 students in 69 schools. Therefore, it is important to present the historical context of professional development, evaluation, and current accountability issues that shape the teaching climate in these public schools.

Professional Learning in Florida

In 2003, The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) implemented new professional development standards and development opportunities for educators designed to meet Florida's changing legislation on teacher learning and evaluation.

These standards were created in order to put emphasis on improving the professional development landscape by setting explicit standards for high quality professional development. The professional development standards are broken down into four strands (planning, learning, implementing, and evaluating professional development) in order to look at the professional development cycle in entirety, and not just the PD event itself. This professional development system also examines the perspectives of stakeholders at three levels (the individual educator, the school, and district) to provide a wide range of realities and experiences.

Within this professional development framework, the individual educator's standards required teachers to design an individual professional development plan (IPDP) in which learning goals for the current school year are created from both an individual needs assessment and administrator review. These learning goals were: (a) clearly defined professional learning goals that specify measurable improvement in student achievement; (b) changes in the educator's practices resulting from professional learning; and (c) an evaluation plan that determines the effectiveness of the professional learning (http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/professional-dev/professional-dev-stards.stml). Expectations for the creation of meaningful professional development plans that focused on planning, learning, implementing and follow up shifted the focus from teachers simply attending professional development sessions, to incorporating that professional knowledge into practical classroom learning and application. This comprehensive focus also necessitated emphasis on resources and tools for implementation support, such as coaching and mentoring of teachers.

While coaching and mentoring were mentioned in these standards as forms of implementation, they were defined loosely: "Skillful coaches, mentors, or others provide sufficient classroom- and school-focused support and assistance to the educator to ensure high-fidelity implementation of professional learning" (http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/professional-dev/professional-dev-stards.stml). Coaching has grown in prevalence in Florida, but this professional development model has not been well defined or well supported.   As a result of reading initiatives associated with the Reading Excellence Act (REA) in 2000 and "Just Read, Florida!" in 2001 which legislated that low-income schools must improve reading instruction and provide early intervention to children with reading difficulties (Denton & Hasbrouck, 2009), a key component of this effort was the allocation of funds to districts to hire full-time, site-based reading coaches.

In a span of five years, participating schools increased from 300 in 30 districts to more than 2,200 in 72 districts in 2006-2007 (Marsh et al., 2010). While an estimated total of 2,360 coaches were funded through local, state, and federal funds (Florida Department of Education, 2006), this funding provided no specific model for coaching, and instead provided an array of conceptual, policy, and practical supports that intended to guide the work of reading coaches (Marsh et al., 2010). Thus, while coaching was rampantly spreading through public schools in Florida, there was no specified model, goals, description of coach responsibilities, or evaluation to determine effectiveness, which mirrors findings about coaching in the previous review of literature (Borman & Feger, 2006; Cornett & Knight, 2009; Deussen et al., 2007).

Teacher Evaluation in Florida

In March, 2011, Florida's Governor Rick Scott signed Senate Bill 736, known as *The Student Success Act*, into law, implementing a performance pay system for Florida public school teachers (Weldon, 2011). This legislation requires at least half of teachers' evaluations to be based on student learning gains reported from the Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test (FCAT), and represents the most sweeping overhaul of the way teachers are paid nationwide (Marsh et al., 2010; Weldon, 2011). Florida's value-added model of teacher evaluation has been both encouraged and argued against (Figlio & Lawrence, 2007; Weldon, 2011), and what remains is a teaching climate filled with ambiguity, pressure and uncertainty, and the need for support and development of teachers' instruction in Florida's classrooms.

Sunnyside County Instructional Framework and Teacher Evaluation System

The Sunnyside County School District uses the Marzano (2007) Causal Teaching Model as the instructional and evaluation framework for their value-added model of teacher effectiveness. This system provides a comprehensive evaluation derived from synthesis of research previously investigated by Marzano (2003a, 2003b, 2007), and is grounded in four domains related to classroom instruction: (1) Classroom strategies and behaviors, (2) Planning and Preparing, (3) Reflecting on Teaching, and (4) Collegiality and Professionalism. Within these four domains, teachers are evaluated on 60 specific indicators grounded in ten instructional design questions useful for teacher planning and implementing instruction (Ross, 2011). These questions direct teachers attention to planning, assessment, cohesive organization of instruction, deepening student knowledge and thinking, engaging students, establishing and maintaining strong relationships with students, establishing and maintaining classroom rules and

procedures for learning, and setting and communicating high expectations (Marzano, 2007; Ross, 2011).

School administrators and evaluators conduct informal observations, formal observations, general assessments, and observations with general assessments periodically based upon a teacher's years of experience by using protocols and an on-line observation system. These protocols require evaluators to provide both teacher and student evidence of each indicator within the Marzano (2007) framework, and rate teachers on a scale of *unsatisfactory, needs improvement/developing, effective, highly effective, and highly effective+*. This 60-page protocol document is to be completed by evaluators for each teacher observation, and then data is inputted into the iObservation online platform where teachers can access observation scores as well as provide their personal reflection statements.

The Lastinger Instructional Coaching Model

Developed in 2011, the Lastinger Instructional Coaching Model is currently being implemented throughout districts in Florida in an intensive, yearlong professional development initiative. This professional development initiative is comprised of a three-day coaching institute for participants to learn about the foundations and theories of coaching and the elements of this model, followed by six half-day professional development sessions to implement, reflect, and refine coaching practice. The theoretical underpinnings for this coaching model are grounded in Knight's (2007) partnership coaching approach, and the Lastinger Instructional Framework (Ross, 2011).

Knight's (2007) Partnership Principles of Coaching

Knight's (2009) partnership principles are "touchstones for reflecting" on what work instructional coaches have done, and for planning work they will do in the future (p. 31). *Equality* refers to both the instructional coach and teacher being equal partners in learning. Instructional coaches (ICs) believe that a teacher's thoughts and beliefs are valuable, and listen with the intent to learn, understand, and respond, rather than persuade. *Choice* requires that ICs frame the teacher's choice of coaching focus implicitly in every communication of content, and in every process to learn that content. *Voice* creates empowerment of the teacher by allowing individuals in the partnership to express their point of view. ICs see the coaching process as a way for teachers to find their voice, rather than a means of imposing certain instructional behaviors or strategies. *Dialogue* signifies the mode of mutual learning, in which partners engage in dialogue to learn together and explore ideas. According to Knight (2007), a coach should not impose, dominate or control that dialogue, and often coaches listen more than they speak.

Reflection is the most integral part of this coaching philosophy, in which collaborating partners make sense of whatever focus or strategies are proposed for learning, and respect each other's professionalism by providing information to make collaborative decisions. Teachers have the freedom to choose and reject ideas, and think reflectively about those choices. *Praxis* creates a space for teachers to reflect on ideas, and then put those actions into practice (Knight, 2009). An IC must focus on how to use ideas in the classroom as those ideas are being learned. Finally, *Reciprocity* is designated as allowing partners to benefit from the successful learning and experience of each other. Thus, ICs learn with teachers about strengths and weaknesses of

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teaching practices, and incorporate various perspectives about strategies, including those of teachers and students.   Knight's basis of partnership requires specific contextual factors for success, including sufficient time for coaches to work with teachers, the use of research-based interventions, professional development for the coaches themselves, cooperation and support between coaches and administration, and hiring the right instructional coaches with the necessary skills and attributes (Knight, 2006).

The Lastinger Instructional Framework

The Lastinger Instructional Framework (Ross, 2011) was designed to synthesize the most used and comprehensive observation frameworks in the state as a lens for best practices in teaching. This framework provides a common language of instruction to enable teachers and coaches to talk about teaching more in depth and develop common perspectives and strategies for improved instruction (Ross, 2011). This synthesis features and describes the two most popular teacher observation systems in Florida (Danielson, 2007; Marzano, 2007, 2009), and also incorporates systems evaluating teacher-student interaction (Pianta, Le Paro, & Hamre, 2008) and culturally responsive frameworks (Powell & Rightmeyer, 2011). Teachers and coaches are presented a comprehensive framework with foundational emphasis on effective instructional strategies, students' cultural backgrounds, and how to meet diverse learners needs (Ross, 2011).

Within this synthesis on effective teaching elements, Ross (2011) identified five domains to provide content for teachers to engage in collaborative study and peer coaching around key elements of effective teaching: (a) Planning a challenging, coherent curriculum, (b) Building a safe and connected classroom community, (c) Using

instructional strategies that scaffold student engagement and success, (d) Using

instructional strategies that scaffold student learning conversations, higher order

thinking, and student success, and (e) Using assessment to inform and guide

instruction. With these five domains as a starting point, coaches and teachers can

collaboratively identify and implement effective instructional strategies based upon

teacher and student needs. This instructional framework provides a common language

of instruction to enable teachers and coaches to talk about teaching more in depth and

develop common perspectives and strategies for improved instruction (Ross, 2011).

Overview of the Lastinger State-Wide Coaching Model

The Lastinger Instructional Coaching Model is comprised of five progressive

steps of implementation in which the instructional coach and teacher engage in a

teacher-driven method of professional learning, as seen in Figure 4-1. In step one, the

goal of increasing strategic knowledge of instruction is developed by teachers

identifying a specific need or interest in their instructional practice. This can be done by

watching a coach model a specific strategy, participating in a collaborative article study

or as follow up to recent professional development. After this initial learning occurs,

step two is a teacher-coach conversation where the coaching focus is collaboratively

determined. The coach interviews the teacher to gather general information about the

teacher's context as well as challenges he or she deems important. The teacher and

coach then review the Lastinger Instructional Framework, decide a specific coaching

focus, and link it to a domain in the instructional framework. They also decide what data

will be most useful to the teacher to answer this question of practice, and agree on

both tools and a process for data collection.

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Step three is the data collection observation, in which the coach observes the teacher, and collects descriptive evidence predetermined in the coaching interview that connects to the teacher's coaching focus. This is important to emphasize because often teachers are coached with a broad focus, and get overwhelmed with the abundance of feedback they receive from coaches. This observation focus is strategically targeted to gather non-evaluative evidence to answer the teacher's question about their practice. Evidence is most commonly recorded through note taking, but video or audio equipment may also be used. Once this observation is completed, step four entails the coach creating a *data display* that presents the evidence in a non-judgmental way, providing the teacher useful information related to his or her coaching focus. This data is presented in a non-attributive fashion in order to provide open pathways of interpretation for both the teacher and coach. Prior to the coaching conversation, the coach creates open-ended probing questions to help the teacher examine and interpret the data, as well as some initial impressions of the data to guide and facilitate the discussion.

Step five is the coaching conversation, where the coach and teacher meet, ideally within three to five days of the coaching observation, to discuss the data collected from the observation related to the teacher's coaching focus. Because this model is based on Knight's (2007) partnership principles of coaching, the coaching conversation must be situated with the coach and teacher as equals, sitting on the same side of the table and collaboratively exploring, interpreting, and discussing the data.   At the end of this conversation, the coach invites the teacher to reflect on his or

her learning, and then create a new or related coaching focus based upon this learning for future coaching cycles.

Within this coaching initiative, cohort participants are required to facilitate four coaching cycles in their school or context using this model during the follow-up sessions. Participants then select one complete coaching cycle for review (pre-interview, data collection and observation, creation of data display, coaching conversation, and setting appropriate goals for instructional improvement) that fulfill mastery requirements as stated on the Lastinger Instructional Coaching Rubric, which is Appendix A. Lastinger facilitators as well as peer reviewers assess these coaching cycles, and coaches receive certification as Lastinger Certified Instructional Coaches.

Overview of the Study Context and District Implementation of This Model

Sunnyside County School District contracted with the University of Florida Lastinger Center for Learning to provide a multiyear coaching initiative from 2013- 2016. With the three year contract to provide this initiative, the Lastinger Center designed this professional development as a gradual release model, in which Cohort 1 (2013-2014) was completely facilitated and supported by Lastinger faculty and facilitators. Cohort 2 (2014-2015) would be supported and facilitated by both Sunnyside district professional development personnel as well as a Lastinger facilitator in order to make this initiative sustainable over time, and Cohort 3 (2015-2016) will be completely supported and facilitated within the district, with the goal of continuation beyond this three year initiative.

District participants included school-based coaches, district coaches, curriculum coordinators, and classroom teachers interested in becoming peer coaches. Participants were required to apply through the district to be considered for these

cohorts, and decisions on participation were made by Sunnyside school and district leaders. These participants were grouped in cohorts based on geographic location, content area and grade level. These cohorts engaged in a three-day institute in which foundational goals included understanding adult learning theories, effective professional development factors, coaching structures, and observational frameworks and systems. Particular to Sunnyside Schools, key elements of effective teaching linked to the Common Core State Standards as well as aligned with the Marzano (2007) evaluation framework were identified and facilitated through interactive learning sessions and discussions. Participants focused on fundamentals of this coaching model, professional development resources to facilitate teacher understanding of key instructional strategies and reflective discourse, and practicing methods for a collaborative, teacher-centered focus and coaching cycle (Ross & Burns, 2013).

After the initial institute training at Sunnyside in October of 2013, two coaching cohorts attended six half-day follow-up sessions. Before each follow up session, cohort participants were given at-home learning consisting of current articles and research about coaching, teacher learning, and professional development facilitation, and were expected to journal about their learning and experiences in an online coaching platform. During the first part of each follow up session, coaching participants were introduced to additional resources for scaffolding teaching learning through coaching and provided modeling by Lastinger facilitators of facilitation tools. Participants also reviewed key concepts to engage in reflective coaching, and were given the time and resources to reflect upon, change, improve, and implement their coaching skills.

Cohort participants also engaged in four reflective coaching cycles in which they coached a teacher within their school, and were required to provide evidence of these cycles through an online platform. Through this process, cohort participants continued to practice their coaching skills using their own data displays and coaching conversations, with feedback from facilitators and cohort peers. These coaching cycles were discussed during the second half of each follow-up session, where participants unpacked the challenges they were experiencing during coaching.

At the end of the follow up sessions, cohort participants were required to select one complete coaching cycle for review (pre-interview, data collection and observation, creation of data display, coaching conversation, and setting appropriate goals for instructional improvement) that fulfilled mastery requirements as stated on the Lastinger Coaching Rubric. Lastinger facilitators as well as peer reviewers assessed these coaching cycles, and coaches received certification from the Lastinger Center as Certified Instructional Coaches. An end-of-year Lastinger/Sunnyside coaching showcase was held for cohort participants to present their learning to Sunnyside principals, the Sunnyside district superintendent and district officials, University of Florida and Lastinger Center leadership, and all Sunnyside School Board Members in order to make reflective coaching practices public and provide information to school and district leadership.

This professional development initiative was created by the Lastinger Center for Learning and district representatives based upon the needs and practices of Sunnyside County teachers. According to the Sunnyside County School District website, this professional development initiative provided a means to achieve goals identified by the

district as an effective strategy to portray the requirements articulated in the Florida Student Success Act (SB 736), and help Sunnyside teachers improve their practice and raise student achievement. District Board Members intended Lastinger certified coaches to assist in creating a culture of learning and experimentation, and to energize teachers to encourage collaborative work and discourse about engaging students in hands-on, authentic learning. Within Sunnyside County School District, this coaching initiative was implemented both as instructional coaching provided by school-based coaches and district level coaches, and also as a peer coaching approach by teacher leaders who participated in the Lastinger coaching initiative.

The Lastinger Instructional Coaching Initiative Cohort 1 in Sunnyside County School District in central Florida was chosen as the research setting for this dissertation study. This coaching cohort began in October, 2013 with a three- day coaching institute, and continued with follow-up sessions in December, January, February, March, April, and May of 2014. The 2013 Sunnyside County Lastinger Instructional Coaching Cohort 1 contained over 60 participants from 16 elementary, middle and high schools with varying content focus.

<div align="center">

Conclusion

</div>

This chapter explained both the context of this research study as well as the policies and practices involved that shaped participants' environments and experiences. As described, the Lastinger Center Instructional Coaching Initiative provided coaches a reflective coaching approach compatible with both this district's instructional framework and teacher evaluation system. Although this study does not focus on the training of the coaches, it is important to consider the approach in which coaches were trained because it framed the experiences of teachers engaging in these coaching cycles. What

follows in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 will be the descriptive findings of teachers' experiences

engaging in this reflective coaching approach, and the analysis of these findings based

upon the two research questions of this study.
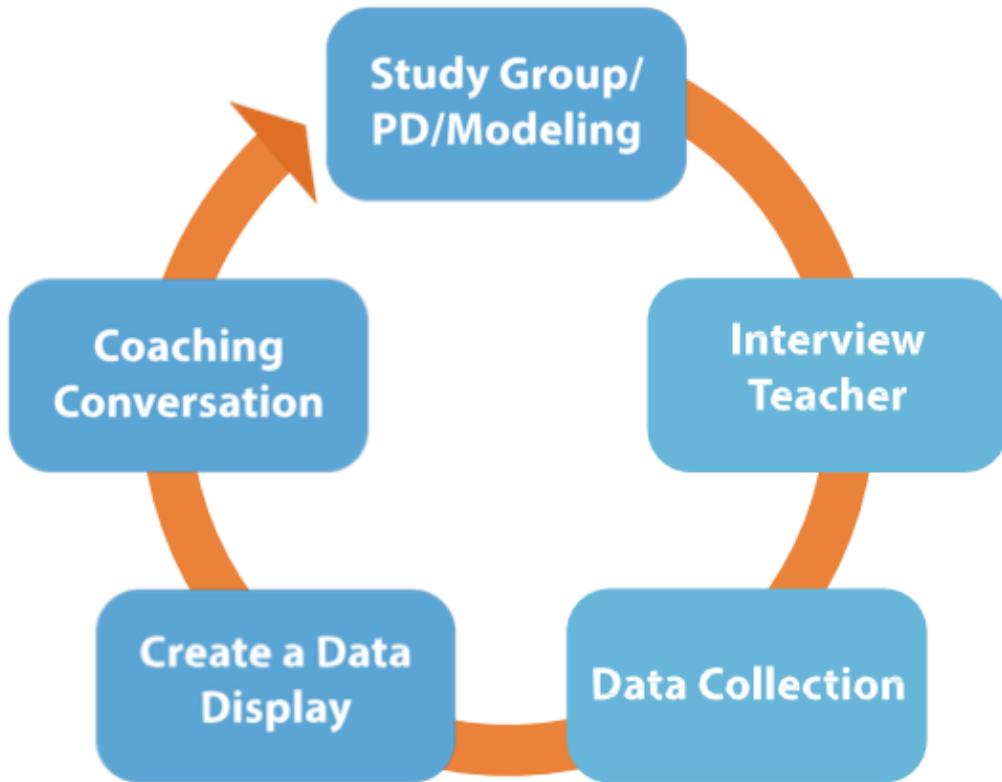
Figure 4-1. Lastinger instructional coaching model

CHAPTER 5
REFLECTIVE COACHING: MIRRORS, WINDOWS AND DOORWAYS TO TEACHER
LEARNING

The purpose of this dissertation study was to analyze and determine (a) how teachers experienced reflective coaching, and (b) what factors of this coaching approach teachers perceived as contributing to their learning and changed practice. Though all teachers in this study reported benefits from reflective coaching, their depth and scope of learning varied. Participants described experiences that ranged from an inward, microscopic view of teaching to an outward, comprehensive gaze at learning as a holistic process incorporating not only themselves, but also their students, colleagues, and school administrators. The intricate connections between teachers' contexts, backgrounds, and coaching environments were evident in these experiences, and all of these components played a role in the outcomes and meanings of coaching.

In order to present the varied teachers experiences of learning through coaching that occurred, I have chosen to use metaphors of a mirror, window and doorway, comparing reflective coaching to objects that provide physical representation of reflection, visualization, and transformation in order to explain these varied levels of learning and growth. Thus, these reflective coaching experiences are classified as coaching as a mirror for inner reflection, coaching as a window to look beyond teacher practice, and coaching as a doorway for teacher transformation. These metaphors were not used as a *method* of analysis (e.g. Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) but instead were created as a product of analysis in order to describe how participants envisioned their coaching experience. In chapters 5 and 6, I present the individual coaching journeys of all six participants, using data to discuss each participant's coaching experience.

Coaching as a mirror represented a self-reflective coaching journey in which the teacher being coached examined his or her knowledge, actions and beliefs. This coaching experience highlighted a narrow strategic process to focus on teacher needs and centered on the practice of teacher self-reflection, allowing the teacher to see *themselves* more clearly. Coaching as a window described a more comprehensive coaching experience in which the teacher broadened his or her gaze of inquiry to classroom interactions and student learning and outcomes. The window represented an *expansive view of instruction*, in which the teacher could not only look within to self-reflect, but also look out to focus on the larger scope of the classroom and incorporate the gaze of others (students, colleagues, administrators). These two coaching experiences add to the literature by providing evidence of teacher learning from coaching, and highlight teachers' views of the power of reflection and dialogue in the coaching process.

This research also brings to light the transformational power of coaching to create school change and improvement that is seldom mentioned in coaching literature. Coaching as a doorway represented an experience in which teachers perceived that they reframed their teaching identity, and ventured beyond their comfort zone to view their classrooms as a new, unknown space through this holistic learning experience. Coaching as a mirror, window and doorway are explained further in Table 5-1.

After several phases of inductive analysis and data reduction, it became evident that while each participant's coaching journey was distinctive, there were also similarities in how the teachers interpreted this experience. These similarities appeared to be due to factors such as years of teaching experience (novice and veteran

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teachers), school context (unsupportive versus collaborative school cultures) and coach and teacher roles and relationships (evaluator, mentor, peer, and partner roles). Thus, findings are presented in pairs of participants according to their interpretation of the coaching experience. This chapter will discuss reflective coaching experiences categorized as coaching as a mirror for inner reflection and coaching as a window to look beyond teacher practice. Chapter 6 discusses coaching as a doorway for teacher transformation, and presents evidence from two teachers with different backgrounds and levels of experience who experienced a transformation of teacher identity, beliefs, and practice both within their classroom, and in their schools.

These illustrations of coaching detail factors contributing to the development of teachers understanding, and provide detailed nuances of each participant's personal coaching journey. A continuum of coaching stances (Duessen et al., 2007; Heineke, 2010) is also represented in these stories. Though coaches were not direct participants, their relationships and stances towards coaching these teachers, in which directive, reflective, and balanced coaching were evident, are important to each participant's story. While all teacher participants attempted this coaching experience to improve their instructional practice, a diverse combination of coaching elements and relationships influenced these teachers, creating more cumbersome journeys for some than others.

Each coaching section (coaching as a mirror, window, and doorway) in this chapter and Chapter 6 begins with a brief introduction and explanation of characteristics of the metaphor that are connected to participants' descriptions through data illustrations. True to the constructivist framework of this research, I introduce each

participant individually through a vignette, and summarize his or her coaching experience. What follows then is a discussion of meaning that emerged from the data of individual participants, as well as similar outcomes or influences of coaching that connected teachers' coaching cycles to the metaphor. This discussion includes important concepts such as the coaching approach (coach-teacher relationship, coach behaviors and coaching lens), the elements and activities of reflective coaching (such as pre-conference interview, coaching conversation, and data display), and the benefits and tensions of reflective coaching acknowledged by these teachers.   Understanding these stories is an important component to constructing an answer to my first research question: *What do teachers experience when engaging in a coaching cycle facilitated by a coach trained in a reflective coaching approach?*

Category One: Coaching as a Mirror for Inner Reflection

Teachers who experienced coaching as a mirror used it to facilitate a process of self-reflective inquiry and introspection. We use mirrors every day to focus on ourselves. A mirror is used to make sure our hair is in place, a tie is on straight, and we assess how we look from our own perspective. We use a mirror to scrutinize ourselves. Therefore in reflective coaching, this category is represented by the entry-level experience of novice teachers who scrutinize their practice with the help of their coach. The mirror reflects teaching on a micro level, in which teachers look only at pieces of their instruction, often with a lack of experience and confidence, to discern their needs for improvement in their practice.

A mirror, unlike a window, is solid, and can only be viewed from one side. Therefore, these novice teachers were only able to focus on one view of their instruction. They viewed their coaches as experienced mentors to help and fix their

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immediate needs. Coaching as a mirror represents the experiences of two novice

teachers who were aware that change was needed for their instructional growth and

desired to create those changes. They viewed reflective coaching as a way to get help,

and improve their "appearance" in the classroom by making instructional improvements.

The mirror category of reflective coaching is represented by two novice teachers,

Sarah and Celina and is summarized in Table 5-2. Two elements that impacted these

individual coaching experiences were the coach-teacher relationship, and the lens used

by the coach to provide a coaching focus. While Sarah and Celina experienced similar

aspects of the coaching process regarding their challenges as new teachers, their

experiences differed greatly because of coach behaviors. Both Sarah's and Celina's

stories give insight into the tensions of teaching as a new teacher, including feelings of

isolation, being unprepared for diverse students, and requiring both scaffolding and

support in their personal learning.

The two novice teachers' perceptions of this experience also illustrated similar

ways in which they understood coaching, and intended to improve their practice.

Understanding both the similarities and differences in Sarah's and Celina's coaching

experiences contributes to the knowledge gained about using reflective coaching with

novice teachers, and also highlights many of the tensions associated with this type of

professional development.

Sarah: The Cracked Mirror of Coaching

Sarah is a young, reflective elementary teacher with tremendous compassion for her students, who won the Rookie of the Year Teaching Award from her district during her first year of teaching. During Sarah's second year of teaching, she was frustrated by a change in school administration and claimed that teachers were not provided support, quality professional development, individualized teacher learning or collaboration within the school faculty. Sarah was moved to a new grade level, given lower-achieving students, and a new curriculum with which she was unfamiliar.   As a

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novice teacher, she felt isolated and overwhelmed and received a mediocre teaching evaluation. Sarah was torn down and had little confidence in her abilities. Sarah's team leader invited her to participate in a peer coaching cycle, and Sarah was excited about coaching because it would provide personal support in an instructional area where she felt she was struggling.

During the coaching process, Sarah's coach personalized her learning by using the techniques deemed reflective in nature (asking Sarah questions, providing informative data and feedback). However, because Sarah's formal evaluation was used to create her coaching focus, she felt defensive and continued to focus on her weaknesses as a teacher. Sarah's coaching cycle became deficit-based, emphasizing what she was doing "wrong", and evaluative in tone because of her coach's lens and frame of focus. Sarah discussed the fact that her coach took the time to create informative data displays from her classroom observations tailored for Sarah's specific students, and that her coach cared personally for her growth as a teacher. Though her feeling of inadequacy lingered, Sarah claims to have benefitted from this experience because it helped her examine some of her teaching practices and provided personal feedback, something which she did not receive in her formal evaluation. But the coach-teacher relationship of expert and novice that was established overshadowed her learning, and though she felt thankful for the personal attention of her coach and the time taken to engage in this process, she was left wanting collaboration and reciprocity in learning, which she never received. She desired to work together with her coach to understand, reflect upon, and improve her instructional choices, but that opportunity never came.

The vignette above describes Sarah's reflective coaching cycle based on data from her interviews and observations of her coaching conversation video. Sarah's experience with reflective coaching is characterized by her need to "fix" herself as a new teacher. Sarah viewed her coaching experience as helpful in terms of personal attention to her needs as a teacher, but also critical of her practice and an incomplete process to provide collaborative learning. She used coaching as a mirror because she was aware of her challenges and personal needs as a teacher, and used that mirror to assess those needs and scrutinize her practice. However, for Sarah, when she gazed into the mirror that coaching provided her, it was cracked due to a tense relationship with her coach coming in as an expert and to the rigid connection of her coaching to evaluation, which for Sarah had been a negative experience. Sarah was still able to

learn and benefit from the experience, but the view of coaching in her mirror was not always a pleasant one.

The expert-novice coaching relationship

When analyzing Sarah's conversation with her coach, there was evidence of tension in their relationship due to Sarah's coach being her team leader.   Sarah spoke to this dynamic often within her interviews, and described her coach with kindness and gratitude, but also acknowledged the power differential of expert and novice in their conversations:

> I always felt she was higher than me . . . She's taught fourth grade for eight years, and this was my first year on the team . . . and so I think rightfully so, I should've been a little below her. But as I'm thinking about this, I think I was afraid to dig deeper into the conversations, I think with our relationship, it made it very hard. We knew she was coaching, and it was almost like her new role as team leader . . . so I definitely felt inferior. (Sar2, 663-684)

As a novice teacher in a new teaching environment, Sarah often conveyed feelings of frustration and anxiety about her teaching, asking for guidance and support. This authoritative element of power impaired her coach's ability to engage in collaborative learning with a new teacher, and Sarah's coach approached this coaching cycle from the view of an experienced leader, not a partner in learning. Sarah's coaching relationship and lens added to the self-scrutiny of her practice. When asked if this dynamic overshadowed what she interpreted in her data display and her ability to reflect on her practice, Sarah replied, "Yes, I think it could have. Because even at that time . . . there wasn't that sense of camaraderie . . . there was a role switch. Instead of 'We're working on this together', it was, she is pointing out what I'm doing wrong and how to fix it" (Sar3, 142-146). While Sarah had rapport with her coach, there was never a feeling of equality in power, or reciprocity in learning due to her coach's authoritative

positioning of the relationship. Thus, the glass of her coaching mirror was cracked, allowing her to see small pieces of her instruction to fix, but obscuring and altering a clear gaze.

Evaluation as focus

By receiving attention from her coach without the collaborative interaction she needed, Sarah felt vulnerable. Her practice was being scrutinized by someone she perceived as having more power than her, and her negative evaluation was continually brought back into her coaching focus. Sarah's coach suggested using her teacher evaluation scores as a starting point for her coaching cycle, and Sarah agreed. Because of Sarah's previous negative experience with her evaluation process, both Sarah and her coach interpreted her data display, coaching conversation, and feedback through a deficit lens. When asked how her coaching cycle goal was determined, Sarah responded, "She would look at what I was missing . . . and it made me realize what I was doing wrong" (Sar2, 164-187).

While Sarah and her coach completed two coaching cycles, her second coaching conversation video was viewed for this study, and Sarah commented on watching the video with feelings of frustration:

> It made me realize looking at this that I didn't do the strategies I had
> learned. Why didn't I do turn and talk? I mean, seriously, why did I not do
> that? I think, at that moment, I was like 'Crap, I'm not doing this right!' I
> wasn't doing what I'm supposed to be doing. (Sar2, 323-331)

Sarah continued to analyze her coaching conversation by discussing the data presented by her coach based on Sarah's evaluation rubric:

> I think as soon as she brought in the evaluation rubric, I guess it became
> 'Let me look at the checkmarks, and let me see what I did and what I
> didn't do.' And the evaluation process is so belittling. It's very difficult to
> put yourself on a scale and rate yourself. (Sar2, 459-466)

This example of Sarah's mindset exemplifies the deficit-based reflection she received from her cracked mirror of coaching: the inability to perceive positive attributes of her teaching from her coaching experience despite being presented with data that could help her improve her practice. Ironically, coaching, which she had hoped would help her meet these needs and deficits, became an extension of her negative evaluation process. Sarah freely admitted, however, that her lack of confidence also rested within her and the way she viewed herself as a teacher. Before her formal evaluation experience, she perceived herself as a strong teacher who had the ability to create powerful student learning. Therefore, it is uncertain whether Sarah's coaching experience would have had a different outcome if she received a more positive evaluation experience, but her story provides a connection to these often opposing forces in teaching.

Data as a learning aid

Though Sarah experienced tension within her coaching experience, she explained the benefits of her data displays as an important element of her learning. Although Sarah had a cracked mirror of coaching, she was able to learn from this experience because the data her coach provided helped her see beyond the cracks. From these data summaries of her teaching, she realized ways to grow as a teacher through self-reflection, and thus, in her mind, coaching was beneficial to her practice. "I think the coaching made me more reflective as a teacher, it's like a mirror, you literally see what you're actively doing in the classroom with a different set of eyes" (Sar2, 949-957). What was significant about Sarah's experience was that the "eyes" she refers to were focused with a deficit perspective and she was not encouraged to reflect beyond that and beyond her negative evaluation. While Sarah and her coach talked about her

practice in the coaching conversation, there was never collaborative dialogue or

incorporation of Sarah's thinking to determine ways to improve, which she longed for:

"There was never a collaboration of what to do next. I don't feel like I ever participated

in knowing the goal, or determining the next steps" (Sar3, 230-232).

In contrast with Sarah's experience, Celina's coaching experience will be

presented. This novice teacher's experience was based on equality between her and

her coach, and as a result, she benefitted from a new ability to reflect on her teaching.

Celina: Learning How to Use the Mirror

Celina is an energetic second-year teacher from a traditional teacher preparation program, but claims to have never had the proper educational training or support needed to be successful in her classroom. Thus, she was struggling as a social studies teacher in a Title One Middle School, and feeling overwhelmed in all aspects of her teaching. She referred to her classroom management as "embarrassing" and was feeling anxious about not meeting her students' needs. She grasped on to reflective coaching because it provided her with a peer who became a mentor and provided her support and encouragement. Celina knew she needed help, but did not possess the educational knowledge or skills to truly assess her specific challenges. Therefore, her coach used a directive approach to determine her coaching focus by providing specific choices related to classroom management strategies.

Celina consistently discussed needing to see tangible evidence and validation of her teaching practices. As a learning tool, her coach used the same data collection method and data display through two of her coaching sessions. However, Celina admitted showing no change in her classroom management after these coaching observations. Her data displays were almost identical. Facing more feelings of frustration and inadequacy from not implementing her coaching goals and still being burdened with classroom issues, Celina agreed to one more coaching cycle. Instead of her coach giving her prescriptive solutions to her management dilemmas, her coach suggested she self-reflect on the two data displays before they met for their third coaching cycle. It was only through her reflection before the third coaching cycle that Celina had the "epiphany" about her teaching, and it was because of specific probing questions that her coach used combined with data as evidence which lead her to realize her challenges. This introduction to reflection helped Celina to brainstorm and implement solutions. Without the combination of data interpretation and reflection, coaching would have been lost on this novice teacher.

The mentoring/coaching relationship between Celina and her coach was instrumental because Celina was receiving little support from her administration and felt overwhelmed in her team meetings. She was afraid to ask for help, and needed a trusted yet knowledgeable peer to guide her and push her. She treasured her coaching experience because it gave her confidence while providing a comfortable environment

for growth. While initially this novice teacher did not have the capacity to decipher her specific classroom challenges, through reflective coaching, she felt a sense of empowerment and confidence.

Celina's vignette summarizes her coaching experience and describes how coaching helped this novice teacher improve her teaching and become a reflective educator early in her teaching career.   Celina looked in her mirror of coaching, and saw so many needs, she did not know where to start. Celina and her coach had a relationship of trust, and thus her glass was not cracked, and provided an accurate image of her teaching. However, instead of reiterating problems and weaknesses, as Sarah's coach did, Celina's coach covered most of the mirror up, and only looked at one small, manageable piece to improve and create dividends for her classroom instruction. Celina's coach viewed that image in the mirror through an asset-based lens, realizing the necessary steps to create change and positive growth for this novice teacher.   Two important concepts gleaned from Celina's story relate to: (a) her coach's ability to scaffold her learning as a new teacher, and (b) the use of reflection in the coaching cycle, in which Celina learned to look inward at her practice and develop efficacy.

Scaffolding teacher learning for specific improvement in practice

When Celina was approached by her coach to begin the reflective coaching process, she expressed feelings of being overwhelmed, underprepared, and unconfident as a teacher. When she thought about her practice, she could not determine where to focus her gaze, thus needing her coach to provide that mirror to help her see which specific things needed improvement. As a second-year middle school teacher, Celina had been given low-achieving students with behavioral issues, and she felt that she was not capable of handling these challenges to adequately meet her students' needs:

College does not prepare you at all to teach these kids. I'm so embarrassed, and I was so worried. I just don't have the time to plan enough, and I get so overwhelmed with all the resources thrown at me and have no idea how to use them . . . sometimes my confidence is low and sometimes it's just like, "Is this a good idea?" and I just need that affirmation. (C3, 134-136)

Celina's lament is a common one among new teachers. Her coach, who was another teacher in Celina's school but in a different department, began the coaching process slowly by scaffolding her learning about both the function of the coaching cycle and Celina's instructional decisions in the classroom. Celina's coach took time to understand Celina's concerns and helped her identify several issues within her classroom that were preventing student engagement and learning. Celina admitted not being able to fully understand how to make improvements in her instruction, and her coach aided her learning and presented several scenarios in which Celina could understand how student engagement was impacted by planning, learning strategies, and different types of instruction. Thus, Celina's coach taught her how to use the mirror to assess her instruction by scaffolding her learning in small manageable pieces.

Once Celina and her coach identified aspects of her teaching in which she could improve, her coach began the coaching cycle with a focus towards classroom management:

She was telling me about the coaching process, and explained it in detail, so we started with Marzano, it made the most sense . . . and she said, "Tell me what you think you need help with, and I'll create a model from there." So I said management is my weakness, and that's where I wanted to start. She steered me in that direction, but we decided to go there together. She asked me questions, but I just put it all on her in terms of focus, because I felt I didn't really know what to look for or what to expect. (C1, 69-76)

While Celina's coach directed her towards specific elements of classroom management, she incorporated Celina's viewpoints and together they decided on a specific focus and data collection method for her classroom observations.

Data as a tool for self-reflection

Like Sarah, Celina was eventually able to benefit from coaching because of the power of data to focus her gaze within her coaching mirror. For Celina, however, it took multiple times before this strategy worked. Celina's coach provided her with resources and teaching strategies but did not tell her how to implement them in her practice. As a result, Celina's second coaching observation was static and the data display was almost identical to the first one. She made little change to her instructional strategies, had the same management issues, and was frustrated with the outcome. Though Celina could look at the problem of classroom management in her mirror of coaching, she could still not understand how to fix those problems.

This disconnect between Celina's learning, reflection, and practice was evident in watching Celina's second coaching conversation video. During this conversation, her coach sensed Celina's angst and need for intentional guidance. Yet instead of telling Celina what to do to help her and alleviate her tensions, her coach continued to ask probing questions about how she felt the observation went, and also asked her interpretation of the data display, which was almost identical to the first data display. When asked in the second interview how she felt, she replied, "I realized nothing changed. She was coaching me, and I failed in using what she taught me" (C2, 192-194). Celina and her coach discussed the suggestions and strategies more intently, and Celina agreed to one more coaching cycle. This time, Celina's coach also asked her to reflect on her observations and data displays by herself before the third

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observation and provided her with probing questions to help direct her learning. Celina

discussed this process:

> I started to think back to lessons where (students) were engaged, and I
> started to notice a pattern . . . I was listening to myself talk and thinking
> about it, because I totally forgot how much energy they have . . . and then
> I started thinking about movement, and how at least half the class is
> always up doing something. So now I'm thinking, man, movement really
> would be good for this class. (C2, 359-367)

Through this reflective process, Celina noticed specific things about her class,

her teaching strategies, and herself as a teacher. By incorporating probing questions

with data interpretation and reflection, Celina's coach helped her realize her

instructional value as well as the value of critically reflecting on her practice. She

looked at herself in the mirror, and through her coach's intentional guidance, realized

why those problems were occurring. When asked if this process was harder than

simply being told what to do, she replied:

> It makes me feel that I'm doing the work. By her asking me and wording it
> the way that she words it, it makes me feel like, okay, so maybe I do need
> to change it. It would be different if she was telling me, "Okay, this is what
> I think would be good." But instead she asked me, "Do you think this
> would be good?" because then I have to sit there and reflect on my
> teaching. (C2, 600-608)

This example demonstrates the importance of connecting a teacher's reflection on

practice with probing questions to further learning, and data to present evidence of that

practice. Once Celina realized the importance of connecting reflection with practice,

implementing strategies was her next step, which increased her confidence in her

abilities.

Learning to Gaze Into a Coaching Mirror

For these two teachers who experienced coaching as a mirror, what made

learning possible was a foundational support of caring within their coaching

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relationships. Like many novice teachers, Celina and Sarah's need for support and

personal attention was instrumental in battling the difficulties of being a new teacher.

According to Sarah, professional development for novice teachers in her school and

through her district's induction program were primarily geared toward teacher evaluation

systems and the district's instructional framework, and provided little choice for personal

learning. In her second interview, she explained how different coaching was from her

evaluation experience. Sarah viewed coaching as an opportunity for professional growth

within a caring relationship:

> Coaching actually has to do with what I need to get better. It's personal,
> it's about my practice, and it's what I want to work on, not them . . . It's just
> way more helpful when it's actually what I need. It's like a kid who needs
> more Vitamin C, then don't put him on Vitamin A. (Sar2, 1099-1109)

Sarah's need for personal, inquiry-driven professional learning to achieve instructional

growth, as echoed in the literature (Nelson & Slavit, 2008; Putnam & Borko, 2000),

positioned her to appreciate her coach's role in that development. As Sarah

experienced two coaching cycles with her coach, she felt gratitude toward the effort and

time taken by her coach to create personal learning experiences from her observations

and conversations:

> I felt that she really cared . . . because I think the amount anybody spends
> extra time with you, I mean that was her planning period. That was part of
> her lunch. That meant something, and the fact that she also cared
> enough to create the data display . . . all of that was nice, and I feel like it
> just took her forever to do. The fact that she used the names of the kids to
> help me see what I was missing, I think that meant something. (Sar3, 253-
> 268)

Celina interpreted her coaching relationship as caring because of her coach's

continued attention and patience with Celina's practice despite Celina's noted

frustration. Her coach refused to give up, according to Celina, and in her third coaching

cycle, Celina developed the capacity to connect her learning to her practice, and started the transition toward becoming a confident teacher. She attributed this change to her coach's continued support and personalized approach as well as engaging in continuous coaching cycles:

> Sometimes there were days where you just felt really defeated, and now I'm thinking "Wow, okay!" She boosted me . . . and I feel like now I want to try harder, to do more for the students' engagement or be more specific to the students themselves, or the class themselves, and how they work. I realize I know more than I feel like I know. I used to feel, "Oh, I'm a second year teacher, I don't know anything." Now I'm able to reflect on my own teaching, and I see now why it's so important . . . To do this multiple times was really helpful. I feel like I can do more. (C2, 628-637)

While Celina initially approached coaching with the need for support, affirmation and encouragement, the connection of her reflective ability with evidence of her practice pushed her to become a better teacher with a continued need for learning.

Despite Sarah's desire for equality in power in her coaching relationship and her desire for more collaboration and reciprocity in learning, she considered this experience a "catalyst for my improvement as a teacher" (Sar3, 355). While she acknowledged the tensions based upon the positioning of her evaluation within coaching, Sarah suggested that the biggest challenge of this experience was looking in that mirror, and not turning away. She struggled at accepting her challenges as a teacher, and pushing through that struggle to move forward and improve her practice. She accepted responsibility for her lack of confidence, and attributed this challenge to the reason that initially attracted her to coaching as professional development: the personal focus on her needs as a teacher. In her final interview, Sarah stated:

> I guess because we were so focused on something that I needed . . . and because I wasn't good at whatever [my coach] was looking for, that I don't feel it ever made me feel confident, but still at the same time, it showed me so much that I can improve upon and work on. (Sar3, 113-122)

Sarah's statement addresses the dilemma of coaches providing positive pressure (Fullan, 2007) in the coaching of novice teachers. How can coaches provide a caring and supportive relationship with novice teachers, but then push them to become vulnerable, and improve their practice? When does coaching heavy, as Joellen Killion (2009) described, become too heavy? While both Sarah and Celina had different mirrors, their experiences were powerful. Because both of these teachers received a more mentoring coaching experience because of the lead of their coaches, one element missing from these experiences was dialogue based on reciprocity of learning. The next section discusses this important concept of dialogue in the dissection of two stories from veteran teachers and their coaching experiences.

Category Two: Coaching as a Window to See Beyond Teacher Practice

This section describes the next category of coaching experience, coaching as a window to see beyond teacher practice, and presents two similar stories of veteran teachers Nicole and Dianne. Coaching as a window represents a coaching experience in which teachers viewed their teaching practices and resulting student learning and had the ability to see their own learning from a different perspective to improve classroom outcomes. When we think of the purpose of looking through windows, we stay inside and use the window to view how things are outside, and this influences our actions. We look to see how the weather is, or whether there is a lot of traffic on the road. Therefore, coaching as a window presents an experience that looks within (self-reflection) and outside (classroom impact) and incorporates the teacher being coached as well as that teacher's students. While a mirror represented a self-reflective experience with a narrow focus of learning, coaching as a window highlighted an expansive focus of teacher learning incorporating several viewpoints and solutions to be interpreted for

instructional improvement. Teachers self-reflected based on their teaching knowledge

and experience, but then had the ability to gaze outward for a more comprehensive

scope of learning and impact.

This discussion of reflective coaching experiences focused around themes

relevant to professional development of veteran teachers such as providing necessary

collaboration, support, and reflective dialogue, and presenting a new lens through which

to view teaching (see Table 5-3). This section also examines tensions commonly faced

in the coaching of veteran teachers, such as the positioning of coaching with regard to

teacher investment and intentionality, and the ability to push beyond evaluative

frameworks to decipher the connection between coaching and providing instructional

improvement and growth.

Nicole: Looking Through a Window of Mastery

*Nicole is a fourth-year veteran elementary teacher who typifies an inquiry stance
in her teaching. Her diagnostic ability in her teaching is evident as she consistently
probes and "digs deeper" into her teaching tensions to improve her instruction. She
attributes her inquiry stance to interning at a professional development school where
inquiry and critical reflection were the norm and expectation. After four years of
teaching, Nicole considers herself a master teacher. She has mentored student
teachers, has been selected to represent her school at district-level professional
development, and recently completed a Master of Arts in Educational Leadership.
Nicole transferred into her district this year and quickly realized that her new school was
not the laboratory of learning she was used to. Described as a culture of "compliance,"
her school and fourth grade teaching team were struggling with collaboration, and she
immediately took a leadership role to try to alleviate tensions and provide a structure to
help her grade level colleagues. Nicole jumped at the chance to return to a
collaborative form of professional development and agreed to participate in two
coaching cycles with her peer coach.*

*Within her coaching experience, Nicole recognized that coaching provided data
to help her see things she normally wouldn't think about, bringing the "cognitive"
element back to her teaching. During her first and second coaching cycles, Nicole and
her coach focused on an aspect of her reading instruction, which she identified as her
"weakness." Nicole wanted the perspective of her coach about her choice of strategies
as well as the data to help her understand how these choices impacted her students
learning. What Nicole learned, however, was that her assumptions about her teaching
were challenged by both the data collected, and by her coach's ability to probe into her*

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thinking about teaching. She appreciated the sharing of ideas with her coach, and her coaching conversations showed evidence of critical reflection, dialogue, and collaboration between colleagues. Nicole described her coaching relationship as professional and comfortable. Her coach pushed her to discover new insights into her practice through probing dialogue and presented evidence about specific improvements she could incorporate. Nicole appreciated this opportunity to grow as a teacher.

While novice teachers Sarah and Celina also discussed issues of support and isolation within their new teaching contexts, Nicole had the experience and knowledge to realize that her school culture was stifling her growth as a teacher. Thus, she had to seek out her own collaborative professional development opportunities and welcomed the opportunity to be coached. As Nicole discussed, her school was afraid of change:

> This school is completely different than what I came from. We would collaborate, we would create and share. Here it is everyone is on their own. What we have found out is that everyone is set in their ways and doing their own thing . . . there is no planning for the kids. Planning time is hard to get together, and there are a lot of excuses. The biggest challenge is that we are not coordinated. I'm not sure why people are afraid of change. (N1, 51-59)

As discussed in coaching research (Knight, 2007; Taylor, 1998), organizational elements such as school leadership and policy implementation need to support both coaches and teachers for success. Though Nicole felt unsupported by her administration and team members, she saw the promise of collaboration and support through coaching, and was excited about the process. When asked about the most poignant aspects of coaching, Nicole spoke of characteristics related to the collaborative and cognitive power of coaching, specifically the power of reciprocal dialogue to push her thinking, and the power of data to challenge her assumptions of both teaching and learning.

Learning from reflective dialogue

As a veteran teacher, Nicole embodied a reflective teaching stance, and frequently engaged in inquiry into her own practice and her students' needs. Whereas Sarah and Celina focused on their personal teaching needs in the classroom, Nicole focused beyond her personal growth to her students' learning. Wanting to problematize her practice in a safe, comfortable atmosphere not affiliated with the formal pressures of evaluation, she appreciated coaching for the constant exchange of ideas and critical dialogue within her peer coaching relationship. Nicole's window of coaching provided a two-way view of teaching through reflective dialogue. Her coach looked in, and Nicole looked out at her practice, and they engaged in critical, reflective dialogue about what they observed. Nicole used the metaphor of a tennis match to describe the exchange of ideas in her coaching experience:

> As we reflected, as we were taking the percentages and connecting it to the questions, she would point something out to me and then I'd notice something . . . So we were going back and forth in helping each other, like a tennis match, and bouncing ideas back and forth. It was a great mutual conversation. (N2, 451-456)

This example illustrates the need for veteran teachers to have challenging partners in learning and gives credence to Knight's (2007) definition of the partnership mindset: "Partnership is a deep belief that we are no more important than those with whom we work, and that we should do everything we can to respect that equality" (p.24).

However, because Nicole worked with a peer as her coach that was familiar and considered equal in terms of knowledge and experience, the relationship may not have been as crucial to her growth as with Sarah and Celina. What created the most challenge and learning in coaching for Nicole was the presentation of data in order to confront and problematize her practice.

Data to confront teacher assumptions

Nicole's coaching window provided her another view of student learning that she was not able to see on her own. This new view helped her confront assumptions she held about her own teaching. When Nicole asked her coach to observe her reading lesson because she was concerned with the amount of student talk versus teacher talk, her coach originally suggested collecting data on wait time after Nicole would question her students. However, Nicole felt this concept was something she had mastered:

> I feel like I already mastered it. I didn't feel it is meaningful if I already do it, I feel like I already know wait time, I don't accept just like three hands in the air. I don't accept a quick response. So . . . wait time was not something that was going to move me as a teacher. I felt like that was too surface, I wanted something deeper. (N2, 105-148)

Taking Nicole's needs and wishes into account, she and her coach decided to collect data regarding her questioning stems and types of questions. Nicole's coach presented this data in a mathematical data display revealing the percentages of the types of questions Nicole asked based on Bloom's taxonomy of knowledge. This coaching focus appealed to Nicole because she was constantly trying to improve the critical thinking and independence of her students and considered herself a very mathematical, visual person. Nicole's coach used probing questions and strategies to illuminate the fact that while Nicole's questions were higher level and appropriate for her students understanding, her students were not getting enough time to answer the questions and dig more deeply into the concepts Nicole presented. Nicole's data display provoked a discovery she was unprepared for:

> I think the data helped me get there . . . that was a very clear, direct way to see it. The percentages helped me, and I think maybe I wasn't as good as I thought, because I asked questions but they weren't answering so I would move on, or I wouldn't give them enough time to answer. The data MADE me think about wait time. (N2, 276-282)

Nicole's coach used her data display to confront feelings of mastery regarding her questioning strategies. As a result of interpreting the data and engaging in critical dialogue, Nicole realized that she had not mastered the practice of wait time, and needed to do so in order to improve her instruction in her reading lessons. Coaching provided this veteran teacher with new ways to view her practice and also gave her the outlet to confront these assumptions through collaborative dialogue with her coach.

Dianne: Starting with One View, and Gaining Another

Dianne is a national board certified veteran teacher in her eighth year of teaching. She is currently teaching a gifted/blended fourth grade classroom at her school where she has taught since the beginning of her career. Dianne is a highly motivated teacher who describes herself as a "perfectionist," but still loves teaching and is energetic and compassionate with her students. She relates that her school culture is "desperately needing change," where teachers have little voice in implementation of programs and curriculum changes, and there is minimal cohesiveness and communication from her administration.

When approached by a peer to engage in a coaching cycle, Dianne agreed and used this coaching cycle as a "safe" rehearsal for her final teaching evaluation without the pressures of being evaluated formally. She and her coach worked on a lesson that would encompass all indicators necessary for her evaluation framework, and Dianne performed the lesson while her coach observed. Dianne's coaching was strategically positioned with an evaluative focus based on her need for a highly effective evaluation, and thus change in practice was not her goal. But during the coaching conversation, Dianne was surprised and confronted with data that showed that she was not meeting her three lower-level students' needs, and she reflected upon and troubled this revelation. While often focusing on her gifted students, she realized from this coaching cycle that she was not differentiating to the best of her ability, and this data provided her a "teachable moment." She and her coach went beyond the lens of evaluation to focus on her students' needs. Coaching provided learning and growth for Dianne in an unexpected way through data interpretation, reflection, and critical dialogue with her coach.

Dianne's is a teacher who understood the requirements of teaching, and the importance of her teaching evaluation within her practice. From this coaching experience, however, she realized that teaching went far beyond that evaluation lens. Her coaching window opened up her gaze to go beyond what she hoped to focus on when she began her coaching experience.

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Similar to Nicole, Dianne believed that her school culture and professional development opportunities were not providing adequate challenge and inquiry into her practice, and that was translating to less challenge for her gifted students. When asked how her school was positioning school improvement and professional development, Dianne replied:

> Our administration is rocky. There's a lot of miscommunication, certain expectations are unclear, a lot of new programs. Administration could have rolled it out a different way. They don't take our ideas into consideration, everyone feels overwhelmed. There's a lot of fear and uncertainty with teachers. (D1, 20-25)

This lack of confidence in her school's administration provoked Dianne to use coaching as a tool to assess her practice in a safe coaching environment with a trusted peer coach in order to look at her practice critically, but without formality or high stakes. However, as Dianne found out, the window of coaching allowed her to see far beyond this initial goal.

Data to broaden the scope of learning

Dianne wanted her coach to collect data based strictly from her formal evaluation rubric as a rehearsal for her final evaluation. Her strategic use of coaching as a *tool* for evaluation was to provide her with areas to work on in order to receive a highly effective teaching rating. Dianne's focus of coaching was based on her students' learning through her evaluation indicators, but gave little attention to her needs and growth as a teacher. While Dianne had a specific evaluative focus, her coach also suggested tracking student engagement to make sure she was calling on all her students. Dianne's coach observed the lesson and collected data on specific questioning strategies by recording verbatim what Dianne said, and tracked student engagement during the lesson by showing which students were called on the most and which

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students were barely engaged. While the lesson didn't go according to plan, Dianne still felt confident in her abilities and was eager to see the data her coach had collected.

As her coach presented her with a data display detailing her questioning, Dianne immediately focused on the student engagement portion. While she was pleased that she had used several higher order thinking questions, she was surprised to discover that while she was engaging her gifted students, she was not calling on her tier two students, and conversely focusing on one specific student with a disability, and almost "picking on and spoon-feeding" him. This student received the majority of her attention during the lesson, which was very visible in the data display. She reflected on the initial surprise and feeling of inadequacy that she culled from her data display:

> The one thing that I saw, that I obviously need to work on, was my tier two students. I could see they took a back seat from the data, you know . . . like wow. I was surprised I was calling on my ESE student so much. I really think seeing the data reiterated I still have things to work on. I think I thought I was better than that, and remember being disappointed in myself, because I try to be cognizant of that because I have so many higher ability kids. (D2, 446-450)

This revelation provoked Dianne to meet with that student's ESE teacher, and create a behavioral improvement plan for her student, as well as reevaluate her questioning strategies for whole group discussions to better differentiate for all her students. While her coaching conversation provided the avenue for this discovery, Dianne, like Nicole, was reflective and motivated enough to realize that without the data, she would not have been aware of the improvements needed in her practice.

To Dianne, the data display was what broadened her scope of learning, and was the difference between using coaching as a mirror for self-reflection, to using coaching as a window and seeing a comprehensive picture. Though initially her coach focused on specific pieces of her practice related to Dianne's formal evaluation, it was the data

display that provided the view of both her and the students in Dianne's coaching experience. She realized from data that student learning was being impacted by specific issues within her instruction. The data provided that transparency of a window, and allowed Dianne to incorporate something unexpected in her practice. Coaching as a window is not one dimensional as coaching as a mirror can be, and data made the students appear in this process. This was an integral component to these coaching experiences, as Dianne explains:

> I think the data displays are really helpful because as you're teaching throughout the day, I don't necessarily have the time, and I can reflect and say "I should ask this" or "I should have done this" but having the data in front of me with, black and white . . . that was powerful, and really helpful and positive. (D2, 414- 418)

Learning to Gaze Through a Coaching Window

These two vignettes summarize the coaching experiences of two accomplished veteran teachers, and shed light on coaching as professional development for two teachers who had the capacity to discern their specific teaching needs as well as desired the collaborative learning of coaching. They used the window of coaching to access their coach's view of their instruction, and then turned that gaze from inward to outward with revelations about their practice based data about their students.   Both Nicole and Dianne strategically approached their reflective coaching experiences as opportunities for peer observation and critical feedback in a non-threatening environment, and appreciated the cognitive challenge of re-envisioning their practice through new strategies, data interpretation, and critical dialogue.

As Nicole discussed in her last interview, this process of challenging her ideas and infusing new research into her teaching was paramount in her growth as a teacher:

The importance of bouncing an idea off someone else or having someone
that can support you and say hey, here are my ideas . . . and incorporating
activities and strategies and new research into teaching, that's what I grew
the most from, the cognitive side of looking at my teaching. I feel like
sometimes there's certain things I feel confident in because I've taught it
for three years, but still knowing that there's always room for improvement,
I think that was a big one I came away with from this. I learned so much
just from her, and her questioning. The whole experience is so powerful,
to move you as a teacher. (N3, 440-466)

While Nicole enjoyed her coaching as cognitive stimulation for growth, Dianne admitted

that this coaching experience was mentoring for her, and realized she craved that one-

on-one support, challenge, and guidance. As a veteran teacher, it was humbling for

her to realize there was still improvement needed in her practice:

This cycle definitely impacted me as a teacher. For part of me, it was a
pride thing, in that I thought that I had really nailed it, and came up with
such a great activity, and then I feel like I quickly realized that's not the
case. I had to pick up my pride and move on. I think this definitely helps
me focus on the student's learning, because you start with what they need
and what they want, but it really made me think, and focus on what I want
to do, versus something I have to do or am told to implement . . . it was a
really valuable experience and pushed my thinking. (D3, 365-372)

Data were the catalyst for discovery and provided these two veteran teachers a

surprising and welcomed opportunity to learn, collaborate, and grow from this coaching

experience. Their reflective ability, teaching experience, and knowledge allowed them

to move from the self-reflective one-dimensional aspect of the mirror of coaching, to

looking through the window of coaching, which provided an expansive, transparent look

at both their practice, and their students' classroom experiences. These veteran

teachers understood the impact of coaching on themselves and their practice, and the

impact of these critical reflections on their students learning.

Conclusion

In this chapter, reflective coaching experiences were portrayed through the similes of coaching as a mirror for inner reflection and coaching as a window to look beyond teacher practice. The four experiences of both novice teachers (Sarah and Celina) and veteran teachers (Nicole and Dianne) demonstrate both the benefits and challenges of reflection coaching within different contexts as well as the impact of various elements on a teacher's perception of their coaching experience. These four teachers all agreed that their instructional practice benefitted from this reflective coaching experience, and their experiences add to the literature portraying coaching as a worthwhile, collaborative form of professional development. However, each teacher within this chapter experienced challenges. Internal tensions of novice teachers stemmed from a lack of confidence, lack of capacity, and lack of support within coaching relationships, thus proving the coaching mirror as solid and sometimes restrictive. Coaching as a window displayed tensions based outside the teacher's identity and capacity based on school culture and administrative support, thus adding external pressures to their experience. In the next chapter, two teachers experiences' will shed light on a category of coaching that is not currently discussed in the literature, and provide understanding of the next category of coaching, coaching as a doorway to teacher transformation.

Table 5-1. Coaching as a mirror, window, and doorway to teacher learning

Coaching	Definition and Purpose
Coaching as a mirror	One-sided reflection of teacher only (knowledge, actions, beliefs). Coaching highlighted and framed areas that need improvement. Small "surface" area to minimize areas of focus during coaching. Helps teacher see specifics of practice by reflecting on targeted area through self-reflection.
Coaching as a window	Displays larger image of teacher learning (student reactions, implications, broader issues of classroom). Many views possible, not only self-reflective for teacher, but gaze beyond to classroom implications as well as incorporates gaze of others (administrators, students, colleagues). Helps teacher confront assumptions, expands view of learning, but teacher remains in place in classroom and does not venture further to create larger change.
Coaching as a doorway	Allows teacher to reframe teacher identity. Allows teacher to step outside of comfort zone. May allow teacher to venture into new, previously unexamined spaces beyond current context (school culture, administrative and collegial connections to coaching). May extend learning beyond instruction to teacher leadership, student empowerment, and school improvement.

Table 5-2. 'Coaching as a mirror' individual experiences and common themes

Participant	Themes
Sarah (novice with recent negative evaluation experience)	Expert-novice coaching relationship persisted throughout coaching cycle. Evaluation as narrow focus for coaching. Data as learning.
Celina (novice who lacked classroom knowledge and confidence)	Coaching as scaffolding for specific improvements. Self-reflection of data was integral to teacher growth and change.
Learning to Gaze Into a Coaching Mirror	Coaching as a caring relationship for novice teachers. Coaching provided novice teachers personal support and helped feelings of isolation and being overwhelmed with classroom responsibilities.

Table 5-3. 'Coaching as a window' individual experiences and common themes

Participant	Themes
Nicole (four-year veteran, self-reflective and proficient) in practice).	Coaching as a tennis match with a back and forth exchange of ideas with coach. Data to confront assumptions about practice to broaden understanding.
Dianne (eight-year veteran, National Board certified teacher)	Evaluation focus was directed by teacher, but coaching lens broadened scope of learning. Data as catalyst to shift from mirror to window. Data created a shift from looking within to beyond to meet students needs.
Learning to Gaze Through a Coaching Window	Cognitive push of reflective dialogue. Teachers appreciate the comfort of peer relationships contrasted with the challenge of reflective dialogue and data interpretation.

CHAPTER 6
REFLECTIVE COACHING: OPENING A DOORWAY TO TEACHER
TRANSFORMATION

The professional literature has documented several goals and outcomes of instructional coaching related to teacher and student outcomes (Borman & Feger, 2006; Cornett & Knight, 2009). While there are no "typical" coaching experiences due to the individual focus and immense disparity of goals and models of instructional coaching, much research has been dedicated to discussing the impact of coaching on the change of teacher beliefs and practice.   As discussed in Chapter 5, four participants in this study experienced learning through their coaching experiences, and discussed the benefits of coaching within their classroom context. These benefits included increased support and collaboration with coaches, a personal focus on their needs to improve instructional practice, and the ability to critically reflect on their practice based upon both teacher and students' needs. These findings are important to coaching research, and support existing professional literature. This chapter, however, presents the *transformational* coaching experiences of two teachers with different backgrounds, contexts, and levels of teaching experience that are not currently presented within the coaching literature, and thus offer new perspectives on the power of this job-embedded professional development.

The subject of teacher transformation as a result of instructional coaching is scant in the literature. Most recently, in her mixed-methods study of instructional coaching for teachers of diverse learners, Teemant (2014) described teacher transformation from coaching by claiming teachers became more "sociocultural" with regard to their diverse students, and "became different teachers" (p. 596) from engaging in coaching. While Teemant's definition of transformation looked solely at teacher

practices, this chapter adds to this area of research by providing descriptions of the transformation of teaching identity and beliefs from a teacher's perspective, and explores this beyond the classroom to examine its impact on students, other teachers, and school culture.

Category Three: Coaching as a Doorway to Teacher Transformation

This category of reflective coaching experience symbolizes a transformation of teacher identity, beliefs and practice, and is represented by coaching as a doorway, in which a new world of teaching and coaching is revealed to teachers. Doors represent many things: we use doors to open up new spaces, reveal spaces that are familiar, and close off spaces that are not needed. Doors are not one-sided, like mirrors, nor transparent, like windows, but instead solid and secure. Open doorways, however, are open, passable and inviting. The process of passing through a door allows a person to stand in a space that is known and comfortable, look into a new, unknown space, and enter that space. It is the act of walking through the doorway that represents transformation, accepting those changes, and creating new frames, roles and identities that are evolving.

The doorway of reflective coaching is represented by experiences in which two teachers began in specific places with particular needs just as other teachers did, but then instead of reflecting within or gazing outward as the mirror and window of coaching signified, they transformed their practice by engaging in new roles and identities. This doorway of transformation provided these teachers a changed way of thinking, being, and acting that both improved their teaching, and allowed them to explore the role of coach. What is most significant about these experiences is the different contexts and levels of experience of the teachers being described, as well as the depth and scope of

their learning through coaching. Not only did reflective coaching open the doorway to transformation of teacher identity, beliefs and practice for both of these teachers, but it also revealed other doorways, to teacher leadership, student empowerment, and school improvement.

This category of reflective coaching experience is represented by two teachers, Jake and Sally. Jake is a novice teacher with no teaching experience or educational background, and Sally is a veteran teacher and department chair, with ten years of teaching experience. These experiences will also be presented with vignettes and discussions of individual themes as well as common themes across participants. Jake and Sally's experiences and themes are summarized in Table 6-1. For Jake, themes included the framing of his identity from teacher-centered to student-centered, and his experience with a continuum of coaching approaches that occurred in his coaching relationship over time. Sally's themes focus on the doorway that led to several other doors. Her coaching experience provided her insights into her own growth and development, as well as her students' empowerment. Sally also described how coaching went beyond her classroom to serve as a catalyst for a culture shift in her school, and opened the door to overall school improvement. Common themes presented in both teachers' stories are the concept of praxis within the coaching experience, and shift in identity from teacher to coach. These themes are portrayed progressively, showing the depth of both these teachers reflective ability, and the powerful transformation of how they taught, learned, and coached.

Jake: From Mirror to Window to Doorway and Beyond

Jake is a first year secondary Social Studies teacher who was getting certified to teach as he was teaching. Jake was hired to be a high school football coach, but always felt he was meant to teach. He had no formal teaching experience other than

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athletic coaching, but was an accomplished student and athlete and came from a long line of teachers in his family. His positive personality and sense of humor made him an immediate favorite among his high school students. Jake experienced a mountain of initial obstacles as a new teacher: no classroom (he was required to float to three separate classrooms), two classes with no required texts, three preps in content areas in which he had received no education himself (world religions, government, and geography) and then a complete switch of course content his second semester. He was drowning, and yet remained positive and energetic about his position. His youth and exuberance appealed to his students, and he quickly realized ways to motivate and engage his students and learned pedagogical strategies through a baptism of fire.

Jake's principal was supportive and committed to his development, and recognized his tremendous learning curve. He was assigned a mentor teacher to "show him the ropes", who became his reflective coach. Through his district's induction program and school professional development, Jake learned the necessary policies, programs and indicators required for his teaching evaluation as well as his certification. He and his coach used his reflective coaching cycles to achieve these required benchmarks, but something more occurred. Jake was coached in two successive coaching cycles, and his depth of learning progressed through each cycle. Jake's initial coaching cycle was directive in nature and heavily scaffolded due to his lack of knowledge and capacity, and he approached this as an evaluation, needing affirmation and tangible evidence of his growth from his mentor. His second coaching cycle was more balanced with a partnership as Jake and his coach reflected on his goals, analyzed the data together, and bounced ideas off each other about strategies. From this cycle, Jake gained confidence in his teaching by trusting his coach to push his learning. Thus, when she pressured and challenged him, he engaged as a partner in the process, and felt the process was comfortable yet motivating. As Jake moved through this continuous process, he achieved praxis in his practice. He was implementing strategies while he was teaching, and then critically analyzing those strategies to improve further. Both he and his coach worked toward creating knowledge of instruction through reflection and praxis, which helped form his teaching identity and create capacity and confidence in his abilities. Through reciprocity in learning, Jake's coach also experienced reflective growth as a veteran educator and entertained new ideas and strategies for her teaching and coaching. As a result, Jake went from being coached, to becoming a reflective teacher, to transforming into a coach himself.

This vignette summarizes Jake's transformative journey through reflective coaching. Jake's journey is significant because in one short year, he went from being a novice teacher with no educational experience or knowledge, to becoming a reflective teacher with the ability to coach himself, and coach his students.   Jake's journey highlights the power of reflective coaching by showing the versatility of benefits within the coaching process. For Jake, these benefits included the framing of his teaching

identity, the evolution of his coaching relationship, and the transformation of his instructional practice.

Creating a student-centered teacher identity

What makes Jake's novice coaching experience different from Sarah and Celina as new teachers is that while both of those teachers achieved benefit from reflective coaching towards creating capacity and efficacy, Jake was able to start from scratch, and used coaching to help formulate his teaching identity. He started teaching from a teacher-centered identity, in which he only considered his preferences, abilities, and knowledge. Because Jake experienced coaching as a doorway, he was able to shift to a more student-centered teacher identity, where everything he created and practiced was based around his students' needs and learning. Jake described how he first framed his lesson planning:

> When I first started, I would prepare lessons and prepare class for something that I would like, how I would like to learn, and what I knew. I would go over it and make sure that I liked it, and say "ok, that's good." But now, especially as I get to know the students more, I take a step back, and I look at a lesson, and I make the lesson by saying "okay, how am I gonna reach everybody in the class?" So I think it's just constantly evaluating and reflecting, evaluating and reflecting. (J3, 244-248)

Similar to Sarah and Celina, Jake did not have the capacity to relate his students' needs to his learning and teaching goals as a new teacher. When he was first approached by his coach, his immediate reaction was to make *himself* better. He described his first coaching cycle, and recollected viewing it from an evaluation-based lens in which he only considered what he was doing and what his actions were, and did not make the connection to his students or their learning. When first asked about whether he felt his coaching experience was more for his needs verses his student's needs, Jake replied:

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> The whole reason we're doing this is to help me do better and to also help me achieve a certain score or rating, so I felt it was a lot about me and focused on me . . . and so for her, by doing these things, saying this can help you get from effective to highly effective, it makes it worth your while but there's so much more. It shows you why you're doing what you're doing. What you need to improve on to achieve those things. It brings the goal back to mind, just like we tell our students, always have the goal in mind. (J2, 376-382)

Through working with his coach, Jake began to shift his focus from himself to his students. Although similar to the teachers who experienced coaching as a window, Jake's experience went beyond noticing how his actions impacted student learning toward a more intense identity shift. The doorway of coaching led him to question his approach to teaching, from planning to delivery and evaluation, and thus change his thinking about his teaching.

Though his coaching focus initially centered around his teaching evaluation goals, Jake's coach framed his learning and improvements through the eyes of his students. Throughout the process, she would model bringing the focus back to his students' learning, and Jake learned how to be a reflective, student-centered teacher:

> When students are engaged, and they are participating, it makes teaching a lot easier, so when you deepen your thinking and your preparation, and you go past the "Am I just using the students as a means to an end?" I knew with her guidance, that this was benefitting the kids, and the reason why we're doing this is to help deepen student learning. (J2, 423-433)

As seen with other coaching relationships, without the trust and respect for his coach, Jake admitted that he would have hesitated to adopt this stance. As Jake progressed through his coaching experience, his relationship with his coach progressed as well.

An evolving coaching relationship

Jake's coaching experience took him through all the metaphors described in this study. He began with the coaching mirror, as his coach directed him to several learning

goals and strategies to improve his teaching. Jake's coaching focus was based on his

initial teaching evaluation, and therefore his coach directed him to several learning

goals and suggested specific strategies for him to use during his first observation, of

which Jake then chose his focus. Jake admitted that initially his relationship with his

coach was expert-novice, and he was looking for validation and acceptance of his

practice:

> The validation was definitely important, because without having an
> education background, I want the picture of having somebody who was in
> the profession for so long, validating and approving of what I was doing. If
> she's saying I'm doing okay, then I'm actually doing okay. (J3, 34-39)

Despite this directive stance, Jake felt that his coach deeply cared for his growth as a

teacher, and there was never the fear of failure or inadequacy present in typical expert-

novice relationships. Jake described his coach's behavior as caring and

compassionate, and respectful of his lack of educational expertise:

> It was always evident that she was doing it for me and she had my best
> interests in mind. She was always very thorough, and by showing me it
> was okay not to know things, it made me feel better, it made me feel
> valuable, because honestly without that, I wouldn't be motivated to get
> better . . . I was never faced with that inclination because of how kind she
> was, and how compassionate she was for teaching. (J3, 61-69)

As their coaching relationship progressed and strengthened, Jake gained

confidence, and soon became more inclined to reflect and work together with his coach,

shifting to using coaching as a window to see beyond his own actions as a teacher. His

coach started to use a more reflective approach to provide Jake challenging learning

and confidence in his teaching. He explained the progression of his coaching

relationship as his coach going from a "mothering" to a "partnering" role, and as he

gained knowledge and resources around his teaching, he become a partner in the

process:

I definitely feel like I was a partner in the process because I was still coming up with ideas. She wouldn't tell me this is a lesson you need to do, and this is how you need to do it, but I would ask her opinion because of her tremendous expertise. I would ask, "What do you think?" For most of them, she would say "That's great, go for it," but for a few she would offer suggestions and give ideas to tweak it and make it better . . . to show me what works. It never came across as My way is better, this is what you have to do . . . a lot of times, as a first year teacher, it was that positive affirmation that gave me confidence going into the lesson. (J1, 92-99)

Jake and his coach developed mutual respect for each other's talents as teachers, and his coach slowly shifted her role from directive to reflective. Jake described how his coach became a learning partner as she gradually released power and treated him like an equal. This seemed to open the doorway of coaching for Jake, who was able to see beyond his own teaching actions and transform his teaching identity. Because of the growing equality and reciprocity of learning in the coaching relationship, during their planned third coaching cycle, Jake and his coach actually agreed to switch roles and he offered her ideas for teaching which they examined together.

This shift signifies that this coaching relationship was adaptable, and created doorways that both Jake and his coach entered to transform their practice. First, as a novice teacher, Jake respected his coach as his mentor and valued her expertise, often seeking her validation of his practice. Secondly, with that validation and confidence, Jake viewed his coach as a colleague who faced similar dilemmas and tensions in the classroom and welcomed his collaborative contributions. Third, Jake and his coach then viewed each other as partners in learning, and challenged and pushed each other. Through the push and pull of their critical dialogue, they reached a level of partnership

in which his coach valued Jake's contributions and learning just as much as he valued

hers:

> I came away from it with some areas to work on . . . and it was really
> good, really good, and she would say "I like how you did this, I'm using
> that!" and I felt really good about myself, and then by doing that, it's not
> like she's just trying to have me become her, and teach as she does, we
> were helping each other. It's a Ping-Pong match. It's back and forth.
> She's taking some of my ideas, and I'm going to take some of her ideas.
> (J2, 883-887)

As coaching scholars (Heineke, 2013; Killion, 2009; Knight, 2007) have learned, a

coaching relationship of trust and respect is the foundation of true partnership learning,

and Jake's coaching relationship is an example of this. However, Jake's experience

also illustrated that a coaching relationship can be evolving and fluid. This changing

relationship contributed to both Jake and his coach's perception of their roles, from

expert and novice, to colleagues, to coaches.

While this last section has illustrated the power of reflective coaching to

transform a new teacher's instructional practice, the next section examines a veteran

teacher in a secondary alternative learning context, and her coaching experience that

not only transformed her teaching identity and practice, but her school's culture.

Sally: Doors Everywhere

Sally is an energetic secondary Language Arts teacher and department head at an alternative learning school in her district, and is in her ninth year of teaching in this context. This school is comprised of students in grades 6 through 12 who have been removed from the district system, and have severe emotional, behavioral and learning disabilities. The purpose of Sally's school is to rehabilitate these students in a small, nurturing educational setting in order to mainstream them back into their regular public schools, and thus Sally's classroom is very different from other secondary high school contexts. She has no more than ten students in each of her six classes, and has one full time aide for safety and security of both teachers and students. Sally's students are still expected to follow district curriculum, and are assessed with the same instructional benchmarks. Sally's principal, Mrs. J, leads the school by example and approaches each student with respect, compassion, and high expectations. Mrs. J uses coaching techniques in her teacher evaluation process, making the experience personal and

positive. Because of this beneficial evaluation experience, Sally was primed for coaching.

Sally was approached by another teacher in her school to engage in a reflective coaching cycle, and she agreed because of the friendship she and her coach had fostered. Sally and her coach had been teaching together for several years, and called each other "work wives" who finished each other's sentences.   While their relationship was familiar and comfortable, both Sally and her coach were determined to create change for their students. When Sally first began the coaching process, she viewed herself humbly, stating she wasn't "good enough" as a teacher to receive the attention of a coach. Her context created a sense of doubt in her abilities because her school is viewed within the district as the least rigorous, but most difficult environment. Sally recalled previous district professional development trainings in which she wasn't even given the materials because of the low expectations for her students.

Sally's coach reconceptualized Knight's (2007) reflective coaching model to make allowances for their special context, implementing additional observations and coaching techniques that made this experience benefit both Sally and her students. In planning for the observation, the coach considered not only Sally's goals for instruction but also her students' individual education plans (IEP) and behavior goals. This gave both the coaching focus and data collection a more comprehensive scope beyond teacher actions that encompassed student needs. She established rapport with Sally and her students by conducting a pre-observation before each coaching observation to create trust and respect in Sally's classroom. Because of the learning needs of Sally's students, it was crucial to create a common language for observations, feedback and discussions. Sally's coach used the data display as a tool to both analyze Sally's practice as well as examine student engagement, behavior and achievement to provide Sally the whole picture of learning.   She encouraged Sally to engage in praxis by having Sally implement strategies the next day to further her students' learning. Sally's coach provided validation and created pride in Sally's practice, but also challenged this veteran teacher with new research and ideas to help her high-need students.

During her coaching cycle, Sally realized that if she used these same coaching techniques as pedagogy for her students, she could empower them and make them reflect, just as she had done as a critical learner. She and her coach began to create lessons based upon their reflective coaching model. Students would teach each other lessons, critically observe each other and collect data, discuss their findings, and reflect and assess their own and each other's learning. The transformation from this learning strategy of these students with disabilities was more than Sally could have imagined. Sally was being coached by her peer while simultaneously coaching her students, and her students were coaching each other.

From this success, Sally then incorporated coaching into her teacher leadership role, informally coaching other teachers and encouraging them to incorporate coaching within their teaching. From her data display, she realized specific behavioral changes that she could implement, and after successful implementation in her classroom, she advocated to make those changes school-wide. With the reflective coaching that Sally received from her peer, she was transformed. She became a reflective learner, educator, teacher leader, and student advocate, and eventually a coach herself. While

this veteran teacher improved her practice, more importantly, she also provided empowerment to all stakeholders by encouraging everyone to be a coach.

Sally's context makes her story different from the other participants in this study in that she works with students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) in a secondary school setting who been removed from their regular zoned schools. She teaches Language Arts, Composition, and Reading to these students, with many students being far below grade level. Several of Sally's students are homeless or in foster homes, and the school is funded with Title One federal funding because 100% of the student population is on free or reduced lunch. Sally's school has a staff of 40 teachers, a principal and an assistant principal, teaching aides and support staff who are all trained to handle students with severe EBD. But despite these tremendous challenges, she calls this school an "amazing" place of learning, and Sally attributes that to school leadership and the quality of teachers and staff. Her district is known for its affluence and student achievement, yet Sally often experiences a negative stigma related to her students and her school:

> I can't tell you how many times I've been to PDs outside the school in our district . . . it's so frustrating to hear, when I say I'm from [my school], the looks, the stigma, they think we are a babysitting school. They think that we go to teach here because we can't teach anywhere else. Almost every single place I go, they say "oh" and turn their noses up. It's so frustrating because I've never met a group of more professional, capable teachers than at this school. None of those teachers could deal what we deal with on a daily basis. (Sal1, 103-107)

Sally described her daily routine and responsibilities with humor and care, and believed that her school was successful because of the principal and the leadership conveyed to the staff. Sally's principal, Mrs. J, is a hands-on leader, and leads by example according to Sally. Sally describes her evaluation process, in which her principal often coaches her and provides support:

> She wants to see how we handle the kids, and how effective the techniques are that we are using. She looks at Marzano, Common Core, along with student behavior, and how we get them back on task. She doesn't feel like it's a fair process if you don't really see everything. She wants to know if there is anything I want her to look at specifically . . . and usually I'll tell her my insecurities. She'll look at those things . . . but to be honest, a lot of times we will put the paperwork aside and say, "Look, this is what I see, let's talk about it." Our classes and our kids are not typical. She makes it easy, and it's transparent. (Sal1, 41-56)

With this support from school leadership, Sally was open to trying reflective coaching with her peer coach and welcomed the opportunity for more growth, both for her as well as her students.

Using coaching to empower students

Sally's confidence in her abilities wavered at the beginning of the coaching process, and she was torn between wanting to help herself, and help her students:

> It was really difficult to determine a coaching focus. I didn't know whether to be selfish and focus on how I'm teaching or if I wanted to really work on how to take care of the kids in terms of behavior and learning. I didn't want to focus on me. But at the same time you want to, which is so different from an evaluation perspective . . . But this, there were just so many choices and directions I could go. (Sal1, 139-141)

Sally and her coach decided the best course of action was to focus on individual student behavior, and examine how each student in her classroom was engaged and how that related to her instructional delivery. As a result of this personal coaching focus, Sally's coach added specific elements to the reflective coaching model. She added a pre-observation to each coaching cycle in order to establish trust and rapport in the classroom by simply being present in that space. She would often informally consult with students about their needs and goals as well before deciding on ways to collect data for the coaching observation. During the pre-coaching conference, Sally and her coach determined common language and concepts in order to understand the data

properly. Sally's coach also incorporated both teacher and student data within the data display to give Sally the full picture of the observation. In her second interview, Sally describes her first coaching cycle, and the results she received about a specific student:

> We needed to establish our parameters, what specifically she wanted me to know, when I said "off task," my definition of off task may not be the same thing as what she thinks. So we listed out what I felt was the student's off task behavior and then the progression of what he did. And it was pretty amazing the things that she saw, because I looked at them differently. Just like the hair twisting, I'm like, "Oh, that happens all the time" but she saw it as "That could be a trigger." It was a really good idea because we tried a strategy the next day and she actually came back and watched it. (Sal2, 328-333)

Sally realized through the data that she was definitely doing some good things in her classroom, but she saw many holes and opportunities for growth. Sally and her coach also realized that a data display could be used as a teaching tool to directly help her students. Sally gleaned useful information from her coaching conversation and data display, and immediately transferred that learning to improve her practice through using coaching techniques with her students. She relayed a story of an intelligent male student who was unmotivated and unengaged in her classroom. Sally had tried several times to engage him and spark his interest, but to no avail. She and her coach then discussed using data collection as a motivator to engage this student and give him a sense of involvement and ownership in the classroom. Just as her data display made Sally aware of elements in her classroom through analysis, she hoped this student would create his own data display and become involved and active in his own learning.

In her second interview, Sally describes her thought process of how to make this coaching technique into pedagogy:

> I was actually thinking about a particular student that I have, he is extremely intelligent. He just didn't see any purpose in school at all. So his behavior was completely shut down at the beginning, so I thought,

"Oh, this data collection . . . that's right up his alley." Because he wants to correct me and he notices everything, he wants to be the teacher. So when he came in, I said, "I'm having some issues and I want you to help me with something." So I asked him to help me chart and figure a way to display the discussion with the other kids, like if they were on task, and what their discussions were . . . And oh my gosh, it was night and day. He came up with amazing data! And his engagement improved. He discussed his chart with me just like I did with [my coach]. The kid is my best buddy now, he is ridiculous. He smiled at me, and he never smiled, and now he smiles all the time. (Sal2, 366-391)

Sally and her coach determined this student's needs by first collecting data about this student's engagement. Then both Sally and her coach realized that to spark his interests, they could use this coaching technique of data collection as an instructional strategy to both engage this student and meet his needs. By using coaching as a teaching strategy, Sally opened the door to a new way to reach her often unreachable students.

After using coaching as pedagogy with one student, Sally then decided to use coaching as pedagogy in an entire class. This presented a challenge because many of her students had trouble collaborating due to their emotional and learning challenges. She forged ahead with her coach, and they carefully designed a coaching "project" in her senior level Language Arts class. Students were put into groups, and each group worked together to present, or "teach" a subject of their choice within specific parameters. As each group taught their lesson and their peers observed them, collecting data and creating feedback. After each group presented, there was a group discussion about the instructional content, the relevance of the topic, and what specific learning goals they covered. Students would then present their "data display" of things they learned, positive feedback about the lesson, and critical reflection for improvement.

Reflective coaching came full circle in Sally's classroom and opened several

doors. She was being coached to improve her practice and implement this strategy,

and she was coaching her students to learn in a new way, who then in turn, were

coaching each other.   Sally describes how she experienced this new type of pedagogy:

> I was thinking differently about my instruction . . . I wanted the kids to
> experience it, this transparency and this empowerment, so I tried it with
> my English class. I flipped it to where they were teaching through their
> presentations, and I didn't grade. I sat back and I let them teach the class.
> They had to teach the presentation and control what was going on. Their
> peers were observing them and giving feedback. They had to collect data,
> and they were evaluating their learning from each other. WOW . . . And
> one of the kids said, "I don't know how to explain this to you. This is the
> first time I've ever done anything like this. And it's the only time I've ever
> liked learning and understood why we were doing it." And I was like . . .
> wh-ha-haaa!! It was awesome! This is the moment that teachers dream of,
> you know? So now we're brainstorming ideas of what to do next. I would
> have never guessed that would happen like that. (Sal3, 50-126)

Sally and her coach managed to eclipse the original intent of her reflective instructional

coaching, which was to improve her instructional practice, and pushed further to

incorporate this valuable method of learning to her students. As a result, she reported

her students were more engaged, enjoyed their learning, and developed social and

emotional skills that were crucial for their success.

Shifting school culture through coaching

While Jake incorporated coaching within his teaching identity as he transformed,

Sally completely changed her identity from thinking of herself as a teacher to becoming

a coach. Sally and her coach discussed their success with coaching with other

teachers in her school, as well as her principal. Through this organic process, Sally

used her position as department chair to share her learning from her coaching cycles,

as well as what her students were accomplishing in her class. In her department

meetings, she introduced the idea of data displays as teaching tools, and began to

informally coach other teachers on how to incorporate this process into their teaching as well. Soon, Sally and her coach became a coaching team. In her third interview the following school year, Sally discussed how excited she was to return to teaching, and felt she had adopted a new identity:

> When I came back to school this year, we started talking about the coaching thing. I'm a mentor for one of the new teachers and I found myself saying, "Look, anytime you want me to come in and watch and help you do this." It didn't even occur to me that this wasn't something that he wouldn't want to do. It was just something natural, and part of me. So now I'm thinking to myself, how can I get this same idea to people that have been in the business for 25, 30 years . . . how can I help them change? (Sal3, 30-40)

Sally's coaching stance also made her a stronger teacher leader in her school. Throughout this process, Sally and her reflective coach continued to work together, and their cycles of observations, reflections, and conversations became part of their routine of teaching.   Sally incorporated this holistic vision of coaching into every part of her teaching position, and realized that her colleagues were also implementing this approach. During her member-checking interview, Sally recounted a story in which her entire school was "bitten with the coaching bug," and reveled in new ways to continue this journey with her students and her colleagues.

Learning to Walk Through a Coaching Doorway

According to Knight's (2007) definition of praxis, both Sally and Jake achieved praxis in learning, in which they applied new knowledge and skills in their daily teaching practices. Through praxis, these teachers transformed their practice, and improved their instruction.   Because of his coaching experience, Jake began to coach himself, and achieved praxis by simultaneously trying strategies and reflecting on them, thus

improving his practice day after day. He describes a lesson in which he was evaluating

and reflecting *while* he was teaching:

> When we were talking about the concepts of total war, I asked a question, and then I thought back to when [my coach] and I did the question thing, and about how many questions you ask as the teacher. So I asked the question, and then I sat back and thought, "Stop asking so many questions" . . . And then I thought about it, and prompted them a little bit. I was constantly monitoring, thinking "How many questions am I asking, and how many are they asking? Where do they stop? Where do I keep them engaged? When do they fall asleep?" . . . And I was thinking in my head, like making a tally, a little data display in my head. Then the next class, I worded the question better so that I didn't have to lead them on to get a response . . . and it actually worked! (J3, 396-405)

Jake's response provides an example of reflection-in-action, and his reflective ability did

not stop after this process. As a result of Jake's continuous reflective coaching process

and improvement in his instructional practice, he was evaluated as highly effective on all

indicators for his first teaching evaluation. Jake's coach not only provided the

necessary scaffolding, support and professional development to create best practices in

his teaching as evidenced by his evaluation, but together they transformed Jake from a

first year teacher with no educational experience to a reflective educator who coached

himself and wanted to coach other teachers. Coaching was a pathway to better

instruction for Jake, as well the avenue for potential for teacher leadership through

coaching others.

Just as with Jessica and Nicole, for Sally as a veteran teacher, coaching

validated many parts of her practice to make her confident. For Sally, however, it also

challenged her as a teacher, a teacher leader, and a learner. Reflective coaching not

only transformed her practice and provided her with strategies to improve her high-need

students' learning, it transformed her beliefs about both teaching and learning. Sally

incorporated praxis within her teaching, but didn't realize it. Her innate sense of the

coaching cycle allowed her to coach herself, but she was unaware of this until she reflected on her practice during our third interview.   Self-coaching seemed to come naturally to her and she achieved praxis both by herself and with her coach. When asked what was most important about her coaching experience, she replied it was both the tangible evidence of her data combined with the ability to see the changes happening instantaneously both in her teaching, and in her students' learning. For Sally, praxis was not just an outcome or goal of coaching, praxis was a philosophy for continuous transformation. It not only helped her as a teacher, but helped her students experience success. Sally felt like a new and different teacher after nine years of teaching in a very difficult teaching environment:

> I thought we all grew, and I grew a ton. I think I just totally flipped how I looked at things. You want to try new things and see those results, but you don't know whether it's going to work or not, and at least you have somebody to bounce it off of. It just sparks your ideas, it sparks your interest. It changed the whole dynamics of the room, and now it's changing the dynamics of the school. The kids see it and feel it, it's really exciting . . . and I'm totally rethinking how I teach and coach. Because if it works with our kids here, it will work with everybody. (Sal3, 367-447)

After Jake's second coaching cycle, he spoke about his relationship with his students as transforming from a passive teacher-student relationship, to an active coach-coachee relationship. Jake's view of his students changed from being reflexive learners to active partners in their educational process. No longer was he inertly incorporating their needs into his teaching, but instead was actively involving them in their own learning process, and in effect, being their coach. Jake viewed his teaching with a coaching stance. He attributed this new frame of teaching to the way he was coached:

> I value my students, and think about them as I was when I first started coaching. . . Especially if a student might not get something, or it might be

completely foreign to them. I take a step back and think, "How can I react to this situation? What would [my coach] do?" I was completely unaware of the subjects that [my coach] would bring up to me . . . and she taught me anyway. She taught me like it was no problem, and it's okay not to know. I do the same thing with my students. I don't need to discourage them, I need to help them discover their learning abilities and become reflective in their learning. I need to be their coach. (Ji3, 218-228)

While Jake incorporated coaching within his teaching identity as he transformed, Sally changed her identity from one of teacher, to being a coach. She used coaching with all stakeholders, and encouraged others to coach and reflect. Sally's multiple doorways of coaching are an example of how reflective coaching can be used to transform teacher practice, student learning, and school culture.   With the proper supports in place, such as administrative buy-in, a trusting and supportive coaching relationship, and the capacity for a teacher to accept challenge and desire growth, reflective coaching can be effective professional development in even the most difficult teaching environment.

Conclusion

This chapter has illustrated the individual transformational experiences of reflective coaching described as coaching as a doorway for teacher transformation. This metaphor of coaching details findings from the perspectives of two teachers who experienced transformation of teacher identity, beliefs, and practice from reflective coaching based on analysis of this study's first research question, *What do teachers experience when engaging in a coaching cycle facilitated by a coach trained in a reflective coaching approach?* Each teacher described in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 experienced the reflective coaching process differently, and provided insight into the nuances of coaching from a teacher's perspective. What is missing from these stories of reflective coaching are common themes and patterns of specific coaching elements and activities. Therefore, Chapter 7 will address the research question, *What elements of a*

reflective coaching approach do teachers perceive as contributing to change in their

knowledge and practice?

Table 6-1. 'Coaching as a doorway' individual experiences and common themes

Participant	Themes
Jake (novice with no teaching experience).	Teacher identity and coaching focus shifted from teacher-centered to student-centered. Coaching relationship evolved over time, established continuum of coaching approaches.
Sally (nine-year veteran, alternative ed. setting for students with emotional/behavioral disabilities.	Coaching as pedagogy for student empowerment: teacher used coaching cycle as instructional practice with secondary students to empower them. Coaching as a culture shift in a school: teacher participated in continuous coaching process, and facilitated that process with students and colleagues, creating a school culture shift to provide more empowerment to teachers and students.
Learning to Walk Through a Coaching Doorway	Praxis: Both teachers coached themselves and students during their teaching, encompassing reflection-in-action (Schon, 1983) and praxis (Knight, 2007). Shifting identities from teacher to coach: Both teachers incorporated coaching techniques with students, and viewed instructional practice from a coaching lens.

CHAPTER 7
ELEMENTS OF A REFLECTIVE COACHING APPROACH THAT CONTRIBUTED TO
TEACHER CHANGE

The examination and discussion of coaching experiences presented in Chapters 5 and 6 focused on teachers' interpretations of reflective coaching, and examined the unique ways in which teachers benefitted but were also challenged from this professional development model. Each teacher came to the reflective coaching cycle with different knowledge, skills, and dispositions, and therefore achieved diverse levels of learning. Chapters 5 and 6 addressed my first research question and explained the *what* of reflective coaching, presenting evidence from six coaching journeys. This chapter then looks at the *how* of reflective coaching, and examines specific elements of this coaching approach that teachers reported as contributing to their learning and changes in beliefs and practice.

In this study, the coaching approach includes both elements of the coaching model (the "doing" of coaching) as well as relationships and philosophies employed by the coach during this process (the "thinking" of coaching). The discussion of these elements will highlight specific coaching behaviors and activities that aided teachers in their growth and change in practice, and also look at common themes from these experiences that transcended the individual teachers' coaching work. The first section will focus on the coaching model, and the steps within that model that teachers deemed necessary and important to their learning. The second section will focus on the coaching relationship and philosophies employed by the coach in this approach. Themes will be presented about each of these elements with examples from the data to illustrate the importance and portray the relationship of these elements to the effectiveness of reflective coaching. The goal of using this collective examination is to

listen to the voices of teachers and examine their experiences in a manner that reinforces the attempts to better serve the needs of teachers through professional development initiatives.

Elements of the Coaching Model: The Doing of Coaching

When discussing the coaching model used in this reflective approach, I refer the reader back to Figure 4-1 to examine each step within this reflective coaching model based on teachers' experiences and descriptions. These coaching steps include: (1) the professional development or modeling that spurs the idea for the coaching focus, (2) the pre-observation interview with the coach and teacher, (3) the data collection observation by the coach, (4) the creation of the data display by the coach, and (5) the coaching conversation with the coach and teacher to interpret data and create next steps for future coaching goals. In conducting participant interviews, questions were asked of these teachers as to the importance of each of these steps to teacher learning and practice, and teachers were probed regarding connections between elements in the coaching model and the coaching relationship and lens.

First Steps: PD/modeling, Teacher Interview, and Coaching Observation

Based on the coaching model used to train these coaches (Figure 4-1), the first three steps in the model (professional development/modeling, teacher interview and data collection observation) seem to be important elements to coaching. However, these teachers rarely mentioned these steps as critical within their learning.   Though Knight (2007) advocates for use of modeling in order to translate best practices to teachers in a comfortable classroom setting, coach modeling was not emphasized as much as professional development resources within the Lastinger model. The omission of this vital coaching technique was discussed by only one participant, Sarah, who

believed that modeling could have helped her not only connect with her coach, but provide her clear examples of best practices as a novice teacher. Other participants discussed the role of the professional development piece during interviews. Nicole, Jake, Sarah and Celina mentioned research articles given to them by their coach before the coaching process started, but these teachers did not focus on this step nor give indication that receiving this information impacted their coaching outcomes. In fact, Jake and Sarah expressed that they would have liked to "have more time to process" the readings given to them at the beginning of their coaching cycles in order to use this information more successfully.

In addition, while novice teachers Celina, Jake, and Sarah discussed specifics about the pre-observation teacher interview in regard to establishing trust and rapport with their coach, most teachers in this study reported that this first interview was necessary, but not critical to their coaching outcomes. For veteran teachers Nicole and Dianne, the initial teacher interview occurred during a brief 15-minute work session some time before the actual coaching observation occurred, and thus it seemed unconnected to their perceptions of learning or change in their practice.

Teachers mentioned the coaching observation matter-of-factly, and incorporated this component of the model within their frame of this coaching approach without considering its significance. For example, Justin believed that his coach's observation was "a truer sense of his classroom" because his coach did not represent an authoritative presence or disrupt his instruction in any way. Nicole, Dianne, and Celina felt that their coaching observations were relaxed, and provided a better sense of how their classroom worked on a daily basis.

Sally described her coach's first pre-observation, her teacher interview, and her coach's data collection observation in depth. Because Sally's coach determined the need to establish trust and rapport with Sally's students in order to not disrupt daily classroom activities, Sally believed this process was important to both her and her students' impression of the coaching cycle and process. Sally's context required tremendous trust on the part of the students for her coach to be present, and thus, once that trust was established, collecting data was a more "beneficial process" for Sally's coaching and learning. When describing her initial meeting with her coach, she stated:

> I wanted to focus on students . . . [My coach] mentioned Marzano, and wanted to make sure that I didn't think that this was her evaluating me, just looking at what you want me to look it, and what can I do to help you become a better teacher, or to help your kids become more engaged. It was totally up to what I needed. (Sal1, 127-132)

While Sally felt this interview was important to set the tone of coaching as non-evaluative and geared towards her and her students' needs in order to determine the focus of her first coaching cycle, she believed that this introductory piece of the model was not as important as the data display and coaching conversation.

The Data Display

When asked what was the most critical element of their coaching cycle in terms of facilitating change in practice, all participants responded that their coach-created data displays were invaluable. The data display was used to provide teachers' non-judgmental feedback from coaches about the lesson observed and was the lynchpin to creating a reflective coaching conversation based on equality and reciprocity in learning between the coach and teacher. Because each teacher had different coaching foci, and some teachers had more than one coaching cycle (Jake, Celina, Sarah, Sally, and Nicole), there were several data displays that varied in presentation and content related

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to this study. From participant responses, two themes emerged regarding the purpose

of data displays, as well as the timing of when the data display is used in conjunction

with the coaching conversation.

Theme #1: Data displays provided teachers concrete ways to "see" their practice, and helped teachers to move past self-reflection to a deeper understanding of their instructional needs

The purpose of the data display is to provide the teacher with a non-judgmental

picture of the lesson observed by their coach. After the coach and teacher determine

the coaching focus and how data will be collected, the coach then creates this visual

display to represent the lesson viewed relative to the coaching goal. From participants'

viewpoints, these visual representations were crucial to their learning because it added

an important layer to their professional development: non-judgmental evidence of their

practice. The three novice teachers, Sarah, Celina, and Jake (in his first coaching

cycle), were presented with data displays that created simple, visual representations of

teachers' lessons in their classrooms (i.e. classroom maps, seating charts) and helped

these teachers visually see their instruction. Sarah touted the data display as the best

part of her coaching experience because it showed her specific instructional needs

without judgment in a way she could interpret and understand:

> By actually seeing it, and also even realizing where my kids sit, it helps me
> think and figure this out . . . I mean look how many times I called on these
> kids over here versus these over here. It just helps me see the room and
> makes me think where should I move kids. I also have an easier time
> believing it, to not hear it from a person, but actually to see it in front of me
> connects so many things . . . because without that it's more just evaluation
> and supposition. (Sar2, 280-294)

As novice teachers who were being constantly overwhelmed with new

responsibilities, resources and expectations, all three teachers relayed that these simple

graphic displays helped "untangle" the complexity of elements within their instruction.

They appreciated the time and effort on their coaches' part to create these visual

presentations, and realized how important this evidence was to their experience. Jake

characterized his data displays as an "EKG" of his classroom, and spoke of the benefit

to looking at these when talking with his coach:

> I don't think it was overwhelming. I think it was almost like the EKG of the
> classroom. You see where things are active, where things maybe went
> down. It was a good way to represent my practice . . . and I liked it
> because I'm more of a graphic person. (J2, 283-291)

For veteran teachers Nicole, Dianne and Sally, their coaches created detailed

data displays that involved mathematical representations of both classroom elements

and content (engagement tally charts, questioning stems, question analysis breakdowns

and percentages) and helped teachers interpret 'cognitive' instructional needs as well

as student engagement. These teachers all mentioned that as reflective educators,

they were used to questioning their practice. However, having these intricate data

displays provided a "layered" vision of their classroom. All three data displays of these

teachers incorporated both instructional data (questioning stems) and student

engagement information, and therefore opened the gaze of their reflection from

themselves to their students. These teachers realized that this helped them push

through the self-reflective phase, and enter a deeper reflective stance towards their

teaching because of this evidence. Thus, these veteran teachers considered the data

display to be a tool to push them from the mirror phase of self-reflection, to the window

phase of gazing inward and projecting changes outward.   Dianne discusses this shift in

reflective depth:

> Data doesn't lie, whereas if I just reflect or keep a journal, and say "Well,
> this stinks, I'm not going to try this activity next year." That's as far as I go.
> There's no further reflection on, "Okay, well this didn't go as well, I still
> liked this component," . . . But I obviously need to work on my questioning

within this lesson, or tweak this or tweak that, so I think that's the benefit of this . . . you can't walk away from it without thinking and doing something. It goes beyond that. (D2, 660-665)

Both Sally and Nicole also discussed that as teachers who have mastered certain skills and routines in their classrooms, the data display brought back that "cognitive" aspect to teaching. Nicole stated:

I think this reminded me more of the need for the cognitive side of teaching, and how you can let that slide, and it has to remain a part of the whole picture as a teacher . . . you get busy and you think about it for a second and say "I'll go back to it" but this makes you really think and reflect. It's cognitive and practical. (N2, 522-527)

Sally echoed these thoughts, stating:

When you self-reflect, you go "Oh, well, how did the lesson go? It went great" . . . and you don't delve into and look at it and find out why, because your concentrating on your immediate problems . . . and with this it was neat to see all that, and it both challenges and reinforces what you are doing. (Sal2, 246-259)

All teachers with the exception of Sarah commented how the data display was used as the springboard to their reflective coaching conversations, and provided an equal footing to start the coaching conversation. With the data displays in front of them, these teachers felt partners in the process, and collaborated with their coach in order to interpret the data's relevance and make decisions about specific aspects of instructional practice.

Theme #2: Coaches who gave teachers data displays *before* the coaching conversation allowed teachers the space and time to self-reflect on their data, which thus provided richer dialogue during coaching conversations

An interesting theme that emerged from these participants when discussing their data displays was the timing of when they received their data display: four teachers (Celina, Nicole, Jake, and Sally) received their data displays before their coaching conversations, and two teachers (Sarah and Dianne) saw their data for the first time at

the conversation meeting. The four teachers who received their data displays before they spoke with their coach felt that this allowed them the time and space to process the data. This was especially important for the novice teachers, who needed extra time to decipher and interpret the data. After Celina's second coaching observation, she mentioned that her coach gave her the data display and literally said, "We can't talk about this until you look at it first," making Celina start the process of her reflection on her own. These four teachers engaged in deep, rich dialogue about their data without the coach having to explain the data, and thus create judgments through explanation. The data displays were stand-alone representations of the classroom observation, and teachers were able to interpret and reflect on this evidence before they engaged in critical dialogue with their coach.

Interestingly, Dianne and Sarah both commented that they would have liked to view the data beforehand, but for different reasons. While Dianne had the confidence and experience of previous observations to feel more comfortable, she was a naturally reflective practitioner and wanted to see the data to satisfy her need for answers. Sarah, as a novice teacher, described uneasiness about dealing with the data simultaneously with her coach, and wanted a cushion of space and time alone with the data first. After watching her coaching conversation video, she commented: "If I had more time to process and think about this, I think I would have done things differently. I was very in the moment and reactive, verses really having time to think and become less emotional" (Sar2, 323-324). All teachers' data displays were catalysts for reflection, and therefore teachers deemed this element of their coaching process integral to change in their practice.

The Coaching Conversation

As part of this study, coaching conversation videos were viewed by each teacher participant during their second interview. This allowed participants to refresh their memory of these conversations, and view these conversations as an observer. This enlightening process also gave participants the ability to reflect on these conversations both in terms of process and content after the coaching had taken place. Based on the viewing of these conversations, all teachers were asked about the attributes of their coaching conversations that most aided their learning and development, and these two themes emerged regarding positive reinforcement and the scaffolding and dialogue within the coaching conversation.

Theme #1: Successful coaching conversations incorporated the use of *specific* positive reinforcement

Though coaches used different approaches (directive, reflective, and balanced) with regard to teacher experience and goals of coaching, accentuating positive highlights of teachers' practice was considered necessary for growth from these teachers, and allowed teachers to feel safe, comfortable, and valuable within the coaching conversation. All teachers felt that starting the conversation off with specific, positive reinforcement of their practice from the coaching observation was a necessary and critical step towards establishing trust and rapport, and providing teacher affirmation of practices. For example, Dianne, an accomplished veteran teacher, discussed this as the most important aspect of her coaching conversation:

> I definitely appreciate the positives . . . that's not always something that you hear . . . it just makes you feel a lot more at ease with the conversation, and even though I knew there were things I needed to work on, I didn't mind talking about it, and [my coach] provided a lot of positive reinforcement, what she saw in the classroom that worked well. And then she would provide resources and things to reinforce the strategy that I

wanted to work on. I think her positive reinforcement was probably the most important thing to me. (D3, 21-25)

Both Dianne and Sally, having taught for several years, appreciated their coach's positive framing of the coaching conversation through highlighting "things that worked," and discussed this as the critical bridge between affirmation and reflection. Sally stated, "I'm sure there were things that were wrong that she saw in there, but she didn't present it like that . . . it was, 'I saw you do this thing, which was good, but maybe you didn't notice this.' It made me open to change because I felt both validated and challenged" (Sal2, 672-676).

Jake, Sarah, and Celina also discussed the importance of positive validation of their practices as new teachers, and needed this in order to establish trust with their coaches who were experienced mentors. Both Jake and Celina described the affirmation that helped them develop a sense of confidence, as well as the specific direction of this positive praise to then help them understand their teaching needs in other areas. For example, in Celina's first coaching conversation, her coach discussed her ability to challenge her students through excellent questioning techniques and gave specific examples, but then highlighted the fact that she wasn't providing enough wait time for students to answer those questions, and thus students became disinterested and unengaged. Conversely, Sarah, whose coaching conversation was deemed evaluative, pondered how specific positive reinforcement would have been beneficial to her experience. After thinking about her first coaching conversation, Sarah discussed that need:

> When you always feel you are falling short of your goals and your expectations, it would have been nice to see some positive change and growth to things we discussed . . . and go from 'okay, you're really horrible

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at this' to 'okay, your better at this, and excellent at that' and I knew I was doing something right . . . I just didn't see it. (Sar3, 442-448)

When describing partnership communication in coaching conversations, Knight (2007) highlights this component of positive reinforcement as "a language of ongoing regard" in which coaches communicate the positive aspects of the lesson observed and stress authentic, appreciative or admiring feedback that is direct, specific, and non-attributive. As highlighted from these teachers' experiences, these teachers preferred their coaches telling them specific positive attributes of their practice that detailed what they were doing right in a way that was non-judgmental. For example, Sally's second coaching conversation discussed the fact that one of her student's had a major talking issue which was resolved. When her coach presented her data about his engagement, she made the statement the changes Sally made in her instruction has decreased his talking by 80 percent with a bar graph, providing mathematical, non-attributive feedback that reinforced Sally's changes in practice instead of saying that this student spoke less often.

Theme #2: A coaching conversation framework of combining probing questions with scaffolding of teacher learning challenged teachers' perceptions of their practice

During coaching conversations, participants felt that the *combination* of providing probing questions about teachers' observed practice and decision making, and providing scaffolding of teacher learning helped teachers push themselves to challenge notions of their practice. This was relevant to both novice and veteran teachers. Jake, Celina, and Nicole all experienced this challenge during their coaching cycles, and attributed the "push" of coaching to their coach's ability to ask probing questions and make them think more deeply about their data and practice. Jake describes his second

coaching conversation as one that sparked his thought where his coach provided

"prodding" feedback:

> It totally sparked my thought. We honed in on the methods I used and she suggested specific things and we talked about it. With her prodding...and giving little ideas here and there . . . and asking, "What about this?" and "How did this work?" and "Why did you do this?" We would talk about specific things, and she would say, "Yeah you're right," but then with the other ones it was, "Okay, tell me why this might work." (J2, 506-523)

These "little ideas" combined with probing questions presented by Jake's coach

created different frames in which Jake thought about his teaching. When asked the

most important piece of her coaching conversation, Celina discussed her coach's

questioning and scaffolding after her first two coaching cycles. Her coach lead her

down the right path with targeted questioning, but allowed Celina to make those

connections in order to see specific areas of improvement:

> The most important thing? Her questioning me the way that she did . . . Not telling me, but letting me come to my own conclusions, but the conclusions that I was coming to were the ones that she wanted me to reach, and I know that we do that a lot with our own students. I'll start questioning them and I know what the answer is so I just have to word my questions to get them there. And so, she's doing that same thing. (C2, 653-659)

While novice teachers Jake and Celina needed questioning in order to scaffold and

provide guidance for reflecting on their practice, Nicole discussed an example of how

her coach used provocative questions to promote revelations in her thinking as an

experienced teacher.

After presenting an example of teacher questioning in an article to Nicole during

their first coaching conversation, her coach made the comment about how the teacher

in the article only used two questions during her entire lesson. In her coaching

conversation video, her coach asked two specific probing questions to Nicole that

troubled Nicole's assumption that more questions asked equals more learning for

students: (1) "Is it ok to only ask two questions?" and (2) "How does this make you

think about the concept of time devoted to questions and answers?" From these two

questions, Nicole traveled down a path of discussion and discovery, eventually realizing

that asking more questions and not letting students answer was not beneficial. Nicole

described this experience as contributing towards her reflection both on her data and

the resources her coach provided:

> Her questioning was amazing . . . her letting me think and talk it out . . .
> presenting the data to me, and presenting resources to me and scaffolding
> my thoughts. Like giving me that extra, "Here's this, now what do you
> think?" Because I think it made me become more reflective on what I was
> doing and made me more reflective on the data she had collected. (N2,
> 372-376)

Nicole's coach used this blend of probing and scaffolding in her coaching conversation

to both confront Nicole's views on questioning, and provide space and time for Nicole to

reflect.

The Coaching Relationship and Philosophies: The Thinking of Coaching

While analyzing coaching behaviors and techniques provided the answers to how

coaching occurred, it is the coach's thinking, made up of philosophies and principles

that guided the coaching cycle and lens, that teachers felt was equally integral and

varied the outcomes of their coaching experiences. A coach's philosophy and lens

provide the map for a coach to determine which path to follow during a coaching cycle.

The reflective coaching approach used by coaches in this study by coaches

incorporated Knight's (2007) partnership principles and provided a specific lens for

these coaching experiences. The importance of the relationship between the coach and

teacher is discussed heavily in the literature and cited by some as the key component to

a successful coaching experience. The trust and rapport between a coach and teacher allows for authentic, reciprocal learning to occur in reflective coaching, and without this strong relationship, the coaching experience can be compromised.

The Coaching Relationship

When all teachers were questioned about the influence and importance of their coaching relationship, an interesting divide occurred between novice teachers (Sarah, Celina and Jake) and veteran teachers (Nicole, Dianne, and Sally). For novice teachers Jake and Celina, the coaching relationship was the key piece to establishing the partnership platform for coaching and valued as the most important coaching element in this reflective approach. For all three veteran teachers, the coaching relationship was a contributing factor, but not as critical as the data display or the coaching conversation. Thus, two themes presented about coaching relationships are depicted from both novice and veteran teachers' viewpoints.

Theme #1: Novice teachers craved support, affirmation, trust and mentorship from their coaching relationships

As the three novice teachers discussed, as new teachers, their need for affirmation and validation of their practice was crucial. They looked to their coaches to provide support and collegiality in their new teaching environments, and provide mentorship and knowledge in areas in which they felt weakness and needed help. For Jake, being a new teacher with no educational experience, his relationship with his coach was his "lifeline" in the classroom, and he felt this element of coaching was most important to his success:

> With [my coach], she made me feel good about myself. Once she points out I can improve, she is not trying to have me become her, and teach as she does. It was critical. People have to know how much you care before they care how much you know. I knew from the start that she had an

interest in my well-being and in my future. When that was developed, that was the most important thing from the beginning. Without that, this thing probably would not have been successful. I would not have listened . . . but knowing that she cared and was rooted in my success and being that resource . . . that was it for me. (J2, 984-1002)

While Jake benefitted from his coach's expertise as well as her support and caring, Celina discussed that without trust in her coach, she would not have been able to develop the courage to engage in coaching. Her school's culture required collaboration within her team for planning and data-based decision-making, but Celina constantly felt judged by her peers, and her confidence of her teaching suffered as a result. Celina needed someone who she could trust and expose her vulnerability to as a new teacher. Because her coach was in a different department as well as a national board certified teacher, Celina found both a friend and a mentor:

We have that relationship where we talk to each other, and so I feel comfortable a lot going to her and saying, "okay, this is happening", or, "what should I do here?" I feel comfortable doing that with her. I know she won't talk about this with anyone. I think trust is really important, and I think that with [my coach] I have that, and I don't have that with any other teacher. (C2, 499-503)

Both these novice teachers felt that the foundation of their coaching started positively because their coach fostered both equality and reciprocity in learning, and their coaching relationship was one of give and take as well as comfort and caring.

Theme #2: Veteran teachers viewed their peer coaching relationships as comfortable, professional, positive and challenging, but also acknowledged the challenge to achieve personal learning and growth because of the familiarity between colleagues

With Nicole, Dianne, and Sally, who all had peers as their coaches, their relationship was important, but not the source of strength that novice teachers described. These teachers collectively described their peer coaching relationships as welcoming, comfortable, professional, positive, and challenging. While novice teachers

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craved comfort from their coaching relationships, veteran teachers also described

challenges faced because of the comfortable nature of their coaching relationships with

regard to cognitive push and challenge. Sally, who engaged in coaching initially

because of the friendship with her peer coach, described that partnership to be as

"comfortable as a marriage," and acknowledged that often their learning was unspoken

due to their connection as colleagues. When asked if too much familiarity with her

coach could be a hindrance, she responded:

> When we're talking about our kids, its totally different . . . it's not like the
> friendship kicks in and we talk about our hair and then the kids (laugh),
> this has nothing to do with that, it has everything to do with the kids. It can
> be hard because she knows me too much, and I know her too much, so
> maybe sometimes we understand each other and that learning doesn't get
> verbalized. (Sal2, 560-568)

While Sally's coaching relationship was truly a partnership, Nicole and Dianne

both described their coaching relationships as a combination of professional and

comfortable. Dianne and her coach had worked together occasionally, and she

welcomed her coach into her classroom in order to truly engage in that collaboration

she was longing for. She enjoyed her coaching experience because of her coach's

delivery and positive approach:

> There's a different delivery and approach with her. I do feel much more
> comfortable . . . We can learn some of those strategies she implements
> and I've learned a lot from her. She's always welcoming, helping teachers
> to find out more. I think that relationship that we have puts me much more
> at ease, I can teach like I normally teach when she's here. (D2, 567-576)

When asked if she valued the coaching relationship as much as the use of data

to help her problematize her practice, Dianne responded that while the relationship

allowed her to feel comfortable to discuss and challenge her perceptions of her

teaching, it was the data that allowed her to push herself into critically examining her

practice. Dianne's need for data to scrutinize and problematize her practice overshadowed the power of her coaching relationship. Nicole's relationship with her coach was comfortable and professional, but not as personal because she and her coach had never formally worked together and Nicole was new to her school. While her coach also provided that necessary collaborative element to Nicole's learning similar to Dianne, Nicole also felt that her relationship with her coach was not as integral as the data display and coaching conversation.

The Coaching Lens

In this study, when discussing the coaching lens I am referring to a combination of two things: a set of criteria for instructional and coaching focus, and personal characteristics that the coach engages to identify and interpret information within the coaching cycle. These personal characteristics include the coach's philosophy of coaching, background knowledge, prior experiences, what the coach deems as important and worthwhile in both coaching and teaching, and what that coach can focus on in that time and place. The set of criteria for an instructional focus can include instructional frameworks of the teacher's school or district, a specific program or reform initiative, the teacher's evaluation system, or a combination of these things. In reflective coaching, a coach's lens thus incorporates his or her personal vision of teaching and coaching, as well as the focus of instruction through coaching, as agreed upon by the teacher and coach.

The specific reflective coaching approach used in this study was designed to incorporate the Lastinger Instructional Framework (Ross, 2011) as well as areas of need identified by the teacher and coach relating to this district's instructional framework based upon Marzano's (2009) effective teaching principles. It is important to note that

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while these coaches were given uniform parameters towards their coaching lens from their Lastinger Training and Coaching Rubric (as mentioned in Chapter 4), each coach in this study coached differently. It is also important to note that while these coaches were all certified as Lastinger Instructional Coaches through this process, and deemed reflective in approach, the differences in these coaches' lenses, such as the criteria used for their instructional focus as well as their personal attributes, provided very different experiences for these teachers. The evidence presented from all six participants' coaching experiences sheds light not only on the importance of the coaching lens and *how* coaches used their lens, but also how teachers' *interpreted* that lens, and how that lens impacted the teacher's coaching experience.

These variations show that while this professional development is beneficial and powerful because of the attention to personal needs and attributes of the teacher and coach, it also is difficult to generalize experiences of this non-uniform intervention. This evidence was not relative to teachers' skills, experience, or dispositions as other themes presented within this analysis of coaching elements, but instead was relative to the coach's skills, experience and disposition, and the relationship between coaching, teaching and evaluation. One culminating theme emerged from participants' descriptions of the coaching experience linked to the lens the coach used during this process.

Theme #1: Coaches who used an "evaluative" lens based solely on a teacher's evaluation provided limited reflective professional development, while coaches that went beyond that evaluation focus and incorporated many criteria in the coaching lens, provided deep learning and development for teachers

Looking at all the teacher participants in this study, one teacher was coached with a purely evaluative lens (Sarah), and five teachers were coached with a lens

combining several criteria for teacher need and growth (Celina, Nicole, Jake, Dianne and Sally). While Dianne used her coaching observation to mimic her evaluation observation, her coach included criteria beyond her evaluation framework when observing Dianne's lesson, and thus Dianne benefitted from information collected outside that framework. The notion of how teachers perceived their teacher evaluation process was important to the relationship between the coach's lens and the teacher's perceptions. For example, Jake, Sarah, Dianne, and Nicole all referred to their evaluation process as "a dog and pony show" independently without prompting during interviews. Jake refers to his evaluation framework and process as peripheral compared to the needs of his students:

> I don't need any evaluation to tell me that I'm a good teacher. So much of it is window dressing and doing the right things and there are certain things that are awesome about it. But at the end of the day, I'm not gonna change my teaching style to appease my administrators, I'm going to do it for my students. The main goal here is just to get the kids more involved. (J2, 396-402)

Sarah echoed this statement, and described the pressure of evaluation, adding that teacher evaluation is more about the teacher, and less about the students:

> Everyone's so concerned with making sure that they are 'highly effective.' Teachers don't share as much anymore. They want to be better than the person next to them which is really sad because those kids never get that benefit. Someone next door could've done something great and I never got it because they didn't want to share. It becomes so much more about the teacher than it does about the kids. (Sar2, 1070-1080)

These teachers felt that their evaluation process was necessary, but not relevant to their instructional practice. Celina described the difference between her coaching and evaluation process as differentiation for the learning needs of teachers:

> They evaluate us and tell us that we have to differentiate everything for each student. I need that too, then. I need you to differentiate what I should be doing when you evaluate me. And so for me, as this kind of

teacher, you should start here, you should do this, and make it more personalized for me, instead of being so broad for every teacher. Because not every teacher is the same, yet that's how they evaluate our teaching. (Ci2, 479-487)

Dianne, who used her coaching as a practice run for her evaluation, described the evaluation process as a short period in which she is being criticized and judged by her administrators, and compared her coaching experience as something more catered to her needs as a teacher:

Coaching is not somebody who's above you. It's not somebody who's going to be judging you. A coach is just simply coming in looking at what you can come up with together that you want to work on. So it's really to help you and cater to our needs and what we want to know, versus somebody coming in with a clipboard and checking things off that they see in a 15 to 20 minute period . . . they just can't possibly see everything. (D2, 816-821)

As these teachers expressed, evaluation was viewed as disconnected to their practice, with a gap occurring between their evaluation criteria and what they deemed as important and necessary to their growth as teachers. Coaching was viewed as a way to fill this gap, and the coaching element that connected these two things was the coaching lens. While all of these coaches used instructional frameworks as guides to begin the coaching process as required by the Lastinger coaching rubric (Appendix A), a difference became clear with how coaches interpreted the coaching focus. As detailed in Chapter 5, the coaching lens that Sarah's coach used to frame her coaching cycle stifled Sarah's growth and reflection. Sarah's coach used a coaching lens that *only* considered the evaluative framework. Everything Sarah's coach viewed during the observation and put in her data display was framed by Sarah's evaluation. Therefore, because Sarah's coach did not incorporate Sarah's specific needs, and her coaching lens was limited to that specific criteria, her coaching provided limited professional

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development.   The other five coaches chose to use the district's instructional framework as one component of their coaching goals and focus, but looked beyond that framework with their lens, and incorporated other elements of instruction geared towards creating better student learning.

These statements about evaluation echoed the thoughts of all participants except Sally. Sally's evaluation process was very similar to coaching, and she felt that her evaluation benefitted her as a teacher and was a positive process.   Sally's coaching experience was so similar to her evaluation experiences that she imagined the two processes being combined to create a transformative learning experience for teachers that showed progression and growth:

> If [my administrators] worked in tandem with these coaching observations, they could say, "Well look, you're right, they didn't do this at the beginning of the year, but look at how differently they're doing it now, because as they came in and we're coaching through this, this is the biggest difference." They want us to show how the kids have progressed. They also want us to show how we have progressed. And this is what [my coach] did. We started out with me saying, "This is what I want, this is what I need to change, and then look at the difference." And then we asked, "Did that change help at all, or do we need to change something different?" The whole combination should guide what you do when you coach. If you don't have a goal, then what are you working for? (Sal2, 935-944)

Sally's statement describes her coach's lens that guided the coaching experience: the combination of instructional foci that Sally deemed important in order to improve her instruction and show progression, framed through the use of her instructional framework as a starting point, to thus eclipse those criteria and push Sally's instructional growth through coaching. Jake's description of his coaching experience also showed his coach's lens of looking past his evaluation and realizing how important those indicators were to his teaching:

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> She wasn't telling me things that were part of 'the dog and pony show'. She said, "Do this so you can help your students, and then it will benefit you in the long run". And so that's why it didn't create tension for me, because the ideas she was giving me, I could see how they benefit the classroom. They just happened to help put me into the highly effective category in my evaluation. Her main concern was increasing student engagement and getting more participation from my kids. And she related it back to me like a good teacher, and by doing that, it could help fuel my motivation as well . . . because the whole reason we're doing this is to help me and my kids do better. (J2, 355-374)

Though Jake's coach started with his evaluation framework as a starting point, they progressed to work on every aspect of his classroom management and pedagogy, and thus provided a valuable and transformative learning experience for Jake.

Dianne also expressed the difference between her evaluation experience and her coaching experience because of her coach's lens as more attuned to both her needs as a teacher, and her students' learning needs:

> I like it better this way, because I think with evaluation we're always in a more directed place, "You need to do this, you need to do that" . . . With this I was able to look at a piece and know that I could improve that piece, and work on that and know that I'm going to make the difference. I knew that I needed to continue to work on my questioning, so I made sure that I did that, in a more reflective way versus already getting a 'needs improvement' or a 'developing' on the formal observation. It just is a way to see it differently, and it was presented to me and I could come to that conclusion when I see the data. (D2, 527-539)

Celina discussed the fact that she was achieving several goals through her coaching experience. She became a better, more knowledgeable teacher, improved her teaching for her evaluation, and most importantly, became more attuned to her students' needs. Because her coach used a lens that combined her instructional framework with basic teaching and classroom management principles and strategies, Celina felt she encompassed those goals:

> I feel like it comes to evaluation by focusing on those indicators, how she asked me to choose from Marzano, then we're actually doing both. I'm

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reflecting on my teaching, and learning, and molding my practices, and that's going to be beneficial to me with my evaluation, but also to the students, because, obviously the evaluation's supposed to be benefitting the students. (C2, 812-817)

Each of these coaches had different personal visions of what teaching and coaching should be, and their use of criteria for both the coaching focus and their interpretation of the coaching observation differed, and as a result, the coaching experiences of these six teachers differed.   While it can be said that other coaching elements, such as the data display and coaching conversation impacted teacher changes in instructional practice and in teacher beliefs, the coaching lens provided the foundation for these teachers' coaching experiences, and thus should be considered paramount when creating future coaching experiences.

Conclusion

In order to answer my second research question, *What elements of a reflective coaching approach do teachers perceive as contributing to their learning and change in practice?* this chapter examined similar themes and patterns across participants. These themes pertained to the doing and thinking of coaching, including elements of this reflective coaching model, the coaching relationship, and the coaching lens.   While the coaching experiences of these participants were quite different, the process and elements guiding these coaching experiences had similar components. In Chapter 8, both the individual findings from participants in Chapters 5 and 6, as well as the findings regarding coaching elements presented in this chapter will be discussed, and implications for both research and practice will be given.

CHAPTER 8
DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of my research was to examine teacher experiences with a reflective coaching approach and determine which elements of this approach teachers perceived as contributing to their learning and change in practice. The teachers in this study all believed they experienced learning and growth from engaging in reflective coaching. The impact of coaching as job-embedded professional development has been the subject of several studies in the literature with varying results (Bean et al., 2010; Cantrell & Hughes, 2008; Elish-Piper & L'Allier, 2010; Garet et al., 2008; Neufeld & Roper, 2003; Poglinco et al., 2003; Sailors & Price, 2010; Showers, 1982; Teemant et al., 2011; Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009). In Chapters 1 and 2, gaps in research were discussed with regard to literature examining instructional coaching approaches and relationships (Coburn & Woulfin, 2012; Deussen et al., 2007; Heineke, 2013; Killion, 2009; Ippolito, 2010), coaching and teacher change (Borman & Feger, 2006; Cornett & Knight, 2009; Teemant, 2014; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2014; Zwart et al., 2007), and teacher perceptions of these elements (Deussen et al., 2007; Morgan, 2010; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010). Deficiencies in research literature cited by these authors pointed to a need for better description and examples of complex coaching relationships, the study of coaching experiences from a teacher's perspective, deep examination of specific coaching approaches and practices that respond to teacher needs in specific contexts, and more rigorous empirical qualitative methods to decipher and analyze these approaches.

In this study I used qualitative methodology to examine one specific coaching approach not studied in current literature based upon Knight's (2007) partnership

principles and coaching philosophy in an evaluation-based setting from six teachers'

perspectives. My research was guided by the following two research questions: (1)

What do teachers experience when engaging in a coaching cycle facilitated by a coach

trained in a reflective coaching approach? and (2) What elements of a reflective

coaching approach do teachers perceive as contributing to their learning and change in

practice? While Chapters 5-7 outlined the findings related to my research questions,

the purpose of this chapter is to discuss these research findings and provide

conclusions, connect my research back to the prevailing literature, and suggest

implications for future research and practice based on these findings. Although my

research took place with specific group of teachers in different school contexts in one

public school district, these findings have implications for the professional learning and

development of instructional coaches, teachers, school administrators, and professional

development coordinators. Additionally, my study also deepens our understanding of

coaching methods and practices that effectively facilitate teacher learning and

professional development.

This chapter begins with an examination of this specific reflective coaching

approach and connects these findings to theoretical literature and empirical studies with

similar frames of investigation.   Within this discussion, I consider the importance of

Knight's (2007) partnership principles as the foundation of this reflective coaching

approach. By comparing findings of participants, and exploring the principles present

and absent in their coaching experiences, I provide evidence of both how and why

these principles are integral to the outcomes of this coaching approach. After this, I

discuss the relationship and connection between reflective coaching and teacher

evaluation through examination of the coaching frame and lens, and discuss findings

related both to the context of this study as well as the broader scope of teacher

evaluation and teacher learning. I then theorize the outcomes of reflective coaching

based on comparing the findings of two distinct participants, and deliberate the impact

of coaching on these teachers from their perceptions of the coaching approach,

relationship, and lens. Finally, I provide implications for practice to current

stakeholders, and areas of future academic research based on this discussion.

The Coaching Approach

As defined in Chapter 1, a coaching approach is complex, made up of a coach's

thinking (philosophies) and doing (behaviors). Based upon examples from coaching

research, in my study, a coach's approach is comprised of how the coach implements

the coaching model (practices and behaviors), and the principles and philosophy that

guide the coach towards meeting a teacher's instructional needs. It is important to note

that this study focused on teacher perceptions of coaching, and while this study

incorporated coach behaviors within data collection (through the coaching conversation

video analysis), coaches were not direct participants. Thus I cannot comment on

coaches' personal philosophies, motivation, attributes, or beliefs within this discussion

with regard to their coaching approach, frame, or lens. Within coaching literature, the

term approach and stance are used interchangeably (Borman & Feger, 2006; Deussen

et al., 2007; Heineke, 2013; Ippolito, 2010; Killion, 2009).

Killion (2009) described the difference in stances between coaching *light* and

heavy as a difference in the coaching relationship. Coaches who coach light build a

trusted relationship with a teacher, but focus solely on that trusting relationship.

Coaching heavy refers to behaviors and interactions of a coach that force teachers to

uncover assumptions, and this coaching relationship is one of tension and growth, which pushes both coaches and teachers out of their comfort zone. My study confirms that coaching heavy elements and behaviors were incorporated in the approach of coaches based upon teacher descriptions, and supports Killion's (2009) reasoning for advocating coaching heavy in order to promote change in teacher beliefs and practice. Teachers described specific coach practices embedded in this coaching model such as asking open-ended questions, creating data displays, and conducting reflective coaching conversations as elements that "pushed" their learning and "challenged" their assumptions. According to these teachers, coaches asked "thought-provoking" questions, pushing teachers out of their "comfort zone" and engaged teachers in "critical dialogue".

However, a significant finding was that teachers desired elements of coaching light, specifically the fostering of a positive coaching relationship that provided them confidence, in order to progress to coaching heavy behaviors and techniques, which also supports Heineke (2013) and Knight's (2007) claim that establishing trusting coaching relationships is critical in creating a strong coaching foundation. The experiences of teachers in this study provide evidence that a combination of coaching light and coaching heavy is best suited to change teacher practice. While Celina, Nicole, Dianne and Sally spoke of the importance of their relationship with their coach to provide them confidence and trust in the process, they believed that it was the coach's heavy behaviors and techniques that created deep learning and transformation of practice.

Other coaching research has focused on three distinctions of coaching approaches based upon the goals of coaching: (1) Directive coaching, where the coach leads the coaching cycle as an expert, and the focus is on predetermined practice or strategy; (2) Reflective or responsive coaching, where the coach and teacher engage collaboratively in coaching for reflection and the focus is teacher-centered; and (3) A balanced approach to coaching, combining both directive and reflective elements (Borman & Feger, 2006; Coburn & Woulfin, 2012; Deussen et al., 2007; Heineke, 2013; Ippolito, 2010). While some researchers position directive and reflective coaching as a black-and-white dichotomy (Coburn & Woulfin, 2012; Deussen et al., 2007; Knight, 2007), others argue that a balanced coaching approach is most conducive to providing learning to teachers by building supportive relationships and simultaneously making concrete suggestions about instructional practice (Heineke, 2013; Ippolito, 2010).

When designing this study, I wondered that within this evaluation-based context, a pure reflective coaching approach without directive elements would create tensions because the desired outcomes and coaching frame of teacher evaluation were more conducive to directive coaching techniques. However, my study illustrates the complex nature of coaching through the discovery of a continuum of coaching approaches used within this reflective framework.

These six coaching experiences provide nuanced definitions of directive, reflective, and balanced coaching beyond examples within the literature and demonstrate the many complex elements working within a coaching approach. For example, Sarah experienced a directive coaching approach using a reflective coaching model. Sara sought her coach's expertise, and needed help determining her needs.

While both Sarah and her coach positioned this process so her coach was the expert and coached towards goals predetermined from Sarah's evaluation, her coach used coaching elements (data display, coaching conversation) that were reflective.   In a way, Sarah wanted that directive stance, but needed the reflective coaching relationship to feel support and confidence. Celina experienced a more balanced approach of coaching with a directive focus, with her coach mentoring and leading the coaching, but also providing structured guidance, collaborative dialogue and scaffolded learning by addressing Celina's needs as a novice teacher. Jake experienced the complete continuum of coaching approaches as described by Heineke (2013), in which his coach's approach evolved from directive to balanced to reflective through continuous coaching cycles as Jake became more accomplished and confident in his practice. Pure reflective coaching, as experienced by Dianne, Nicole, and Sally, aimed only at focusing on these teachers' needs with strategic practices and open-ended goals, and provided collaborative support through a partnership in learning.

Therefore this study lends empirical support to Heineke's (2013) claim that a comprehensive perspective of coaching in which coaches move from a telling model (directive) to a collaborative model (reflective) is needed, and provides evidence towards "the value of coaches being aware of the complete continuum of coaching models/stances" (p. 429). While Deussen et al. (2007) claimed that novice teachers preferred a directive approach, these findings suggest that an evolving or balanced coaching approach appeals to novice teachers to best meet their multitude of needs and coaching goals because as the coaching process continues, novice teachers develop ownership and the ability to reflect critically on their practice. This study

confirms research that more than one coaching approach or stance can occur within a coaching session and provide benefit to teacher learning, as evidenced by Jake and Celina's experiences throughout their coaching cycles (Deussen et al., 2007; Heineke, 2013; Ippolito, 2010).

However, teachers in this study reported experiences that both support and challenge the findings of Ippolito (2010) and Deussen et al. (2007). While Celina and Jake felt a balanced approach to coaching was beneficial, evidence from other teachers (Nicole, Dianne, and Sally) suggest that the amalgamation of approaches may not be the only method to influence instruction and create teacher change. Findings from veteran teachers suggest that a pure reflective coaching approach without any directive elements was interpreted as successful and effective by these participants, and provided growth and change in teachers' beliefs and practice.

Another important discovery from this research was the concept of coaching as pedagogy, as mentioned in Chapter 6 referring to Sally's experience. This teacher transformed this reflective coaching model from professional development to pedagogy to empower her students, who then in turn coached each other. This finding has not been reported in the literature thus far, and warrants further exploration. It is important to note that Sally's school context offered an environment conducive to trying this pedagogical approach (small classes, two teachers, block schedule, and administrative support). This finding suggests that while this type of professional development impacts instruction within the classroom, this impact can reach beyond to a holistic approach in which coaching can be used to improve practice, and can be used *as* practice, thus broadening the range of stakeholders who benefit from this approach.

Knight's (2007) Partnership Principles in this Reflective Coaching Approach

Knight's (2007) partnership principles and philosophy of coaching were part of the foundation for this reflective coaching approach, thus providing coaches a predetermined path to guide their actions in the coaching process. But as indicated in Chapter 7, each coach in this study coached differently. Little research has been done on any coaching model using Knight's (2007) theoretical construct of partnership coaching (Knight, 1998; Knight, 2007; Knight & Cornett, 2009) and the scholar himself called for "studies of implementation and teacher attitudes towards coaching" (p. 208). This study presents findings not currently found in coaching literature regarding the implementation of Knight's (2007) partnership principles within a reflective approach.

Knight (2007) states that this partnership approach of coaching helps coaches understand and reflect on "the theory behind their actions" (p. 37). Based on teachers' experiences, it is these seven principles that created the differences in coaching as a mirror, a window, and doorway in teacher learning. While the seven principles are presented with equal importance within Knight's coaching framework (2007), evidence from this study suggests that these principles are not equal in teachers' views, and worked in a specific relationship to each other, presented in Figure 8-1. Teachers also described two specific principles not in Knight's (2007) framework, caring and transformation, which can be added to this coaching framework in order to provide a more comprehensive and beneficial coaching experience.

When viewing Knight's (2007) seven partnership principles of coaching through the experience of Sarah and Celina in coaching as a mirror, only one principle is evident in both coaching cases: reflection. Both Sarah and Celina discuss their ability to reflect, either with a coach or on their own, and the importance of this activity to their learning.

However, Sarah's coaching story is riddled with the lack of equality and reciprocity from her coach, little choice in focus, and no voice of her own, and thus was deemed lacking in Sarah's opinion. In contrast, Celina's story displays some of these principles in order to *achieve* reflection: equality within her coaching relationship, choice in her coaching focus, and most importantly, the inclusion of her voice in her learning. Celina's voice is finally discovered through her ability to become a reflective educator, and thus, her confidence as a teacher grew because of the support of her coach.

It is evident from Nicole and Dianne's experiences with coaching as a window that many of Knight's (2007) partnership principles were incorporated within these peer coaching relationships. Because of the incorporation of the equality, choice and voice, these teachers had the ability to expand their gaze of coaching beyond the narrow focus of the self-reflective mirror. These principles were evident in how both the teachers and their coaches co-created the coaching focus and lens, and the depth in which teachers learned from their coaches. Dialogue was the tool that helped these teachers see through the window, and discover ways in which to improve practice for their students' benefit.

Where all of Knight's (2007) partnership principles were most present was in the transformational coaching experiences of both Jake and Sally, presented as coaching as a doorway. Though equality of power was not immediately present within Jake's evolving coaching relationship, as it was in Sally's peer coaching relationship, the evolution of this relationship created equality both in learning and in decision-making between Jake and his coach. Each teacher had a choice in their desired coaching focus but were also provided guidance with regard to how each focus could be built

upon for further coaching learning and growth. Both reciprocity of learning between coach and teacher, and teacher voice were present in each phase of these coaching experiences, creating a mutual learning partnership between coaches and teachers. These teachers felt valued and worthwhile, and simultaneously received affirmation of their practice, and challenge for future growth. Through the use of critical reflection and collaborative dialogue, these pairs of coaches and teachers were "thinking partners," with back and forth exchanges of thinking as shown in their coaching videos. Finally, and most importantly, both of these teachers achieved praxis in learning, in which they applied new knowledge and skills in their daily teaching, and simultaneously evaluated and reflected on those practices. These findings therefore support Knight's (2007) claim of achieving praxis through partnership, and provide evidence that these teachers engaged in coaching and entered the doorway to transform their identity, beliefs and practice.

When analyzing these teachers' coaching experiences, what emerged was a different conceptualization of Knight's (2007) partnership principles as presented in Figure 8-1. The most important principles to teachers for establishing a coaching foundation within this experience were choice and voice. As evidenced by Celina, Dianne, Jake, Nicole, and Sally, teachers perceived these principles as necessary for teacher buy-in to this learning, and reemphasized how important it was to have the ability to choose their coaching focus to stay motivated and interested in their learning. All teachers expressed their opinion about including teachers' voices in this professional development through dialogue, and felt this was crucial to their learning and change in practice.

Equality and reciprocity were perceived by teachers to be critical principles of a trusted partner relationship, and provided a platform in which teachers and coaches could communicate and learn effectively as partners. For example, though Celina and Jake initially did not experience equality or reciprocity with their coaches due to their inexperience and lack of instructional knowledge, through the continuation of their coaching cycles, they reported their coaches both expressed "learning new things" and "seeing eye to eye" with these novice teachers, thus establishing affirmation of their value as colleagues.   Within Dianne, Nicole, and Sally's peer coaching relationships, equality and reciprocity created the constant exchange of ideas and learning on both sides. Because of Sarah's lack of equality and reciprocity in her coach's approach, she felt "lower" and "talked down to" within her coaching relationship.

Findings from these experiences also determined specific relationships among the principles of reflection, dialogue, and praxis.   Jake and Sally believed reflection and dialogue were tools to *achieve* praxis, which they considered the apex of their personal coaching experience. Sarah and Celina believed their goal in reflective coaching was to achieve reflection. Nicole and Dianne noted the value of dialogue and reflection, reporting that no learning would have occurred without "unpacking" their data, and "deeply reflecting" on the changes needed in their practice. But neither of these veteran teachers spoke specifically of praxis in their teaching as Jake and Sally did. This brings to light a question of coaching implementation: does praxis need to be achieved for coaching to be deemed successful? All teachers in my study considered reflective coaching beneficial, but each teacher had different views of what success meant and experienced different levels of learning and change. Findings from my study also

highlight that when specific principles are violated, such as in Sarah's coaching experience, coaching can be less successful, which lends credence to Knight's (2007) comprehensive framework. As evidenced by Jake and Sally, the use of all seven principles of partnership provided a transformational learning experience for these teachers through achieving praxis.

The findings from Jake and Sally bring into question the scope of these principles in reflective coaching. This study suggests that two principles not included in Knight's (2007) framework might add to our understanding and implementation of reflective instructional coaching: caring, a principle of practice, and transformation, an outcome of practice. Though Knight (2007) suggests caring as a concept that could be interpreted as another important principle, findings from my study provide evidence that the notion of a coach's caring was integral in the making of each participant's coaching relationship. This was even felt by Sarah, who felt her coach "cared about her growth" through this process by devoting time and energy to this process. Caring was interpreted in other ways by teachers, with Jake and Celina expressing the personal caring of their coach as the pillar of their relationship. Nicole and Dianne discussed the value of their coaches' time and commitment to these coaching cycles, and believed the authenticity of their relationships provided caring. Sally expressed the value of her coach's friendship as caring, which motivated her to engage in her coaching cycles. Without the principle of caring, these teachers all expressed that they would not have engaged so deeply or openly in these coaching cycles.

The concept of transformation seemed to be both an outcome of coaching, as in Jake and Sally's case, as well as a principle that these two teachers identified as

necessary in order to broaden the scope of coaching towards overall school improvement. According to these teachers, neither Jake, Sally, nor their coaches initiated this process looking to create a transformation, yet both of these teachers viewed the transformation of their teaching identity as necessary in order to push their coaching experience further. Transformations occurred that included Jake and Sally and their students. But this transformational coaching also engaged colleagues and administrators, and in Sally's opinion, created overall school reform of practice and culture. This transformational shift was presented as both process, in which teachers transformed from being coached, and product, in which teachers became coaches, and coached others. Findings suggest that if the principle of transformation is incorporated as both a coaching process and outcome, such as reflection, dialogue, and praxis, then the scope and breadth of coaching can be widened, strengthened, and used to promote overall school reform. If a coach and teacher engage in coaching to transform, they no longer just focus on a specific set of criteria and limit their outcomes.   Transformative coaching can focus on the school environment as a whole, and see the big picture of the power of coaching.

The Coaching Frame: Coaching and Evaluation

While the connection of instructional coaching and teacher evaluation are theorized in the literature (Darling-Hammond et al., 2011; Kise, 2014; Nolan & Hoover, 2011; Tschannen-Moran & Tschannen-Moran, 2011), this relationship has not been studied in empirical literature from teachers' perspectives. Findings from my study provide teachers' perceptions of these two initiatives within their context, and illustrate how this connection created tension in teacher learning. When speaking of the coaching frame used in this study, I am referring to the instructional framework used by

coaches to guide teachers to create the coaching focus. Coaches in this study used two frames: the Lastinger Instructional Framework (Ross, 2011) and/or the Marzano Causal Teaching Model (2007) in order to guide teachers toward formulating questions about their practice.

Researchers posit for these two initiatives to be successful, teacher evaluation and coaching need to be on separate but complementary tracks (Tschannen-Moran & Tschannen-Moran, 2011). This was not evident from teachers' viewpoints of the current state of coaching and evaluation in their district, who expressed disconnection and discussed the polarity between their evaluation and their personal learning. Though the necessity of teacher evaluation was advocated by all participants, most teachers described their district's current teacher evaluation system as a "dog and pony show" that wasn't representative of their best practice, in which they felt "judged", "criticized", "belittled" and "punished" by the process. Teachers felt this process was more about teachers, and far less about their students.

Both Kise (2014) and Tschannen-Moran and Tschannen-Moran (2011) describe this sentiment as the pitfall of bureaucracy in schools, where no trust exists between teachers and evaluators, and lack of communication leads to lack of cooperation. Conversely, coaching was described by teachers as "invigorating", "worthwhile", and "rewarding", where teachers felt valued. Coaching provided a vital tool for professionalism, which echoes the literature (Knight, 2007; Killion, 2009; Tschannen-Moran & Tschannen-Moran, 2011; Vanderburgh & Stephens, 2010). By using an instructional framework that incorporated several observational criteria for best teaching practices relevant to their district's evaluation system (Ross, 2011), the teachers in this

study felt that coaching could indeed compliment and improve their teaching evaluation by improving their practice, but evidence of this was beyond the scope of this study.

However, the need to have a broad scope of focus beyond that evaluative frame was emphasized and necessary for teacher learning and change. As Figure 8.2 shows, each teacher experienced coaching that was linked to evaluation in varying extent (from high to low) within their coach's frame and lens, and each teacher thus experienced different learning as a result. While these findings cannot state that the correlation of high or low focus on evaluation within the coaching frame provides more or less success, this evidence does suggest that effective reflective coaching can be implemented within an evaluation-based context provided the coaching lens has a broad scope beyond strict evaluative indicators, and the approach uses reflective principles and behaviors to achieve teachers' needs in instruction. This seems important given the links between coaching as an intervention to improve teacher practice (Knight, 2007; Kise, 2014) and the requirement of evaluation to provide evidence of satisfactory or exemplary practice (Marzano, 2007; Tschannen-Moran & Tschannen-Moran, 2011).

Another important finding from my study was the way teachers envisioned and suggested that coaching and teacher evaluation *could* work together. Teachers in my study believed that coaching and teacher evaluation should be implemented as a comprehensive initiative that is linked to teacher learning and classroom needs. This hypothetical evaluation/coaching model was spoken of in some capacity by all participants, and theorized as: (a) administrators would assess teacher practice, (b) administrators would collaborate and reflectively coach on ways to improve that

practice, and (c) administrators would provide evidence of growth in practice and engage in learning with teachers over a continuous period. This model was described by Sally in her interview, who gave the example of how this system works cohesively in her context currently. With the distinctions of these two initiatives lessened so that the power of teacher evaluation was leveraged, these teachers spoke of professional respect and challenge provided by this dual process. Put simply, teachers felt that teacher evaluation needs to be more like instructional coaching and emphasis needs to be on teacher learning and growth, not accountability. The "dog and pony show" of evaluation could thus become valuable, and help teachers improve their instruction to help their students.

This presents empirical evidence supported by the voices of teachers' that teacher evaluation is valued by teachers when combined with personal professional development that meets their instructional needs and provides evidence of growth. But, as many of us in the field who theorize and research teacher evaluation know, the fear of evaluation is dominating the conversation in schools and contributing to an anxious climate for teachers. This research offers reflective instructional coaching as a way to bridge the gap between bureaucratic evaluation and effective professional learning.

The Outcomes of Reflective Coaching: Tensions and Transformations

The findings from my research add to coaching literature by presenting detailed examples and experiences of reflective coaching from teachers' perspectives, as well as describing the impact and outcomes of these coaching experiences within the different contexts of this study. As seen in figure 8.2 and described within the findings of my study, each participant engaged in a complex and different coaching experience. When looking at the most polar examples, Sarah and Sally, one might ask what were

the elements and variables that created this difference in satisfaction, effectiveness, and impact? Why did Sally go so far beyond the typical coaching experience while Sarah was halted at the gate? How did these two teachers, who were coached with the same coaching model, end up with such different outcomes? This section will examine these questions, and provide conclusions to explain the tensions and transformations of this reflective coaching approach.

When discussing the outcomes of coaching, it is important to study three specific entities within these findings: (1) the teacher, (2) the context, and (3) the coach and the approach of coaching. When looking at Sarah and Sally, there are similarities in both personality and teaching style. Both were engaging and articulate in interviews, and spoke about deep caring for their students. Both teachers used humor and gave examples of their vitality in the classroom, and both expressed the desire to become better teachers through this coaching process. Their obvious differences of teaching experience (Sarah was a third year teacher, Sally was in her tenth year) and their school contexts (Sarah was in a Title One elementary magnet school, Sally worked in a 6-12 Title One school for students with behavior issues) provided challenges to these teachers, but the different levels of expertise and leadership did not change the fact that they were both reflective educators.

Sarah represents a novice teacher who was hindered by her deficit-based context. From her descriptions of her first year and second year of teaching, she experienced a massive identity shift, and went from feeling confident, knowledgeable, and successful, to feeling inadequate and overwhelmed in her classroom. Sarah's lack of administrative support, lack of team cohesiveness, and lack of quality professional

development set the stage for her to be unsuccessful in her third year of teaching. This reflective coaching approach was created for teachers like Sarah, who yearned for support, collaboration and personal attention, and truly wanted to improve her practice. So what happened? Sarah's coaching experience provides the example of how a coach's approach, lens, and context impact the coaching cycle and illustrate how important these concepts are to the coaching outcome.

Sarah's coach was also ingrained in this deficit-based context as her team leader, and Sarah described them often commiserating about their difficulties. Neither of these teachers could break free of this negative climate, and thus it set the stage for this coaching as remediation. Examples of this "tell and sell" type of coaching are prevalent in the literature (Bean et al., 2010; Borman & Feger, 2006; Deussen et al., 2003; Knight, 2007; Tschannen-Moran and Tschannen-Moran, 2011) and Sarah's experience lends support to the adverse effects teachers feel from this type of coaching. An important thing to realize is that Sarah's coach followed every step of this reflective model correctly, engaging in the pre-observation interview, observation and data collection, and data display-making process with good intentions of helping Sarah with her instruction. According to Sarah, her coach provided helpful information within data displays, and created knowledgeable interpretations of Sarah's practice. Sarah felt her coach really cared about her as a teacher, and cared about helping her become more successful in the classroom.

Where the breakdown occurred between this teacher and coach was in their relationship and coaching focus, which were products of their deficit-based environment. Sarah and her coach did not view each other as equals, and thus, could

never be partners, which lends credence to Knight's (2007) belief that without partnership, true change in practice cannot occur. The expert-novice relationship dominated this coaching experience, and as a result, Sarah's coach used a lens in which her goal was to fix Sarah's problems, not work together to solve them. Her coaching frame was literally taken from Sarah's evaluation, and her directive approach may have stifled Sarah's ability to reflect and engage in dialogue. When asked questions, Sarah reacted defensively. The coaching conversation was coach-led and coach-dominated, and though Sarah reflected on her teaching through this process, it did not occur within the coaching cycle.

But what did occur? Despite these many issues within Sarah's coaching, she still believed this process was beneficial to her teaching and she gained knowledge about her practice. This finding provides empirical support that reflective coaching can still provide teacher learning despite obstacles affiliated with the coach and teacher relationship because of the element of data presentation. Sarah valued her data displays, and learned important things about her teaching routines and how she engaged her students. What is inconclusive is how much more Sarah would have learned, or possibly changed her practice, had her coach not established this relationship or used this coaching lens. Sarah's coaching journey provides evidence of both the tensions within instructional coaching, as well the benefits of this reflective approach towards teacher learning through providing evidence of practice from data collection.

Sally's coaching journey is one that goes beyond any description reported in coaching literature. Within Sally's experience, it is important to deconstruct the specific

pieces of this puzzle that created different kinds of transformation: (1) Sally's teaching identity and skill level, (2) administrative support and school culture, (3) Sally's coach and coaching lens, (4) the transfer of coaching from professional development to pedagogy for student empowerment, and (5) the scope of transformation from reflective coaching, in a cycle of impact that included the coach, teacher, students, other teachers, and administrators, showing comprehensive school implementation and change.

When beginning this coaching process, Sally originally felt unsure of herself as a teacher, but possessed reflective qualities and was motivated to learn and improve her practice. Because of the stigma she encountered being a teacher in her alternative school, being considered a "glorified babysitter" and not considered rigorous or professional in stature by other schools within her district, Sally's teaching identity was one filled with conflict. She knew she was teaching "some good things," but was uncertain of the impact of her teaching towards her students.   Within her school culture, however, Sally felt supported, appreciated and challenged, and recognized similar exemplary teaching qualities in her peers and in her administration. Sally's principal provided extensive support to her as a teacher through both evaluation and informal observations, and established a culture of transparency and appreciation in her staff. This positive, evidence-based culture established an environment conducive to inquiry-based teacher learning through reflective coaching, and was the first piece of this puzzle.

The second piece of this puzzle was Sally's coach. Sally's coach approached this process with an ability to decipher exactly what Sally needed as a teacher through a

lens focused on her students. According to Sally, her coach intentionally did not incorporate a coaching frame based upon evaluation, and instead concentrated on aspects of this process to benefit Sally's teaching. Sally's coach tailored elements of this coaching model to fit Sally's context specifically based upon the special needs of her students, as well as the non-traditional aspects of her classroom. Through a strong peer relationship, Sally and her coach pushed each other using all of Knight's (2007) partnership principles, and as a result, Sally was encouraged by her coach to achieve praxis not as a result of coaching, but as a tool of coaching. Because of their specific context and her principal's support, Sally's coach was given time outside of class to observe and work with Sally and her students, which was paramount to the success of this endeavor. Through this combination of elements, Sally's coach created an experience that surpassed internal teacher change in beliefs and practice, and instead created transformation of her entire classroom.

The third piece of this puzzle relates to the creativity and intuitiveness of both Sally and her coach. By realizing the empowerment and learning that Sally encountered through this process, both she and her coach connected this outcome to the needs of her students who suffered from engagement and behavioral issues, and translated reflective coaching from professional development to pedagogy for Sally's students.   This creates a link from coaching as professional development to coaching as instructional practice not seen in the literature. Sally's alternative students not only embraced coaching as pedagogy, but advocated for this to be an instructional practice in all their classrooms. Thus, Sally and her coach broadened the scope of this coaching process which started as coach and teacher, and transcended to teacher to students,

students to each other, and students back to teachers, making coaching continuous and encompassing all stakeholders.

The final piece of this puzzle is the most important, and supports findings in professional development literature with regard to comprehensive change and school reform (Darling-Hammond et al., 2011; Fullan, 2008; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996; Knight, 2007). When Sally and her coach realized the success of coaching from data analysis of student achievement as well as from their personal experiences, Sally advocated as a teacher leader and department chair to incorporate this professional development within her school's structure to manifest this success school-wide. She began to informally coach her colleagues, and also presented coaching as pedagogy in her faculty meetings. This organic, holistic approach to coaching, in which the focus widened from improving teacher practice to improving student learning to improving school success, provides empirical support for this reflective coaching approach as a method of school improvement and reform.

As a caution in interpreting the findings from this study, all participants in this study were chosen because their coaches were undergoing an intensive yearlong coaching training. This experience, and therefore these participants, may not be typical of all teachers who experience coaching. This same caution applies to interpreting the findings related to Sally. This study was designed to gather experiences of teachers engaged in reflective coaching, and there was no attempt to present typical or average experiences. As one teacher in this study, Sally's experiences are insightful but not necessarily typical.

Implications for Reflective Coaching

As established from the findings presented in Chapters 5-7 and discussed in this chapter, providing a uniform coaching intervention through a specified framework, model and approach is difficult, if not improbable due the tremendous disparities in teachers, coaches, and contexts. This study has presented six coaching experiences from teachers in different contexts, and each teacher felt they received benefit and learning from the coaching process. How, then, can coaches produce desired results with this reflective coaching approach? How can we replicate the results of Sally and Jake's transformational experience, and avoid replication of Sarah's evaluative experience? In addition to building on the existing literature about instructional coaching, this study offers implications for future practice and research.

Analysis of the qualitative data from my study have determined that instructional coaching needs to be viewed not as a targeted intervention, but instead as a holistic process searching for a full range of outcomes. When focusing on coaching through the "big picture," coaches and teachers can achieve a range of outcomes based upon a teacher's background, knowledge, disposition, level of experience, and context. As all these teachers voiced, reflective coaching provided the opportunity for learning, growth and change.

Though coaches were not direct participants in this study, it is important to consider this reflective coaching approach from a variety of stakeholder perspectives, including coaches, school leaders and district level representatives. The outcomes of coaching must be defined by all of these stakeholders, and the range of outcomes must be envisioned not just as the benefits to a single teacher, but to teachers, students, and schools, as in Sally's example. When restrictive elements of coaching were removed,

such as evaluation frameworks or directive coaching behaviors, this model of professional development had the capacity to promote school-wide change.

Implications for the practice of coaches and teachers who facilitate coaching are far reaching. First and foremost, coaches need to be knowledgeable in several different approaches to coaching, and must determine which approach will best fit a teacher's needs. Based on my study, coaches who identify their coaching philosophy and approach as directive, or are required by school leaders to remediate teachers for evaluative purposes, should not use this reflective model. This reflective coaching approach has the ability to use a strategic focus for reaching specific goals, but the coach's focus must be on the process, not the product. With this holistic view of a teacher's identity and environment, coaches should determine which approach, frame, and lens would best achieve the desired goals of the coaching process and integrate those elements within the coaching cycle.

Secondly, coaches must understand the nuances and power involved in their coaching relationships, and view teachers as learning partners despite their experience level. Teachers valued the attention and information from their coaches, but did not truly engage without that foundation of trust and caring. Thirdly, coaches must implement coaching as continuous professional development, and not one specific cycle. As evidenced by this study, a multitude of coaching cycles produced transformational results with teachers, and benefits reached beyond the teacher, to their students, and often their schools. Finally, coaches need to be well-versed with instructional and programmatic frameworks and teacher evaluation systems within their districts, and have the ability to negotiate the tensions affiliated with these district and

programmatic initiatives and bridge that gap to deep teacher learning and professional growth and change through instructional coaching.

Implications for school leaders and district professional development coordinators regarding the training, support, and implementation of this professional development for both teachers and coaches are numerous. Support and buy-in from top district and school officials is imperative in the success of coaching as professional development. While Sunnyside County School district administrators and school leaders showed support by attending the Lastinger/Sunnyside coaching showcase and learning about this process, many teachers reported that school leadership were not knowledgeable in this different approach to coaching. School and district leaders need to be well versed in the coaching initiative, and understand the theories and beliefs associated with specific models of coaching. For those leaders who are defining coaching roles and responsibilities, this study noted that teachers disliked being judged by coaches, therefore coaches should be steered away from evaluative duties that may be associated with administrative responsibilities. Districts that wish to alleviate the tensions between professional development and teacher evaluation should consider aligning these two initiatives on a complimentary track, and re-evaluate the way school leaders implement the instructional frameworks within their schools. By providing an evaluation model that is more coaching-based, incorporating frequent, continuous observations with evidence-based, non-judgmental feedback focused on student learning, school leaders can model job-embedded professional development for coaches and teachers and provide evidence of teacher improvement in practice.

Coaching should be embedded in efforts for school-wide improvement and not considered a separate entity. School leaders wishing to support the effectiveness of coaches should allow time for coaches and teachers to engage in this professional development as well as consider focusing on the coach behaviors identified in this study. Coaching roles should also be explicitly defined by school administration, and efforts to reduce the fracturing of coaching roles should be made to allow coaches flexibility to provide deep teacher learning. For those schools that incorporate peer coaching versus school-based coaching, teachers also need release time to complete coaching cycles and must be allowed extensive coach training, and this effort must be combined and aligned with other school professional development initiatives.

For those professional development coordinators who facilitate university and district-based coach development and training, implications from this study focus on both methods and content of coach training. This study supports that coaches need to be trained in a continuum of coaching stances (light and heavy, directive and reflective) and need to understand the theoretical and philosophical differences of these stances within their coaching approach. These findings suggest the need for coaches to be provided with opportunities to gain better understanding of coaching processes and knowledge, and provide differentiated professional development based on teacher need and practice. A method that could help coaches understand the complex roles and relationships of coaching is to study and discuss teacher vignettes such as those presented in Chapters 5 and 6, as well as watch coaching videos as examples to collectively reflect upon with critical understandings of coaching goals and approaches.

Coaches need to be able to continually coach and model practices during training and receive non-judgmental feedback in order to build an arsenal of strategies and resources to coach successfully.   Just as teachers need affirmation of practices through trust and support, so do coaches. Coaches also need to learn how to negotiate the tensions between district, programmatic and teacher goals (Heineke, 2013) and identify the coaching approach and lens most capable of providing a broad range of outcomes for teacher learning and change in practice. Finally, as evidenced in this study, facilitators of coach training and development need to provide continuous and sustainable coaching development and learning in platforms most accessible to coaches and teachers, with a recommendation of face-to-face learning sessions, as well as online platforms to promote self-reflection and provide a learning community in which coaches can continue to receive support, resources, and challenge.

Implications for Future Research

As stated in the introduction of my research, coaching is a method of job-embedded professional development invoking great interest and funding in our current school climate, yet there is very little research to support the effectiveness of this approach on teacher learning and student achievement. There needs to be more research similar to this study that focuses on the specific actions and behaviors of coaches, as well as research that looks at the use of dialogue, reflection, and the incorporation of praxis within instructional coaching. In addition, research on specific coaching contexts that both support and stifle coaching needs further exploration. While organizational supports and influences were described by teachers relating to their daily classroom practice and their coaching experience, a number of these factors may support or provide barriers to coaching success. Research is needed to focus on

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coaching with relation to organizational factors such as teacher evaluation, professional development initiatives and opportunities, and curriculum and school improvement reform. School and district leaders should also be interviewed and consulted in future research to provide evidence from all stakeholders on this method of professional development with specific focus on programmatic, district, and state policies and expectations.

While this research provided a complex vision of instructional coaching from teachers' perspectives, it only provided a glimpse of behaviors and relationships that support this method of job-embedded professional development, and many questions remain unanswered. First and foremost, while the behaviors described in this study were from teachers' accounts of coaching experiences, it is essential to also include the voice of the coach when analyzing this coaching process, and determine the differences and similarities of how they interpret these experiences. This study was designed to honor the voices of teachers as partners in this professional development, but future research should encourage both coach and teacher perspectives related to coaching relationships, interactions, and goals, as well as coaching approaches and stances to achieve these goals. Research involving other qualitative sources of data such as observations of coaching sessions, teaching sessions incorporating suggested coaching strategies, and interviews with students, teachers, and administrators would provide a more comprehensive picture of this professional development and lead to better avenues for providing quality coaching.

Another concern is the evaluation and assessment of coaches and coaching programs and models. Studies similar to this one that focus on a specific model or

approach of coaching are needed in order to determine whether coaches impact teacher beliefs and practices and enhance student achievement. The professional development provided to coaches needs to be studied to investigate the effectiveness of coach learning, and future research on coach training is needed to better understand which coaching models best meet various needs and coaching goals.

Finally, several scholars have documented the need for empirical research connecting coaching to improvements in student achievement (Bean et al., 2010; Borman & Feger, 2006; Cantrell & Hughes, 2008; Coburn & Woulfin, 2012; Cornett & Knight, 2009; Deussen et al., 2007; Heineke, 2013; Killion, 2009; Ippolito, 2010; Neufeld & Roper, 2003; Poglinco et al., 2003) and this study confirms the necessity of this research to be completed. While teachers in this study spoke of improvements in their student learning and presented self-reported evidence of student gains as a result of these experiences, I recommend longitudinal studies encompassing several coaching cycles incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methods to truly investigate if coaching is making a difference in schools.

Conclusion

The challenges of teachers and coaches to provide effective professional development to improve teacher practice and student learning is well documented in the literature, and my study has presented just a snapshot of the tensions and transformations that teachers experience when engaging in reflective coaching. This research shows the potential of reflective coaching to push teachers toward a level of reflection, praxis, and transformation that will not only will help them better meet the diverse needs of their students, but also provide benefit to their classrooms, colleagues and schools.

When beginning this research, I anticipated that the answers from these teachers would be based upon a deficit-based view of teaching that is so prevalent in our current school climate. I was therefore surprised and encouraged to find that while these teachers spoke of technical and frustrating issues within their classrooms, their views of coaching were positive and rewarding. Each teacher reported specific growth from this process, but also illuminated the many complexities which impact coaching and teaching, and provided the beginning of a continuing conversation to further enhance this process to create teacher confidence, and change teacher beliefs and practices. The ultimate goal of coaching is improvement in student learning (Killion, 2009; Knight, 2007), and this research has shown several detailed pathways towards achieving that goal. It should be acknowledged that these teachers and the coaches who worked with them through this journey are very real, very caring human beings, and there was tremendous trial and error on both sides of the coaching conversation. Both coaches and teachers experienced victories and suffered setbacks, and their value to each other and this process cannot go overlooked. It is my hope that as this research is interpreted and discussed, the time, energy, and professional dedication of these teachers and coaches is appreciated, and their contribution to the profession of teaching is valued.

Knight's (2007) Partnership Principle	New reflective coaching principle	Purpose and Outcome
	Caring	Establishes foundation of caring and support
Choice Voice		Establishes teacher motivation and buy-in to engage in coaching; differentiates reflective coaching from directive coaching
Equality Reciprocity		Establishes partnership in learning, provides foundational support for reflective coaching relationship
Dialogue Reflection		Tools used within reflective coaching process to stimulate learning and change with both teacher and coach
Praxis		Classroom-based outcome of coaching which incorporates reflection-in-action, change in practice, and the continuous cycle of this process to sustain self-improvement of teaching practices
	Transformation	Scope of change from reflective coaching experience that goes beyond teacher's classroom practice to include a shift in teacher identity that impacts students, colleagues, and school

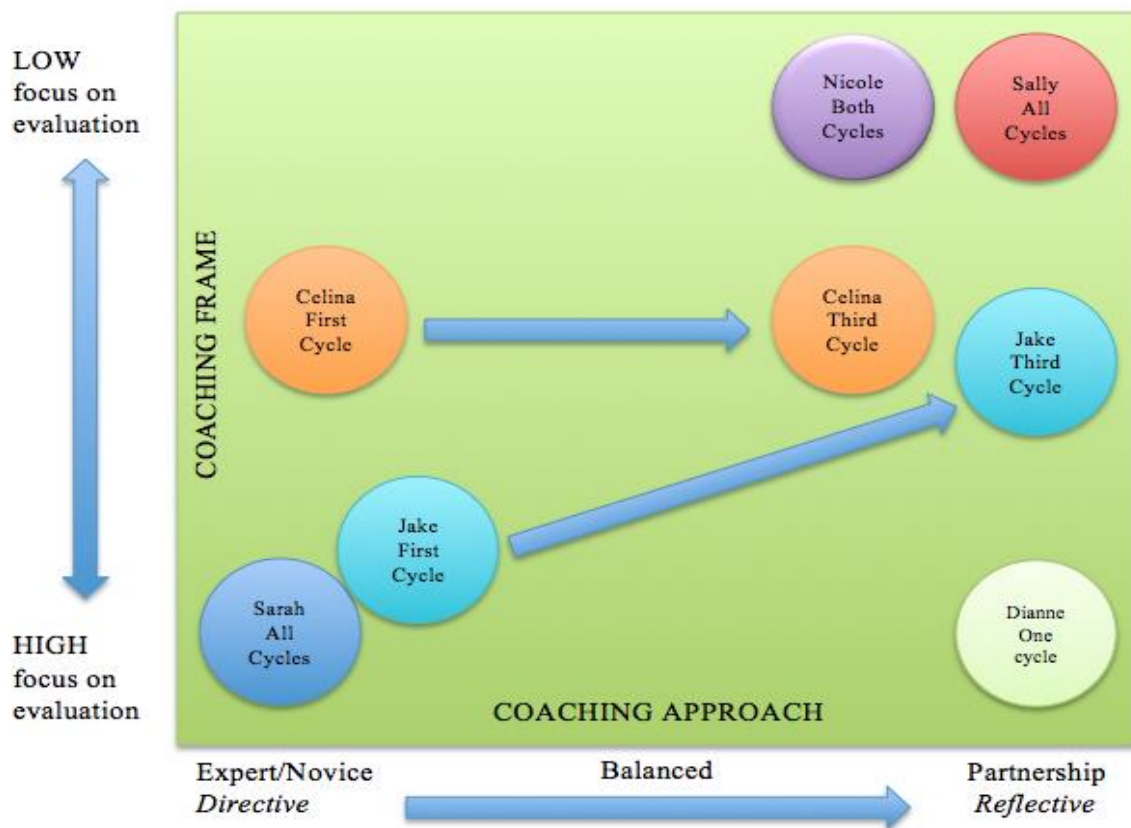Figure 8-1. Purpose and outcomes of reflective coaching principles

Figure 8-2. Participants' experiences with a continuum of coaching approaches

APPENDIX A
LASTINGER CENTER INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING RUBRIC

Focus			
	Needs improvement/ No	**Emerging**	**Mastery**
Topic selection (focuses on instructional issues important in developing mastery on CCSS; *this includes development of a strong positive classroom environment to support thinking and risk taking).*	No clear instructional focus is apparent OR coach moves through a checklist of desired behavior and provides positive and negative feedback.	Observation focuses on technical instructional issue (e.g. amount of time spent on various instructional segments) OR shifts through varied instructional issues with no clear shared focus.	Focus of the observation provides evidence of prior conversations or PD that guided the teacher's and coach's selection of topic/ focus toward substantive instructional issues consistent with CCSS *and/or creating a positive climate.*
Focus on *instructional and classroom climate shifts* necessary for deep and focused teaching and learning necessary for mastery of CCSS.	No clear instructional focus is apparent OR coach moves through a checklist of desired behavior and provides positive and negative feedback.	Coaching is focused on instructional shifts but shared knowledge by teacher and coach of the connection to *creating a stronger climate,* students' learning and/or the shifts necessary for mastery of CCSS are not clear.	Coaching is focused on instructional shifts necessary to enable all children to mastery of common core standards. Teacher and coach use shared, knowledgeable language about the connection between *climate*, instruction and the CCSS.

Focus is consistent with district's instructional framework.	No clear instructional focus is apparent OR coach moves through a checklist of desired behavior and provides positive and negative feedback OR Focus is unrelated to or inconsistent with district framework.	Coaching is logically consistent with the district framework.	Focus of coaching is explicitly consistent with the district's instructional framework and teacher and coach use shared, knowledgeable language about instruction.

Data Display			
	Needs improvement/	Emerging	Mastery
Data are connected to teachers' guiding question.	Data display misrepresents the observational events OR is not focused on the teacher's core questions.	Coach collected relevant data but a different data collection/display strategy would be much stronger.	Coach collected data clearly relevant to the question and data are displayed in a way that is easily interpreted.
Data display presents non-judgmental DATA.	Data display provides a list of interpreted feedback (strengths and skills to work on)	Data display includes a mix of data and interpreted (evaluative) feedback	Data display presents descriptive, non-evaluative data to initiate a coaching conversation.
Data display effectively communicates the observational data.	Coach presents raw data OR too much data that hasn't been reworked into a data display OR presents global statements without support from data.	Data display represents the data but it is not easily understood by the teacher.	Data display clearly represents (in graphic/ summary form) the observational data collected.

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Coaching Conversation			
	Needs improvement/ No evidence	**Emerging**	**Mastery**
Creating a respectful TONE that supports teacher risk-taking for the conversation.	Position of coach, tone of voice, responses to teacher convey a tone of evaluation OR disinterest OR distraction OR frustration.	At times the coach conveys interest and respect but during parts of the conversation the coach is distracted OR seems disinterested, frustrated, or judgmental.	Setting of the conversation, body language and tone of voice communicate interest in what the teacher is saying, respect for teacher's perspective and builds mutual trust.
Evidence that the teacher and the coach are thinking about the data together (Parity in conversation).	Coach does almost all the talking. Coach focuses on communicating his/ her interpretations of the data OR the strengths/ weaknesses of the institution.	The conversation demonstrates thinking by both and is close to parity but the coach tends to dominate a little too much OR the coach says almost nothing and provides little input to the teacher.	There is a general sense of equity in thinking/ participation between coach and teacher. Neither teacher nor coach dominates the conversation.
Conversation is data based.	Data display is not used OR seldom used to focus conversation about the teacher's question (e.g. coach's agenda OR prior interpretation rather than classroom data drive the conversation).	Conversation focuses on explaining the data display rather than focused conversation about the teacher's question OR the conversation shifts between data based and the coach's agenda.	Data display leads to shared conversation about the teacher's guiding question. The coach refers back to the data throughout the conversation.

Coach maintains a non- evaluative STANCE.	Coach's STANCE tends to be evaluative. Coach's assumptions OR interpretations drive the conversation OR Coach tends to over-emphasize his/her prior experiences and practice.	Coach generally maintains a non-evaluative STANCE but at times allows his/ her assumptions OR prior experiences to drive the conversation.	Coach asks questions to clarify assumptions and to understand teacher perspectives and decisions. **Coach avoids evaluation** and recommendations based on preconceived assumptions (relies on data as evidence to focus the conversation). Coach recognizes when it is ap-propriate to share personal experiences and practice.
Coach capitalizes on teachable moments.	Coach misses all key opportunities to provide additional insight to the teacher.	On at least one occasion the coach uses questioning strategies that enable the teacher to surface implicit assumptions OR develop new insights or new skills OR recognize the need for skill development.	Coach appropriately uses questioning strategies that enable the teacher to develop questions and/ or insights about her teaching and student learning AND/OR shares tentative interpretations of data that push teacher thinking and practice WITHOUT dominating the conversation.

APPENDIX B
PARTICIPANT INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview 1 Protocol
Reflective Coaching: What do Teachers Experience?

Interview 1: Background Interview (30 minutes)

Interviewer: I'm really focusing my research on your coaching cycle with (coach), but to understand more about what and how you selected your topic for your coaching cycle, it would really help me to know more about you as a teacher.

1. Tell me about your background in education and what lead you to teaching.   What subject/grade level do you currently teach? What have you previously taught? What is your certification? How long have you been teaching and what other schools have you worked in?

2. Can you describe your school and classroom context to me?
   - Prompt for urban/rural/suburban, demographics of students, anything exceptional that would influence teaching
   - Prompt for administration, mission, values, staff perceptions and overall school climate

3. How did you and (coach) decide to work together? Why did you agree to engage in coaching? What were you hoping to gain from this coaching experience?

4. I'm going to be watching the video of your coaching conversation with (coach) after this conversation. To help me understand what I'm viewing, can you tell me a little bit about how you determined the focus of your coaching cycle? (prompt for evidence of "pull" approach vs. "push" approach, pull being reflective in which coaches partner with teachers to identify teaching practices that will help teachers achieve THEIR goals)

5. Tell me your previous experience with coaching, either personally or within your school or other schools you have worked in.
   - What was the purpose of the coaching?
   - What did the coaches do?
   - What were the expected outcomes from coaching?
   - Who provided the coaching?

6. How do you anticipate the UF Coaching Model to influence your teaching? Tell me what excites you about this professional development.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Mary Kay Rodgers completed her undergraduate degree in English and History at Indiana University, and then began her educational career as a middle school English teacher in Phoenix, Arizona while completing her master's degree in education in secondary Curriculum and Instruction at Arizona State University. After moving to Kentucky, Mary Kay taught secondary Language Arts and Humanities. Mary Kay then moved to Ohio, where she taught business and creative writing courses at Columbus State Community College. After moving to Florida in 2005, Mary Kay then taught pre-K, Kindergarten and first grade, and then became the Director of Education for a K-8 private school. Mary Kay received her doctorate in 2015 with a focus on Curriculum, Instruction and Teacher Education from the University of Florida, and then moved once again to Phoenix, Arizona where she is currently a University of Florida Lastinger Center Learning consultant in professional development with Early Learning Florida and Lastinger Instructional Coaching Initiatives nationwide. Mary Kay's research interests include preservice and in-service teacher education and development, inquiry-based professional development, and social justice issues in education.