Navigating Abrupt Shifts in Contextual Discourses During a Pandemic and Lack of Mentorship: A Preservice Teacher’s Journey Developing Critical Pedagogical Discourses

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Navigating Abrupt Shifts in Contextual Discourses During a Pandemic and Lack of Mentorship: A Preservice Teacher’s Journey Developing Critical Pedagogical Discourses

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Dissertation submitted to the College of Education and Human Services at West Virginia University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Curriculum & Instruction

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ABSTRACT

Navigating Abrupt Shifts in Contextual Discourse: A Preservice Teacher’s Journey Developing Critical Pedagogical Discourses

Casey L. King

This study is centered on one English language arts (ELA) preservice teacher’s development of her critical pedagogical discourses (CPD) with the contextual discourses of a school placement for preservice teaching and later shift to a full-time teacher before the placement was complete during a pandemic and in the midst of implementing online learning. Data is drawn from a 4-month interpretive qualitative case study that included classroom observations and semistructured interviews. The objective for this study included how a preservice teacher uses their beliefs and identity about instruction amid changing contextual discourses in a pandemic and with a lack of mentorship. Discourse data analysis demonstrated that the CPD acted as a filter in her identity, beliefs, and dialogic instructional practices and to what extent they aligned or were compartmentalized in the classroom. Additionally, due to an abrupt shift from the preservice teaching placement to a full-time teaching position in a different district, it left her without a mentor classroom teacher. This study suggests that the teacher education programs and school districts should provide supportive mentoring opportunities for preservice teachers when they experience such displacement and are required to fulfill both job and university courses’ expectations. This study indicated that such an unanticipated alteration in contextual discourses created a set of circumstances that primed the preservice teacher for a quicker departure from dialogic practices toward monologic practices.
Acknowledgements

Choosing to go back to school with a young family does not strike many as something to even consider, but I took a leap of faith. Without my faith in God and the support of people during this journey, it would never have been possible.

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#United We Stand

To my family and friends, I thank you for your continual support and love. My grandmother, Patricia Nicholson, or Maggie as we all knew her, I cannot even express how much you influenced me and how much I look up to you. Growing up in the Great Depression, she had to quit school in eighth grade to help her family on their farm. Although she did not graduate from high school, education was a priority. I cannot recall a time she did not have a book in her hand, and we were always playing Scrabble. She was the most determined, kind-hearted, Godfearing, survivor I have known, and I’m so thankful for her influence in my life. Although she watched me begin this journey and had to watch from above as it ended, I know she was with me every step of the way, rooting me on from above.

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sessions to help encouraging each other. Michael, you’re doing so well, and I cannot wait to celebrate with you!

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Chapter 1: Introduction

When I became an English teacher, I remember that although I felt comfortable in teaching literature, my confidence in the component of writing instruction was much more subdued in comparison. As a student, I fared well in the classroom, in general, and showed a proclivity toward English courses more so than other subjects; however, I simply viewed myself as decent at writing with no real awareness of what the act of writing really meant. Perhaps it was the seemingly detached manner in which writing was presented as formulaic that shaped my indifferent beliefs about it going through public school and college. For instance, there were no undergrad courses specifically on the teaching of writing as requirements for the English education program, only the general writing classes. Although each English and education course had an element of writing, typically for midterms and finals, the writing task was to illustrate my thoughts on a given topic, not on how to teach others to do the same. It was assumed that we, as preservice teachers, would know how to integrate writing into the classroom; however, if we were not instructed as to how, then most, including myself, reverted to focusing on conventional methods we could recognize and, afraid of the unbridled openness of creative writing, assigned it sparingly, if at all. The wincing and avoidance of teachers toward writing is not an uncommon occurrence. There are research findings that the presence of insufficient professional preparation, dubious standards, and discordant assessments across all schools, as well as little variety for teachers to implement writing practices other than writing workshop and peer writing, for example, due to time constraints and curricula contribute to the growing gaps in students’ writing that are currently surfacing (Hodges, Wright, & McTigue, 2019, p. 3). The lack of methods courses I experienced and the contexts I encountered led me to question if current preservice teachers were having the same experiences, and if so, to what extent.
Introduction to the Research Study

The nature of preservice teachers’ identities and beliefs and practices is an aspect of classrooms that has more implications than many realize. The university education programs and educational system have goals of bringing more enlightened and diligent teachers to the field and perpetuating the value of education to future generations. Nationally, the American education system has been scrutinized throughout the years, but more recent events are creating even more of a challenge for incoming teachers due to the predominant contention of accountability. The current environment has seasoned teachers detracted from their beliefs about and values of reading and writing in the classroom due to promises of better scores in applying this system or that practice. If preservice teachers are not seeing the value of reading and writing within the classrooms they observe and eventually take part in, then how can they be expected to continue in such endeavors once they become professional teachers themselves? Teachers may unfortunately revert to the seemingly trite response that they are teaching to the standards through a so-called best practice. The contextual discourses of the English language arts (ELA) classroom are influential in preservice teachers seeing their beliefs and practices that value both reading and writing, making it even more essential they receive support or collaboration in their placements. The amalgamation of learning to teach the aspects of both writing and literature in an English classroom, where preservice teachers and professionals alike can state with confidence why they are so important and should be valued, acknowledged, and communicated, is important in fortifying the educational system from further disrespect of its professional operatives. The subject of English language arts is fundamental in maintaining a civilized, educated, and open-minded society by providing a place for students to explore issues, themselves, and their world. Current teachers and university education programs can help these
developing preservice teachers grow professionally in their beliefs and practices and transition into one of the most important professions in our society, that of educators.

**Research Question:**

1. How does a preservice teacher use their beliefs and identity about instruction amid changing contextual discourses in a pandemic?

**Social Constructivism**

There are competing influences and expectations among preservice teachers of both the university and the school in which they are teaching that may generate difficulty in navigating and appropriating both the theoretical and practical concepts they have been taught about their content. Due to such influences, it is important to understand constructivism in the classroom. Social constructivism is an effective method of teaching “since collaboration and social interaction are incorporated” (Powell & Kalina, 2009, p.243). Social interaction among participants in the classroom is an integral part of the learning process. Powell & Kalina (2009) assert that “Understanding [Vygotsky’s] theories or building a classroom where interaction is prominent helps develop effective classrooms” (p.243). Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory includes different aspects, one of which being scaffolding, as “children learn more effectively when they have others to support them” (Powell & Kalina, 2009, p.244). The support system can allow for students to individually internalize and eventually solve the problems they are experiencing in lessons. The process of scaffolding is “a unique type of internalization” and “occurs when a student will be asked to perform a task that has some meaning to the student and with assistance, will complete it” (Powell & Kalina, 2009, p.244). The idea of scaffolding is a prominent one in the education courses for many preservice teachers who are taught strategies that support it. The idea of scaffolding, for Vygotsky, is essential in “creating a deeper understanding” and
internalization, “which occurs more effectively when there is social interaction” (Powell & Kalina, 2009, p.244). These aspects tie intricately with dialogic instruction for teachers and classroom experiences that can promote it. In current education programs, there seems to be more discussion about the quality of talk in the classroom on the material so “students can critically think about what they are learning” and “walk away with personal meaning that was constructed on their own” (Powell & Kalina, 2009, p.245). Teaching preservice teachers to reflect on the type of instruction and learning they want for their students and ways to increase the likelihood of that occurring is essential in helping them hold to their instructional beliefs and practices.

The extent to which preservice teachers employ these beliefs and use them in determining their instructional practices are influenced by the contexts they are experiencing because teaching is a social practice that is not just a one-sided relationship between teacher and student. It is a relationship that is situated within that specific context, gives these ideological constructions meaning and importance, creates and is created by the discourses between student and preservice teacher, as well as preservice teacher and university professors, and recognizes the production of both social identities and practices (Handsfield, Crumpler, & Dean, 2010, p. 407). Acknowledging context for the expansion and discourse among both students and preservice teachers within the classroom also contributes to shaping preservice teachers’ beliefs and practices in which they feel they have a voice and are supported in their instructional choices, rather than simply relying on their mentor teacher or school setting to determine the value they have within their classrooms (Handsfield, Crumpler, & Dean, 2010, p. 407; Taylor, Bougie, & Caouette, 2003, p. 197). The support needed for preservice teachers to explore and refine their instructional beliefs and practices can help them assemble and develop those beliefs
and practices into something that is perhaps more engaging and significant for themselves and their students. The contexts of the classroom and the teachers and students within it are significant factors in how preservice teachers’ beliefs concerning instruction can develop. If preservice teachers enter into their social context more seamlessly, students could react much more inclusively and accept another voice for their instruction because they are open to the preservice teachers’ beliefs and instructional practices that are presented in the classroom. Due to the social nature of teaching, the learning of teaching is also social, meaning preservice teachers will draw on their experiences when developing their own identities, beliefs, and practices. Exploring how preservice teachers are positioning themselves and the identity they are enacting is of interest because how they view themselves in and out of the classroom is influential and can determine the levels of their teaching beliefs and practice that will be present and depicted.

**Mentorship**

Mentorship is also a collaborative learning process because preservice teachers will draw on their experiences while learning how to teach. Preservice teachers who have a mentor from the university as a preservice teacher and another in their first year in a full-time teaching position would have someone with whom they can reflect on their teaching practices and learn from in each placement. The support of a mentor can be a tremendous advantage and alleviate some stress as they learn to navigate the different contextual discourses they are experiencing. Stanulis & Russell (1999) explain that “research on mentoring indicates that classroom teachers have a significant impact on the learning of novices and in shaping novices’ beliefs and practices” (p.66). Campbell & Brummett (2007) assert “preservice teachers can benefit from a mentoring environment while still students, as they begin to develop an identity with the role of teacher” (p.50). While mentoring is an important aspect to a preservice teacher’s development, it
is not the sole solution in how and to what extent preservice teachers will construct their beliefs, identities, and practices because there are other factors that can inhibit a mentor relationship, such as mentoring that is not conducive to a preservice teacher who identifies more with dialogic and ambitious practices.

Some mentoring experiences that preservice teachers have may not be good examples of ambitious practice and instead reinforce traditional, monologic practices and negative perspectives of students with special needs and students of color. Because preservice teachers will draw on their personal and teaching experiences when constructing their own identities, beliefs, and practices, experiencing more traditional practices and not having the modeling or space for their dialogic and ambitious practices may cause preservice teachers to alter them or abandon them altogether. “Essential to mentoring is an understanding that professional growth is linked to the cultivation of key professional dispositions,” including deliberating classroom practice dilemmas; questioning assumptions and values; attending to institutional and cultural contexts; taking initiative in curricular transformation; and assuming personal responsibility for professional development (Campbell & Brummett, 2007, p.50-51). Because mentors can impact preservice teachers’ perspectives and the extent to which they can or will enact their ambitious practices, the pairing of mentors and preservice teachers is of extreme importance. In Hobson’s (2002) study of preservice teachers, he found the “interviewees indicated that being observed teaching and subsequently receiving feedback and constructive criticism from mentors/supervising teachers was valuable to their development as teachers” (p.8). Additionally, Perry et al. (2006) describe how the mentoring relationship can allow preservice teachers to “develop skills and attitudes that will enable them to engage in intentional, self-regulated learning (SRL) to prepare for life and work in the twenty-first century” (p.238). Because the
classroom, and education in general, is a changing social landscape, reflective practices, cohesive relationships, and good examples of enacting more dialogic teaching practices in the mentorship programs can be highly beneficial in aiding preservice teachers in becoming self-aware in their teaching.

A more recent development in mentorship came with the COVID-19 pandemic. The limited or absence of mentors for preservice teachers amid the context within schools in a pandemic has highlighted a need for mentorship programs, as Lopez (2022) explains that “COVID-19 erased 20 years of [her] mentoring experience in the blink of an eye. The pandemic made us all novices again.” Lopez (2022) asserts that “quality mentoring programs are more necessary now than ever. Attracting and retaining new teachers has gone from being a serious problem to an acute crisis.” Although the pandemic did level the educational community, it also was beneficial in helping both veteran and novice teachers learn to “set small, attainable goals, prioritizing tasks,...and how to set boundaries at work” (Lopez, 2022). Hobson (2002) asserts that previous studies “have shown that learning to teach can be a stressful and threatening experience for student teachers, and a lack of support has been cited as one important reason why many student teachers fail to complete their [Initial Teacher Training] ITT courses” (p.15-160; therefore, mentoring preservice teachers is important in growing the profession. As the landscape of the classroom has changed drastically within the last two years, this is an opportunity to revamp areas that need change to create a classroom of development and progress that all participants require. Although mentorship is not a cure-all for how preservice teachers will draw on their experiences and enact their identities, beliefs, and practices, it is a factor in shaping preservice teachers’ thinking. As it is a requirement for many teacher education programs, there are some suggestions for more successful mentoring experiences.
Suggestions for Successful Mentorship Experiences

There are certain strategies and aspects to mentoring that can lead to more successful experiences for all involved. Lopez (2022) suggests to “pair new teachers with a veteran teacher matching field/grade for frequent, long-term coaching,” that “mentors are paid for their indispensable service and in amounts that recognize their expertise in teaching and coaching,” and that “districts should value their teaching staff and the charge of educating students enough to assure the responsibility for formally training mentors.” Beck & Kosnik (2002) also provide a set of environment guidelines to better ensure a good practicum experience, such as having an “integrated with the campus program” and that it “take place in innovative schools” (p.82).

Stanulis & Russell (1999) found in their study the importance of trust and communication between mentor teacher and preservice teacher was a concern for both and advocate mentoring “where teachers are skilled to scaffold movies to high levels of achievement through critical analysis and improvement of practices” and “mentors themselves…work within a professional support system to learn about helping other teachers learn about their practice” (p.77).

Additionally, mentor “teachers should not be coerced into their role,” be “given adequate preparation,” “should have a critical stance toward their own teaching,” and support preservice teachers by giving them “a considerable amount of feedback” (Beck & Kosnik, 2002, p.82). The needs of preservice teachers were also collected in the study, listing “emotional support,” “a peer relationship”, “collaboration,” “flexibility in teaching content and method,” “feedback,” “a sound approach to teaching and learning,” and “a reasonable workload from and with their mentor teachers” (Beck & Kosnik, 2002, p.82-94).
The Current Educational Policy and Funding for Mentoring

More recently, educational policy has turned to longer term apprenticeship models to support new teachers with the assumption that time in schools with mentors will address the reasons that early career teachers are leaving the field. The attention toward teacher retention is important because of the impact it has on entering preservice teachers and how they will be able to practice teaching and enact their beliefs and practices. The United States Department of Education (USDE) has been vocal about the teacher shortage and issue of teacher retention, and the U.S. Secretary of Education, Miguel, Cardona, has issued a “call to action for states, higher education leaders, and schools to tap federal resources and work together to address the teacher shortage and aid student recovery” (2022). As of March, “nearly half of public schools currently report full- or part-time teaching vacancies” and over half of the schools with vacancies “specifically identified the COVID-19 pandemic as a cause of increased teaching and nonteaching staff vacancies” (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2022). Although the extended apprenticeship may help, it should be noted that more research is needed on the evidence of long-term apprenticeship programs on early career teacher learning and performance and how that would impact teacher career longevity. Moving forward without such research, the U.S. Department of Labor responded by approving “standards that create an easy pathway for states to establish and use apprenticeship funding to support teaching residencies,” allowing “learning the skills on-the-job,” and “increasing the number of teaching residency programs and program capacity” by allowing teacher residents to “serve in schools as substitute teachers” (U.S. Department of Education, 2022). Secretary Cardona has also called for states to “increase the availability of qualified teacher residents to support educators, students, and staff” (U.S. Department of Education, 2022). The calls for states to address the teaching shortage will impact how and what preservice teachers learn about teaching, and although the pandemic contributed to
the shortage, it was, unfortunately, already becoming an issue due to other factors such as pay, student loan debt, and healthcare benefits, among others.

Although mentorship is an evidence-based aspect of teaching practice, its priority in education has waned since the early 2000s. However, the opinion of its importance seems to be returning, as states and higher education institutions have been called by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education to find ways to alleviate their teacher shortages. For instance, Louisiana is “pair[ing] new teachers with experienced mentor teachers for one year” called the Believe and Prepare teacher residency program and partnered with the Louisiana Department of Education (U.S. Department of Education, 2022). The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has “launched a new mentorship program to recruit and retain teachers of color” in which after graduating from their MAT program “they will receive 3 years of mentorship in a unique induction program that includes workshops, trainings, and seminars on issues that face beginning teachers” (U.S. Department of Education, 2022). Dallas College in Texas “will launch the state’s first paid teacher residency apprenticeship in fall 2022 to serve short-term workforce needs of partner school systems” by having “college students…serve as residents 3 days per week and will then either tutor or act as a substitute 1 day per week” in “underserved schools with mentors” (U.S. Department of Education, 2022). New Mexico passed legislation “on March 1, 2022 that provisions $15.5 million in state funding to support teacher residencies, including a $35,000 minimum stipend for residents, $2000 for mentors and principals, and $50,000 for program coordination at colleges of education” (U.S. Department of Education, 2022).

In the state of West Virginia, the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) is preparing to start an even more extreme plan to increase the teacher pipeline. The WVDE announced an effort to retain and attract teachers through the Educator Preparation Taskforce
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(EPT), which identified challenges of concern because, as Dr. Clayton Burch, West Virginia State Superintendent of Schools, shares, “In West Virginia we’re losing 32% of all teachers in the first four years that they come into the profession” (Cork, 2022). An upcoming idea for a solution in West Virginia is having a teacher preparation program beginning in high schools called the Grow Your Own model, in which students can earn “college credit during high school” then “go to college and complete their degree before continuing as a teacher with support from a mentor” (Cork, 2022). The total timeline is forecast to be one year in high school and two years in college. After those three years, the director of the West Virginia Office of Educator Development and Support, Dr. Carla Warren, explains that “they’ll go back out into their communities as a clinical teacher of record where they’ll be able to earn a portion of their salary, they’ll have benefits” (Cork, 2022). She adds “the difference is they’ll have a cohort supervisor who will support them with mentoring, introduction, coaching, modeling, helping them write their lesson plans” (Cork, 2022). Significantly, not only is there little evidence that such a program will do anything to stem the flood of teachers leaving the classroom, it also undermines the importance of teacher knowledge -- limiting their time in college to construct a well-rounded education, and then defying decades of research on teacher education, impacting the types of experiences preservice teachers will have, the content they will learn, and how much of their beliefs and practices they will be able to deliver in the classroom.

Although bringing in more support and funding to help retain and attract teachers is needed, addressing the teacher shortage by lessening requirements for teachers just to get them in the classroom sooner will be a disservice to both the students and the teachers themselves. Inexperience and immaturity in the classroom do not mix well and can cause more problems than they solve. The time it takes for those in education to learn about their field, child psychology,
and effective teaching strategies and experiences are worth the wait to have a competent and knowledgeable teacher in the classroom—every time. However, as evidenced previously, states and universities have had to come up with ways to support teachers in order to increase their retention rates for new teachers. Only time will tell if these solutions will increase teacher attraction and retention for the field. The experiences of preservice teachers and the contexts in which they will learn about their profession can affect their teacher beliefs and identity, as well as their instruction in the classroom.

The Covid-19 Context

A major contextual factor around the world is the Covid-19 pandemic, and its effects in the classroom have been experienced by students and teachers alike. Beginning in the spring of 2020, the educational system that many had previously experienced was radically changed due to the implications of the pandemic, including the safety measures of online learning and later gradual in-person teaching as teachers and students wore masks and vaccines were created and distributed. The introduction of technologically delivering instruction solely online disconcerted teachers and students alike. The transition from in-person to online instruction took place in a very short turnaround. Fortunately, many counties had some technological platforms for teachers to use, but many worked feverishly over the March 13–15th weekend to try to master it so students could be reached and taught until the end of the year, even though some students’ living situations prevented some learning from occurring.

Teaching has a “high level of occupational stress found in the profession” and “has been reported to be one of the most stressful occupations in the world, especially for young, inexperienced teachers” (Kotowski et al., 2021, p.407). The “COVID-19 pandemic brought unprecedented challenges and created new demands and stressors” (Kotowski et al., 2021,
The stressors stemmed from “the abrupt shift, often with little to no training, that induced stress and required more time to prepare” (Kotowski et al., 2021, p.408) as schools were immediately closed by governments to help ease the spread of COVID-19. Reaching every student and acclimating back to in-person learning, sometimes only a couple of days a week with the rest of the days online, was difficult to maneuver, even for veteran teachers. Having very little preparation time in creating online lesson plans “gave birth to the rejection of the contemporary online education experience during this pandemic as effective online education but rather as emergency remote teaching” (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020, p.2-3). Although flexibility of teaching and learning anywhere at any time is seen as a positive aspect, “the speed with which this move to online [wa]s expected to happen [wa]s unprecedented and staggering” (Hodges et al., 2020, p.2). The pandemic definitively altered the context of learning in a classroom. Not surprising, preservice teachers preparing for their in-class teaching experiences were disconcerted as well, watching their mentor teachers attempting to survive these new conditions. The pandemic prevented much of the observational and instructional time normally required for preservice teachers to be adjusted depending on the state’s, and later, each individual county’s, mandates and daily tally of infections, hospitalizations, and deaths.

With all of the numerous factors surrounding the pandemic and its effects on the education system, teachers and preservice teachers were attempting to create similar social environments in their classrooms for dialogic discussions and knowledge-building; however, they found it much more difficult with the online instruction and intermittent in-person interactions with their students. The pandemic definitely forced many teachers and preservice teachers into a survival mode, one in which their previously held beliefs and practices were
questioned and caused teachers to decide whether or not to continue with them, reshape them, or change them altogether.

**Change in School Contexts**

A shift in a preservice teacher’s placement is also a factor that needs to be acknowledged. In this particular study, the participant began her preservice teaching clinical placement in a high school that she had previously attended and graduated from, so she was accustomed to most of the contexts within the school and community. However, due to the pandemic and a shortage of teachers, she was able to apply for and receive a full-time teaching position in a middle school in a different school district while in her clinical placement. The variations in each school district in which she was placed, the grades attending in each school, and the location of the communities of each school were considerable and affected the participant’s pedagogical decisions, beliefs, and practices. As such, the focus of the study evolved from the participant’s value of writing instruction in the classroom to how the contextual discourses surrounding her teaching placements affected how she navigated her teaching beliefs and identity and her instructional practices.

As Chapter 1 has purposefully situated this study within the context of a pandemic and a new placement to a rural school district in a full-time teaching position in a West Virginia school system, Chapter 2 will unpack the constructs of beliefs, practices, and critical pedagogical discourse (CPD), which inform how a preservice teacher responds to the varying contexts of the classroom.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter provides an overview of previous research on teacher beliefs and practices. It also introduces the theoretical framework of sociocultural constructivism, Bakhtin’s theory of dialogism, and Gee’s theory of identity for the study that comprises the main focus of the research.

Where Do Teacher Beliefs Come From?

Kagan (1992) defines teacher belief “as tacit, often unconsciously held assumptions about students, classrooms, and the academic material to be taught” (p.65), although also voices concerns that researching processes that affect change in teacher beliefs need to be further explored. Defining teacher beliefs can be quite “a daunting undertaking” because beliefs “travel in disguise and often under alias” (Pajares, 1992, p.309). The disarray surrounding the definition of teacher beliefs is understandable when acknowledging the factors surrounding the concept of beliefs, with Gao (2014) citing Lortie (1975) who “proposed…teachers’ beliefs originate either from their personal experiences as students, or from their personal life experiences such as family traditions, values, social interaction, community participation, and so forth” (p.41). With the various ways beliefs can originate, develop, and be reshaped, Thompson et al. (2013) define critical pedagogical discourse (CPD) as “individual ways of thinking and being” (p.578). These “threads of internalized dialogue that constitute teachers’ narratives about their current and future teaching selves” (Thompson et al., 2013, p.579), meaning they can be in continuous flux due to how beliefs can emerge and be modified. The experiences of preservice teachers will shape and reshape their internal beliefs about teaching because “when a critical narrative is changed, it changes the person and his or her practice” (Thompson et al., 2013, p.579). CPDs can evolve and be shaped through social spaces and in participants’ talk to construct meanings in that context.
Although CPDs are heavily influenced by past, present, and future experiences, they “are not necessarily consistent with teaching choices, but reflect what individuals believe “should have been done” even if they cannot or will not translate these discourses into action” (Thompson et al., 2013, p.579). The inaction of CPD in preservice teachers’ instructional choices illustrates how CPD can actually act as more of a filter in which they apply their beliefs, knowledge, and context to determine to what extent, if any, they will enact their CPD. As such, “instructional decisions that teachers make influence the learning experiences they plan for students and hence student opportunity to learn” (Rubie-Davies et al., 2011, p.1-2). Teachers’ experiences, discourses, and contexts undoubtedly inform and continually shape their beliefs about all aspects of their classrooms, from students to instructional practices and everything in between. When preservice teachers enter the classroom, they come with varying degrees of a vision of instruction that they have compiled after exposure to social media, hours of coursework, study, and observations of classrooms. They draw on their own experiences in order to create instruction they feel will best represent their goals and aims for students. As preservice teachers engage in their clinical observations and begin teaching, they have already been constructing and forming beliefs that may change as they experience a new context in the classroom. Windschitl, Thompson, Braaten, & Stroupe (2012) explain that in their research of novice science teachers, “popular images portray classroom instruction as independently creative and shaped by artisanal efforts that defy prescription,” which presents the belief that good teaching is a set of behaviors instead of “a product of specialized knowledge and skills” (p. 881). Preservice teachers must be encouraged to focus their beliefs and thinking toward the instruction they feel will best benefit their students and avoid becoming misled that teaching is an idealized version from a textbook, popular media, or their past experiences as students. Because there are so many factors, such as a
reinforcement of the two-worlds pitfall, familiarity of their own K-12 experiences, the level of mentorship, comfort with the content, among others, that affect and heavily influence preservice teachers’ beliefs about what and how to learn to teach (Wang & Odell, 2003, p. 168), there can be gaps in assertions as to why preservice teachers may adhere more so to those contextual influences than aspects of knowledge learned through their college courses. As contexts change, so do experiences, which is continual in a classroom, and preservice teachers will typically experience some challenges to their teacher beliefs. Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann (1985) coined the *two-worlds pitfall*, the distance between ideas from a methods class in university education programs and a school classroom for preservice teachers. Although this pitfall can exist in varying degrees, it is important to acknowledge the impact it can have on preservice teachers and their beliefs as well as enacted practices while in a monitored classroom. Newell, Gingrich, & Johnson (2001) take this a step further, asserting, “Each setting (university, school, etc.) includes socially channeled, goal-directed, tool-mediated actions the effects and causes of which can be studied” and voicing concern that “...some student teachers’ thinking and practices were differentially influenced by the many activity settings they encountered prior to and during [their] teacher education program” (p. 306). Both studies highlight how added contextual factors can contribute to the shaping of preservice teachers’ beliefs and to what extent they appear in their instruction.

The experiences and observations preservice teachers have within the classroom strongly influence their beliefs of what good instruction entails and help them be cognizant of the processes involved in creating effective lessons. Although beliefs are very influential in decisionmaking and can be “perceived as immutable entities that exist beyond individual control or knowledge” (Pajares, 1992, p.309), it must be acknowledged that the context of the preservice
teachers’ teaching environment and the “combination of affect and evaluation” of it can also “determine the energy that teachers will expend on an activity and how they will expend it” (Pajares, 1992, p.310). Preservice teachers need knowledge of the practices occurring within the classroom and that they consist of “multiple activity structures within a class period and the transitions between them. Ideas and discourse from each of these smaller episodes necessarily build upon one another to support a particular learning goal” (Windschitl et al., 2012, p. 883).

One determining factor of preservice teachers enacting their beliefs is whether they feel supported by a community in that context. Thompson et al. (2013) studied how beginning science teachers developed their instruction by setting up two communities—one with support for ambitious teaching practices and one that supported traditional practices in the classroom—to explore how they developed critical pedagogical discourses (CPD) through those different communities. Although their instructional choice may not reflect their CPD, it does not mean they have abandoned it. Acknowledging contextual factors, such as content, students, institutional practices, knowledge, mentor support, and overall comfort in the classroom, among others, can all be filtered through their CPD and influence a preservice teacher's instructional aims and practices. Thompson et al. (2013) found that even when beginning teachers “are exposed to well-designed research-based conceptual frameworks about organizing instruction…, they will either not know how to enact these ideas when they enter a classroom or…disregard these frames and rely on teacher-centered instruction” (p.575).

**Relationship Between Teacher Beliefs and Practices**

It is important to acknowledge the impact contexts can have on preservice teachers and their beliefs as well as enacted practices while in a monitored classroom. Aguirre & Speer (2000) studied secondary mathematics teachers to examine the link between a teacher’s beliefs and
practice, arguing “that beliefs play a central role in a teacher’s selection and prioritization of goals and actions” (p.327). When discussing their findings, Aguirre & Speer (2000) found that as lessons commenced “there were unanticipated instances that provoked changes in goals” and also “provides insight into which beliefs were playing a particularly influential role in the formulation of the new goals” (p.352). Believing in one’s own abilities to perform actions that lead to student learning is at the crux of teaching, so it is crucial for preservice teachers and teachers alike to increase their self-efficacy in order to deliver effective and purposeful instruction to their students. The intricacies of what defines good teaching and the complexity of the teaching itself are additional aspects preservice teachers experience in the context in which they are placed.

Instructional practices are closely tied to beliefs and could also include an expression of a preservice teacher’s personal experiences in the apprenticeship of observation; personal histories of themselves; views about what a teacher or concept is or is not; ideas about what knowledge is valuable to students; and ideas of what is valued by the future settings preservice teachers and students will encounter when they leave the classroom. Samuelowicz (1999) cites Larsson’s (1983) study in which he reported two contrasting conceptions of or beliefs about teaching (A and B). “The essence of conception A was that the teacher should structure and present the content to students. Conception B held that students should be involved in interpreting and structuring the learning material” so students could develop real knowledge (p.17). Larsson (1983) found teachers holding Conception A “exercised strong control over communication in the classroom,” but “there was no congruence between conception and action in the case of the teachers holding Conception B” (Samuelowicz, 1999, p.17). According to Samuelowicz (1999), Larsson (1983) “interpreted this result in terms of external constraints preventing teachers from
acting in accordance with their conceptions” (p.17) and illustrates restricted circumstances and other contexts can affect the degree to which teachers can or will enact their beliefs in their teaching practices. Additionally, Grossman et al.’s (1999) study used activity theory for its “potential to illuminate how teachers’ progression through a series of contexts can mediate their beliefs about teaching and learning and, consequently, their classroom practices” and “account for changes in teachers’ thinking and practice, even when those changes differ from case to case” (p.4). In looking at how and to what extent teachers appropriated pedagogical tools available in the classroom, Grossman et al. (1999) found it “depends on the congruence of a learner’s values, prior experiences, and goals with those of a more experienced or powerful members of a culture” (p.15) and can be affected by the following factors: social context of learning and individual characteristics of the learner (p.19-23). As far as contextual mediators that affect the manners in which teachers develop their conceptions of teaching, Grossman et al. (1999) review important individual characteristics of teachers including apprenticeship of observation, personal goals and expectations, and knowledge and beliefs about content (p.21-23). These studies depict how significant the contexts of the classroom and the teachers and students within it are in how preservice teachers’ practices concerning instruction in the classroom develop.

In order for education to be successful for students, there must be “congruence between the instructors’ espoused beliefs and their actual practices” (Hofer, 2001, p. 373). Feucht & Bendixen (2010) argue that within the educational field, “epistemological beliefs have been found to be related to a variety of factors including reasoning skills, strategy use, cognitive processing, and conceptual change” (p. 40), and currently more of an interest in its impact on teacher practice. Hofer (2001) echoes Kardash and Scholes’ (1996) argument that students should understand that views and truths can change, that there is not always a single correct
answer. Hofer (2001) implies the understanding “that tolerance of multiple viewpoints among a
diverse student body does not foster an inability to weigh competing claims and evidence” and
“to be aware that our explanations of social construction may be interpreted through
epitomological perspectives different from our own” (p. 378). This requires reflection on the
part of the teacher to ensure these measures are being taken and thoughtfully reconsidered in
preparing new lessons and selecting new instructional aims for their students. This practice is
necessary in order to promote a community of learners who are actively engaged in their
learning, as “epistemological thinking is related not only to school learning, but is a critical
component of lifelong learning, in and out of school” (Hofer, 2001, p. 354).

Schraw & Olafson (2006) concentrate on whether teachers’ epistemological worldviews
are more domain-specific or domain-general in relation to their epistemology and practice but
found “inconsistencies between teachers’ stated beliefs and teaching practices” (p. 80) and
“adaptability of beliefs within and across academic domains” (p. 82). Additionally, they found
evidence of “constructs in cognitive psychology, teachable cognitive skills, and beliefs such as
self-efficacy to learn and goal orientations across domains,” allowing for the considerations that
“teachers’ domains are related to beliefs about process rather than beliefs about content” (Schraw
& Olafson, 2006, p. 82), learning processes such as inquiry, problem-solving, and peer
collaboration. Teacher beliefs and teacher practice are inextricably linked; it is just the extent to
which that can vary. If teachers believe in a certain process of attaining knowledge, then they can
enact practices in the classroom to align with that belief. The question becomes whether those
beliefs can change over time, and honestly, that is as variable as the uniqueness of each
individual teacher. For some, they may remain with a more traditional belief that knowledge
does not change and learning is teacher-centered, whereas other teachers may be somewhere
within the contextualist and relativist views of instructional beliefs and practices changing as well as the source of knowledge. This accords with Hammer & Elby (2002) who argue that “developing a more sophisticated epistemology requires changing beliefs” (p. 2), which encompasses both teachers and students.

**Dialogic Teaching Practices**

Within any social interaction there are roles for participants, and the same is ultimately true of the classroom. Dialogue can shape both language and thought, and conversational turns can illustrate preservice teachers’ beliefs about teacher-student relationships and the instructional practices. A preservice teacher’s choice to implement either more ambitious dialogic instruction with democratic discussion strategies or more teacher-controlled comprehension checks in the classroom can be further explored through Bakhtin’s (1981; 1986) theory of dialogism.

In addition to the classroom contexts, social contexts and identities associated with each participant in the classroom are also present and an intricate part of the social practice of education. The quintessential classroom consists of the roles and identities of teacher and student, with the teacher historically having a more authoritarian position in that space. There is a boundary present between the two roles; however, other factors affect the mediation of that boundary. The social context of the classroom can heavily influence how well preservice teachers can engage in developing relationships and the extent to which they can implement their CPD. Nystrand (1997) explains that dichotomizing the roles and boundaries of teachers and students adversely affects the creation of an encouraging learning environment. Instead, focus should be on establishing relationships with students so that the basis becomes the discussion among all members, students and teachers alike, in order to allow construction of knowledge in the classroom.
The social environment that is created can impact the scope of dialogic space that is present. Dialogism is described by Bakhtin as grasping human behavior through the participants’ use of language and interaction and consists of an utterance, a reply, and a relation between the two (Holquist, 2000, p. 15). A dialogic stance in the classroom is “a function of how patterns of talk may open up discourse space for exploration and varied opinions, and how teacher and student decision-making about content is presented and discussed” (Boyd & Markarian, 2015, p. 273). A staple of a dialogic classroom is the value and respect the participants are granted and the meaning and understanding that is co-created. “The dialogue occurs along and across this boundary as the students encode their personal and communal experiences in academic genres, and reflect on these experiences…” (Rule, 2009, p.937). As such, the roles of students and teachers, as well as preservice teachers, can be an open-ended engagement in which the teacher can become a learner in the world of students and their communities, one where there is an atmosphere of trust, openness, and responsibility (Rule, 2009, p. 938). The elements of community and understanding are paramount in creating this type of environment, and other influences that can determine to which degree the dialogic stance toward writing and the historical perception of the roles of student teacher and student writer are altered and either accepted or dismissed.

Growth in ability and knowledge is gained through differences of opinion, even if it reinforces previously held beliefs. It is difficult not to acknowledge a dialogic perspective within a classroom because that type of instruction “highlights the role that intersecting multiple voices play in individuals’ learning and the development of their understandings” (Nystrand, 1997, p. 10). Nystrand (1997) contends that rather than fixating on “listless classrooms [that] are sometimes attributed to problems of motivation, methods, and curriculum,” pitting teacher versus
student, to instead move toward “understanding that more basic than either teacher or student is the relationship between them” (p. 6). In classrooms, Nystrand (1997) advocates for more probing interactions where the talk resembles more conversation or discussion than recitation, “students’ [or teachers’] oral presentation of previously learned material” (p. 5). The probing interactions include “validating students’ contributions to learning and understanding,” one in which teachers take their students seriously (Nystrand, 1997, p. 7). Nystrand (1997) explains Bakhtin’s view of language and discourse of context as continually shaped by “interacting forces of stability and change” (p. 12) but can “result in mutual understandings worked out through class interaction” (p. 21) because the “effectiveness of instructional discourse is a matter of the quality of teacher-student interactions and the extent to which students are assigned challenging and serious epistemic roles requiring them to think, interpret, and generate new understandings” (p. 7). Allowing preservice teachers to see this type of dialogic interaction between teachers and students prior to their experience in the classroom can aid preservice teachers in learning how to help students through their struggles and create lessons with more insight of various social and historical contexts to make their instruction more efficacious.

It is imperative to acknowledge that “dialogic teaching is not defined by discourse structure so much as by discourse function” (Boyd & Markarian, 2015, p.273). The classification of a dialogic teaching stance revolves around talk. Boyd & Markarian (2015) list three aspects to determine if instructional stances are dialogic: (a) patterns of talk; (b) agenda setting in talk; and (c) contingent practices and inter-animation of ideas (p.273). The aspects can be measured in the lesson to assess the degree to which it is a dialogic classroom. As mentioned earlier, the removal of the boundaries of teacher and student is important in creating dialogic classrooms because a teacher within them “listens, leads and follows, responds and directs as he or she employs a
repertoire of talk patterns across varied instructional approaches” (p.273). There is more of a reciprocal relationship among the participants in the classroom. Many will view open questions as a marker of dialogic classrooms when that may not actually be the case. Instead of only looking at the surface features instead of the entire discursive act, dialogic teaching “engages multiple voices and perspectives across time, and is related to the language environment as a whole” (p.274). When teachers employ recitation and the IRE (initiate, response, evaluate) strategies in the classroom, then dialogue is controlled by the teacher and instruction becomes focused on prescribed answers that are an “accurate transmission of information” (Nystrand, 1997, p.9) and becomes more monologic in nature. Teachers utilizing recitation “often change topics abruptly as soon as they are satisfied with students’ mastery of a particular point and…follow up student responses mostly to evaluate them, not elaborate student ideas” (Nystrand, 1997, p.11). Because the interaction is viewed as a discussion, teachers believe that they are practicing dialogism when the practice actually is far more monologic.

**Classroom Interaction and the Role of Reciprocity**

Dialogism in the classroom is dependent upon two elements of equal importance: community and understanding. A dialogic stance in the classroom is “a function of how patterns of talk may open up discourse space for exploration and varied opinions, and how teacher and student decision-making about content is presented and discussed” (Boyd & Markarian, 2015, p. 273), which is intimately connected to teacher beliefs and practices. In order for preservice teachers to create a space in which students’ writing can be strengthened and evolve through understanding, it must also be perceived as a safe community by students. Alexander’s (2008) work suggests building relationships among participants through reciprocity of respect and learning tasks together and asserts that “dialogic teaching harnesses the power of talk to engage children, stimulate and extend their thinking, and advance their learning and understanding”
There is a reciprocity of roles within dialogism, which is why individual acts of writing, reading, and learning are considered social; “each is premised on the appropriate and respective acts by reciprocal others” (Nystrand, 1997, p. 10). These reciprocal social interactions of “what we think and how we understand our experience always depends on how we respond to others at the same time that we anticipate their responses” (Nystrand, 1997, p. 11). The reciprocity between students and preservice teachers and the mentor teacher in the classroom occurs even when it seems students are doing individual writing, as preservice teachers, peers, and mentor teachers respond to those individual acts in various ways as well. Each participant plays a social role, and as teachers and preservice teachers, “the roles we establish...and the interactions we undertake with our students...set out the possibilities for meaning in our classes and, in this way, the context of learning” (Nystrand, 1997, p. 9). When the classroom environment is viewed and sustained as safe, then it will encourage students and preservice teachers to engage in thoughtful and fruitful conversations about reading and writing concepts and build knowledge of those, and possibly additional, concepts. Newell, Bloome, & Hirvela (2015) concur that the teaching of writing “involves social relationships among the teacher and students” (p. 8). The social relationships between preservice teachers, mentor teachers, and students in the classroom should include “shared ways of thinking, a set of shared values and goals,...social relationships and responsibilities between [students],...constructions of time and space that contextualized in...writing, shared definitions of knowledge, and a shared language” (Newell et al., 2015, p. 8). The modeling of dialogic talk in the classroom is echoed by Boyd & Markian (2015) who contend that “studies show that teacher talk directly influences what classroom talk looks like and prescribe open questions and supportive uptake as recommended instructional practice” (p. 275). The activities of sharing dialogue, definitions of knowledge, and language together with
the modeling of dialogic talk that allows the reciprocity to occur between the roles of teacher and student is a great example of the context for successful writing instruction that preservice teachers need to experience and use as a resource to avoid restricting themselves to one role and, in turn, restricting their CPD.

**Significance to My Study**

It is of interest to look at how preservice teachers are positioning themselves in the classroom and the identity and practices they are enacting because of their beliefs. How preservice teachers view themselves in the classroom as well as their backgrounds are very influential aspects to determine to what extent they are motivated to present and embrace their beliefs and instructional practices. Taylor, Bougie, & Caouette (2003) assert that “The articulation of a personal identity requires commerce with one’s collective identity whereby collective identity serves the role of a stable template against which the individual can articulate a personal identity” (p. 197). As such, preservice teachers can change aspects of their teaching identities and writing beliefs and practices depending on their experiences in the shared norms, practices, and expectations that have been established within that classroom by the mentor teacher. Gee (2000) also speaks to the multiple subject positions or identities in his work, arguing that “all people have multiple identities connected not to their “internal states” but to their performance in society” (p. 99). Within a classroom, a preservice teacher may have been timid about expressing their writing beliefs and practices, but after interacting with students and mentor teachers, there is a stronger possibility preservice teachers could become more confident in their teacher identity and instruction.

**Theoretical Framework**

In the theoretical framework section, I explain how the theories informed my study. Because my study sought to explore ways preservice teachers enact their beliefs and dialogic
instructional practices in the midst of changing contexts, I situated this study within the social constructivism theory. In this theory, I began toward an understanding of how preservice teachers navigate discourses about writing instruction when given the added contexts of a pandemic and online education. I started with the social constructivist theory as teaching is a social practice due to the various interactions within the practice. The idea of social interactions being influenced by social and cultural contexts voiced by Vygotsky (1962) explains how important those contexts are to how social practices are shaped. How preservice teachers understand themselves in the social context of the classroom is an important aspect in explaining how and to what extent they enact their beliefs and instructional practices. The discourse in the classroom among the participants can clarify the understanding of their identities. Through Gee’s (2014) identity theory, I delve into how preservice teachers may execute their beliefs and instructional practices in their changing sociocultural contexts. A sociocultural context can “consist of actors, place (space), time, and objects present (or referred to) during interaction” (Green & Gee, 1998, p. 34). Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop (2004) concur, remarking that identity “develops during one’s whole life” (p. 107), is “an ongoing process” (p. 108) of interpretation and re-interpretation of experiences, and “an answer to the recurrent question: “Who am I at this moment?”” (p. 108). Understanding this concept leads to exploring how the function of language within social interactions can shape and affect one’s social and cultural experiences, identities, and beliefs.

Due to the significance of language in the social environment of a classroom, it led me toward Mikhail Bakhtin’s (1981; 1986) concept of the chains of communication and function of and relationship among those utterances. Chains of communication can be threads of dialogue or verbal or nonverbal reactions within interactions that serve to construct meaning for the listener.
and speaker, as well as possibly illustrate their viewpoints and ideas. Bakhtin (1986) asserts “any utterance…has…an absolute beginning and an absolute end; its beginning is preceded by the utterances of others, and its end is followed by the utterances of others” (p.72).

The continuation of those utterances and the situated meanings within them allowed a fuller understanding of the study of how a preservice teacher could identify, react, and choose the instructional beliefs and practices for lessons in the midst of changing contexts of preservice teacher placement and a full-time position in another school during a pandemic.

The following sections feature pieces of the theoretical framework that draws from sociocultural constructionism/constructivism, Bakhtin’s Theory of Language (1981; 1986) and Gee’s (2000; 2014) theory of identity and Discourses. After defining and explaining each conceptual part, I will connect each to the intention of my study.

**Social Constructivism**

Due to the social nature of the classroom, Bakhtin’s dialogic theory, and Gee’s perception of identity, Vygotsky’s concept of the framework of social constructivism is a highly effective method viewing teaching because of the incorporation of collaboration and social interaction among students is an integral part of learning. “Social constructivism is based on the social interactions [of] a student in the classroom along with a personal critical thinking process” (Powell & Kalina, 2009, p. 243). According to Shabani, Khatib, & Ebadi (2010), Vygotsky “indicates that development cannot be separated from its social and cultural context” (p. 237). Everything students know and experience, whether from home, school, or anywhere they have been, has contributed to their development of learning and knowledge. All of Vygotsky’s research involved not only social constructivism and language development, but also asserting cognitive dialogue, the zone of proximal development, social interaction, culture, and inner
speech. His well-known theory, the zone of proximal development (ZPD), describes “the current or actual level of development of the learner and the next level attainable through the use of mediating semiotic and environmental tools and capable adult or peer facilitation” (Shabani, Khatib, & Ebadi, 2010, p. 238). As children learn new concepts on their own, with the assistance and scaffolding of their teacher, their zone grows and they can do and learn more. Although students will begin with some knowledge of their own history, as tasks become more difficult, they will try the task themselves but can also increase their learning with scaffolding from teachers and fellow students through dialogue toward eventual internalization of that knowledge. However, with the individuality of each student, learning will occur at different times, “confirm[ing] Vygotsky’s notion that learning is inherently social and embedded in a particular cultural setting” according to Powell & Kalina (2009) (as cited in Woolfolk, 2004, p. 326.) In this framework, it is believed that students need to understand themselves and others around them before they learn the curriculum, so a teacher who embraces the interaction and knowledge-building that dialogism can offer, create, and maintain social interactions, which will, in turn, instill more learning in the classroom. Understanding one another is also an aspect of Gee’s (2014) D/discourse because we “see interactive communication through the lens of socially meaningful identities”, which “are lived and transformed in history via social interactions among responsive bodies and minds” (p. 25). People view speakers’ or writers’ language, bodies, and other things in the world, essentially context, to negotiate social identities for those speakers and writers. Students sharing their writing with their peers and the teacher will be recognized as some identity, depending on the structure and topic of the writing. Similarly, language is emphasized by Vygotsky, as he “stated that language enhances learning and that it precedes knowledge or thinking” (Powell & Kalina, 2009, p. 245), so it is vital that effective dialogue and
communication within the classroom occurs. In fact, “both Bakhtin and Vygotsky emphasize social factors--and thus the radical significance of education--in the child’s coming to consciousness, because both assume that thought is inner speech” and that “learning to talk is really learning to think” (Holquist, 2002, p. 80).

**Bakhtin’s Dialogic Theory**

To more fully understand the relationship of identity and language, a discussion of Bakhtin’s theory of dialogism is essential. Bakhtin’s philosophy toward knowledge rests in the epistemology of dialogism, which seeks “to grasp human behavior through the use humans make of language” (Holquist, 2002, p. 15). It consists of an utterance, a reply, and a relation between the two and “is based on the primacy of the social and the assumption that all meaning is achieved by struggle” (Holquist, 2002, p. 39). An utterance is active, where “every aspect of it is a give-and-take between the local need of a particular speaker to communicate a specific meaning, and the global requirements of language as a generalizing system” (Holquist, 2002, p. 60). An utterance is not limited to language or texts, but also includes multiple modalities, using multiple literacies. An utterance can be a response to a preceding utterance, expressing the turntaking that is an essential part of dialogue, but is not always the only response. Even what is not said is interpreted as an utterance; silence is, in fact, still an active response. The utterance can resolve a situation or extend it further as we talk and enact our values within our speech, depending on how it is expressed. They serve as a marker of where we are in a particular time and place, not just physically but also socio-culturally, politically, and historically, and determine in what ways we will respond to them.

Nystrand (1997) also places an emphasis on dialogism, calling it more than a theory of interaction because “it offers insights into human interaction as a foundation of comprehension,
meaning, and interpretation” (p. 10). Discourse is dialogic because “it is continually structured by tension, even conflict, between the conversants, between self and other, as one voice “refracts” another” (Nystrand, 1997, p. 8). Dialogism requires the acknowledgement of otherness, recognizing that there is always more than one actor within the dialogic scenarios. The terms self and other within dialogism only serve as a definition of a relation of simultaneity between the two “to help us understand how other relationships work” (Holquist, 2002, p. 19). Due to these dual aspects, it must be understood that all meaning is relative because it “comes about only as a result of the relation between two bodies occupying simultaneous but different space” (Holquist, 2002, p. 21). In this sense, dialogism explains and argues that meanings are relative due to the participants or entities, because self, or I, and other could be comprised of not only individuals, but ideas or events, ones which will continually change within each communication and cause multiple meanings of those utterances to occur and be interpreted. A person need not be an active participant as either a self or other, but simply occupying that space at that time relegates that he or she is one of the two in that encounter. The places of these associations are also affected by not only physicality, but also the participant’s regard for the world and of each other’s perceptions because simply being is viewed as an event. In fact, according to Bakhtin, one is always co-being because the events are always being shared. We tend to see the world in a certain way, and although we recognize others may not view it the same, we sometimes neglect to take the time to understand the reasons for those differences or realize the multifaceted influences and experiences that accompany each of us. People are different and always changing, so our perceptions of I and other shift as well. I is often used and defined as a pronoun for ourselves; however, in dialogism, Bakhtin gives it a more diverse definition other than a powerful identity of a person. Instead, I exemplifies anything that can
have a central point, including language itself, so words could be the selves within that context, with each providing a mechanism for differentiating and giving order to the chaos of lived experience. Although we may not see all that is consolidating to create the I, we know that existence embodies many shared events, and the I “is the needle that stitches the abstraction of language to the particularity of lived experience” (Holquist, 2002, p. 28). Lived experiences culminate within the I and interpretation of any communication will be determined and judged by the aspects of those experiences. The self never stops in time or can be fixed in space as it has no meaning in itself because it exists in relation to other, or dialogue. “The other is always perceived in terms that are specified socially and historically, and …dialogism’s primary thrust is always in the direction of historical and social specificity” (Holquist, 2002, p. 32). Bakhtin stresses how anything anyone, self or other, thinks or states is really “bits and pieces of text that have circulated and recirculated inside the workings of various texts, social groups, and institutions” (Gee, 2000, p. 114). The meaning of words is then subject to one’s own individual appropriation of those words within conversations and interactions. Acknowledging such a concept is poignant when making connections to how dialogue is used to recognize and possibly determine identity and Discourses of others and ourselves.

Dialogism in the classroom is dependent upon two elements of equal importance: community and understanding. A dialogic stance in the classroom is “a function of how patterns of talk may open up discourse space for exploration and varied opinions, and how teacher and student decision-making about content is presented and discussed” (Boyd & Markarian, 2015, p. 273), which is intimately connected to epistemology and teacher goals. In order for teachers or student teachers to create a space in which students’ reading and writing identities can be strengthened and evolve through understanding, it must also be perceived as a safe community by students. There is an added layer for preservice teachers in establishing such a safe space in
the classroom because typically the mentor teacher has had more time to create it. With preservice teachers entering the classroom, this factor needs to be acknowledged to help them in creating a relationship and overall secure environment with students as well. Alexander’s (2008) work suggests building relationships among participants through reciprocity of respect and learning tasks together and asserts that “dialogic teaching harnesses the power of talk to engage children, stimulate and extend their thinking, and advance their learning and understanding” (p. 185). There is a reciprocity of roles within dialogism, which is why individual acts of writing, reading, and learning are considered social; “each is premised on the appropriate and respective acts by reciprocal others” (Nystrand, 1997, p. 10). These reciprocal social interactions of “what we think and how we understand our experience always depends on how we respond to others at the same time that we anticipate their responses” (Nystrand, 1997, p. 11). The reciprocity between students and teachers in the classroom occurs even when it seems students are doing individual writing and reading activities as teachers and peers respond to those individual acts in various ways as well. Each participant plays a social role, and as teachers, “the roles we establish...and the interactions we undertake with our students...set out the possibilities for meaning in our classes and, in this way, the context of learning” (Nystrand, 1997, p. 9). When the classroom environment is viewed and sustained as safe, then it will encourage students and teachers to engage in thoughtful and fruitful conversations about concepts and build knowledge of those concepts. Newell, Bloome, & Hirvela (2015) concur that the teaching of writing “involves social relationships among the teacher and students” (p. 8). The social relationships in the classroom should include “shared ways of thinking, a set of shared values and goals,...social relationships and responsibilities between [students].... constructions of time and space that contextualized in...writing, shared definitions of knowledge, and a shared language” (Newell et al., 2015, p. 8). The modeling of dialogic talk in the classroom is echoed by Boyd & Markian
(2015) who contend that “studies show that teacher talk directly influences what classroom talk looks like and prescribe open questions and supportive uptake as recommended instructional practice” (p. 275).

With the understanding that dialogic instruction involves various types and functions of talk, Alexander (2008) offers five principles of dialogic teaching: collective; reciprocal; supportive; cumulative; purposeful (p. 185). Within the collective aspect, both students and teachers address learning tasks together. This would be the turn-taking observed during speaking interactions where questions are asked about the concept being introduced. The reciprocal element includes teachers and students listening to each other, sharing ideas, and acknowledging different positions. It could look like group work, peer editing, debates, Socratic seminars, or any other of the variety of discussion activities teachers may institute. The supportive element occurs when “children articulate their ideas freely, without fear of embarrassment over “wrong” answers, help[ing] each other reach common understandings” (Alexander, 2008, p. 185). It can be difficult to manage this supportive aspect, so it is vital that the expectations for classroom etiquette are established from the beginning and consistently maintained, which includes introducing, reviewing, and modeling open-mindedness and respectful behavior, questions, and responses with students. Therefore, the example the teacher illustrates for students and their trust in the teacher and classroom environment foregrounds how successful dialogic instruction and talk can be in attaining the teacher’s goals. The next element, cumulative, “teachers and students together build on their own and each other’s ideas and chain them into coherent lines of thinking and enquiry” (Alexander, 2008, p. 185). Within the dialogue, cumulative instances can occur within whole group conversations where perhaps smaller groups come together to present their ideas and building of knowledge and integrate that understanding with the other groups’ responses. With the purposeful aspect, the teacher plans and promotes dialogic teaching with
specific goals for the students. Teachers’ epistemology and intentions for their instruction drive the reasoning for the dialogic method in the first place. Because teachers are engaged in discussion with students, they are able to see their avenues of thinking and determine if students are moving toward the understanding teachers believe necessary to reach the established goals. It is critical to realize that although some of these aspects are also viewed as surface features of dialogic teaching, the function of the talk and the engagement of students is necessary to maintain the dialogic label.

Alexander (2008) admits that the last two characteristics of cumulative and purposeful talk tend to be the most elusive within the classroom, partly because the challenge lies in how well the community of learners is thread together in the class expectations of dialogic learning. The community within the classroom is created through the relationships between teachers and students and mediated through the pedagogy that is developed by teacher epistemology. The accumulation of knowledge and the purpose of the lesson intertwine with these two aspects, working to clarify teacher epistemology. The planning of the lesson will undoubtedly include a combination of content objectives as well as in-the-moment responses to where the discussion leads, with the teacher at the helm to steer the conversation where it may need to go next in order to accomplish the objective(s). Boyd & Markarian’s (2015) importance of the function of dialogue in the classroom serves to reflect Alexander (2008) and his belief in avoidance of asking questions for sought-after answers instead of asking more open questions in order to stir and maintain discussion among students and the teacher, looking deliberately at the “third-turn move--that is after the student’s response to the teacher question--[which] signals a teacher’s instructional stance and what he or she expects from students” (p. 277). Reacting with a judgmental response of dismissing a student inquiry or stance or even stating the response is
correct shuts down dialogue, which shows the interaction is not dialogic and student histories and identities are halted and reshaped, possibly negatively. However, if teachers respond with questions for students about their response in a constructive way, then dialogue continues, students realize they will be given space to tease out their responses and thinking, and a dialogic stance has been illustrated and sustained. Matusov (2007) concurs with Alexander’s (2008) characteristics, arguing, “successful establishment of internally persuasive classroom discourse creates the conditions necessary for the students to develop trust in their teacher and for the teacher to develop trust in the students” (p. 234). This development of trust stems from the teachers creating a supportive environment in which students freely and safely share ideas, help each other reach understanding, and acknowledge their teacher has a purpose for such knowledge-building.

**Identities**

Gee (2014) asserts two levels of identity: social distance (distinguishing between “intimates, associates, and strangers” (p. 22) and socially significant kinds of people (“identities enacted and recognized by different social groups and social and cultural formations in society” (p. 23). These levels of identity are based on communication and are a type of performance. The interactivity needed to communicate identity is what Gee (2014) terms as “Discourse” (p. 24). Although discourse is typically interpreted as a chain of words that construct meaning, Gee (2014) introduces Big ‘D’ Discourse, which occurs between two communicating people “enacting and recognizing socially significant identities...because various...social groups construct, construe, use, negotiate, contest, and transform them in the world and in history” (p. 25). Essentially, the identity of a teacher and a student include other Discourses that are communicating simultaneously with the teacher and student, such as Discourses about their
gender, race, and interests, among others. These Discourses may not be something one is born with, but they are given power through the discourse or dialogue of others. “The process through which this power works is recognition, that is, the fact that rational individuals recognize” the student as a writer, defining a rational person as one who prescribes identity on their own and is “not “forced” to by ritual, tradition, laws, rules, or institutional authority” (Gee, 2000, p. 103).

These socially meaningful identities are living and transforming currently and have been doing so through history as well because they are sustained through discourse and dialogue, depending on how actively one pursues a Discourse. However, if a preservice teacher engages in talk and actions that are not like that of a teacher, then the Discourse of teacher and attached social interactions can disappear and cause others to not view the preservice teacher as a teacher, whether it is wanted or not. If students have adapted to the social context of the classroom with the preservice teacher, mentor teacher, and peers and view the preservice teacher as an outsider, then it could possibly hinder their identity as a teacher. If handled well by the mentor teacher in introducing the preservice teacher and, in essence, giving consent to the preservice teacher to come into their social context, then the students could react in a much more inclusive way and accept another voice for their instruction. Therefore, the establishment of a preservice teacher’s identity is heavily influenced by the dialogic interactions in Bakhtin’s theory within the classroom.

These Discourses can be built not only with languages but other symbols, tools, and objects in certain places at certain times. In fact, Discourses “can be big or little, [have] no end to them, come and go in history, [and are] rooted in conventions that allow us for a time and place to enact and recognize being certain socially significant socio-historical types of people” (Gee,
2014, p. 26). In order to build a Discourse, one must “engage in ways of thinking, acting, interacting, valuing, feeling, and believing that are characteristic of [that Discourse]” (Gee, 2014, p. 45). Enacting Discourses includes noting when words allude to other types of texts or someone’s words relating to themes, debates, or motifs that are of focus and recognized within a social group. People also enact different Discourses in various places and times, such as an identity within a classroom and another when among family or friends. These socially-situated identities and practices occur in the present and help to further create other Discourses. In the socially-situated context of a school, teachers and students could inherit expectations of the class environment and an identity and practice; however, through social interactions and experiences, the Discourse for that context at that point in time can be revealed and possibly reshaped by the participants as positions that are traditionally found in that context can change. Harre’s (2003) positioning theory argues “‘Positions’ exist as patterns of beliefs in the members of a relatively coherent speech community” and “are social in the sense that the relevant beliefs of each member are similar to those of every other” (p. 4). The psychology surrounding the position theory distinguishes between two actions: logically possible and socially possible, “for any social actor at any moment in the flux of social life” (Harre, 2003, p. 4-5); however, the line between the two is more blurred than it may appear because “positioning someone, even if it is oneself, affects the repertoire of acts one has access to” (Harre, 2003, p. 5). Within the classroom, the student is often the one positioned as a learner by embracing their histories and creating and reshaping an identity through that position. In exploring the shaping of identities and acknowledging students’ identities, Apter (2003) discusses motivational orientations in the positioning theory and suggests thinking about motivation “in terms of the orientation of individual people to the world about them” (p. 15). How preservice teachers view themselves in
the classroom as well as their backgrounds are very influential aspects to determine to what extent they enact their instructional beliefs and practices. Preservice teachers are drawing not only on their experience as a student, but beginning to represent themselves in the Discourse of a teacher, shaped by the expectations of not only the university but the school site as well. Students in the classroom may likely have a front seat to this transformation from the beginning of the student teacher’s time in their classroom through the end. It is because, as Gee (2005, 2008) defines Discourses as “forms of life” or “ways of being in the world” (Collin, 2012, p. 77), the teachers and students within the classroom are then prompted by the language, objects, symbols, and practices occurring in that setting to enact an identity based on that Discourse. Collin (2012) asserts that Gee’s theory “offers ways of seeing how diverse social actors use language to embody different identities, [as well as] how communicants build situations through performing Discourses” (p. 77). These Discourses “are concerned with the ways actors use language to take on social identities and mediate situations” (Collin, 2012, p. 78). The class environment, intentional or not, is a social platform in which participants are given the opportunity to enact an identity through a Discourse because there will be different backgrounds and resources informing, engaging, and communicating within and among the preservice teacher and students in the classroom. The students and preservice teacher in the class discourse will need to allow for a supportive learning context in order for these Discourses to be acknowledged, discussed, and perhaps changed as dialogue is fostered.

Not only are preservice teachers engaging new Discourses upon entering the classrooms in which they are placed, there are additional Discourses they encounter, the university they attend. Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann (1985) coined the two-worlds pitfall, the distance between
ideas from a methods class in university education programs and a school classroom for preservice teachers. The two-world pitfall coincides with Gee’s (2014) contention that Discourses can include multiple identities and asserts the concept of socially-situated identities, arguing his use of the word identity explains “the multiple identities we take on in different practices and contexts” (p. 58). The language and interaction occurring within situated meanings constitute the importance of context in identity. Discourses are perceived as interactive communication through socially meaningful identities; however, Discourses are comparable to activity settings in education, which are defined as “a person’s frameworks for thinking [that] are developed through problem-solving action [and] carried out in specific settings whose social structures have been developed through historical, culturally grounded actions” (Grossman, Smagorinsky, & Valencia, 1999, p. 4). Since the social culture of the American educational system and the university are both navigated by preservice teachers, Newell, Gingrich, & Johnson (2001) nestle the two-worlds pitfall in the activity settings in which student teachers learn to teach, arguing, “Each setting (university, school, etc.) includes socially channeled, goal-directed, tool-mediated actions the effects and causes of [them]” (p. 306). Additionally, Grossman, Smagorinsky, & Valencia (1999) articulate that “the specific images of what professional responsibilities entail or what it means to be a competent teacher may differ dramatically in different settings” (p. 5). Faculty and administrators from the university and the school site, as well as the students in the classroom, hold beliefs about how someone should teach. Those “beliefs help shape how they interact with and support beginning teachers” (Grossman, Smagorinsky, & Valencia, 1999, p. 5). Acknowledgement is needed from all participants of the various expectations, definitions, and perceptions of preservice teachers and
the effect they can have on what beliefs and instructional practices they choose to share in the classroom.

Chapter 3: Methodology
Qualitative Research

This was a qualitative study because it “involve[d] focusing on the cultural, every day, and situated aspects of human thinking, learning, knowing, acting, and ways of understanding ourselves as persons, and it [wa]s opposed to “technified” approaches to the study of human lives” (Brinkman & Kvale, 2015, p. 15). As the study was situated in a classroom and focuses on the preservice teacher, it was recognized that the setting of the classroom is intended to create a culture that encompassed Brinkman & Kvale’s (2015) definition of a qualitative study. This qualitative study was guided by the following question:

1. How does a preservice teacher use their beliefs and identity about instruction amid changing contextual discourses in a pandemic?

Qualitative scholars have suggested the criteria for goodness should be “tied to specific theories, paradigms, or qualitative communities,” and “Creswell (2007) specifically heeded this call by offering a unique set of evaluative criteria for...five different qualitative areas--narrative, phenomenological, grounded theory, ethnographic research, and case study research” (Tracy, 2010, p. 839). There are conceptualization differences between quantitative and qualitative, and the “conceptual discrimination of qualitative ends from means provides an expansive or “big tent” (Denzin, 2008) structure for qualitative quality while still celebrating the complex differences amongst various paradigms” (Tracy, 2010, p. 839). Because qualitative research classified and interpreted material “to make statements about implicit and explicit dimensions and structures of meaning-making in the material and what is represented in it” (Flick, 2014, p. 5), I felt this type of study would be more beneficial to further understanding and exploring of secondary preservice teachers navigating writing and writing instruction within the classroom.
In a qualitative approach, I made my knowledge claims based on a constructivist perspective. Constructivism assumes “reality is viewed as socially and societally embedded and existing within the mind. This reality is fluid and changing, and knowledge is constructed jointly in interaction by the researcher and researched through consensus” (Grbich, 2013, p. 7). Additionally, constructivists believe “the inquirer must elucidate the process of the meaning construction and clarify what and how meanings are embodied in the language and actions of social actors” (Schwandt, 1998, p. 222). The setting of a classroom with multiple participants situated together was an atmosphere in which the interactions will be in a state of constant change. As data was collected and analyzed, the process of meaning making became fluid and included multiple factors and influences as is the context of the study. Constructivists “are concerned above all with the production and organization of differences” (Schwandt, 1998, p. 236), which is why the data analysis began with chronological organization but the analysis did not develop linearly.

Constructivism implies “we continually test and modify these constructions in light of new experience” (Schwandt, 1998, p. 237), which lent itself well to interpreting and exploring the research questions in that context. Throughout the study, a constructivist perspective included all of the recorded interactions and forms of data that “can be evaluated for their “fit” with the data and information they encompass; the extent to which they “work,” that is, provide a credible level of understanding; and the extent to which they have “relevance” and are “modifiable” (Guba & Lincoln as cited in Schwandt, 1998, p. 243). Taking into account such considerations, I felt the constructive perception was the best way to interpret the data for this study.

**Case Study as Method**

The case study approach, according to Stake (1995) and Yin (2003), is based on the constructivist paradigm, “which recognizes the importance of the subjective human creation of
meaning, but doesn’t reject outright some notion of objectivity” (Miller & Crabtree as cited in Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 545). An advantage of utilizing a case study approach is “the close collaboration between researcher and participant, while enabling participants to tell their stories” (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 545). Additionally, the how and why questions lend themselves to a case study approach “because such questions deal with the operational links needing to be traced over time” (Yin, 2003, p. 9). A case study is preferred in examining contemporary events, with the added sources of evidence of “direct observation of the events being studied and interviews of the persons involved in the events” (Yin, 2003, p. 11). Although case studies come under scrutiny because they may “provide little basis for scientific generalization,” case studies “are generalizable to theoretical propositions” rather than for whole populations (Yin, 2003, p. 15). In looking at theoretical propositions, the scope of a case study includes investigating a phenomenon within its real-life context, while also coping with many more variables than data points, a multitude of sources of evidence, and “benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis” (Yin, 2003, p. 18).

In using a case study approach, I conceded my epistemological beliefs informed my theoretical perspective and interpretation of the research (Crotty, 2015, p. 8). The epistemology of constructivism is defined by Crotty (2015) as “truth, or meaning, comes into existence in and out of our engagement with the realities of the world” (p. 8). Although it is clear that “different people may construct meaning in different ways, even in relation to the same phenomenon,” this is true in varying eras and cultures as well (Crotty, 2015, p. 9). The actions of people and the interactions they have with one another help influence their social realities, as the meaning of those realities is constructed depending on the historical experiences and social norms within a local context. Even though the meaning is being defined in the present context, it is important to
realize the present meaning is also being informed, in varying degrees, from prior experiences and actions of the participants as well.

**Researcher Positionality**

As an interpretive researcher, the construction of the findings relies on supporting that interpretation through evidence. Through the adept theoretical framework outlined in Chapter 2, I approached the various articles of evidence and amalgamate Bakhtin’s (1981; 1986) dialogic and discourse theories, Thompson et al.’s (2013) CPD theories, and Gee’s (2000; 2005; 2008; 2014) theories on discourse as they aligned with my relativist ontology in which a single phenomenon may have multiple interpretations and “gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon and its complexity in its unique context instead of trying to generalise the base of the understanding for the whole population (Creswell, 2007 as cited in Pham, 2018, p. 3). Looking at and acknowledging the array of contexts and cultures when studying human relationships and interactions allowed a deeper understanding of social context as I probed the preservice teacher’s thoughts, values, prejudices, perceptions, views, feelings, and perspectives. I was aware that as a researcher, I would bring to this study my own interpretation, belief system, ways of thinking, and cultural bias, which critics may see as a cause for invalidity of the study; however, having such an awareness and knowing that I was so closely entangled in the research process as both a researcher and participant also afforded me the opportunity to create a close bond with the preservice teacher and perhaps lead to a deeper understanding of the research I collected. Additionally, although typically interpretive researchers tended to not address “the political and ideological impact on knowledge and social reality,” my familiarity with the preservice teacher program at the university and having taught in the school placement for fourteen years helped give insight on those aspects during the study. I also relied on the use of
my analytic memos to remind me of the duality of my roles as a researcher and participant, which is further explained in the data sources section.

I had experienced the role of mentor teacher previously and was fortunate enough to work with three amazing preservice teachers who were able to enter the classroom, adjust easily to the environment and make it their own, engage students thoughtfully with their instruction, and maintain a level of mutual respect with students and faculty alike. Collectively, each was successful in implementing their instruction, and during discussions with them prior to and after lessons, we were able to have meaningful and enlightening conversations and reflections about our observations. The reflections included which areas we felt were strong, which needed more vigor, ways to help lessons become stronger, and any reshaping of goals or aims of the instruction that needed to occur. Additionally, I have completed written observations and letters and had meetings and conversations with their university professors as well, so I was familiar with the expectations for both my school and the university and confident in my ability to experience this context again.

As the study centered on a preservice teacher’s beliefs, identity, and practices generally, and more specifically related to writing instruction, it was important to acknowledge and interpret my own beliefs, identity, and practices related to teaching writing. It was not until I started teaching Advanced Placement English Language in my fourth year of teaching ELA that I experienced a very thoughtful, purposeful program that seemed to address in a more passionate and concentrated manner the role of critical thinking and writing in the classroom and the impact of that instruction on students. This program and the teachers I had come to know through years of attending annual conferences were much more critically reflective about their writing instruction practices and identities, which inspired me to become more critical and aware of my
own ideas about writing instruction and my identity as a teacher of writing. Learning the aspects of this Advanced Placement program and contemplating and noting which genres, types of writing, analytical strategies, topics, issues, along with other aspects of teaching, felt both more comfortable and challenging, and I became focused on aligning writing instruction for students and helping them build knowledge through a more dialogic class environment, even if I met resistance from students not familiar with such an environment. This aided me in constructing a stronger identity as a teacher of writing than I had previously. Seeing the success of individual students able to use their voices and enhance their motivation to think and write critically became the center of my writing instruction through all of my ELA classes.

Research Context

School District 1

The first part of the case study took place in a school district in West Virginia. The school district encompassed six high schools with around 3100 students (US News, 2020). The county had voted to renew their school system’s excess levy in 2015, which began in the 2016 fiscal year through the 2020 fiscal year, “to go toward necessities such as teacher salaries, technology upgrades, supplies and extra curricular activities” (MetroNews Staff, 2015).

School 1

Bradley High School is located in a suburban community with approximately 811 students ranging from ninth to twelfth grades in the 2019 full academic year, with an attendance rate of 94% and a graduation rate of 95% (US News, 2020; WVDE, 2020), with 217 in both ninth and tenth grades, 197 in eleventh grade, and 180 students in twelfth grade (WVDE, 2020). There are a total of 71 special education students and 73 students with a 504 in the population (WVDE, 2020). Additionally, there were 96 professional staff at the school (WVDE, 2020). The AP participation rate is 51%, with 33% passing, ranked in the top 5 Best High Schools in West
Virginia category (US News, 2020). The school did not have a Title I status and received $411.35 of federal money per student and $6,747.62 of state/local money per student (WVDE, 2020).

The estimated population for this area within Bradley High School boundaries in 2019 was an estimated 8,842, an increase of almost 700 from 2010 (US Census, 2020), despite many areas within the state which have seen a steady decline in population. Additionally, the area in which many students live who attended this school was an affluent one with an average median income of $80,000 and a 4.1% poverty rate. There were 182 students identified with a low socioeconomic status (WVDE, 2020). Of the people living in this area, 96% of the population had graduated from high school or higher and 50% of the population held a bachelor’s degree or higher (US Census, 2020). The racial composition of this area was 93.6% white, 1.9% Black, 3.4% Asian, 0.8% Hispanic or Latino, and 0.9% of two or more races (US Census, 2020).

School District 2

The second part of the case study took place in a different school district in West Virginia, one that was rural. The school district had two middle schools with around 562 students (NCES, 2020). The county had voted down the school system’s excess levy in 2012 that would last for five years (Tobias, 2012). In 2018, the board of education placed another levy on the ballot, which would last for three years, but it was not passed (Knicely, 2018). They are currently functioning with no levy.

School 2

Belmont Middle School is located in a rural community in a neighboring school district with Bradley High School. Although they are relatively close in distance, the makeup of the community and schools are extremely different. Belmont Middle has approximately 271 students ranging from fifth to eighth grades in the 2020 full academic year with a 96.25% attendance rate
The school enrolls 53% economically disadvantaged students and has a Title I status. There are 20 full-time teachers, with a 15:1 student-teacher ratio. Also, 93.1% of teachers have three or more years of experience. The student diversity is 95.8% white with 4.2% minority enrollment. In academics, students scored 35% proficiency in math (US News, 2020). In state testing, students scored Does Not Meet Standard in math for the White, Economically Disadvantaged, and Children With Disabilities sub groups. In English, only the White sub group scored Partially Meets Standard (WVDE, 2020), while the other sub groups scored Does Not Meet Standard. The school received $1,242.22 of federal money per student and $6,401.52 of state/local money per student (WVDE, 2020).

The estimated population for the school district was 15,465, a decrease of 1,124 from 2010 (US Census, 2020). The area in which students lived who attended this school had an average median income of $38,906 and a 20.8% poverty rate. Of the people living in this area, 87.3% of the population had graduated from high school or higher and 13.9% of the population held a bachelor’s degree or higher (US Census, 2020). The racial composition of this area was 96.5% white, 1% Black, 0.3% Asian, 1.1% Hispanic or Latino, and 1.5% of two or more races (US Census, 2020).

**Participant Selection**

This was a case study of one female secondary preservice teacher, Katherine, from a large university in the rural mid-Atlantic area, who was working on completing a graduate degree in the Master of Arts in Secondary Education. When Katherine entered my classroom in Fall 2020, she was in her senior year of the English Secondary Education program and ready to proceed with the clinical student teaching experience. She had previously been a student in the same high school and was familiar with the policies and routines in place. During her student
teaching placement, she had bid on a teaching job in a neighboring county and was subsequently hired. After obtaining permission from the university, she was able to take the teaching job and left her student teaching placement after 3 weeks without further mentorship from me as a mentor teacher. Observations were relegated to recorded Google Meets lessons of her unit and an outline of her lesson plans and activities. We kept in contact through occasional texts or phone calls; however, the conversations rarely were in the context of a mentor because she was in a different county and school district. At the time, the state was using a color-coded map of Covid19 infections and other factors to determine if students would be in-person or continue online learning, and each county was following its own guidelines depending on those numbers. There were many times we were not on the same schedule, either in-person or online, which made communication more difficult, as we were both working on our instruction and how it would be delivered to our students.

**Teacher Education Methods Coursework**

Katherine attended a large, land-grant university approximately 45 minutes from where she grew up. She earned her BA in English and then enrolled immediately into the Master of Arts with Certification program housed in the College of Education. In this program, pre-service teachers had both general coursework in learning theory, special education, culturally relevant pedagogy, and history of American education, and a series of four methods courses specific to secondary English: Writing Methods, Language Methods, Reading Methods, and Advanced Methods.

In Language Methods, the course was divided into two parts: 1) socio-politics of language (identity, dialects, and how they tie into region, race, and gender) and 2) research-based approaches of teaching vocabulary, sentence level/crafting. There were projects associated with
each part: a mini-unit to investigate a type of the political side of language and a unit to teach a short text with a vocabulary lesson using strategies reviewed in class. In Reading Methods, the focus was on the before, during, and after reading strategies, having students create units of studies for their future students using canonical texts and applying critical theories, such as social class, race, post-colonial, and gender as analytical and literary lenses. In Advanced Methods, the first part of the class learned close reading strategies, noticing patterns of words, genres, text structures, and rhetorical devices, among others. Then they produced their four-week unit of a close reading activity with a text through the lens of critical literacy and teaching for one of the following: social justice, interrogating multiple viewpoints, Socratic seminars, and peer-level discussions. However, since the pandemic hit that part of the semester, instead students looked at EdTPA samples and analyzed them (Interview, Professor A).

Major concepts in Language Methods centered around the politics of language, which has to do with how writing is taught. There was a standard of writing for academic settings, but the challenge was to “give students access to codes of power” through their dialects (Interview; Professor A). She wanted her students to think about how to communicate about language and conventions without further stigmatizing students due to their dialects and culture, having them critically look at sentence structure and its purpose. Students had to write the connections in the beginning of their lesson plan and how to transition between their activities, writing a script along with lesson plans. She followed the same strategy with the vocabulary strategies portion of the course for her students to learn how to teach structure and make predictions, citing the Tea Party strategy where students are handed pieces of a sentence from a particular text and must discuss with each other how the sentence is structured in that text to make predictions on the text’s content. Other strategies included bell ringers and visual text/images, all in an effort to
allow their students to develop some mastery around that concept before moving on to something else. Advanced Methods centered more on self-reflection and metacognition about what they are doing and why they are doing it. Students were constantly asked to reflect and assess the strategies used and the outcomes to make the learning process better for themselves and their students. Professor A also discussed with them more academic writing compared with creative writing, and although she wanted to do more with analytical writing, time was not afforded with the pandemic in that semester (Interview, Professor A).

The value of writing was defined in the courses as “writing is thinking”, that “students need the time to reflect on their own thinking in the form of writing” (Interview; Professor A). It was structured for the students to have multiple opportunities and small assignments of reflection on the topic being discussed frequently in the class in order to model self-regulation for her students. She gave feedback to students, but she stated she “was asking them to think about how their own students need to be in the position of inviting someone to give them feedback and that they develop a meta-awareness of what their own strengths are and what self-doubt we might experience as writers” (Interview; Professor A). Her students were assigned to write a “Dear Reader” letter with their units/assignments and she responded similarly from an article by Amanda Lewis about letters to yourself being an authentic essay, as she emphasized the need for an authentic audience with writing as well (Interview, Professor A).

Other writing assignments included rationales for their units that were 10–15-page essays explaining school context, why it mattered to their lessons, how they were building a community of knowledge, and their choice of text for the units, among other topics. The rationales became another example of learning to write for authentic audiences because they allowed students to voice their reasoning and thinking for not only the professor but possibly for future interviews and bosses, citing that quoting text from recent research on close reading strategies may not impress the principal but perhaps the department chair. The Daily Journal for Advanced Methods was meant for student teachers to observe their setting and environment, the interactions among participants, the look and décor of classrooms, etc. (Interview, Professor A). Expectations for her students included thinking about authenticity for writing assignments and audiences of
their writing. She wanted them to branch “out of the habit of only having academic essays that go to the teacher and instead think about ways students’ writing can be more public, more collaborative” (Interview, Professor A). In addition, she hoped they develop a more metacognitive perspective about the writing process and discern writing does not have to be limiting. It was important for students in this course to realize that if they are as a high school teacher, they will more than likely have to unpack 12 years of thinking that writing is boring to students because the bulk of their students’ experiences include the same repetitive first level sensory writing without being challenged or inspired and their students’ voices as writers would “take time to cultivate” (Interview, Professor A).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th>Writing Methods</th>
<th>Language Methods</th>
<th>Reading Methods</th>
<th>Advanced Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approaches to Teaching Composition</td>
<td>Approaches to Teaching Language</td>
<td>Approaches to Teaching Reading and Literature</td>
<td>Advanced Methods of English Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Topics and Strategies Taught</td>
<td>1) Review major trends and theories and ideas in the field of teaching composition 2) Give students practice thinking about how to position themselves as writers and teachers of writers</td>
<td>1) Socio politics of language (identity; dialects) and how they tie into region, race, and gender 2) research-based approaches of teaching vocabulary and sentence level; crafting</td>
<td>1) Before, during, and after reading strategies</td>
<td>1) Close reading strategies; patterns of words; genres; text structures; rhetorical devices</td>
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<tr>
<td>Projects</td>
<td>Explanation of Purposes</td>
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<tr>
<td>1) Writer’s notebook for reflection 2) 2-3 week writing unit to take</td>
<td>1) How writing is a process that is learned and deepened over time 2) Students to embrace their roles as writers</td>
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<tr>
<td>students through the entire writing process with their paper being</td>
<td>3) How to work with multimodality</td>
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<td>the mentor text for their students 3) Individual research theory book</td>
<td>1) How writing is taught 2) How to communicate about language and conventions without stigmatization 3) Scripting</td>
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<tr>
<td>project</td>
<td>lesson plan activities and transitions 4) Tea Party Strategy for vocabulary</td>
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<tr>
<td>1) Mini-unit to investigate a type of political side of language 2)</td>
<td>1) How to use before, during, and after reading strategies 2) How to use analytical lenses with canonical texts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit to teach a short text with a vocabulary lesson using strategies</td>
<td>1) Self-reflection and metacognition about what they are doing and why they are doing it 2) Assess strategies and</td>
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<tr>
<td>reviewed in class</td>
<td>their outcomes 3) Discuss creative and academic writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>1) Unit using canonical texts and applying critical theories using</td>
<td>**Usually: Teach one of the following: social justice; interrogating multiple viewpoints; Socratic seminars; and</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>social class; race; postcolonial; and gender as analytical and literary</td>
<td>peer-level discussion. However, during Katherine’s semester they reviewed and analyzed EdTPA samples because of the</td>
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<tr>
<td>lenses</td>
<td>pandemic.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1) 4-week unit of a close reading activity with a text through a</td>
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<tr>
<td>critical literacy lens</td>
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<tr>
<td>2) **</td>
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Data Collection

I collected data over the course of three weeks during Katherine’s preservice teaching experience in ELA twelfth grade classes, then an additional 12 weeks in her full-time teaching position in another district. This research design and data collection plan had been purposely considered to address the study of a preservice teacher making decisions within a classroom to explore how a secondary preservice teacher mobilizes their learning in a new context. Due to the limited time frame of mid-August 2020 through December 2020, there were semi-structured interviews that were audio recorded, explained in the table below, and daily field notes of direct observation and interviews as I was the mentor teacher in this case, as well as the researcher. Additionally, there were multiple opportunities for semi-structured interviews, as we met regularly to discuss and reflect on the planning of her lessons, the teaching of the lessons, how she would approach assessment, looking for and making sense of patterns she sees in students’ writing, and how combining all of this knowledge and observation would inform her subsequent instruction and either align or reshape the educational goals for writing she had set for the class while she was in her student teacher placement and had me as a mentor teacher.

Data Sources

A variety of data sources were opened in using interviews and observations during the 15-week time period for data collection. With the inclusion of multiple data sources, triangulation allowed me “to take several methodological perspectives or theoretical perspectives on an issue under study” (Flick, 2014, p.12) and substantiated my findings by causing me to “more closely examine the integrity of the data collection methods and even the data themselves” (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014, p. 299).
Analytic memos. In reviewing the field notes, I did initial and thorough readings of my data to write analytic memos and tentative ideas for codes, topics, and noticeable patterns or themes (Saldaña, 2016, p. 22). Keeping this open coding approach while reviewing field notes provided me with multiple codes that are representative of the data rather than codes that I wanted the data to represent. In continually reviewing the field notes to remain focused on what was occurring in the classroom, I saw each re-reading as a new opportunity and experience, in much the same way one can re-read any text and gain a new understanding or insight not previously observed. The new insights and interpretations in implementing analytic memos aided in the constructive and interpretive research in which I was engaging. Because “coding and analytic memos writing are concurrent qualitative data analytic activities, there was “a reciprocal relationship between the development of a coding system and the evolution of understanding a phenomenon”” (Weston et al., 2001, as cited in Saldaña, 2016, p. 44). The memos and coding system are the conversations we have with ourselves about our data that allow us to “think critically about what we’re doing and why, challenge our assumptions, and recognize the extent to which our thoughts, actions and decisions shape how we research and what we see” (Mason, 2002, as cited in Saldaña, 2016, p. 44). It was imperative that as an interpretive researcher I immersed myself in the analytic memos and kept vigilant about the ways in which I interpreted the data, that those ways aligned with the whys and hows of the data and the purpose of the study.

As a veteran secondary ELA teacher of 18 years, I had formed beliefs about the purpose of reading and writing in a classroom setting. The combination of this lens as well as the theoretical framework informed, influenced, and explained the duality of my roles as a researcher and mentor teacher as I studied the preservice teacher’s writing instruction in the classroom. In the theoretical framework of Bakhtin, his philosophy toward knowledge rests in the epistemology of dialogism, which seeks “to grasp human behavior through the use humans make
of language” (Holquist, 2002, p. 15). It consists of an utterance, a reply, and a relation between the two. An utterance is active, where “every aspect of it is a give-and-take between the local need of a particular speaker to communicate a specific meaning, and the global requirements of language as a generalizing system” (Holquist, 2002, p. 60). As each utterance was recorded and interpreted through observations and interviews, this framework helped me ruminate on the dichotomy between myself as researcher and participant in the study. Katherine was positioned as a co-being because the events are always shared and the self was not fixed in a space because it is always related to other that is “specified socially and historically” (Holquist, 2002, p. 32).

For this study, the focus was how Katherine navigated through the discourses of her beliefs and dialogic CPD, identity, and instructional practices within the contextual discourses of new ELA classrooms during a pandemic with the following research questions:

1. How does a preservice teacher use their beliefs and identity about instruction amid changing contextual discourses in a pandemic?

Interview transcripts were supplemented by field notes, as they go hand-in-hand, because of the “critical link between data collection and their explanation of meaning” (Charmaz, 2001, as cited in Saldaña, 2016, p. 4). Interviews are “dialogical performances, social meaning-making acts, and cofacilitated knowledge exchanges” (Koro-Ljungberg, 2008, p. 430). The negotiations of possible differences and differing expectations lead to increased rapport, a strengthened relationship, and richer communication between subjects that can assist transformation and decrease resistance to change (Koro-Ljungberg, 2008, p.440). Because interviews were able to further observations and increase dialogue surrounding the participant and occurrences in the study’s setting, there was a broader range of perspectives and contexts to aid the researcher in understanding the participant’s perspective and view his/her beliefs and navigation of the discourses in action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2: Research Question</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Question</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How does a preservice teacher use their beliefs and identity about instruction amid changing contextual discourses in a pandemic?</td>
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</table>

The data collection from semi-structured interviews occurred during the two-week time period while Katherine was at Bradley High School for her student teacher placement, before and after each lesson Katherine taught, as well as documented when other instances arise with discussions and reflection of her writing instruction, of creating or reshaping lesson plans as a result of her reflection, and of her instruction itself. During the discussions concerning lesson planning and her teaching experience in my classroom, we looked at her unit plan and individual lessons as visual representations of her writing instruction. Being able to refer to Katherine’s unit plan with her as a timeline also allowed her to have a deeper reflection and for me to have access to her thinking as she continued in the placement. As the interview was “based on the conversations of daily life and is a professional conversation” and “constructed in the inter-action between the interviewer and the interviewee” (Brinkman & Kvale, 2015, p. 4), it allowed a relationship between myself and Katherine in which there was candidness in discussing prior to and after her lessons and further understanding of how she was navigating reading and writing, reading and writing instruction, and students’ reading and writing in selecting her identity and resources for her educational goals.
The class Katherine taught was a 12th grade ELA class that included students with IEPs. As we transitioned into the beginning of the school year together, Katherine was able to help set up and model expectations and routines for students and allowed me to see how she taught those expectations and scaffolded writing instruction in the classroom. During observations of her teaching, I took detailed field notes to record Katherine’s words and actions with students while teaching and audio recorded and transcribed classroom sessions and interviews.

Because “epistemology and theoretical perspective influence how researchers utilize and implement interviews in research projects,” they assisted me in organizing research and making sense of interview data (Koro-Ljungberg, 2008, p. 429). As interviews were transcribed, they inspired me toward “new interpretations of well-known phenomena, and the interview reports can contribute substantial new knowledge to a field” (Brinkman & Kvale, 2015, p. 18). Due to the valuable information within interview data, all transcribed interviews were coded through In Vivo Coding “to keep the data rooted in the participant’s own language” (Saldaña, 2016, p. 8). While coding, themes were “discerned during data collection and initial analysis, and then examined further as interviews continue” (Saldaña, 2016, p. 199). Through the semi-structured interviews, I was able to create meanings of Katherine’s experiences through the theoretical framework of the study. Essentially, I was able to see themes that were clustered together or repetitive ideas and “explore and develop them into “an overarching theme from the data corpus, or an integrative theme that weaves various themes together into a coherent narrative” (Saldaña, 2016, p. 199).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3: Interviews</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Timing</strong></td>
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</table>

### Interview 1
**August 17-21, 2020 (before students begin on Aug. 24th)**

To account for her experiences with writing as a student; to account for her value of writing in the classroom and the resources and roles she plans on utilizing; to account for her beliefs about teaching writing; and to account for the expectations of the university, school placement, and English department at the school placement

1) What experiences did you have as a student with writing?
2) As a student, what value did you place on writing? 3) What preservice teacher education experiences have you had that you feel have helped shape your view of writing and writing instruction?
4) Entering a classroom, what do you see as your role in teaching writing to students?
5) In the English department, what expectations do you have for the element of writing in the classroom?

---

### Daily Interviews
**Aug. 2020 - Oct. 2020 (before/after Katherine’s instruction)**

To account for process of reflection and document her experience in teaching writing and responding to students’ writing; to account

1) What would you consider a successful writing lesson today, and how do you view creating one?
2) How is your lesson accomplishing your overall writing instruction goal for reshaping of her lessons or educational goals
3) To what extent do you feel your writing lesson is scaffolding students?

---

### Final Interview of the preservice teacher experience
**October 2020**

To account for the experience of teaching writing, the roles/identity enacted, resources used; to account for expectations set for writing instruction and the expectations of the university, school placement, department, and mentor teacher

1) What role(s) did you feel you enacted while instructing writing lessons?
2) What resources did you find were most helpful to you during your preservice teaching experience in a public school?
3) What value do you feel you placed on writing during your preservice teaching experience?
Final Interview of full-time placement | January 2021 | To account for her inclusion of the Locate & Find activity, as it was not mentioned in her previous interviews or coursework; to account for motivations for its appearance in her unit | 1) For the locate and find activity, where the idea for that lesson come from? Was it something you came up with on your own? 2) What were your motivations/objectives for the science textbook lesson? 3) Did you feel comfortable with or familiar with the textbook? Were there other areas you felt more/less comfortable with? Why?

Table 4: Data Sources—Dates of Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Katherine</th>
<th>Professor B</th>
<th>English Dept. Head at BHS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/15/20</td>
<td>Professor A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/24/20</td>
<td>6/29/21</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/1/20</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/28/21</td>
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Field Notes

During ethnographic observations in the classroom, I took field notes that were “converted into expanded write-ups” to be” read, edited for accuracy, commented on, coded, and analyzed” (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014, p. 71). These notes were a direct recording of the events of observations and interviews and work to stimulate my memory of things that happened at that time that are not in the raw notes as I transcribed them so they can be more accurate in their descriptions of the events. In writing field notes, I looked for actions and discourse
Katherine used to discuss and frame writing for students, engage students in writing instruction, and value student writing in the classroom. Noticing and recording these utterances and interactions with students, as well as in semi-structured interviews, gave a fuller understanding of how Katherine decided to engage in writing instruction with students and negotiated the context of the classroom and participants.

In writing field notes, I learned “to recognize and limit reliance upon preconceptions about members’ lives and activities” and “become responsive to what others are concerned about in their own terms” (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011, p. 16). It was important to remember field notes “offer subtle and complex understandings of these others’ lives, routines, and meanings” (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011, p. 17). The purpose of field notes was not a finality but rather ideas for analytic consideration while the study progresses. Descriptive field notes were “products of active processes of interpretation and sense-making that frame or structure not only what is written but also how it is written” (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011, p. 9). Additionally, it released me from having to rely solely on memory for future writing and allowed me to record my thoughts in a distinct, documented way. Because field notes were recorded close to the moment of occurrence, it allowed “for deepening reflection upon and understanding of those experiences” (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011, p. 17).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date/Time</th>
<th>Content:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/17/20*—55:46</td>
<td>Reading “Names/Nombres”; close reading questions/strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/19/20*</td>
<td>1:15:59</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/1/20*</td>
<td>38:13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/4/20*</td>
<td>41:01</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/8/20</td>
<td>14:16</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/10/20*</td>
<td>1:05:06</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/11/20*</td>
<td>1:05:46</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/15/20*</td>
<td>51:29</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/16/20</td>
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**Documents**

Documents collected during the study included: interview transcripts; classroom observation transcripts; lesson plans; unit plans; students’ work; Katherine’s written responses to students’ work; informational packets/articles/books from university courses; and informational packets/articles/books from Bradley High School and the other county in which she was employed. Each of these documents provided another lens in which to view Katherine’s progression and shifts through her experience in both the 12th grade and 7th grade ELA.
classrooms and the implementation of reading and writing instruction she intended and was able to facilitate to students in this context.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4: Lesson Plans for Identity Unit</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
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organisms as a whole? Do they forever stay the same based on the same DNA or do they change depending on stimuli and outside factors? What does this make you think in regards to who we are as people (or identities) and how these identities are formed?

<p>| 6   | 12/14/20-12/18/20 | 12/14/20-12/18/20 Google Meets (optional); Read ch. 8, Sections 3 &amp; 4; Location services activity; Slide 2 “Overview” explains how this will help them become better writers 12/15/20-12/18/20 Google Meets 12/17/20-12/20 Google Meets (digital vocab. Notebook; nature vs. nurture padlet activity) 12/18/20-12/20 Google Meets (develop viewpoint into argument; hunting and gathering activity for ch. 8, Section 1; Reflection Journal #11 | Ch. 8, Section 3 “Cell Structure”; Section 4 (Viruses) Location Services Activity; Location &amp; Find Activity; Reflection Journal #10—Why is it important for us to learn about cell structure and how sells work to better understand the Nature v. Nurture debate? What is 1 new fact that you have learned that you think relates to the concept of Nature vs. Nurture? (added instruction of increasing amount of writing for journals) Padlet Activity (names and comments; collect ideas and facts to build viewpoints/arguments within Nature vs. Nurture debate) Slide 4-Developing a Viewpoint into an Argument Hunting &amp; Gathering activity for ch.8 Section 1 Reflection Journal #11—How comfortable are you at searching for information and gathering it to support your viewpoint? Does the Graphic Organizer help you collect your ideas better? Do you like taking time to collect support for your ideas? Does this type of thought organization help you learn better? |
| 7   | 12/21/20-12/22/20 | 12/21/20-12/22/20 Review developing a viewpoint into an argument; hunting &amp; gathering activity for ch.8, Section 2 | Developing a Viewpoint into an Argument slide Ch.8, Section 2, 3, 4 Hunting and Gathering Activity Reflection Journal #12—How are you understanding the importance of organization in the preparation for writing? What do you feel like is the takeaway from these activities? How is your understanding of cells, nature, and nurture developing? |
| 7   | 1/4/20-1/8/21 (All Google Meets) | 1/4/20-1/5—the same as 12/21-12/22 1/7/21-vocabulary introduction activity; plagiarism; citations 1/8/21-review plagiarism and citations; teacher expectations of MLA format; citation activity | Developing a Viewpoint into an Argument Hunting and Gathering Activity Ch. 8, Section 2; 3; 4 Reflection Journal #12 (same as 12/21-12/22) Vocabulary Introduction Activity What is Plagiarism? (article linked in slide 7) What is a Citation? (articles linked in slide 8); video (slide 9) Teacher Expectation (MLA format) (slide 10-13) Citation Activity (slide 14) |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/11/21-1/15/21</td>
<td>Review Titles, Topics, and Subtopics; Ch. 18: “Interactions of Living Things” from science book; Location Services Activities for Sections 1, 2, 3;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/18/21-1/22/21</td>
<td>Reflection Journal #12—Communities are an important part of the levels of organization for living things. How can we relate its importance to the nature vs. nurture debate? Why are our communities important to us as people? Locate and find Activity Reflection Journal #13—What are you learning about the way living things interact with the environment? How do you connect this information back to the nature vs. nurture debate? Reflection Journal #14—How are you currently feeling? How can I help you adjust to attending school again? What do you need in order to complete any missing work? (added instruction of writing more for journals) IXL Diagnostics; CatchUp/Young Writers Entries; Quote of the Day Reflection Journal #15—What does the quote on the previous page mean to you? “Perhaps it is impossible to wear an identity without becoming what you pretend to be.”—Orson Scott Card, <em>Ender’s Game</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>“Wilde Horses” by Brian Fawcett</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 10 | 1/25/21-1/29/21 - breaks into Groups A and B | 1/25/21 (Monday) **Group A:**
Review How to Turn a Viewpoint into an Essay; hunting/gathering ch.18, Sect.1
Reflection Journal #16—What do you currently know about what an argumentative essay is? Moving forward, what do you need to know in order to write a strong, argumentative essay?

1/25/21 (Monday) **Group B:**
Review How to Turn a Viewpoint into an Essay; hunting/gathering ch.18, Sect.1
Reflection Journal #16—What do you currently know about what an argumentative essay is? Moving forward, what do you need to know in order to write a strong, argumentative essay?

1/26/21 (Tuesday) **Group A:**
Review how to turn a Viewpoint into an Argument; Hunting/Gathering Activity for Ch.18, Sect.3; Reflection Journal #16—What do you currently know about what an argumentative essay is? Moving forward, what do you need to know in order to write a strong, argumentative essay?

1/26/21 (Tuesday) **Group B:**
Quote of the Day—“What’s meant to be will always find a way.” - Trisha Yearwood; Hunting/Gathering ch.18, Sec.2 & 3; Introduction to Parts of an Argumentative Essay (if time)

1/28/21 (Thursday) **Group A:**
Complete 1 out of the 3 outlines on slide 18

1/28/21 (Thursday) **Group B:**
How to Write a Thesis Statement for an argumentative essay… slides; video; create rough draft of own thesis;
Reflective Journal #17—How do you feel about thesis statements? Do you feel good or bad about your own?

1/29/21 (Friday) **Group A:**
How to Write a Thesis Statement for an argumentative essay… slides; video; create rough draft of own thesis;
Reflective Journal #17—How do you feel about thesis statements? Do you feel good or bad about your own?

1/29/21 (Friday) **Group B:**
Complete 1 out of the 3 outlines on slide 18
Argument Example 1 “Wild Animals Aren’t Pets”

| 11 | 2/1/21-2/5/21 Writing Process Overview and Calendar Example Essay “Let People Own Exotic Animals” Zuzana Kukol | **Feb.2021:** Writing Process Overview Calendar with due dates for Groups A and B (this Google Slides includes information about outline; rough draft; writer’s workshop; revising and editing; and the final draft 2/1/21)

**Group A:**
Argumentative Essays slides; Quote of the Day; Reading Squares;
Writing Time Expectations; SSR 2/2/21 (Tuesday) **Group B:**
Argumentative Essays slides; Quote of the Day
Reading Squares; Writing Time Expectations
SSR

2/4/21 (Thursday) **Group A:**
How to Write Argumentative Essays slides; writing introductions; thesis review; reasons/thoughts; revisions; how to write body paragraphs; work on rough drafts
Ms. Boot Example Essay
“Let People Own Exotic Animals” by Zuzana Kukol
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Group A</th>
<th>Group B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/8/21</td>
<td>(Monday) Group A:</td>
<td>Quote of the Day; Writer’s Workshop Mini-lesson;</td>
<td>Group B:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Writer’s Workshop; Mini-lesson on commas-comma worksheet 1; Editing</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>practice for commas</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Revising &amp; Editing Time 2/9/21</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2/8/21</td>
<td>(Tuesday) Group B:</td>
<td>Quote of the Day; Writer’s Workshop Mini-lesson;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Writer’s Workshop; Mini-lesson on commas; Editing practice for commas;</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/9/21</td>
<td>(Tuesday) Group A:</td>
<td>Writing Help Google Meets at 11:00am</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Work on Revision and Editing</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/9/21</td>
<td>(Tuesday) Group B:</td>
<td>Writing Help Google Meets at 11:00am</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Work on Revision and Editing</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/10/21</td>
<td>(Wednesday) Group A:</td>
<td>Writing Help Google Meets at 11:00am</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Work on Revision and Editing</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/15/21</td>
<td>(Monday) Group A:</td>
<td>Quote of the Day; Reviewing Citations Mini-lesson;</td>
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<td>Revision &amp; Editing; SSR; Individual Writing Conferences begin (10 min.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>per student)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/16/21</td>
<td>(Tuesday) Group B:</td>
<td>Sentence Structure Practice (slides 17-23) 2/16/21</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Revise and Edit final draft</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/17/21</td>
<td>(Wednesday) Groups A &amp; B:</td>
<td>Catch up on work; Revise and edit 2/18/21</td>
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<td>(Thursday) Group A:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Quote of the Day; Citation Review; Comma Review;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sentence-Structure Review; Revise and edit</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/18/21</td>
<td>(Friday) Group B:</td>
<td>Catch up on Work; Revise and edit</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Friday) Group A:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Catch up on Work; Revise and edit</td>
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<td>(Friday) Group B:</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/19/21</td>
<td>(Friday) Group B:</td>
<td>Quote of the Day; Citation Review; Comma Review;</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sentence-Structure Review; Revise and edit</td>
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**Data Analysis**

In this section, I explain how I approached analyzing the data collected during the study. Qualitative data analysis classifies and interprets “linguistic (or visual) material to make statements about implicit or explicit dimensions and structures of meaning-making in the material and what is represented in it,” which can refer to subjective or social meaning-making (Flick, 2014, p. 5). In looking at the sequencing of how I commenced with data analysis, I did...
not view the process as linear, but rather inductive because data analysis is the central step in qualitative research and forms the outcomes of the research.

Preliminary data analysis is “an ongoing process that is undertaken every time data is collected,” a “process of checking and tracking the data to see what is coming out of it, identifying areas that require follow up and actively questioning where the information collected is leading/should lead” the researcher (Grbich, 2013, p. 21). This was done in order to highlight the emerging issues and allowed relevant data to be identified and direct where to seek further data.

### Table 5: Data Analysis Sequence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates/Phase</th>
<th>Steps in Analysis Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mid-August 2020</td>
<td>1. Transcribe interviews (Katherine) and In Vivo coding to theme data and identify key themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mid-August 2020 -- midOctober 2020</td>
<td>2. Field notes on classroom observations and interviews; transcribe conversations/interviews pre- and post-observation of lesson being taught; triangulate data; continue identifying themes in data of teaching beliefs and practices in the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mid-October 2020</td>
<td>3. Field notes on classroom observations and conversations/interviews pre- and post-lessons; transcribe field notes; triangulate data; continue identifying themes that emerge through data on teaching writing, the value of writing, and perceptions of and responses to students’ writing, as well as her instructional choices due to the pandemic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| mid-October -- July 2021    | 4. Organize data chronologically; compare data in regard to time, then by themes  
5. Write conceptual memos; share memos with Katherine for member checking |

### Analytical Questions

Within the process of data analysis, I planned in advance questions concerning the sources of data throughout Katherine’s time in the clinical placement (Table 4). The analysis
questions were directed by the theoretical frameworks of Bakhtin’s (1981; 1986) discourse and the continual influences of historical and social, contexts that inform discourse; Gee’s (2000; 2008; 2014) theory of identity and Discourse and how they are developed, enacted, and defined; Thompson et al.’s (2013) framework of critical pedagogical discourses; and Gee & Green’s (1998) framework of the MASS (material; activity; semiotic; sociocultural aspects) system. Each question served to understand how Katherine navigated the discourses of reading and writing, reading and writing instruction, and students’ reading and writing within the context of a classroom as a preservice teacher and as a newly hired teacher in a new district. The analytical questions allowed a space to consider Katherine’s thinking, actions, and understanding of the discourses she was being exposed to, how she valued writing in the classroom, and how she discerned the roles of identity and resources associated with writing instruction.

In separating the analytical questions into different topics, I was able to inform the question set with my conceptual and theoretical framework. There was some obscurity among the different posed questions; however, in doing so, I was able to retain connection to the theoretical framework of discourse and identity to study how a preservice teacher navigates those concepts and makes decisions about writing instruction and its value in the secondary ELA classroom. Presenting these analytic questions on topics throughout the study allowed space for subtleties to be brought forward in understanding Katherine’s actions and thinking about the discourses surrounding writing instruction in the context of a classroom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6: Analytical Questions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research questions:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1) How does a preservice teacher use their beliefs and identity about instruction amid changing contextual discourses in a pandemic?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topics in the research question:</td>
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<td>---------------------------------</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Context                         | - What discourses will Katherine encounter in the context of the classroom as a preservice and new teacher?  
- How will Katherine manage these discourses?  
- What expectations does Katherine have about her writing instruction in this context? | |
| Preservice Teacher Writing Experience | - What writing experience does Katherine have upon entering the classroom as a preservice teacher?  
- How will her proclivity for a favored genre of writing inform her writing instruction?  
- How will Katherine’s writing experience shape her view of students’ writing? | |
| Preservice Teacher Beliefs about Writing | - How has Katherine’s writing experience shaped her view of what good writing is?  
- How will she navigate disruptions to her beliefs about writing she may experience in the classroom?  
- What will Katherine see as a valued assessment of successful writing by students? | |
| Identity/Roles                  | - In planning the writing instruction for the class, what identity/role will Katherine draw from most? Writer? Author? Teacher? Reader? Etc.  
- In assessing students’ writing, what identity/role will Katherine find most useful and effective in helping students with their writing?  
- In the classroom context, will Katherine successfully manage the role of teacher and establish herself as an authority and recognize students as an authority of their own writing? | |
| Resources                       | - Which resource(s) will Katherine draw from when informing her writing instruction?  
- To what extent will Katherine’s resource as a writer herself permeate her instruction and views of students’ writing?  
- To what extent will Katherine draw on her own understanding of students and their writing when responding to their work? |
MASS (Materials, Activity, Semiotics, and Sociocultural) Analysis Process

Content analysis is “a systematic coding and categorising approach...to explore large amounts of existing textual information to ascertain the trends and patterns of words used, their frequency, their relationships and the structures, contexts and discourses of communication” (Grbich, 2013, p. 190). Content analysis was used in examining lesson plans and units, as well as transcripts of interviews with and observations of Katherine to further understand her thinking about writing instruction and its value and her identity as a writing instructor. I used Gee and Green’s (1998) MASS framework as a way of analyzing Katherine’s instructional practices and decisions. Gee & Green (1998) focused on sociocultural practices and how knowledge is socially constructed in educational settings and the factors that shape that discourse through linking situated meanings, cultural models, and reflexivity. Gee & Green (1998) then used “two sets of elements that are central to an understanding of the relationship among discourse, social practices, and learning”, MASS (material, activity, semiotic, and sociocultural aspects of discourse) and building tasks (p.134).

<p>| Table 7: Data Analysis Questions Using the MASS System—Gee &amp; Green (1998) |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MASS Aspect</th>
<th>Representative Questions</th>
<th>Revised MASS Questions</th>
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</table>
| Material | When, where, with whom, and under what conditions are members interacting?  
What meanings and values seem to be attached to places, times, bodies, objects, artifacts, and institutions relevant in this situation?  
What situated modes and forms of language practices and processes are used as resources by members in this event? | Beliefs: When, where, with whom, and under what conditions does she share his beliefs and/or find her beliefs challenged?  
Which materials does she use, modify, or disregard because they are consistent with or challenge or infringe on her beliefs?  
Practice: What materials (from whom and under what conditions) does she take up or constrain her practice? |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Activity | What subactivities and sequences of these compose this activity?  
What actions (down to the level of things like “requests for reasons”) compose these subactivities and activities? | Beliefs: How does Katherine use her beliefs to make sense of the larger activity/unit?  
Practice: How does Katherine draw from or resist the larger activity/unit within her teaching practice? |
| Semiotic | What are the sign systems being used in the situation?  
What situated meanings of the words and phrases do members construct and/or signal to each other in the situation?  
What institutions, communities of practice, and/or discourses are being (re-)produced in this situation and how are they being transformed in the act? When a frame clash occurs between different interpretations of situations or use of cultural models, what do members do and what consequences does it have for each, as well as the group? | Beliefs: What sign systems does Katherine use within her larger activity/unit?  
What situated meanings of words and phrases does Katherine construct?  
How does Katherine use her beliefs to assess the discourses being reproduced or produced in the situation?  
Practice: How does Katherine’s practice reflect or challenge the contextual discourses? |
Sociocultural

What norms and expectations, roles and relationships, and rights and obligations are constructed by, and/or signaled by, relevant members (the group) to guide participation and activity among participants in the event?

What personal, social, and cultural knowledge and beliefs (cognition), feelings (affect), and identities (roles and relationships, positions) seem to be relevant to the situation?

Beliefs: What roles and relationships seem applicable to Katherine’s beliefs about teaching?

Practice: What roles and relationships seem applicable to Katherine’s beliefs about instructional practice?

(Gee & Green, 1998, p.140)

These elements allowed for the analysis “across a number of current theoretical perspectives” and gave “a broad range of researchers across disciplines view as central to understanding the socially constructed nature of knowledge” (Gee & Green, 1998, p.134). I used these same elements to analyze Katherine’s instructional and unit strategies and organization. In utilizing these elements, the following themes emerged: Katherine’s CPD of Writing and Reading Being Mutually Informing; Writing as Ownership; Writing is Reflection; Teaching is Showing…and Telling; Scaffolding; and Learning to Pose Questions to Students.

Using Gee & Green’s (1998) MASS system, I was able to move “reflexively between enumerative data, contextual data, contextual themes and literature [that] provided greater depth of understanding” (Grbich, 2013, p. 196) and explore data that was “coded for identification, later amalgamation and finally for ease of retrieval along with related elements” (Grbich, 2013, p. 261). With coding, “the data segments are labeled and grouped by category; they are then examined and compared, both within and between categories” (Flick, 2014, p. 24). After the initial or ‘open coding’ was completed on the data, a second round of coding commenced on the different resources Katherine used (lesson plans, unit plan, communication/email with the mentor teacher, feedback to students) and on the discourses that circulated concerning the subject of writing, including beliefs or statements about what defines good or effective writing, how her identity as a writer informs her beliefs about reading and writing and their instruction, how
effective reading and writing instruction should be approached, and why students may react or perceive reading and writing differently. The second round of coding was inductively generated through a close ‘open coding’ of the data into theoretical categories of coding, and placed into an explicit theoretical framework, either from prior theory or an inductively developed theory (Flick, 2014, p. 25). As a novice researcher, I worked to ensure I remained true to the original case by asking for feedback from the participant, Katherine, and “integrate[d] the data sources in an attempt to answer the research question” (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 555).

Data Organization

The preliminary organization of the data was key, which made the field notes so important while the study was conducted. I “expect[ed] to revise and extend [my] data management system” during the analysis process (Miles, Huberman, Saldaña, 2014, p. 51). I began with the use of In Vivo coding to help me organize and analyze the data with the initial reading of it and stay true to the interviews, observations, and Katherine’s thinking and actions concerning reading and writing. In case study, “data from these multiple sources are then converged in the analysis process,” which “adds strength to the findings as the various strands of data are braided together to promote a greater understanding of the case” (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 554). As the data was compiled, the coding allowed me to collect “related chunks of data...cutand-pasted together as a form of instantaneous categorization” (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014, p. 51).

The data was organized first chronologically using the dates of the interviews, observations of lessons Katherine delivered to students, and her assessment of students’ work at the end of her unit, ranging from the mid-August placement through her new teaching position...
through December. The field notes consisted of the day’s entry to “narrate and recount the day’s experience,” which “relates experiences in the field” (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011, p. 74) and was added to as the study continued. For the second coding, it felt more natural to begin episodically due to daily observations and interviews; however, I was not opposed to looking at data in multiple ways to see other themes emerge, which encompassed patterns of topics for types of writing or identities for writers, for example. In order to present the study in a comprehensive manner for readers, I “return[ed] to the propositions or issues” so the report would “remain focused and answer the research question” (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 55). To achieve the comprehensive layout for the study, after organizing the data chronologically, I revisited the data multiple times to search for emerging themes and look for patterns that were or were not linear or sequential.

There was an overwhelming amount of data with this study as Katherine was interviewed and observed for the eight-week time period, which included the use of a computer because “using a database improves the reliability of the case study as it enables the researcher to track and organize data sources including notes, key documents, tabular materials, narratives, photographs, and audio files can be stored in a database for easy retrieval at a later date” (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 554).

**Ethical Considerations**

**Time Limitations**

The duration of the study was eight weeks, which could be considered a short amount of time for any teacher, let alone a preservice teacher, to enter a new classroom, forge relationships with students and faculty, and implement instruction perceivably for the first time. This was also compounded by a new placement as a full-time teacher in another district after only 3 weeks in her student teacher placement. These are challenges Katherine experienced that also influenced
her decision-making concerning how her writing instruction commenced in the classroom. Additionally, the students were also new to the classroom, as it was the beginning of a new school year, which entailed disruptions of Covid-19 online and intermittent in-person classes, class meetings, class materials handed out, locker assignments, school pictures, and the like in a secondary school setting, which Katherine experienced during her time instructing.

**Power Dynamics of My Positionality**

Because I was the mentor teacher and researcher in this experience, there was a power dynamic that needed to be acknowledged in this study. As a mentor teacher, there was an evaluative power I recognized I held in Katherine’s clinical classroom experience. Additionally, as a researcher, I was also in the role of studying Katherine and was responsible for being protective of her well-being during the study, as I had the power to *study* my own preservice teacher. Due to my dual roles in the study, it was important that I was open and honest about the underlying conditions when approaching both Katherine and the data collected in order to create honesty and trustworthiness, as there was a delicate balance of respect that had to be maintained for all the participants. As a participant in the study myself, I believe “the idea that an observer becomes a part of the observation is at the heart of social construction” (Koro-Ljungberg, 2008, p. 432), and that is why the use of triangulation and member checking was utilized to create transparency.
Chapter 4: Findings

The purpose of this study was to explore a preservice teacher’s beliefs and values about writing and teaching writing in an English Language Arts classroom. This qualitative study was guided by the following questions:

Research Question:

1. How does a preservice teacher use their beliefs and identity about instruction amid changing contextual discourses in a pandemic?

In this chapter, I present background information about the preservice teacher and the contexts surrounding her teaching experiences in this study. I begin by explaining Katherine’s beliefs, then move into how those beliefs translate into her identity, are impacted by shifting contextual discourses, including those from her teacher preparation program, her first and second placements, and how those factors influenced her classroom practice as she used her identity and beliefs to navigate those contextual discourses. It is then followed by a summary of findings.

Identity as a Writer

For Katherine, although she felt reading and writing are both of value in an English Language classroom, she had a stronger proclivity toward writing, which guided the study into more exploration of her identity as a writer, her beliefs about writing and writing instruction, and how she navigated them in changing contextual discourses. In talking with Katherine, much of what she references and holds valuable about writing was considerably influenced and shaped by the learning discourses she experienced and positive feedback she received from her high school teachers about her writing. These experiences prompted her to attempt to create a similar writing culture with her writing instruction and within her own classroom. Writing became integral to her personal identity because she placed such a high value on it in her life. How someone
identifies contributes to the critical pedagogical discourses that are reflected in “emerging repertoires of practice” (Thompson et al., 2013, p.575), and for Katherine, identifying as a writer is intrinsic to her beliefs and CPD.

Interestingly, Katherine’s beliefs in fostering a strong relationship with writing and its connection to reading and critical thinking were already a part of her CPD before entering the teacher education program and taking the writing methods courses within the program. Although Katherine may not have known the dialogic beliefs and instruction she valued with writing and reading were, in fact, dialogic, she seemed to align with the instruction she received, and those dialogic beliefs were reinforced in those courses as well. This phenomenon is described by Thompson, Windschitl, & Braaten (2013):

“We reasoned that teachers identify with others’ stories of practice (e.g., from university instructors, cooperating teachers, department members) prior to and during teacher education and negotiate the appropriateness of new practices by evaluating the fit with their developing frameworks. If new practices that are modeled appear to be consonant with an underlying theory of teaching or present a compelling new vision, then the novice teacher may identify with stories from these influential narrators (Sfard & Prusak, 2005) and endeavor to appropriate the practice.” (p.578)

Although there are instances in which her instruction is monologic, the underlying motivation is explained to students as scaffolding to help students reach the more dialogic knowledge-building practices she views as valuable and essential to their ability to write, think, and discuss effectively. The dialogic beliefs she has internalized do seem to drive her instructional choices and overall goals for her students.

Her identity and acclamation of being a writer was a “thread of internalized dialogue” that constituted Katherine’s narrative about her current teacher self (Thompson, Windschitl, &
Braaten, 2014, p.579) and aligns with the semiotic aspect of Gee and Green (1998), illustrating her continued reference to the cultural and social writing situations and the institution and discourses about writing that she has been a part of and around throughout her school environments (p.140).

**Embracing the CPD as a Writer: I Decided I Was Going to be a Writer**

Katherine’s strong adherence to and high value on writing began with the shaping of her identity as a writer at a young age. As a student in her k-12 schools, Katherine experienced English classes that emphasized research-based or analytical writing, with occasional narrative writing, stating, “most of it was more focused on that assessment-type writing style” (Interview 1, p.1). In fact, she readily admits she preferred to work on her creative writing instead of the grammar section the teacher was reviewing with her fellow students during class. Katherine had a strong enough CPD, even at a young age, to create her own time and space within classes whose context did not provide it for her writing practice. Additionally, while Katherine states that her writing experiences were heavily laden with analytical and assessment writing, she provided little detail on those writing experiences. Instead, she elaborates on her creative writing experiences that she was fortunate to have through creative writing classes, which facilitated her experience of revision in writing and the importance of putting her thoughts “down on paper” (Interview 1, p.2). Katherine repeatedly attempted at a young age to break from that common experience by focusing on her own writing skills, emulating things she was reading and experimenting with her expression, even if it was during class time. The sociocultural aspect (Gee & Green, 1998, p.140) of forging her own ideas of expectations and roles as a writer with those expressed in the classroom attest to her determination to persevere in writing, noticeable by
how much time and effort she spent fostering her relationship with writing by participating in and creating a culture and discourse of writing for herself.

In viewing writing as thinking, a preservice teacher’s orientation toward writing, as a writer themselves in whatever capacity that is, can become an axiom on which he or she constructs and engages in his or her critical pedagogical discourse of writing instruction. Critical pedagogical discourse and choices made about materials, lessons, and units can illustrate “how individuals think about what they know, what knowledge is, and how they know what they know” (Braten, Muis, & Reznitskaya, 2017, p. 253). Katherine’s CPD is apparent in the intrinsic relationship she has with writing as she reveals her decision to become a writer at the age of four years old (Interview 1, p.1). Making such a considerable assertion of identity at a young age demonstrates Gee & Green’s (1998) activity aspect due to the meaning and value of writing that she attached to that time in her life. Because Katherine had such a strong calling to write, she spent any free time, even class time, working on her writing, citing instances in which teachers complimented her writing while also expressing their wishes that she focused more on their class instruction instead. Katherine admits, “I placed a high value on writing. I think that’s because when I was four years old, I decided I was going to be a writer. So I knew from childhood this is what I’m doing...So I put a lot of emphasis on writing growing up and, like, the other aspects of it” (Interview 1, p.1). Katherine’s fascination with writing later flourished with opportunities to write during creative writing classes she experienced, which offered more occasions for her to understand herself as a writer and adapt those skills for other writing assignments. She articulates, “I got a lot of experience with writing as a student as I learned the process of revision and the importance of putting my thoughts down on paper, and how doing that on a routine basis, actually helped me with the research and when it came to getting my thoughts out and write an
assessment-type paper” (Interview 1, p.2). While some teachers and many students often categorize types of writing into separate entities, Katherine is able to learn how the various writing genres can complement each other and produce stronger writing and effective authors. Her exposure to dialogic methods of instruction and her previously held beliefs in that type of instruction, whether she recognized it at that moment or not, increased the likelihood that, as an instructor, Katherine would adopt and enact those instructional strategies within her classroom. “Susi (1984) found that teachers assumed different positive writer roles and identities as a result of their participation in writers’ workshops…which, in turn, not only taught them to be more empathetic to the experiences of their students, but also “humanized” them to their students” (Brooks, 2007, p.178). Katherine brings her experience, perspective, and identity of a writer to her teaching to help students in creating writing and a writing identity. Her adherence to writing echoes the reasoning of Thompson, Windschitl, & Braaten (2013) of teacher candidates evaluating what practices fit within their framework of teaching and align with their critical pedagogical discourse and how those practices will look in their instruction. She consistently refers to students as writers, using reflective journals to explain it will be helpful “when we go to write something larger” (Google Meets 1, p.16), and later stating, “we want to start producing more writing” (Google Meets 3, p.12). She views them as writers, like herself, and includes them in that identity. The strong connection Katherine has with writing and its importance in her life due to stimulation within the classroom influenced the shaping of her identity and critical pedagogical discourse as both a writer and a writing instructor.

Contextual Discourses of Teacher Education

The methods courses held many dialogic beliefs and practices that Katherine adopted and integrated into her CPD and instructional unit and lesson plans. The Advanced Methods course
focused on teaching close reading strategies, such as “the noticing of patterns of words…, genre and text structure, and logical analysis,” among other rhetorical devices (Interview, Professor A, p.1). One assignment in this course work required students to script out their lessons to help them notice the differences in listing their objectives and activities in the lesson plans and actually enacting them. Since phrases such as “hand out papers, read this, discuss the reading” were void of complete understanding for students due to a lack of frame of reference as a teacher, students were to script it and given instruction on how “to connect the content to their lives…, ...connect it to what you’re already taught them,...connect it to what they’re about to do in the next five minutes,...[and] connect it to what they’re going to do on the assessment” (Interview, Professor A, p.3). The course aims to prepare students for how to have more effective discussions with their future students. Instead of creating “a list of procedures” or viewing discussion as “just the teacher quizzing people on what they remember,” they learn “how to write the script to make it really compelling” for their future students (Interview, Professor A, p.2). Instruction about writing in this course included having students think cognitively about writing and how it differs for their students. For their future students, considerations for writing instruction center around the amount and type of writing to work on as well as “how effective something is,” “self-observation”, and “self-assessment” for both teachers and students (Interview, Professor A, p.3).

Katherine aligned her unit lessons for her students with the structure of the 624 classes she experienced. The Advanced Methods course had students do quick writes in class by projecting a PowerPoint on the screen that included discussion questions about what they were reading that day for students to respond to, hoping “that would help them sort of integrate the variety of ideas that would be occurring and circulating in the room and then...integrate that into
their own words” (Interview, Professor A, p.5). The course also focused on self-regulation, to “reflect on their progress and make a plan for the future, and that’s something that helps as they as teachers need to cultivate” (Interview, Professor A, p.5). It also helped prepare students to “explain how learning is supported here” in their students’ assignments (Interview, Professor A, p.5). Making writing routine in the course, along with material aspects of goal-setting, action plan, and reflecting after discussion activities that Katherine experienced, are threaded through her own lesson plans and apparently became a part of her sociocultural aspect (Gee & Green, 1998, p.140). For example, Katherine used PowerPoints in her Google Meets lessons to give students an overview of the day's lessons, including reflective journal prompts for students to write upon completion of the class.

Katherine’s School-Based Contextual Discourses…Their Influence and Impact

Contextual discourses are defined as “different, often competing messages, norms, and practices in various learning-to-teach settings” (Thompson et al., 2013, p.575). Katherine had a range of experiences as a K-12 student, college student, and in traditional teaching clinical experiences. It is important for this study to include and discuss contextual discourses that were unique to Katherine’s experiences in the classroom during her clinical placement at Bradley High School and teaching position at Belmont Middle School and the impact and influence they had on Katherine’s beliefs, identity, and CPD.

Navigating Contextual Discourses in Placement 1—Bradley High School

Bradley High School is located in a suburban area with a high socioeconomic status among most of the population. The amount of people living in the area have a high school diploma and bachelor’s degree. There is a lot of pressure on students to earn good grades and on teachers to prepare them for college or other post-high school aspirations. There is much tension in the classrooms and school, especially around the dates that the grading period ends. Many students
and their parents email teachers about any missing assignments or opportunities for extra credit. The school holds a high standard for students to achieve and be more involved in their learning. Education is seen as a high priority in this school and district.

Katherine entered her preservice clinical placement at Bradley High School, a school she had graduated from as a student and with which she was familiar. As referenced previously, the Covid-19 pandemic struck the United States educational system in March of 2020. Due to its ease of transmissibility and fatal health complications, schools across the country were closed abruptly and teachers had to learn online methods of instruction for their students at home to minimize social contact and spread of the virus. In more rural areas, some students were without access to the internet to receive the online lessons, so parents picked up paper packets for their children to complete at home. Veteran teachers had difficulty transitioning to this new type of teaching, and preservice teachers not only witnessed the challenges but also experienced them as they entered the classroom. During the pandemic, the administration at Bradley High School handed down directions about how to connect with students online and use tools to create online lessons for them. We were informed by the administration of protocols on how to communicate online through messages and online meetings with students, striving to instruct and assess students, as well as respecting and protecting their privacy during those meetings. There were mandatory online conferences with specific times for each class, and teachers were to take roll during class and submit absences to the office. The reporting of absences were for teachers to call parents about why they may have missed and try to get them caught up on their missing assignments. The priority was to attempt to reach every student and lessen any gaps in their learning throughout the semester. Expectations were high, and it seemed more time was spent tracking down students and contacting parents than on instructing students. For Katherine, she entered my classroom during a time when students were still receiving online instruction but
attending in-person two days a week, masked, depending on the number of cases, rate of spread, and other factors determined by both the school districts and the state. With the varying times she would see the classes in-person, she had to prioritize and adjust her lessons with students and the pace at which she would deliver her instruction. The online platform of Schoology was used by the school district to communicate with and deliver instruction to students. Some classes were recorded in case students were not able to meet or access class at the specified time. Monitoring the issues of students’ work and progress and messaging and calling them and their parents or guardians were constant and considerable obstacles.

For Katherine, I introduced her to the classes and let her take over lessons. The students received her well, and she was eager to help them, which I believe they picked up on in her classes. She acclimated to the classroom, and students genuinely seemed to respect and treat her well. Additionally, she seemed to adjust well to navigating the online platform. She was able to think of ways to do peer editing by having students share their papers through Microsoft Word online with one another so they could comment on each other’s papers, since with Covid-19 we could not be in close proximity for the workshop. Additionally, she would meet individually online with students if they had questions about their drafts, and students attended. She took the time to thoroughly comment on their work and encourage them in their writing, so when they received her feedback and got opportunities to meet with her for more understanding, they took advantage of it. Due to her identity as a writer, it was important to her to find ways for students to grow their writing, even in the midst of challenging obstacles due to the pandemic. Under my mentorship, she was able to focus on ways to create the dialogic classroom and align and enact her beliefs and practices during the pandemic. For instance, Katherine used British Romantic poetry to help students learn to read more deeply and take note of meanings. She used the
Iceberg Activity in which students were given a handout with a picture of an iceberg on it and wrote what they saw from the poem above the line and on top of the iceberg and the hidden meanings under the water line on the bottom of the iceberg. From this activity, students would share what they noticed and discuss with Katherine and the other students to help construct meaning. The Iceberg Activity was used to help them not only understand Romantic poetry, but also learn how to write their own poetry. The writing assignment included students creating their own poetry, then analyzing it using a similar method used in the Iceberg Activity. The poetry was then asked to be shared and discussed after students had done multiple drafts and had conferences with Katherine. In the assignment, she was able to follow through with her dialogic beliefs and practices, even while teaching part of the time online with students during the pandemic.

As mentioned previously, Katherine had originally been placed in my classroom for her preservice teaching placement. While in my classroom, I was able to mentor her and be someone she could come to with questions or clarifications about students, lessons, and unit plans. We would collaborate and discuss strategies and material, among other aspects of the classroom regularly. She was able to take over seamlessly with instruction, even online, agreeing to meet with students for individual online conferences when needed or wanted. She was aware of the expectations during the online instruction of the pandemic and rose to the challenge of teaching in that capacity with creativity and support for students. As mentioned previously, Katherine was only in Placement 1 for a few weeks before moving to Placement 2, from which the bulk of the data was collected and analyzed.
Navigating Contextual Discourses in Placement 2–Belmont Middle School

Covid-19 caused the decision for some teachers to leave the profession in order to care for themselves and loved ones and career openings in school districts. Three weeks into her preservice teaching placement, Katherine had applied for and received a teaching position in a different school district. This meant she would be leaving her preservice teaching environment to enter a new one as a novice teacher.

Belmont Middle School, Placement 2, is located in a rural area with a low socioeconomic status among most of the population. The amount of people living in the area have a high school diploma, but only 13% hold a bachelor’s degree. Unfortunately, the area has not passed a school levy in at least 12 years, even though the school board has attempted a few times. Although teachers hold high expectations of their students, it seems from Katherine’s experience, that many students did not hold learning in high regard. The reason for this could be due to many factors, including, but not limited to, the pandemic, lack of in-person attendance, and family or health issues, the school’s and district’s culture, or socio-economic issues, just to name a few. The school does hold a high standard for students to achieve and be more involved in their learning; however, the contextual discourse of education does not seem to match in intensity with Katherine’s first placement.

Instruction at Placement 2, Belmont Middle School, was more challenging with a new set of contextual discourses for her to navigate. The online platform in that school was Google Meets. Additionally, she was in a new school district and classroom in which she was unfamiliar. Their dates of in-person were different from the days students attended within Placement 1, Bradley High School. Also, individual superintendents were allowed to determine if students could meet in-person based on their district’s COVID-19 numbers, so there were instances in which our school was attending in-person and her school district was not. There were also stark
contrasts between the two school districts and environments that Katherine had to learn to navigate in her first full-time teaching position. The composition of her class was different in socioeconomics, ages, and academic abilities, according to Katherine’s assessments through classroom discussions and lessons. There were more students with either limited or no access to the internet to attend the Google Meets instructional sessions she conducted. There were numerous instances where Katherine references paper packets that some of her students had to complete because they were not able to meet during her Google Meets instructional lessons.

Essentially, Katherine’s placement at Belmont Middle School was a completely different one than her first placement. While she had me as a mentor to help her transition into her role as their teacher in Placement 1, she was basically placed into the full-time teaching position in a classroom in which the students had four to five weeks of school with at least two other substitute teachers. She had to finish a novel that another teacher had started and attempted to align with her method of teaching to keep it uniform for students. Although the methods of the substitute teacher she was replacing did not align with her beliefs about teaching, she conformed to them in most respects through the end of the novel and only made a few changes. She felt pressured to do this, thinking that students had already experienced different teachers and instruction and would need more stability and familiarity.

Additionally, when she accepted the full-time teaching position at Belmont Middle School, my role as her mentor essentially diminished. As she was leaving the classroom, I had to begin teaching my classes again and was unable to be a constant presence for her to inquire and reflect on her teaching practices and goals. Although we talked sparingly throughout the transition, each of us were focused on our own students, classrooms, and courses because she was also challenged by having to complete her preservice teaching course assignments that semester as well as navigate a new school, classroom, students, and instructional content and
goals. Also, in her teaching position at Belmont Middle School, Katherine was not assigned a mentor teacher, or at least states that she does not remember one being assigned to her. Although she was still in contact with her college courses’ professors, she was unable to experience the benefits of a mentor/mentee relationship during a challenging time in the beginnings of her teaching career. In her own classroom, Katherine was able to enact her own teaching practices without getting feedback on her instructional practices or the space to reflect on how to evaluate and reform those practices to better align with her beliefs and goals. Her preconceptions and experiences of instruction and classroom practices were undoubtedly much different than the ones she was facing at that time, and without a mentor to help support her through those changes, the classroom practices shifted from dialogic beliefs and instruction to monologic ones to make sure students were receiving the content. Although mentorship is not a complete remedy for preservice teachers learning and transitioning into novice, professional teachers, it is a helpful tool as preservice teachers learn more about themselves, their career, and how to adjust to different contextual discourses they may face as they embark in their field.

**Katherine’s Unit Structure**

Over the course of my observations, Katherine taught an 11-week long unit on identity. The essential question of the unit was, "How is Identity Formed?" Within this unit, Katherine explored multiple dimensions of identity through multiple genres. The dimensions of identity she explored included nature, nurture, and the types of genres and writing that express identity (See Table 7). In each segment of the unit, she used a central text, focused on a reading practice, introduced a reading strategy, and integrated writing activities. Ultimately, the unit culminated in an essay arguing whether identity is formed more by nature or nurture.

Over the course of my observations, she taught two mini-units and one unit within the comprehensive unit of identity. The two mini-units observed were of a short story and poem that
lasted for a few days each. The unit with the science textbook was observed for two weeks, but lasted longer within her teaching unit. Within each unit, she designed explicit instruction on reading, language, and writing:

**Table 8: Katherine’s Units and Instruction**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mini-Units</th>
<th>Reading Materials</th>
<th>Writing Tasks</th>
<th>Relationship Between Reading &amp; Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Names/Nombres” with</td>
<td><strong>Genre:</strong> Short Story</td>
<td><strong>Focus Writing Craft</strong></td>
<td>Writing for the Say-Mean Chart was to collect textual evidence, which was followed by the reflection journal to build interpretations after reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a focus on how an aspect</td>
<td><strong>Focus Reading Practice / Standard:</strong> Comprehension Inferencing Interpretations Color-coding for inferences</td>
<td><strong>Summary</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of our identity is</td>
<td><strong>Reading Activities:</strong> Close Reading; Text read aloud to students; Color-Coding Reading Strategy; Guided Reading Questions</td>
<td><strong>Explanation of an inference Characterization</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>appointed by others due to</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Focus Writing Activity / Materials:</strong> Reflection Journal Say-Mean Chart Plot Diagram</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>our culture and backgrounds.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The Road Not Taken”</td>
<td><strong>Genre:</strong> Poetry</td>
<td><strong>Focus Writing Craft</strong></td>
<td>The large utterances focus on the bigger picture of the unit, the theme of identity, and students making inferences about identity as they think about the nature vs. nurture debate. Students are asked to think about how they would define identity, what parts compose an identity, and how it is shaped, then write their interpretations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with a focus on how an</td>
<td><strong>Focus Reading Practice / Standard:</strong> Comprehension Inferencing of themes</td>
<td><strong>Summary</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aspect of our identity can</td>
<td><strong>Reading Activities:</strong> Close Reading; Guided Reading Questions</td>
<td><strong>Characterization</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>be ascribed due to our</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Focus Writing Activity/Materials:</strong> Reflection Journal</td>
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<td>decisions.</td>
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**Unit**

| Reading Materials | Writing Tasks | Relationship Between Reading & Writing |
|-------------------|---------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                  |               |                                                                                          |                                                                                                          |
| Science Textbook with a focus on how an aspect of our identity can be attributed to our genetics. | **Genre:** Nonfiction Text  
**Focus Reading Practice / Standard:** Learning parts of a nonfiction textbook (titles, topics, subtopics)  
Comprehension of concepts  
Inferencing to identity  
**Reading Activities:** Text read aloud to students  
Guided Reading Questions | **Focus Writing Craft:** Comprehend the layout of a textbook  
**Summary:** Locate information in a textbook  
**Understand content in relation to identity**  
**Argument about nature/nurture and their effects on identity**  
**Focus Writing Activity/Materials:** Nature/Nurture Activity (categorize from a word bank)  
Locate & Find Activity (handout to complete on each section of the text)  
Reflection Journal  
Hunting & Gathering Activity (for argumentative essay on Nature vs. Nurture) | The reading was to bring in a different type of source for students to draw from when arguing whether nature or nurture influences identity more. The writing focused on helping students understand how the text is set up first, then on understanding content in relation to the culminating argumentative paper. |

The material and activity aspects (Gee & Green, 1998, p.140) for her unit and instruction are evident in her choices of artifacts and texts for students to read and integrate into a concluding writing assignment using those resources, which consist of the genres of prose, poetry, and nonfiction. She begins with short stories, then introduces poetry, and finishes with the nonfiction science textbook. The chosen texts also represent her confidence level in each one. She seems much more at ease in teaching the prose and poetry texts, while the nonfiction text seems more uncomfortable for her, illustrated by the types of writing each unit is assigned. The writing in the prose and poetry units involves more critical thinking, while the writing in the science textbook involves understanding of the layout of information than the information itself. The subactivities she assigns for students, such as reading the texts, completing guided questions, and other scaffolded assignments to develop their understanding of each text separately, are part
of the larger activity of connecting the theme of identity for each text in the unit and encouraging students to use those connections to advance their knowledge-building and the culminating writing assignment (Gee & Green, 1998, p.140). She chose to use the reciprocity between reading and writing to help students learn about how books are created, author’s choices, and nuances with writing so they can learn through the writing process. Similarly, Katherine feels students will become better readers and writers by using and defining both as they develop writing skills in her classroom, seeing each as complementary to the other instead of separate disciplines. Katherine’s CPD is discernible in her view of writing and reading as correlative and dialogic in nature through her selection and intention of unit materials and instructional writing strategies.

How Katherine Navigated Her Beliefs and Identity in Placement 2

Although Katherine experienced dialogic beliefs and practices within her methods courses, the strategies and beliefs did not always follow through in her instruction. For instance, Katherine learned how to scaffold and model strategies for students so they could learn to do them on their own and build their own understanding of the strategy and the text they were working on in class. However, due to the contextual factors surrounding her teaching she felt she needed to deliver content instead of allowing collaboration of learning to occur in the classroom. The rurality of the school was a factor because during her teaching there, students were not attending in person except a couple of days a week. Other days were strictly for online meetings and lessons, and some students did not or could not access them from home. Katherine cites in her Google Meets lessons about having to create paper packets for some students as to why she was reviewing a concept or assignment with them again. Additionally, students had limited time to meet and form a relationship with Katherine because of online learning and previous substitute teachers in the class before her arrival. When Katherine entered their classroom, she was aware
of at least two different substitute teachers that had taught the students that semester, from August until her beginning in October. Students could have been reluctant due to those circumstances, and although Katherine never states that they were, the manner in which she speaks to them in Google Meets illustrates her desire to help students and build those relationships in the midst of intermittent attendance. Due to these contexts, she felt she needed to deliver content to students rather than following the methods of scaffolding and modeling she had learned in her methods courses.

One scaffolding strategy Katherine utilized with students was the Say-Mean Chart. The Say-Mean Chart is designed to scaffold students toward finding the inferences on their own as they read texts that have figurative language or more meanings than the literal words on the page. The strategy can give the students the ability to recognize these deeper meanings to better understand the texts and their authors’ meanings. After explaining the purpose of the Say-Mean Chart for students, Katherine then shares an example with students, intending to scaffold them to learning this skill on their own:

So for number one, “When we arrived in New York City our names changed almost immediately at immigration the officer asked my father, Mr. Alvarez, if he had anything to declare. So when I read that sentence, I was kind of like, okay, so did their names actually change? …And I came up with, in the mean chart, that no one could pronounce their name correctly, so it changed their names from what they had been. So it's not like an actual change. But it's just how someone pronounced it differently. Does that clarify kind of how I want you to take away from the say part instead of just restating what the say says…”(Google Meets 2, p.1-2)

In this part of the lesson, Katherine follows the format of the Say-Mean Chart activity by showing students an example as a reference and guide as they complete the rest of the chart for
the story. She then releases students to continue working on the chart for the rest of their instructional time but stays on in case they have questions. However, shortly after instructing students to begin on their own, a student voices they cannot find another example., stating “So you can't, so you're having trouble finding the next one?” (Google Meets 2, p.8). She reengages by reading through more of the story until class time ends, “So…I'm just reading from where we left off…” (Google Meets 2, p.8) and continues to lead the discussion in the interaction and provide them with example after example. Although she asks students questions about pieces of the text and whether they think it could go on the chart, students answer with one-word responses and she takes up the rest of the exchange. At the end, they are instructed to find the rest on their own and email her if they have questions, which breaks from the Say-Mean Chart format by continuing to dictate her thinking for students and does not allow for dialogic discussions to occur in the lesson. While Katherine chose this activity due to her dialogic beliefs and CPD and begins with the dialogic practice of the Say-Mean Chart, it becomes more of a monologic practice through her dominating both the examples and the meanings behind them. In doing so, Katherine believes she has completed the strategy in a dialogic way because at the end the students have completed the chart; however, she essentially has lectured them to the point at which they simply copied down her examples and explanations instead of constructing their own. She struggles with how to release students to the task for productive struggle, an element of Vygotsky’s theory of social constructivism and how students learn.

Katherine also chose to reread texts multiple times in her Google Meets. Although the strategy can help in students’ comprehension, spending the entire class period reading the text for students with minimal interactions is monologic and recitation, the “oral presentation of previously learned material” (Nystrand, 1997, p.5). These types of lessons are “tightly scripted”
where “students play a minor and supporting role in what gets said here, mainly responding with an occasional word or two to the teacher’s periodic questions” (Nystrand, 1997, p.5). Essentially, the purpose of recitation is “to transmit information to students and review it with them” (Nystrand, 1997, p.6). For instance, in Google Meets 6, Katherine rereads a section of the science textbook for students in the lesson, which takes up a little over 30 minutes of the one-hour lesson. She intermittently pauses to check for comprehension, but continues reading the text for students. The rest of the lesson, she has students complete a Locate & Find Activity where students are to locate information in the text she had just read and answer questions she has listed. However, even in this exercise, when students have questions, Katherine guides them toward the answers, so students “develop no ideas of their own; they do a lot of guessing” because she “is working from a highly wrought list of topics and questions, covering particular points in a particular order” with “minimal interaction between teacher and student” (Nystrand, 1997, p.5). These lessons illustrate her priority and intention to deliver the content to students, which parts from her dialogic beliefs and previous experiences in the methods courses, and that without a classroom-based mentor to help her reflect on her use of time and purpose for activities, she did not cultivate that self-awareness.

**Dialogic Reading and Writing...Even Online!**

Reading and writing are integral to Katherine’s critical pedagogical discourse because she views them as interdependent and imperative in fostering more effectiveness in the set of skills for each discipline. For Katherine, reading and writing are integrated into English class because “you can’t have one without the other” (Interview 1, p.3). She believes “you can’t be a writer without also being a reader, and you can’t be a reader without also learning to write” (Interview 1, p.3-4). The reciprocity between reading and writing seems seamless to Katherine because they
can inform each other and aid in students’ understanding. In her teaching in both placements, Katherine attempted to have the two aspects of reading and writing coincide within her lessons.

At Belmont Middle School, one semiotic pattern Katherine frequently used was metalanguage about the goals and process for student learning with them (Gee & Green, 1998, p. 140) to highlight the connection between reading and writing for students. With each lesson, she explains the activities they will be doing and helps students make connections between their reading and writing activities to develop their thinking on the topics being discussed. In the “Names/Nombres” mini-unit, Katherine explains the Say-Mean Chart is “a graphic organizer to organize our thoughts on deeper meanings of the text. So it is a tool to help us build and expand on our close reading abilities in order to add another layer to the surface layer of a text” (Google Meets 2, p.1). Later in the class, she has students follow the I Do/We Do/You Do strategy for students, explaining she wants them to see “...my thinking and how I would figure those out” and “tell me what you think about each part and what you think it means” (Google Meets 2, p.3-4). The interactions in this lesson illustrate how reading, writing, and thinking work together to help students develop their understanding of concepts. Katherine expands her discussion of how reading and writing help students advance their thinking with phrases such as “you can use quotes from the story to…support your answer” (Google Meets 2, p.17) and “inferences” (Google Meets 3, p.1) to help students learn to develop meaning. Katherine further references the importance and value of reading and writing in a science textbook lesson, explaining, “I want you to…form your own answers… And…why you think that’s correct…because we're eventually going to write an argumentative essay on this topic where you have to defend what you think based off of the text...” (Google Meets 4, p.10-11). The consistent references to the value of reading and writing are threaded through the texts she designated for the unit. The texts
align with the concluding argumentative essay on the nature versus nurture debate where students take a stance on which aspect is more influential in creating one’s identity. Katherine reviews the texts “Names/Nombres”, “Eleven”, “Fever 1793”, and “The Road Not Taken” together while defining theme and helping students make connections between the other pieces of literature they have read in her unit. She ventures to scaffold their thinking and strengthen their own inferencing skills with these and future texts. Through the knowledge-building she scaffolds in class discussion, Katherine attempts to integrate the semiotic aspects and the classroom community to help create a sociocultural aspect of the roles of students in the classroom and guiding their participation to foster dialogic practices (Gee & Green, 1998, p.140). She initiates the connections between the literature and has them recognize the theme of identity while reviewing the discussion question about themes within the lesson on the poem “The Road Not Taken:

Katherine: Yeah. So, one of the things that I wanted, I want you guys to learn throughout my class is that literature is usually in a conversation with each other. So if you read one short story or you can read a novel, and, or even like a textbook like an informational text, and you're kind of confused about it, sometimes there's other, you can find other readings or other options that you can read to help you understand that first reading better. So, and then even if you feel like you understand that you can always use these extra, you know, side readings to kind of get a conversation going so that you can see more than one person's perspective because each writer, each, um, each person, the author kind of has their own ideas and they put their ideas on paper differently. And it, like reading multiple versions of it can help you form your own…opinions based off of the information that we got. (Google Meets 3, p.9)
Katherine’s detailed rationale at this point in the lesson elucidates for students her intentions for the unit and inclusion of different types of texts so students can recognize that texts do not have to stay partitioned by their genre. Instead, the pieces of literature work together as a conversation about the theme of identity in different contexts, an aspect of dialogism. The idea that seemingly contradicting types of literature can be complementary speaks to her CPD on the importance of the interconnectivity of writing and reading to expand her students’ critical thinking and understanding, attempting to create a sociocultural aspect through integrating students’ “personal, social, and cultural knowledge and beliefs, feelings, and identities” (Gee & Green, 1998, p.140) that are relevant to the unit and classroom environment.

**Writing as Thinking…Even Online!**

A teacher’s orientation toward writing, as a writer themselves in whatever capacity that is, can become an attribute on which he or she constructs and engages in his or her CPD of writing instruction in the classroom. Writing is an outlet to help students find their own words and thoughts to expound on their learning of concepts in the classroom and in society for Katherine. The reflective journals she assigns allow for student choice and open-ended responses for students to construct their thoughts and understanding, as topics are related to the lesson and overall unit in some way. Her critical pedagogical discourse includes that writing is thinking and a fundamental cornerstone on which people can communicate and build their knowledge. She believes writing is a valuable and compulsory exercise in order to communicate with others, as she repeats the importance of “getting thoughts on paper” (Interview 1, p.2) for her students within interviews prior to even teaching them. The writing prompts in the unit are to help students build knowledge and voice their own thoughts in a culminating argumentative essay at the end of the unit. As seen in her following explanation:
For essays, you have to actually communicate what you think, why you think it, and prove to it, which is a critical thinking level of skills that, even if you don't continue on in an English career, you're gonna be doing...So to learn that system of communication will be very beneficial, and so it's kind of scaffolding and building that ability to think critically in all aspects. (Interview 3, p.2)

Additionally, she explains other benefits of writing, such as, “It teaches you valuable analytical skills...[and] when you’re writing you...have to analyze what you want to do and make those choices. And it also...teaches you how to back up your choices” (Interview 1, p.4). It is apparent Katherine highly values writing and its place in her curriculum to help students even after they leave the classroom. She explains to her students that while writing, “it is always important for us to be able to reflect on what we’re doing and on the work we’re doing. So it’s just kind of giving us that ability to stop and think, you know, to think deeply and think critically and help us [understand] why we think what we do” (Google Meets 1, p.14). Katherine takes the time to emphasize the correlation between writing and thinking for her students, as well as remarking on how important routinely writing it is to help “get your thoughts on paper” (Interview 1, p.2).

Writing allows students to express their reasoning and join in the classroom discourse to build upon their understanding of those concepts. The practice of writing is actually a practice in thinking, as students reflect on and relate their thinking for others to view and discuss. For Katherine, she illustrates her beliefs about writing through assigning open-ended responses for students in reflective journals, using mentor texts to as examples of her thematic focus on identity, and also using Say-Mean Charts for students to learn to look for inferences and eventually use inferences in their own writing.
Say-Mean Charts

Close reading strategies were selected by Katherine for her unit, which can be a dialogic practice for students to learn how to communicate their thinking about concepts to others through writing and discussion. In the beginning of the course, Advanced Methods of English Education, Katherine was exposed to close reading strategies, including the Say-Mean Chart, and assimilated the strategies within her unit. Thompson, Windschitl, & Braaten’s (2013) research would recognize that Katherine’s critical pedagogical discourse and dialogic beliefs about writing and its relationship with reading were further shaped by the instruction she experienced in the methods courses. The close reading strategy of the Say-Mean Chart evidently emerged for Katherine because of its dialogic potential. The strategy allows students to reflect on and pose questions about the text they are reading and help them transition from literal to inferential meanings. The T-chart has students place the quoted text on the left side and the inferred meaning on the right side. After students complete the chart, the teacher does a whole-class review, asking students probing questions so they will explain their conclusions. Katherine used this strategy with the short story “Names/Nombres” by Julia Alvarez:

Katherine: For today, we’re talking about the Say-Mean chart... It’s another strategy that uses a graphic organizer to organize our thoughts on deeper meanings of the text. So it is a tool to help us build and expand on our close reading abilities in order to add another layer to the surface layer of a text. So we talked about this before, about how there’s kind of like that surface layer and sometimes you have to dig down deeper to get other meanings. So the goal of the say-mean chart is so you can provide you with, like, a new reading strategy to help you and interpreting and analyzing a literary text… Katherine explains the purpose of the strategy as a way to help students learn to think critically and extend their understanding of texts they read. It
is clear Katherine wants students to experience and internalize the concept of writing as thinking because she views writing as an expressive act, one that can be empowering and epiphanic. Her CPD is apparent in her choice of writing and reading instructional strategies and in her rationalizations and explanations to students of those strategies and their benefits.

*Quick Writes as a Tool for Thinking*

Katherine views writing as an imperative practice for students because she, herself, experienced the benefits of that writing process and intends the same experience for her students. Her CPD prompted the assigning of journal responses and guided reading questions for students to complete throughout the unit. The responses for those assignments are intended to allow students time to think more deeply and critically about the text they are reading and how they are making sense of it. The quick writes are activities she includes in the unit that will orient students to the larger activity of the argumentative essay on nature vs. nurture (Gee & Green 1998, p.140) and align with her CPD. Katherine strongly regards the benefits and effectiveness of routine writing for her students. The idea of writing being a sustained process that one has to keep working with was addressed in the writing methods course and became a deep-seated belief for Katherine, as it aligned with her previous experiences with writing and identity as a writer. The writing methods course syllabus states, “Because writing helps us to know what we think, to articulate what we know, and to make meaning in a community, [we] will write daily, individually and collaboratively” (309 Syllabus, p.1). The class focused on laying out the perception of writing as a recursive process that “can be learned and taught and deepened over time” (Professor B, p.2) for their future students. Katherine also had extensive experience with quick writes in all of the four methods courses in which the professor fostered viewing writing as thinking:
I tried to model that practice by doing a lot of quick writes… I would have my PowerPoint up on the screen and I had preplanned we'd have our discussion of the reading. Whatever topic it was, it might have been about…, and then, the next slide would be a question where they had to just sit and write for five minutes about and respond to that question… What my hope was, is that that would help them sort of integrate the variety of ideas that would be occurring and circulating in the room. And then they integrate that into their own thoughts and words. So we use it after discussions a lot” (Interview, Professor A, p.4).

Katherine’s belief of writing being a continual process was reinforced by these courses and later utilized with the five-minute writing exercises and journal prompts within her identity unit. She assigned these exercises to prepare students for developing their thinking on the topics being discussed in that specific lesson and bridge it to the bigger theme connecting all of the texts in the unit for the culminating writing project. Assigning her students these writing tasks depicts the considerable influence the writing methods courses had on her critical pedagogical discourse.

Writing is Ownership… Even Online!

One of the most central aspects of Katherine’s CPD is viewing writing as ownership. The idea of ownership “sometimes means that the student chooses the topic or format or genre for texts, sometimes that the student, rather than the teacher, makes the major decisions about the progression of the piece, and sometimes that the project is an authentic project rather than an assignment” (Kennedy, 1999, p.59). Katherine discloses, in particular, the impact the Writing Composition methods course had on her views of writing for others because her views of writing previously rested solely with her own experiences and frames of reference as an author herself, the owner of her writing. She recalls the realization of the idea that “it’s important to consider
students as authors, like give them ownership of their work,” admitting, “I never thought about it like that, like giving them a title, like giving them credit for what they’re doing and letting them know, well you’re writing so you are an author, whether it’s published or not” (Interview 1, p.2). Stemming from her role and identity as an author, Katherine’s feelings of autonomy over her thoughts and writing are imparted on to her students and their writing practices through her lessons. She further explains how such a stance can give students pride in their writing and “contributes to their engagement” (Interview 1, p.2) in the writing process. The writing methods courses became a revelation to Katherine about the writing process and how it is referenced and applied to students in a classroom, as she had only viewed writing through the lens of her individual writing process as an author. She began positioning students as agentive writers, consistently giving positive feedback to encourage them to keep writing and be vigilant in putting their own ideas on paper and expounding upon them. For instance, in the lesson with “The Road Not Taken”, Katherine explains to her students “…that literature is usually in a conversation with each other...So, and then even if you feel like you understand that you can always use these extra, you know, side readings to kind of get a conversation going so that you can see more than one person’s perspective (Google Meets 3, p.9). The clarification communicates the idea that reading should be dialogic, an exercise, like writing, that can lead students to more knowledge-building about the topics within the unit. Katherine’s explanation of her expectations and goals for the students in the lesson and overall unit reiterate many aspects of the 309 course ideas and concepts. It is clear she is attempting to empower them as critical thinkers and writers within her lessons.

Essentially, Katherine drew on the sociocultural aspect of the norms, roles, and obligations as an author and transitioned them to a semiotic aspect by using the same sign
systems in institutions and communities (Gee & Green, 1998, p.140) of authors and writing through phrases like “the author kind of has their own ideas” and “reading multiple versions of it can help you form your own ideas” (Google Meets 3, p.9). In staying true to her experience with writing and her CPD that everyone is able to write and express their thoughts, Katherine also chooses to keep the stance and frame of reference as an author herself, illustrating her strong adherence to writing and viewing writing instruction from the perspective of a writer rather than that of a writing instructor. Katherine makes a point to stress the importance of ownership of both ideas and writing to her students in other lessons as well. She states, “… each writer,…. each person, the author kind of has their own ideas and they put their ideas on paper differently” and has planned for students “to be exposed to multiple different stories or poems or text…so that [they]’re able to form [thei]r own opinions based off of the information…”(Google Meets 3, p. 9). For Katherine, she aspires for her rural students to be emboldened in owning their writing and thinking and continuing to make it the best it can be through revisions and experiences with other writing and texts. Her critical pedagogical discourse is apparent in her class discussions of writing with students, partly because she herself is an author and partly because of her experiences in the writing methods courses that have been forged and adopted by Katherine.

**Writing as Assessment in an Online Context**

Assessment permeates the education system, and writing is no exception; however, the views of assessment vary with each teacher. For Katherine, her views of assessment as a student included drafts of writing for her teachers where corrections and revisions were strictly dichotomized as infallible or erroneous. She later transitioned her CPD to viewing assessment as giving credit to students as their roles as authors of their writing instead of judging their writing as right or wrong (Interview 1, p.3) and attributes her change in the perception of assessing writing to the Approaches to Teaching Composition course, which also affirms how she already
viewed writing. The 309 course encompassed writing assignments and projects, material aspects (Gee & Green, 1998, p.140) that focused on multi-modality and “realizing that drafting an essay is not the only way that they’re going to ask their students to compose and that they’ll need to compose themselves” (Interview, Professor B, p.2). Katherine was also to keep a writer’s notebook to reflect on the reading in the class and possibly “collect quotes and reflections or citations of authors,” essentially creating “a catch-all for writing as composing ideas and writing as thinking” (Interview, Professor B, p.3). Other writing in the course included research writing, through creating an annotated bibliography; genre writing; lesson plans and accompanying analyses; and arguments and “rationales for the work they were doing” (Interview, Professor B, p.5). The assorted assignments and projects seem to confirm for Katherine how viewing writing through the lens of her future students and the manners in which types of writing can be utilized and maximized for the benefit of her students, as she reveals creative writing “helped me with the research” (Interview 1, p.2) and chooses to include similar activities within her unit.

Katherine references materials from courses that she believes helped shape her CPD further, and the material aspect of these artifacts and the language practices and processes used in and with those resources (Gee & Green, 1998, p.140) appear in her instruction. Katherine specifically references the writing methods’ central text, In the Middle, as she elucidates its impact on her view of the value and application of writing as an educator within the classroom: I read In the Middle, like, the middle school, the high school age. I forget who wrote it, but she was a writing-based instruction teacher, and she put so much emphasis on writing, whether it was narratives or poetry. Every section of her, um, instead of doing an assessment or like a test, she would do a writing activity. So there was so much emphasis. There was like 45 minutes of reading, 45 minutes of writing because they had an hour and a half block. So, taking that into
consideration, it was, I don’t know, I kind of, like, just learned that it’s important to give kids the opportunity and to, like, give them credit for what they’re doing. (Interview 1, p. 2).

*In the Middle* became a pivotal text for Katherine, as she seemed to embrace the ideas of writing activities instead of traditional assessments as part of her critical pedagogical discourse, which is evidenced by her choice to conclude her identity unit with an argumentative essay on the nature versus nurture debate and comprise the literature in that unit with pieces that could be used as sources for that essay. There were six Google Meets instructional lessons recorded and a daily calendar of her lesson plans for the unit, which began with a novel, short stories, and a poem, then transitioned to a nonfiction article and science textbook for students to have varying points of view on the subject of identity. In the unit, there were several formative assessments used through the journal writing, guided reading questions, close reading strategies, locate and find activities, and classroom discussions; however, there was only one summative assessment, the argumentative essay on nature vs. nurture. The 309 course and *In the Middle* text allowed Katherine to accept the idea of writing activities as assessments, illustrating her CPD and the effect of the material and activity aspects on her writing instruction and unit plans.

**Writing is Reflection…Even Online!**

Katherine’s CPD of the high value of writing extended her view that writing can be used as a reflective exercise and tool to help students organize and advance their own thinking in a critical manner. Reflective writing in the classroom is effective, as it allows students to look back at past experiences, explore experiences to explain them, and constructively criticize themselves. Reflection has its educational roots in the work of Dewey (1933) for intellectual growth and a more critical approach in the work of Friere (1972) (Ryan, 2011, p.2). Ryan (2011) asserts that “When students are provided with opportunities to examine and reflect upon their beliefs,
philosophies and practices, they are more likely to see themselves as active change agents and lifelong learners (Mezirow 2006)” (p.4). The benefits of reflection have been researched thoroughly and are still being taught and discussed in writing methods courses. Drawing from course 309, Katherine assigned reflective writing in her identity unit as well. During one class, Katherine took time to elucidate for students the reflection journal and its purpose, to build their writing and critical thinking skills. Within the lesson, Katherine mentions that the smaller 5-minute journal writing is a practice “for the next semester, when we go to write something larger” (Google Meets 1, p.15-16). She explains that the transition between reflective journals and the larger writing assignment “is going to be easier...to defend your ideas and to defend your thoughts because you’ve been practicing (Google Meets 1, p.15-16). The following exchange illustrates Katherine introducing and discussing her expectations of the reflection journals and their purpose with students, to help them learn more about themselves and their thinking:

Katherine: ...So the reflection journal is pretty much an activity to help us practice writing and backing up our thoughts...They are to help you practice reflecting and...practice thinking about how you think...it is going to help you become a better learner and to help you progress...it's just kind of giving us that ability to stop and think...deeply and think critically...(Google Meets 1, p.15-16)

Within the interaction, Katherine emphasizes the importance of practicing writing for students as they begin the reflection journals because the assignment allows students to discover their methods of thinking and how to express and convey themselves to others. To Katherine, the ability to relate their thinking to others is a skill that must be practiced so they become more effective at socially communicating, illustrating her CPD.
Katherine explains the benefits of reflection are detrimental to students advancing their writing and the importance of having a safe space in which students can let those ideas foster and develop:

… So to create this area, like a classroom environment where they are routinely writing …to let them know there’s a purpose for it;...You’re writing because it teaches you valuable communication skills. It teaches you valuable analytical skills. I feel like when you’re writing you kind of have to analyze what you want to do and make those choices. And it also kind of teaches you how to back up your choices” (Interview 1, p.4).

Katherine suggests that reflective writing practices will allow students to engage and grow confident in their writing abilities. She places a high value on students recognizing themselves as authors and having ownership over their writing. For Katherine the concept of reflective writing is important because it can lead to the feelings and empowerment of ownership, the status of an author, much in the way she identifies as one herself. Katherine’s CPD is showcased by the way she places her views of reflecting and ownership closely together due to the perceived reciprocal relationship they have in fostering writing and expression.

The 309 course specifically included reflective assignments and projects of various writing compositions and activities to expand the students’ frame of reference and understanding of the writing process for their future students, as students in this course are usually adept at writing already. Professor Morris explains the main goals for the students enrolled in the course: The first thing that I really want them to be familiar with is writing out the process. So I think a lot of them come from backgrounds where they... the first...they are already good writers for the most part...So I want to start to think about writing as a process that some writers have to really engage much more deeply and maybe they themselves do…That it doesn't come naturally for
everyone. So really thinking about writing as the thing that's recursive, that requires feedback and time; that requires drafting that’s related to thinking and not drafting, maybe, that's just related to editing...Second thing...I want them to embrace is their role as writers in a classroom with other writers. So how to model that process. A lot of them... maybe they do one and done drafts…We're attempting to delay that meaning should change in a piece of writing. So helping them unlearn some of the things that they think they know and then to practice that process so that they can model it for their students. (Interview, Sarah)

The reflective aspect to the writing process is a principal one Katherine has learned and wants to encourage in her own students, evident through her writing assignments and descriptions of writing and its importance in her lessons. The experiences in the course help the 309 students discern that their future students may struggle with writing and may not see writing as having the same value as themselves, a revelation for Katherine that she explained during interviews. For instance, in the Writing Composition Methods course, she was required to keep a writer’s notebook the length of the course for reflection and create a 2–3-week unit designed to “work students through the entire writing process with a piece of writing” that is “centered on the type of writing students must do themselves so it becomes a mentor text for their future students” (Interview, Professor B, p.5). The ideas of writing as thinking and reflection, as well as the benefit of using mentor texts, were strategies she learned about within her writing methods courses that she felt should be central to her CPD and become a part of the activity and sociocultural aspects, spending more time on these activities and “creating these norms and expectations to guide students’ participation and activity” (Gee & Green, 1998, p.140) within her future class instruction.
Teaching as Showing: Learning to Model as a Practice

For Katherine, the environment and encouragement she received from her classroom experiences helped solidify writing as part of her identity and CPD. Because it is such a strong part of her identity, she approaches writing instruction with not only teaching students how to write, but hoping they learn to appreciate it as much as she does and integrate it as part of their identity as well. As mentioned previously, Katherine holds writing and its beneficial effects of reflection and critical thinking in high esteem, and the assignments from her writing methods courses and the experiences with them have undoubtedly become a part of her CPD and teacher identity.

The environment a preservice teacher enters is an additional factor that can determine the degree to which they implement their CPD and dialogic lessons. Katherine’s preservice teaching placement in an open classroom environment with choice of instruction for students allowed her to create relationships with the students and share her perspective that they are all writers, that writing can be an important part of their identity. As she shifted to her full-time teaching position at Belmont Middle School, Katherine spent a great deal of time explaining what they are doing and why partly in response to the contextual factors of the abrupt nature of her entrance into their classroom and the pandemic-induced delivery of online and intermittent in-person instruction. She attempts to bridge a social rapport with students, stating, “And for those who have not turned in…yesterday’s assignment,…get it submitted today as well. Because all of you guys do great work in class, but if you end up not submitting your work a lot of times, and then I can’t give you grades…for your hard work” (Google Meets 1, p.1). Katherine’s demeanor and statements are complementary for students and their level of work in her class, as well as express her desire for students to receive ‘credit’ for their work by submitting assignments. Throughout this same
Google Meets, and in the others, Katherine spends much of the time discussing the stories and aspects of them that students may be unfamiliar with, such as names of places and concepts to which the author mentions or refers, all reflective of the assignments and instruction she received in the writing methods courses.

Katherine further explains her dialogic beliefs and CPD of a successful writing lesson, explaining it as one in which “every student partakes in the writing process,” a discussion between her, as the teacher, and the student “about writing and using writing language” (Interview 2, p.1). She views this as an immersive process that requires much interaction among the participants in order for the writing lesson to be efficacious. Katherine clarifies, “A successful writing lesson would be a lesson where every student partakes in the writing process. And whether that’s through actually writing, revising, or workshopping, and whether it’s an actual discussion between a student and the teacher, me, about writing, using writing language—and just kind of immersing themselves in the writing, whether they’re actually sharing what they’re doing or not” (Interview 2, p.1). The reciprocity among participants, the students and herself, is a key component of measuring success for her students, as well as herself. For Katherine, lessons must include “learning the different elements of writing and connecting the purpose of why these writings happen,” and the learning of writing elements can come from “preparing students through reading mentor texts or texts that are similar to what you’re wanting them to write so that they kind of learn the style and like the different components of it before they jump into writing it” (Interview 3, p.1). The importance of mentor texts in Katherine’s writing lessons mirror the material, activity, and semiotic aspects of Gee & Green (1998) with the meaning and value of mentor texts, the time spent on those mentor texts, and the sign system of mentor texts (p.140), which assimilate into her CPD on writing and writing
instruction. Throughout her unit, she purposefully chose mentor texts of varying genres for dual purposes: 1) introduce students to different types of texts; 2) introduce students to the concept that different types of texts can still align with an overall theme. In this case, Katherine chose texts that all shared the theme of identity to coincide with how it is influenced by the nature vs. nurture topic of the culminating argumentative essay.

Katherine begins creating a writing-friendly environment by making writing routine in the classroom and writing lessons that include different stages: brainstorming; daily writings; mini-lessons with writing; and assessment. The concept of a safe writing environment was formed early in her life, as she craved that space for herself as a writer in her schooling experience. Integrating the importance of a safe writing space into her CPD, she desires a classroom environment where “norms and expectations, roles and relationships, and rights and obligations are constructed by and/or signaled” (Gee & Green, 1998, p.140) by students to guide and foster writing activities. She additionally expressed that writing should transpire and be present in all classes in some manner and not only as an assessment itself. As experienced in her writing methods courses, she reverberates the importance of making writing routine in any classroom because it is so beneficial for students, disclosing, “writing should be ingrained in...all of the classes somehow, whether it’s just like daily writing, or...because I really do think that reading and writing go together and you can’t teach one without the other” (Interview 2, p.1). For instance, her writing lesson for students included 5-minute journal response writings that usually centered on reflection of what text and concepts students are discussing in class so they are “learning how to develop their writing through just these quick five-minute exercises” (Interview 2, p.1), an exercise from her writing methods courses. She explains that beginning with a short writing exercise can “help students by just getting them to have a routine practice. So when it
does come that they have to write, it’s not as scary or, like, uncomfortable for them because it’s something familiar and they’re used to it by that point” (Interview 2, p.1). Their experience of writing and exposure to short stories will give students a “better understanding [of] those elements that go into it to make a good story so that when they’re writing, they can...reflect on the exemplar texts and the mentor texts” (Interview 2, p.1). Familiarizing students with elements of writing and creating a routine of writing is a practice she finds essential to the writing process for it to become more natural for students. It builds students’ confidence in their writing and knowledge of elements of writing by recognizing them in texts they read and emulating them in their own writing. Students who routinely experience mentor examples of different writing creates a beneficial impact on students’ writing. Katherine’s explanation and reasoning for the layout of her writing lessons illustrate how such a context can allow students to become more confident and effective writers and thinkers.

Katherine makes many statements about her CPD and its focus on dialogic beliefs and strategies about writing for students, including some aspects of her writing methods courses. The Advanced Methods course addressed creating connections to their students’ lives and what they had already taught or discussed with them; however, only intermittently did Katherine discuss the connections to a later assessment, in this case the argumentative essay on the influence nature and/or nurture has on identity. Within the lessons, Katherine’s dialogic CPD motivates her goal of the lesson, as seen in her attempt when discussing “Names/Nombres” where she repeatedly asks if students have questions about the story, then goes into in-depth explanations to help them:

**Katherine:** What, what was that? What are some areas that were confusing to you?

**Student:** The part where her name is.
Katherine: Which part of her name? Her name is kind of mentioned throughout. Can you tell me the specific part?

Student: The part, um, where she said it in Spanish.

Katherine: Okay, so part of the Dominican Republic culture is that traditionally their names don't just include their names…So it would have everyone in my whole family, but instead of just going to their parents, it would go all the way back four generations.

(Google Meets 1, p.2)

By addressing some of the comprehension difficulties students were having and attempting to have the connections become more natural for them, Katherine demonstrates that she had adopted these strategies as part of her CPD. The questions she asks and her explanations of how they relate to comprehending the story continue in Google Meets 2 lesson with the hidden connections of Alcatraz and “Hey, Jude” that are referenced, as they are nicknames the students in the text give to the narrator. Katherine deliberately points out these nicknames to her students to ask if they have heard of them before. She hopes to help them see the deeper meanings behind the choices of nicknames and their implications on aspects of the narrator’s identity.

As Katherine transitioned into a teaching position for a seventh-grade English class during the pandemic, she decided to begin a unit that would culminate with students writing an argumentative essay on the issue of whether one’s identity is influenced more by nature or nurture. Ending the unit with a writing assignment aligns with her earlier comments, as she explains, “…In the Middle…Every section of her, um, instead of doing an assessment or like a test, she would do a writing activity. So there was so much emphasis” (Interview 1, p.2). The material aspect of In the Middle and semiotic aspect of the institution in which the book was introduced and used prompted Katherine’s sociocultural aspirations of creating norms and expectations for the class
To align with those beliefs, Katherine chose an end-of-unit writing assignment and designated to students a combination of narratives, poetry, and informational texts with a theme of identity to help students gather information and ideas about the issue of nurture versus nature from the texts to use as sources for the culminating essay. Katherine’s college writing methods courses and her own experience as a writer shaped and continue to shape her critical pedagogical discourse, depicted in the choices and intentions of her reading and writing lessons to help students further their own critical thinking and build upon their writing skills.

Scaffolding & Teacher Talk: Dialogic Beliefs and Monologic Practices

Katherine experienced and adopted dialogic beliefs in her CPD through her schooling about writing in the classroom. Scaffolding, a dialogic teaching strategy, refers to a method where teachers offer a particular kind of support to students as they learn and develop a new concept or skill. In the instructional scaffolding model, a teacher may share new information or demonstrate how to work through text, but then gradually steps back and lets students practice on their own either individually or as group practice. The Language Methods course introduced strategies to help build students’ knowledge and understanding, including bell ringers and visual text/images, all in an effort to allow their students to develop some mastery around that concept before moving on to something else. The Reading Methods course continued the focus on the before, during, and after reading strategies, and the Advanced Methods course emphasized close reading strategies, among others, and self-reflection and metacognition about what they are doing and why they are doing it. Students were constantly asked to reflect and assess the strategies used and the outcomes to make the learning process better for themselves and their students. The value of writing was defined in the courses as “writing is thinking,” that “students need the time to reflect on their own thinking in the form of writing” (Interview, Professor A). It
was structured for the students to have multiple opportunities and small assignments of reflection on the topic being discussed frequently in the class in order to model self-regulation for her students. Through these three courses, Katherine experienced scaffolding and how to instruct students using this method, as evidenced by the teaching strategies she chose to include in her units as seen in the material (strategies/activities) and activity (the time spent on those strategies/activities) aspects (Gee & Green, 1998, p.140).

While the outline and aims of her identity unit were shaped through her dialogic experiences with instructional strategies and methods, along with a high value on writing, the instruction itself does not align completely with the aspirations and ideas of the dialogic writing instruction she had voiced in previous interviews or her experiences. In the Google Meets 1 lesson, she reads aloud and discusses Julia Alvarez’s short story, “Names/Nombres,” a mentor text to help students think about identity that narrates the author’s experiences growing up as an immigrant in the United States. Katherine does include close reading strategies, asking students questions after reading the story aloud and using a color-coding strategy for the story, “so that's kind of like…what we can pull away from it. But how is it, like, plain-stated? Who is using it in conversation? Who is calling her that? Who gave her the name?” (Google Meets 1, p.3).

However, the questions she continues asking students are a quick assessment of their understanding of the story, as seen in the following exchange:

**Student:** Troublemakers.

**Katherine:** Yes, troublemakers, because it’s her friends. She has a group of friends, and that’s their nickname for her. Instead of learning her actual name, they call her Alcatraz, after a prison that’s known to not house very good people. What do you guys think of that?
Student: It’s a bad name.

Katherine: Yea, it’s a bad name. (Google Meets 1, p.3)

Instead of scaffolding the pace of the discussion to allow for other students to converse about this topic, Katherine changes the topic to ask students for any other questions about the story. While on the surface the exchange may look like discussion because there are semblances of that instruction with connections to the text, the connections with readers about any other aspects that they may relate to are missed, which causes the interaction to become more of a quiz for students, who once they arrive at the correct answer are shuttled to the next topic in either the story or point she wants to review with them. The one-sided monologic discussion or review is the prevailing approach in her lessons with students, regardless of whether the text is prose, poetry, or nonfiction.

Although Katherine allows a little more elaboration from students in the poetry lesson, she still heavily directs the discussion and scaffolding. She reviews the parts of a poem, then begins this exchange where she leads them first with a summary then toward the theme. After students give an answer, Katherine repeats it for the class then adds to it to make it closer to her intention with the piece. The discussion begins as scaffolding, a dialogic exercise for students to construct their own summary of the poem and share what themes they feel are present within the poem. However, Katherine’s additional comments and reworking of their answers in some cases convert it into more of a monologic practice instead. For the poem, “The Road Not Taken,” a similar scaffolding for the discussion that occurred with the “Names/Nombres” appears as Katherine asks students to summarize the poem and continues scaffolding considerably until students reach the specific conclusion she intends:
(Gus)Student: One was beaten down and not grassy, and one was grassy and nothing that been on it.

Katherine: Yeah, so the two different paths were, you know, different, which, what can we infer from about the end of the paths? Or throughout the path? What about the journey through each of the paths? What, what can we infer or, you know, as in like what inferences are what we use little clues to make her own conclusions. So what conclusion can we draw from those two different paths? (Google Meets 3, p.1) The lesson is placed between those on narrative prose and nonfiction texts and is more on the creative side of the texts Katherine had chosen for the unit. She seems to allow students more elaboration in the discussion on the poetry piece and connections between the theme of the poem and other pieces of literature they have read as a class.

In the next day’s lesson, Katherine scaffolds even more to help them understand the thematic connection between all of the texts and how to bridge the texts as sources for their argumentative essay on nature versus nurture at the end of the unit.

Katherine: …so how does this theme that we're talking about where… you guys talked about how the theme is about how we have to make choices, and we don't know how that's how it's always going to end up. How did that relate to the other stories we’re reading? Such as like 11, and name the two short stories 11 and “Names/Nombres?” How does it connect to the themes in those previous ones and our, kind of, central idea about identity?

(Gus)Student: It connects to the themes and the different ones because they're all trying to get farther in life.
**Katherine:** They're all trying to get farther in life...so it's all about, you know, their identity and their names and how they're getting farther in life. (Google Meets 4, p.6) The interaction shows more student response to her pointed questions, which they seem to successfully navigate. However, the bulk of the explanation and discussion again falls with Katherine, as she makes the connections for the students instead of allowing them the space to discuss the meanings for themselves and build their understanding. Katherine does purposefully reference previous readings they have completed as a class to scaffold students on how to connect the readings, not only as a critical skill to acquire, but more specifically to illustrate how students can use the readings as sources while constructing their argumentative essay. Although Katherine hints at the culminating argumentative essay on nature versus nurture in the lesson on “The Road Not Taken,” the lessons do not have specific references to the end-of-unit essay until the first science textbook lesson. The lack of specific reference to the essay throughout the previous lessons seems to leave students with a vague sense of her intentions and expectations for the unit and upcoming writing assignment, evidenced by their minimal or absent responses to her questions on their connection.

Within the first science textbook lesson, directly after the poem lesson, Katherine does delve a little more into the upcoming argumentative essay by scaffolding the discussion of the word *debate*. In this lesson, she hopes students have gotten the connections between the other texts at this point so they can transition easier into the upcoming writing assignment. Katherine begins by asking students if they know what a debate is and receives the response, “Like with the presidents” (Google Meets 4, p.1). Katherine then defines *debate* for students in general, at first:

**Katherine:** So a debate is when a question is proposed...like, the two opposing sides, and then those...people, or multiple people, then give their...answer where they believe they fall on that
debate…This is a discussion or argument where you have…your answer…supported by ideas for, like, texts, and that you can clearly articulate what your ideas are. (Google Meets 4, p.2) She takes the student’s example of the word debate and launches into a more thorough definition of a debate for the class. The lesson does illustrate an attempt to get back to her dialogic CPD and motivations for her unit lessons plans; however, the monologic instruction of reading the text aloud and asking assessment questions seems to prevail in the science textbook lessons. Later she references the nonfiction, science text to lead students to making the connection between her definition of a debate, the topics and themes they have discussed centering around identity and nature vs. nurture, and the reason for discussing it in class. Katherine makes the connection for students, stating, “Yes, so it's the central argument of, you know, this, this debate, the nature versus nurture, would be how was identity formed” (Google Meets 4, p.2-3). She then attempts to scaffold students toward looking at the nonfiction text as a possible source for the essay, asking, “How is the informational text saying that we, as people, can be formed by…What is one of the opposing views? So the central argument is how our identities…are formed. What are the two things that…play in the how we become who we are?” (Google Meets 4, p.2-3).

Once Katherine has greatly assisted students to realize the topic of the debate she wants them to focus on, “nature and nurture” (Google Meets 4, p.2-3), she attempts to help them bridge the gap between the different types of texts they have read in the unit and the culminating argumentative essay on the shared themes in the texts. The intercommunication between Katherine and her students is heavily monopolized by Katherine continuing to help students connect the texts and practices to align with her unit’s aims and goals. Although her intention is to scaffold students to come to those conclusions on their own, her presence in the talk within class discussions leaves little space for students to construct their own understanding. Instead, the information and the
threading of the assignments and texts are disbursed to students without them having to do much of the interpretation or learning to infer those meanings on their own. Unfortunately, there seems to be a disconnect between Katherine’s CPD of dialogic beliefs, practices, and ideas about writing and her teacher identity and what actually occurs throughout the unit. Although the dialogic intentions and aims for the instruction are there, they remain elusive for students.

Although Katherine’s talk is prevalent in the scaffolding of instructional discussions with the poetry and prose texts, it is present to an even greater extent in the nonfiction, science textbook lessons. The preponderance of the instruction in the science textbook lessons includes Katherine reading the text aloud to students and asking quick assessment questions for understanding of a word, table, or section. Students’ responses, however, are either one-word or one-sentence answers to her specific questions about what was just read. For instance:

**Katherine:** Do any of you guys remember what a theory is? That was here yesterday.

**Ian:** It is a thing that was like proven my identified and stuff, and it's not fake.

**Katherine:** Yes, so a theory is an explanation of events or circumstances based on scientific knowledge, resulting in repeated, from repeated observations and tests…

(Google Meets 7, p.1)

In the science textbook discussion exchanges, Katherine’s talk is more extensive than in the lessons with “Names/Nombres” or “The Road Not Taken.” Although the scaffolding she enacts has dialogic motives, the application does not align with those beliefs. Her choice to allow more discussions among the students about the short stories and poem could reveal her own inclination toward more creative writing or confidence and comfort in discussing those types of texts as opposed to the nonfiction, science textbook. The increase in discussions with the prose and poem could mean factors, such as less student involvement due to online learning or less interest in or
understanding of some of the vocabulary or concepts covered in the science textbook, were also influencing her instructional moves at that point.

In the majority of the nonfiction, science textbook lessons, Katherine reviews how to recognize elements of the textbook, such as topics, subtopics, titles, vocabulary, figures, and tables. In recalling the elements of the textbook, her choice of a nonfiction piece for her identity unit is performing a dual task—1) introducing students to how to read a nonfiction text and 2) retain information about genetics for their upcoming culminating argumentative essay on the nature versus nurture debate. However, questions in the prose and poetry lessons centered around authors’ choices of words and looking for deeper levels of meaning, allegories within the texts to connect the themes of the pieces, while questions in the science textbook lessons focused on surface level understanding of the concepts being explained. Viewing the interactions as giving students the necessary skills for each type of literature, it may have proven too ambitious. The minimal participation by students seems to suggest their difficulty in connecting how to read each text, how to discern the common themes among the different types of texts, and how to use those varying texts to create an integrated argumentative essay on nature vs. nurture. Katherine had expressed a more dialogic CPD and taken courses in which she performed tasks and learned information and methods about how to create a more dialogic classroom through scaffolding writing and literature instruction that she seemed to adopt. However, the science textbook choice for her unit seemed to create even more dialogically lacking lessons than the other text choices in the unit.

Katherine created the Locate and Find search strategy for the nonfiction, science textbook lessons in which students look for key concepts to retrieve accurate information from the text including titles, topics, subtopics, vocabulary, tables, and photographs/figures. Katherine
explains that the Locate and Find strategy will help students “take a step back and develop our skills so that we’re able to use this textbook to actually make our own inferences and draw our own conclusions and opinions” (Google Meets 5, p.1). The technical nature of the science textbook and the manner in which it explains more of the scientific side of the nature vs. nurture debate cause Katherine to utilize the Locate and Find activity to help students expand their resource list for the culminating argumentative essay on whether identity is more influenced by nature or nurture. Although this strategy did not come from her previous experiences as a student or teacher, Katherine explains how this activity originated:

I created the locate and find activity on my own. The science teacher approached me about collaborating with her unit, and I knew my students were on the lower levels of reading and many had complained about being unable to understand the textbook’s informational language…I thought about how I could engage the students with the topics that were being taught in the science classroom while teaching important research and writing skills. (Interview 4, p.1)

Interestingly, Katherine added this activity when prompted by her students and the science teacher. It was not an original part of her unit, but created to help her students because “[t]hey struggled in understanding the textbook and locating information from the textbook” (Interview 4, p.1). She explains the activity was to help students “support their arguments more efficiently in this collaboration. I felt like an important part of English was teaching how to find information to support their opinions as much as it was teaching them the writing process” (Interview 4, p.2).

The design of the Locate and Find activity was an undertaking she had not originally planned. By helping her students navigate the textbook, she hoped to better secure their understanding of the content and the future assignment of the argumentative essay. Katherine’s choice to create an
activity in response to what she saw as a need for students to better comprehend the text and, hopefully, her unit’s upcoming argumentative essay illustrates her CPD of the importance of the reciprocal relationship between reading, writing, and thinking.

When Scaffolding Doesn’t Stop…Still Learning How to Scaffold

As mentioned previously, Katherine had expressed her more dialogic CPD and value of being able to discuss and hone their writing ideas and skills; however, while utilizing dialogic practices in the unit, the practices transitioned to monologic ones. One such dialogic practice which illustrates the tension of her dialogic beliefs and monologic practices is close reading. Snow and Connor (2016) define close reading as “an approach to teaching comprehension that insists students extract meaning from text by examining carefully how language is used in the passage itself” (p. 1). Close reading includes teachers having a heavy presence at first, but then releasing students to become more responsible in understanding the text as they progress.

Katherine consistently comments on the value of using dialogic strategies, such as close reading, for the benefit of students’ comprehension through interviews and in explanations to students of the activities she assigns for them, especially noting the importance of students recognizing and strengthening their voices. However, instead of gradually stepping back to allow students to learn and strengthen their critical thinking and knowledge-building, she maintains the same amount of presence in the lessons, in essence stifling the discourse among students. Katherine’s integration of dialogic methods and beliefs are present within her instruction; however, in Thompson, Windschitl, & Braaten’s (2013) research of beginning science teachers and how and to what extent they developed ambitious teaching practices, she would be classified in the second trajectory, Compartmentalized Practice. The second trajectory included teachers who “attempt[ed] to reconcile their own vague, gestalt-like critical pedagogical discourses (e.g., invoking sweeping statements such as “students need ownership of ideas”…) with the borrowed
practices,” essentially holding “ideas and practices emerging from different communities in separate compartments and worked slowly to reconcile those boundaries” (Thompson, Winschitl, & Braaten, 2013, p.595). Katherine demonstrates this tension as she struggles to execute the scaffolding, close reading strategies, and dialogic teaching she had learned and voiced alignment with and fully apply them in her instruction.

In the following exchange, Katherine shows the tension of holding dialogic ideas from her courses and CPD and its waning in her lessons. She first reviews the parts of an informational text with students, a strategy for both pre-reading and during reading learned in the C&I 425 course, in order to help students better understand how information is presented and navigate the text. However, she continues to speak during the interaction, which signals to students that she will define the answers to the questions she is asking while they passively learn what she wants them to know about informational text:

**Katherine:** …What we just read is an informational article, so it’s an informational text. Does anyone know what, like, the purpose of an informational text is?

**Student:** To inform us.

**Katherine:** To inform us, yea. So an informational text, the whole reason an author would write one is to inform us about a particular topic. So the information in the writing, is it opinion, does it have opinions or is it factual? Is there facts or opinions in it? So opinions are like what you, like, what the author personally thinks about something. And facts are, like, the scientific proof. (Google Meets 4, p.1)

Within the lesson, Katherine continues to review the parts of an informational text so students will be more aware of how the text is set up for readers, as she feels this is an important part of students strengthening their understanding of the content within the textbook. Although her intention is for students to grasp this information and connect it to the overall theme of identity
and future writing assignments, her prominent stance in the classroom discussions may have affected to what extent those goals were received by students, evidenced by their minimal responses within the lessons.

The close reading strategy known as “I Do/We Do/You Do,” which involves students following a series of steps starting with the teacher leading instruction and finishing with students working independently, is also within Katherine’s lesson. In the I Do stage, the teacher explains what students need to understand or model how to do a process. Then, in the We Do stage, the teacher helps students by providing prompts or partially completed procedures. Finally, in the You Do stage, students do the procedure or show their understanding on their own (Killian). The strategy was created to guide students into a more independent position of building and connecting knowledge and understanding. Katherine introduces the I Do/We Do/You Do strategy with “Names/Nombres” and explains the eventual release of students to work on their own to build understanding of the text. The I Do/We Do/You Do close reading strategy allows Katherine to show students elements she wants students to pay attention to and recognize in other future texts they will read in class. Although this is a strategy that is set up to transition from a monologic to a dialogic classroom practice, Katherine does not allow space for students to continue toward a more independent, constructive understanding of the concepts within the story that she is pointing out to students. If a student voices they cannot find something in the text for the assignment, Katherine immediately directs students to examples in the text that can be used to complete the assignment, essentially not following the close reading method and rendering students to passive learners. When the scaffolding does not stop, then the dialogic CPD that Katherine has consistently voiced through her interviews and explanations in the unit is discarded. Although the intention of the lessons and goals for the unit were created with her dialogic CPD threaded throughout them, the actual implementation of the strategies and
assignments end up being more monologic in nature, preventing dialogic practices and
meaningmaking from emerging.

With each of the strategies in Katherine’s unit, there is extensive recitation within the
interactions in her lessons. Although recitation “usually refers to students’ oral presentation of
previously learned material” (Nystrand, 1997, p.5), many of the interactions between Katherine
and her students illustrates “how completely the teacher can do the actual reciting” (Nystrand,
1997, p.5). Katherine’s lessons are similar to an example from Nystrand (1997) in which the
teacher believes that quizzing students on what they are reading and learning allows more
intelligent discussions later, which only occasionally leads to more open-ended discussions. The
effectiveness of discussions depends on the quality of teacher-student interactions and what roles
students are assigned in order to consider and interpret in those interactions. The difference
between recitation and dialogic discussion rests with the focus of the utterances; recitation
focuses on the “accurate transmission of information”, while dialogic utterances focus on the
discussion being used as “thinking devices” (Lotman 1988, as cited in Nystrand, 1997, p.9). The
manner in which Katherine compiled her unit and the lesson plans and activities within it
demonstrate that she does have dialogic intentions; however, the minimal interaction among
students to build the understanding and connections she was hoping for seemed to have lessened
the extent of students’ grasp of those aims.

Her Perceived Purpose of Posing Questions to Students

The posing of questions was a method discussed and practiced in the 624 course
Katherine experienced. One assignment was to script out their lessons so preservice teachers
could see how they would craft discussion questions for their future students. The strategy of
guided questions is one Katherine uses in many of her lessons as students read and discuss text.
Guided reading involves a teacher guiding students to learn to master specific ways to understand text. The process includes a teacher modeling and guiding students through activating prior knowledge and before, during, and after reading activities. Guided reading also allows students to reread a text if needed to practice decoding. Due to its alignment with the theme of identity and with the nature vs. nurture debate, Katherine included the poem “The Road Not Taken” by Robert Frost and employs a guided reading strategy. Katherine begins by reviewing the characteristics of a poem then transitions to the guided reading questions assigned with the poem. The first question asks students to share themes they are seeing in the poem, while the second question asks students to determine how the themes in the poem may relate to previous texts in the unit, hoping they will see the intimate association of the texts through their thematic connections (Google Meets 3, p.4-5). The class discussion on the guided reading exercise is led by Katherine, as she follows the strategy by modeling for students how to look for and answer questions for the assignment. Guided reading questions do help students learn how to look at a text per teacher modeling and have space for dialogic instruction to take place. The strategy could become more dialogic in her lessons if students would elaborate more on their answers; however, Katherine asks usually two to five questions in an attempt to narrow down responses and direct students toward acceptable responses, which limits student interaction as they wait for her to answer the questions and make the connections for them. This is a purposeful move by Katherine to aid students in connecting the theme of identity among the texts they have read in the unit thus far and accumulate a list of possible sources for their end-of-unit argumentative essay. Katherine asks questions of students about each of the stories and creates a sort of breadcrumb trail for students to follow and piece together in hopes the students come to an understanding on their own. When students do not seem to be following her preconceived
connections, the form of the discussion becomes more of a one-sided script and causes the strategy to be much more monologic. Although Katherine had writing methods courses that addressed how to pose questions to students in order to elicit knowledge-building interactions and is attempting to have more dialogic discussions and connections with the unit materials align with her dialogic CPD, she overlooks the points at which she can lessen her role and have students fully engage in more dialogic discussions.

Summary

Katherine’s CPD of dialogic and writing beliefs and practices in order to help students construct stronger writing and thinking operated in various ways, ultimately depending on the changing context of her teaching environment. Although she already faced the two-worlds pitfall that many preservice teachers experience (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1985), the additional conditions of not finishing her preservice placement before being hired full-time in a different county, the online and infrequent in-person teaching due to the pandemic, and the accompanying tensions surrounding those contextual discourses compounded her challenge of persisting in her dialogic writing and teaching beliefs and instruction. Caughlan et al. (2013) recognizes that there is already “a significant problem” of “cultivat[ing] dialogic practices in new teachers’ instruction” (p. 212), which is evident in Katherine’s experience as well. In the teacher education literature, these effects are broadly characterized as “problems of enactment” (Kennedy, 1999), when a teacher attempts to apply what was learned in preparation coursework to the complexity of public school classrooms during internships and beyond” (Thompson et al., 2013, p.575). However, Katherine’s CPD of dialogic and writing instruction in the classroom definitively motivated her unit and the lessons and materials within it. She organized the unit to include various types of texts and threaded them with a theme of identity, along with assigning reflective
writing assignments to help students connect the texts and ideas. Additionally, the culminating writing assignment functioned as an assessment of the unit in which students used the texts in the unit as sources for their essay. Her motives and aspirations for the unit seemed to be overcome by the circumstances of her teaching environment and minimal support associated with it. The science teacher asked Katherine to collaborate with her on a unit, and she accepted, to help her students read and navigate the text due to their low reading levels. Along with the fluctuation of her own classroom contexts, Katherine also accepted a collaboration; however, as evidenced, there was only one virtual class in which the science teacher was present to aid in explanations. Katherine faced these challenges with little to no mentor support and seemed to abandon the more dialogic instruction in favor of the monologic initiation-response-feedback (IRF) instruction to reach students. It is important to note Nystrand’s (1997) assertion that “good conversation happens when mutual trust and respect exist between the parties conversing…. Without this ethos of mutual respect, the classroom atmosphere will tend toward monologism” (p.88). If there was a lack of trust on what students could comprehend and on students’ side of acclimating to Katherine when she came in so late in the semester after other substitutes had previously been in the classroom, then the relationships between them may have been too new to foster these more dialogic lessons. Katherine may have also been too focused on helping students with comprehension of the texts through predicated questions and answers that not enough time was spent with dialogic conversations for students to foster their own meanings and connections. Since CPD includes “perceptions of messages about teaching by actors in social situations and institutional environments and policy statements” (Thompson, Windschitl, & Braaten, 2014,
The corresponding relationship between Katherine’s CPD and the competing and changing contextual discourses demonstrates the need for further research on the impacts of mentors, online instruction, and collaborative teaching on CPD and how it is filtered due to those experiences and informs a preservice teacher’s future instructional aspirations and direction.
Chapter 5

Introduction

Across Chapter 4, I used the CPD construct and MASS system elements as lenses to explain Katherine’s instructional choices at Placement 1, Bradley High School, with the majority of analysis focusing on her instructional unit and choices at Placement 2, Belmont Middle School, since she was at that placement the bulk of her experience. In this chapter, I discuss the findings and how they suggest a revision to the understandings of critical pedagogical discourse (Thompson et al., 2013) and further support the possibilities for teacher education programs, mentoring of new teachers, and how to navigate a pandemic in education. Following the discussion of the findings, I outline three implications for teacher education, teacher mentoring, and future research on the impact of abrupt contextual discourses on preservice teachers and their instruction.

Thompson et al. (2013) define critical pedagogical discourses as “individual ways of thinking and being” that interact with contextual discourses, “historical, social, and institutional influences” (p.578), and together shape teacher practice across time. Additionally, CPD can be continually influenced, modified, or rejected depending on who the preservice teacher wants to be and if a teaching practice conforms with those perceptions. CPD “organize[s] and influence[s] one’s perceptions of the past and the future in terms of…approaches to problem solving, and other choices made in instructional contexts” (Thompson et al., 2013, p.579), so it is always
shifting and adjusting. CPD may not be “consistent with teaching choices, but reflect what individuals believe “should have been done” even if they cannot or will not translate these discourses into action” (Thompson et al., 2013, p.579). Even though Katherine held tightly to her identity of a writer and beliefs in dialogic instruction, her instructional practices were not always aligned with these commitments.

The essential contextual factors of having to learn to teach during a pandemic and in a new placement due to the teacher shortage are critical to Katherine’s ability to align her identity, beliefs, and practices in the classroom, as well as her CPD. The pandemic caused teachers to decide to leave the profession to care for themselves and their families, with a teacher shortage as a consequential effect. The shortage prompted school districts to post and hire preservice teachers for positions who still needed to complete their student teaching experience through the university and graduate. These factors interrupted the carefully monitored teaching experience that is constructed by universities to aid preservice teachers in their learning process and gain knowledge, practice, and confidence in the field. Katherine was precluded from the full experience of developing her ambitious, dialogic teaching practices when she was transitioned into Placement 2 at Belmont Middle School.

In the Thompson et al. (2013) study of how secondary science teachers developed and used ambitious instructional practices, they explained the variations in the novice teachers’ appropriation of those ambitious practices. Ambitious teaching practices focus on “fostering deep understanding of ideas and engagement in solving complex problems rather than the typical emphases on activities and procedural talk” for science educators (Thompson et al., 2013, p.580). Students’ emerging ideas are the center of the practice and require regular adjustments to that practice based on assessing students’ understanding. The study found three trajectories to show
the varying extents the CPD filtered their contextual discourses and affected the choices of their instructional practices: Integrated Ambitious Practices; Compartmentalized Practice; and Appropriating Language Without Practice groups. The Integrated Ambitious Practices group readily “integrated [ambitious practices] into their everyday curriculum” (p. 588) by “tr[y]ing] multiple ambitious practices simultaneously and in coordination with one another in the classroom” (p.591). The group “gradually experimented with practices that would fit with their internalized student-thinking critical pedagogical discourses” (p. 593). The Compartmentalized Practice group “selected a single ambitious practice to work on within a pedagogical “compartment,” meaning they experimented with the practice in conceptual isolation from other practices” (p.595). They attempted to reconcile their own vague CPD with the borrowed ambitious practices. The Appropriating Language Without Practice group developed a beginning set of practices that were not conceptually based in ambitious practices and had limited attempts at experimenting with ambitious practices. The factors of how novice teachers affiliated with their university and school communities, how they developed different types of CPD in those contexts, and how they selectively used tools to achieve goals valued by the communities with which the affiliated (p.602) were cited as influential in which trajectory the novice teachers followed. Thompson et al. (2013) found “the development of early expertise was dependent on how teachers negotiated membership in and across communities that provided different images of teaching” (p.602). Teachers who integrated ambitious practices “primarily affiliated with the people and ideas associated with the university and induction contexts,” but also “maintained productive working relationships with teaching partners and principals” (Thompson et al., 2013, p.602). Teachers who compartmentalized segments of ambitious practices “tried to maintain affiliations with the two communities that provided substantially different visions of ideal
practices” by “replicating others’ curricular visions from the induction context, without developing their own actionable…theories about learning and teaching” (Thompson et al., 2013, p.602). Thompson et al. (2013) assert that “identifying with entire communities may better explain why participants took up a range of practices” and found that “all teachers worked to solidify social and professional affiliations with preferred groups and used contextual discourses associated with these groups to define normative practice” regardless of their trajectory (p.603).

Katherine demonstrated similar teaching as the Compartmentalized Practice group in the Thompson et al. (2013) study in which the participants “selected a single ambitious practice to work on within a pedagogical “compartment,” essentially experimenting with the practice in conceptual isolation from other practices” (p.595). In addition to compartmentalizing the ambitious practices, Katherine also used interactional structures, like the Say-Mean chart and class discussions, in monologic ways. The lessons that included those structures had more expository, interrogatory, and evaluative talk rather than transactional and exploratory talk (Alexander, 2008, p.38). Missing from the dialogic repertoire were the aspects of receiving, acting, and building upon answers; analyzing and solving problems; and exploring ideas (Alexander, 2008, p.39). Alexander (2008) explains that dialogic teaching is facilitated and supported when certain factors are present, including: “lesson introductions, transitions and conclusions do not extend beyond children’s concentration span; lessons are paced to cover cognitive ground for pupils, not for speed; and teachers shift from brief and random interactions to those that are longer and more sustained” (p.41). While Katherine used structures that could support dialogic teaching, her use of them was in stark contrast to those characteristics. Boyd & Markarian (2015) explain that “dialogic teaching is not defined by discourse structure so much as by discourse function,” and “when teachers adopt a dialogic instructional stance, they treat
dialogue as a functional construct rather than structural” (p.273). Boyd & Markarian (2015) assert that “to discern dialogic teaching involves more than consideration of surface interactional structures” (p.273). Grossman et al. (1999) explains this as appropriating surface features, “when a person learns some or most of the features of a tool, yet does not understand how those features contribute to the conceptual whole” (p.17). Grossman et al. (1999) are careful to explain that “a lack of appropriation does not necessarily involve a lack of understanding,” but rather that “one might also understand a tool but find that the environment makes it difficult to use effectively” (Grossman et al., 1999, p.18). Additionally, Grossman et al. (1999) clarify that the “opportunity to experience a pedagogical tool in the social setting of teacher education may also affect appropriation” because “once teachers join the workforce, the school becomes the primary activity setting for developing conceptions of teaching and learning” (p.20). “When a preservice teacher’s prior beliefs, university course work, and student teaching experience are all in concert, the influence of the university may become invisible” (Grossman et al., 1999, p.21). Therefore, it is important to see the various roles preservice teachers are expected to surmise in those contexts and understand the role that mentorship can have as preservice teachers navigate the classroom.

For Katherine, due to contextual factors of the pandemic, unpredictability of online and inperson teaching, a transition into a full-time teaching position, the stark contrast in the two school placements, and a lack of mentorship, she borrowed practices from the methods courses while trying to cover content, which could not serve as a filter because she “held ideas and practices emerging from different communities in separate compartments and worked slowly to reconcile those boundaries” (Thompson et al., 2013, p.595), the communities of each school, the university, and social community amidst Covid-19.
I applied Gee & Green’s (1998) MASS system of material, activity, semiotic, and sociocultural aspects of discourse “to understand the socially constructed nature of knowledge” (p.134) and observe the manners in which Katherine implemented and addressed those aspects in attempts of carrying out her CPD throughout her instructional unit. The classroom is a “communit[y] that reinforce[s] different messages about teaching and learning [and] also value particular forms of conceptual and practical tools, such as socially constructed routines, semiotic systems, or material technologies, that mediate the collective intellectual work that defines professional practice” (Thompson et al., 2013, p.580). Her changing CPD filtered when these aspects appeared, and the degree to which it filtered depended on the contextual discourses she was navigating at the time. She consistently used her identity as a writer to inform her CPD and instructional decisions and gave rationalizations to students on the purpose of the strategies and lessons they were completing. Due to the changing teaching environment and contexts, she shifted her strong dialogic beliefs and practices into monologic practices.

Through the findings, I discuss ways Katherine reacted to the changing teaching contexts and how she used her concepts of identity and beliefs to filter how and to what extent dialogic instructional practices materialized. The findings include how Katherine attempted to align her teacher identity, beliefs, and practices in CPD and the transformation of dialogic practices into monologic practices due to these changing contexts. After the discussion, I then detail the implications of this study’s findings on teacher education programs and school districts.

**Aligning Teacher Identity, Beliefs, and Practices in CPD**

Katherine explains that as a student in K-12 schools she found herself drawn to writing and had declared at the tender age of four she was going to be a writer. Katherine’s experience correlates with Gee’s (2014) assertion that socially-situated identities contain “the multiple
identities we take on in different practices and contexts” (p.58). She is a member of the social identity and Discourse of a writer, which she actively pursues and sustains through her writing practices. In addition, she is constructing teacher Discourses in this time and place, enacting it through “engag[ing] in ways of thinking, acting, interacting, valuing, feeling, and believing that are characteristic of [that Discourse]” (Gee, 2014, p.45). As a new teacher in a middle school English language arts classroom, she uses diction in her lessons in the themes, debates, and motifs that are recognizable to writers and refers to students as writers themselves. She also uses diction in her classes to further create a teacher Discourse by referencing assignments, grades, and other school-related events and classroom situations. The teacher Discourse was also being shaped by the district, school, colleagues, and classroom community she experienced at the time in each placement. Collin (2012) asserts that Gee’s theory “offers ways of seeing how diverse social actors use language to embody different identities and bolster the status of those identities” and “how communicants build situations through performing Discourses” (p.77). At Belmont Middle School, Katherine relied on the writer Discourse to bolster her teacher Discourse in the choices she made for her identity unit and the lessons and assignments embedded within it. Katherine’s writer Discourse aided her performance in the teacher Discourse. The extent to which one is recognized within a Discourse “can change from moment to moment in the interaction, can change from context to context, and, of course, can be ambiguous or unstable” (Gee, 2000, p.99). For Katherine, aspects of both Discourses appear in varying degrees throughout my observation, illustrating how she is negotiating them in the classroom. The “knowledge and commitments” of teachers “strongly influence their teaching identity” (Hillocks, 1999, p.124). Hillocks (1999) found “each teacher constructs his or her own version of that rhetoric for classroom consumption” (p.116). Clearly, the depth of knowledge Katherine has
about writing and her commitment to teaching students how to write and see themselves as writers heavily impacts her CPD and chosen materials to help students reach that potential. Her strong identity as a writer propelled her to bridge that identity to beliefs about her instruction. “Evidence suggests that even if these belief systems are implicit, they serve to filter new information as candidates attempt to make sense of curricula that may or may not mirror their personal experiences” (Norman & Spencer, 2005, p.26). Katherine explains in interviews how her beliefs were shaped by strategies and materials she was exposed to in her methods courses. Norman & Spencer (2005) reinforce the impact of past experiences, stating, “preservice teachers’ histories influence what and how they learn in formal coursework” (p.26). One breakthrough, according to Katherine, was considering students as authors and giving them credit for their writing and ideas. She continually expressed the concept of ownership in writing to her students, the importance of sharing their thinking with others and referencing them as writers. Because Katherine holds writing in such high regard, she desires for her students to learn to appreciate and gain confidence in their writing as well. Teachers can highly impact their students’ writing identities through their lessons and interactions. An important distinction Norman & Spencer (2005) found in their study of preservice teachers’ experiences with teachers who encouraged writing and those who taught writing had both positive and negative effects on their self-concepts as writers. Katherine voices the same occurrence with writing instruction, explaining how she found writing creatively much more enjoyable than writing instruction that focused on corrective feedback. She integrated both positive and negative experiences into her CPD on writing instruction, stating, “my role is someone who isn’t there to tell them if [they are] good or bad at writing, but to teach them and, like, inspire them and let them know that they can write” (Interview 1, p.3). Her beliefs about writing instruction are threaded in her choice of
reflective writing assignments and the culminating argumentative essay about the influence of nature and nurture on forming one’s identity.

Katherine’s instructional choices were grounded in dialogic practices that she both experienced and learned about in writing methods courses. The experiences of constructing meaning and understanding in the writing methods courses fused into her CPD and translated into her perception of writing and writing instruction for her students. The revelation in her writing methods course of viewing students as authors aligned with her long-established identity as a writer, so she adopted that concept and attempted to put it into practice within her instruction and unit. In my observation of her teaching, Katherine attempted to align her identity as a writer and teacher, her beliefs about writing and teaching, and her teaching practices through her lesson plans and teaching strategies. She included dialogic strategies, such as the Say-Mean Chart, guided reading questions, and reflective journals, as instructional tools for students to eventually engage with and commence in order to construct their own meanings through discussions with one another. She aligned the texts to reflect her CPD of dialogic and writing practices to foster connection and knowledge-building throughout the unit and help students create their own understanding in their argumentative essays. Katherine hoped students would formulate their own opinions on identity and expound on them in their culminating writing assignment. The fact that she attempted these ambitious and dialogically-based lessons within her unit illustrates her strong adherence to her identity as a writer and her desire for her students, even within a new and rural placement during a pandemic and without a mentor. As she made instructional choices, her identity was a considerable factor in those decisions. Even when facing such abrupt contextual discourse changes, Katherine held strongly to her identity as a writer. The importance of her choices show that identity seems to have been a more influential factor than that of her dialogic
beliefs and practices, which may explain why that although she used dialogic structures, she was unable to fully implement them in the contextual discourse of a pandemic and without the support of a mentor.

**Transformation of Dialogic Practices into Monologic Practices**

Nystrand (1997) explains that “[f]ully dialogic instruction…involves a conception of knowledge not as previously formulated by someone else but rather as continuously regenerated and co-constructed among teachers and learners and their peers” (p.89). Through the data collection period, Katherine’s CPD of writing identity and dialogic beliefs were clearly present; however, her CPD did not function as a strong filter for her instructional practices with the contextual discourses of being a new teacher and teaching online during a pandemic. Thompson et al.’s (2013) study explains how “without clearly defined critical pedagogical discourses to act as filters, they spent practicum and their first-year teaching trying to refine beginning repertoires while weighing contextual discourse that pulled their practice in different directions” (p.596). Katherine did not complete her preservice teaching practicum in Placement 1, where she had a mentor and guidance of a classroom teacher and university professor, and was hired in a new county, Placement 2, midway through a semester in a class that had two substitute teachers in that semester prior to Katherine’s arrival. Unfortunately, given the context and timing of her placement in the classroom during a pandemic, the relationship between her and her students, that Nystrand (1997) explains is an important aspect of a dialogic stance, took longer to develop and made dialogic instruction more difficult to enact and sustain. With limited time in-person and some online lessons due to the pandemic, the trusting environment needed as a base of the relationship between them was prolonged and more difficult to navigate.

In Katherine’s placement at Belmont Middle School, she served as the instructor of record, and only had remote access to her university supervisor. This position in which a student
teacher is hired by the district as a classroom teacher is an outcome of the teacher shortage, particularly severe in rural communities. The presence and amount of mentorship was drastically reduced, not to mention that observation of her teaching occurred during a pandemic with an added context of online teaching and students having varying accessibility to the internet for online lessons. Online instruction was quite an obstacle for seasoned teachers to address and manage, let alone a new teacher in a new educational context. She was unable to fully assert her CPD of dialogic beliefs in her teaching practices because she did not have the support or experience necessary in that environment. She was a new, full-time teacher in a district where there was no mentorship program in place for her to be supported. Although mentorship does not guarantee that she would have been able to fully apply her ambitious, dialogic practices, these “weighing contextual discourses” (Thompson et al., 2013, p.596) were contributing factors to her inability to generate dialogic instruction that aligned more with her CPD.

The motivations for her teaching practices were dialogic in nature, aimed at helping students create their own understanding of the texts, but her strong desire for students to connect the texts by directly delivering the material to students perhaps inhibited them from associating the correlation among those texts and her overall goal and culminating assignment for the unit. Katherine’s dialogic CPD filter could not overpower the contexts of the online teaching environment due to the pandemic and lack of mentorship she experienced.

**Implications for Teacher Education and School Districts**

Teacher education programs and school districts need to prioritize continued mentorship for preservice and first year teachers in the classroom. New teachers should be given opportunities and space to inquire about their practice, beliefs about student learning, how those beliefs will be enacted within the classroom, and note that their beliefs may not always translate
into their instructional practices. Having the opportunity to analyze how their beliefs and practices are interacting within their contextual discourses can allow them time and space to reflect on those interactions and seek support from mentors or more experienced teachers when needed. Teachers reflecting on their practice, according to Feucht et al.’s (2017) research, “...embodies the essence of being a professional within classroom environments” and can lead to reflexivity, “an internal dialogue that leads to action for transformative practices in the classroom” (p.234). Mentorship can allow preservice teachers to review their instructional practice and beliefs and be beneficial for them and their students as they reflect on their practice with an experienced educator. Preservice and novice teachers need “to develop sound reasons for what they do, to learn principles of teaching, and to think about ways to represent knowledge to learners” (Feiman-Nemser et al., 1992, p.16).

**Teacher Education Programs**

Teacher education programs serving districts with severe teacher shortages need to consider models of university support if they are to participate in programs that place preservice teachers as classroom teachers without local support. The student teaching experience is an important aspect for preparing preservice teachers because it “provide[s] the opportunity of a transformative experience discovering their teaching identity through reflective practice of content knowledge and pedagogical proficiency and delivery” (Varela & Desiderio, 2021, p.3). In addition, “cooperating or host teachers have a tremendous responsibility bestowed upon them as the most direct influence” to preservice teachers (Varela & Desiderio, 2021, p.3) and should be supported in learning the reflective practices for encouraging preservice teachers to self-analyze and adapt practice, as well as the ambitious practices teacher education programs are using. Although mentoring does not necessarily guarantee success or effectiveness in the
classroom, preservice teachers learning the process of using ambitious practices is less likely to occur without one.

The pandemic, in particular, highlighted the significance of the student teaching experience because many of those “immersive experiences [were] no longer available” (Varela & Desiderio, 2021, p.3). Mecham et al. (2021) conducted a study of how novice teachers navigated teaching in the pandemic and found the following themes: teachers felt overwhelmed; teachers had inconsistent levels of support and collaboration; instructional requirements often changed; technology was the main method of delivering education with many students not having the resources they needed; adaptability became necessary to meet the needs of students; and parents became an integral part of learning and challenged teachers to become comfortable working closely with families (p.91-94). The abrupt nature of the pandemic left many feeling jilted, as they were just beginning to feel comfortable with their “pedagogical skills, content knowledge, and workplace culture familiarity…while assuming responsibility for dozens of children” (Mecham et al., 2021, p.91). Mecham et al. (2021) found “at a time when these new teachers were most desperate for support, most of them lost the situation specific supports on which they had relied in better times,” while “participants for whom those supports continued identified them as a lifeline” (p.92). There is also research to suggest the success of preservice teachers within a pandemic can include “mutual trust among members” and “just-in-time support,” an “effective strategy to quickly release anxiety and improve motivation for addressing bigger challenges” among teachers and preservice teachers (Song et al., 2020, p.153). As mentioned earlier, there are some suggestions to create more successful environments for mentors and mentees: pairing with experienced teachers who are trained on how to mentor and align more with the preservice teachers’ beliefs about teaching and teaching practices; pay mentors to
recognize their expertise; have a set of guidelines about the environment for mentorship; have a close working relationship with universities in the mentorship program.

However, even if the mentor does not share or support ambitious, dialogic teaching practices, a mentor can help preservice teachers learn to teach using those practices.

The pandemic appeared abruptly and emphasized that teacher education programs be there “to support student teachers through their student teaching experience” and “revamp teacher training to include and enhance use of technological resources and related pedagogical strategies” (Varela & Desiderio, 2021, p.10). Now having experienced a pandemic and its effects on teachers and learning in the classroom, teacher education programs can begin piecing together strategies and protocols of mentorship to aid both mentors and preservice teachers in the future.

**School Districts**

In the state where this study occurred, the state board of education announced about 15 years ago that new teachers would be assigned a mentor who would observe new teachers in the classroom and provide evaluations to aid them in their practice. Currently, the department of education asserts their goal is to support districts in their efforts to attract and retain teachers because research shows that mentor support has a positive impact on teacher retention. However, the policies on education have been revised by the legislature to give districts greater discretion over program funding and eventually eliminated agencies that had been responsible for supporting professional learning. As such, the state board of education instead only encourages districts and schools to use their professional learning sessions and recommendations when choosing teachers to fill the role of mentor teacher in their schools and gives flexibility to counties to design and implement a comprehensive system of support for their own goals.

Therefore, the appointment of a mentor teacher for a new teacher is not a guaranteed support that
new teachers can count on when beginning their career. Most of the time, there may be a senior teacher in their field to go to for guidance, but the experienced teacher may not be trained or have the time or motivation to truly mentor new teachers or give support when needed. Feucht et al. (2021) comment on the weaknesses in the educational system, stating, “the uneven distribution of resources across schools and the lack of state and national leadership…leads to uncertainty and extreme variation in schools across our nation” (p.95). This situation illustrates how detrimental legislation and oversight are to supporting and retaining teachers today.

Mathur et al. (2012) found in their review of literature on mentor-mentee relationships that “teachers who are new to a district or are at the beginning stages of their teaching career often seek support from mentors for practices that they can use to produce better outcomes for their students” (p.154). Also, “Fletcher and Strong (2009) found that student academic gains were greater for classrooms in which the beginning teacher had access to consistent mentoring support” (Mathur et al., 2012, p.154). Within mentorship programs, “teachers new to the district/teaching are engaged in an experiential process in which they learn how to make effective decisions about curriculum, assessment, and instructional practices” (Mathur et al., 2012, p.154). These findings depict the impact mentors can have on beginning teachers and the contributions and outcomes that can arise from those interactions. With limited or no mentorship, preservice teachers could miss the opportunity of developing their identity and beliefs as well as learning to teach and use ambitious, dialogic practices, even if their mentors do not inherently support those practices.

**Future Studies**

Future studies will address how unanticipated shifts in the contextual discourses preservice teachers' experience can directly influence to what extent they will enact and reflect
on their identity, beliefs, practices, and critical pedagogical discourse. When preservice teachers are rapidly propelled into precipitous contextual discourses, will they gravitate more toward the current placement’s context and have less of an inclination to hold to their college methods course teachings and their dialogic CPD?

In this study, a preservice teacher transitioned out of a supportive school classroom placement through the university and into a full-time position in a different school system, locale, and environment. This is an important aspect to consider, as she was required to fulfill the full-time teaching expectations amid a continually changing environmental landscape with the pandemic and the assignments and obligations of her university courses. Additionally, mentorship is an important aspect to teacher education programs, and the lack of mentorship and pandemic seems to have highlighted its importance in preservice teachers’ experiences. As mentioned in Thompson et al. (2013), there “cannot be a singular approach to working with novice teachers,” and following that thinking, even preservice teachers “will need assistance uncovering and working with preexisting critical pedagogical discourses” (p.610). An increased presence of mentorship could be beneficial in helping preservice teachers enact their critical pedagogical discourses because mentoring “can be seen as comprising an important duality; it is both a relationship and a process” (Kwan & Lopez-Real, 2005, p.276). Preservice teachers and mentors can establish a close relationship due to the intricate nature of their interactions and commit to a process of developing instruction for the classroom; therefore, preservice teachers could professionally grow in a more caring and supportive environment and perhaps increase the probability of their adherence to their identity, beliefs, and practices amid changing contextual discourses. Mentorship is not an assurance of success or effectiveness for preservice teachers;
however, having a mentor can increase that likelihood, even if the mentor does not share or innately support ambitious and dialogic practices.

With the pandemic and its introduction to online learning platforms, an abrupt change in teaching placements in completely different school environments and intermittent school openings and student attendance may have led to a quicker monologic turnaround due to the new contextual discourses she experienced. Feucht et al. (2017) found teachers “in unexpected teaching situations…are likely to engage in “reflection-in-action,” (p.237) which includes “(a) a surprise/unexpected outcome; (b) a moment of stop-and-think; (c) an exploration and/or experimentation of alternatives on the spot; and (d) an adjustment of pedagogical content knowledge and daily routine…” (p.237). However, Schon’s (1987) reflection-in-action, referring to teachers being aware of their decisions while they work, seems much more difficult to attempt and manage when in the midst of online teaching during a pandemic without having completed a preservice teaching practicum, as even seasoned teachers found it challenging. Preservice teachers, with minimal experience of the fluid nature of teaching due to changing contextual discourses, seem to need even more preparation and support navigating the changing contextual discourses.

**Conclusion**

This research study is one example of a preservice teacher’s development of a critical pedagogical discourse (CPD) and the manners in which the CPD filtered and operated within the multiple contextual discourses. The contextual discourses of a preservice teaching placement and a full-time teaching placement in two different districts during a pandemic informed her instructional practices and illustrated her teaching beliefs and identity in varying degrees. Katherine used her CPD as a filter for her dialogic beliefs and instructional practices within the
contextual discourses, which in most cases led to her compartmentalizing dialogic strategies or altering them to suit the perceived abilities and needs of her students. Completing preservice placements before moving into full-time positions and support for preservice teachers through mentorship in their placements and teaching positions can aid them in becoming reflective and confident practitioners in the classroom. This is ongoing work that I plan to continue exploring, following the current trends and researchers in the field to discover other avenues preservice teachers may choose when confronted with abrupt shifts in contextual discourses.
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