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Influential experiences: Practices of teaching and learning successes to increase pre-service teachers' self-efficacy

Amanda L. Steiner
University of Nebraska at Omaha, alsteiner@unomaha.edu

Jennifer Lemke
University of Nebraska at Omaha, jlemke@unomaha.edu

INFLUENTIAL EXPERIENCES: FOUR PRACTICES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING SUCCESSES TO INCREASE PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' SELF-EFFICACY

Amanda Steiner, Ed.D.
University of Nebraska at Omaha

Jennifer Lemke, Ed.D.
University of Nebraska at Omaha

Abstract *Teaching is a complex yet rewarding career; still, 40% - 50% of teachers leave the field within the first five years of their career (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Teacher preparation programs are often criticized for the lack of connection between theory and practice. Pre-service teachers who have more pedagogical courses and field experiences built into their coursework display higher levels of self-efficacy in their first year of teaching (Boyd et al., 2009; Clark, 2016). Through the lens of Bandura's four sources of self-efficacy, this case study examines what experiences are most influential in developing pre-service teachers' self-efficacy.*

Introduction

Teaching is a complex yet rewarding career; still, 40% - 50% of teachers leave the field within the first five years (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Furthermore, novice teachers leave the field at greater rates due to lack of support and feelings of isolation (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Teacher attrition is costly for school districts; additionally, student learning is negatively impacted (Madigan & Kim, 2021). The Covid-19 pandemic exacerbated attrition rates, placing a spotlight on teacher preparation programs (TPPs) and the need to prepare highly qualified teachers who are ready for the realities of the job (Bacher-Hicks et al., 2023). Evidence suggests that teachers who experience inadequate preparation and lack an understanding of the profession's realities are more likely to leave the profession (Darling-Hammond, 2003). Unfortunately, TPPs are often criticized for the lack of connection between theory and practice (Zeichner et al., 2015). Early models associated with teacher preparation focused on providing students with theory and philosophy of education while experiences working in the field, or the ability to practice what they were learning, were limited to clinical practice, or student teaching (Zeichner, 2010). More recently, universities have worked to carefully pair coursework with hands-on experiences to close this divide.

Pre-service teachers (PSTs) who have more pedagogical courses and opportunities within their coursework to observe the application of theory, display higher levels of self-efficacy, or the belief in one's ability to succeed, in their first year of teaching (Clark, 2016). Higher levels of self-efficacy are a key factor in teachers staying in the profession even when challenges arise (Bobeck, 2002; Yost, 2006). Furthermore, coursework and field experiences are predictors of teacher effectiveness (Boyd et al., 2009; Clark 2016). Field-based experiences create additional opportunities for PSTs to link theory and practice and grow in their ability to manage the learning environment. Opportunities to practice while receiving feedback from instructors support the development of PSTs' self-efficacy (Evans, 2010; Tuchman & Isaacs, 2011). So

what experiences are impactful on PSTs' development of self-efficacy? Through the lens of Bandura's four sources of self-efficacy, we highlight initial findings from a longitudinal multiple case study that explored the following questions: What experiences are most influential in developing pre-service teachers' self-efficacy? Why were those experiences most influential? This article outlines practices identified by PSTs as highly influential in their growth and development as teachers.

Conceptual Framework

Defining Self-Efficacy Grounded in social cognitive theory, Bandura (1997) believed that the relationship between an individual and their environment are reciprocally deterministic, meaning that one has an influence on the development of another. An individual's development is often based on experiences they have in various environments and has an impact on an individual's self- efficacy. Self-efficacy is defined as "[an individual's] judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performance" (Bandura, 1986, p.391). Building upon Bandura's (1986) self-efficacy framework, Tschannen-Moran (2011) refers to teacher efficacy when discussing the field of education. Tschannen-Moran (2011) note teacher efficacy is an important aspect of teacher effectiveness as it can directly affect teachers' attitudes, behaviors, and motivation in learning environments. According to Usher and Pajares (2008), higher levels of teacher-efficacy are built when individuals have the opportunity to complete a task or action successfully. These transformative opportunities are especially important for novice teachers as their beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions are developing and easily influenced (Jackson & Miller, 2020). Strong teacher-efficacy can enhance a teacher's belief that they can positively impact students' learning and increase their desire to persist through difficult or challenging tasks (Eun, 2019). This development is imperative in novice teachers as they must possess the willingness and ability to approach challenging situations with confidence in their overall ability to meet the needs of the diverse learners in the classroom (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007; 2010; Wasserman, 2009).

Bandura (1997) identifies the following four sources as contributors to the development of a teacher's self-efficacy: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological arousal.

Four Sources of Self-Efficacy

Mastery experiences. According to Bandura (1986), the most powerful source contributing to self-efficacy is the mastery experience. Bandura (1986) believed that mastery experiences provide individuals with numerous opportunities to practice and become successful in performing simple tasks. Once mastery is attained, simple tasks can be scaffolded into more complex tasks. In the context of teaching, mastery experiences are hands-on teaching experiences that range from teaching students in individual settings to teaching and managing a whole class. Whether done in person or through virtual environments, these direct experiences allow PSTs to identify both successes and failures in the planning and implementation process. Because mastery experiences are considered the most influential source of efficacy, it is important that PSTs have an abundance of mastery experiences throughout their teacher preparation program (Clark & Newberry, 2019).

Vicarious Experiences. Vicarious experiences allow individuals to observe others successfully accomplish a task that is challenging (Bandura, 1977). "Seeing others perform

threatening activities without adverse consequences can generate expectations in observers that they too will improve if they intensify and persist in their efforts" (Bandura, 1977, p. 197). In teaching, vicarious experiences accumulate through the process of imagining oneself teaching or watching someone engage in the teaching process (Clark & Newberry, 2019). It is likely that throughout a PST's program they have opportunities to engage in simulated lessons with a group of peers or observe others modeling a specific skill or strategy. Bandura (1986) believed that vicarious experiences could motivate an individual to attempt a task that they deemed to be challenging by providing a model that illustrates steps to accomplish the task. Additionally, observing others succeed can boost an individual's belief in their own ability to accomplish a task (Wentzel et al., 2009). Studies show that vicarious experiences, like the opportunities described above, correlate with higher self-efficacy, and are identified as the second most influential source (Clark & Newberry, 2019). These experiences can be highly beneficial for PSTs when mastery experiences are limited (Clark & Newberry, 2019).

Verbal Persuasion. Verbal persuasion is the process of receiving feedback, encouragement, or mentoring from a trustworthy and credible source (Clark & Newberry, 2019). Verbal praise and encouragement aid in developing an individual's belief about their abilities. Mulholland and Wallace (2001) determined that feedback from peers, in-service teachers or instructors can be a significant source of self-efficacy in PSTs. Though feedback can come in a variety of formats, such as lesson plan feedback or in-person observations, Rots et al. (2007) found that quality feedback and supervision provided by university faculty or mentors correlated to higher levels of self-efficacy in PSTs. On the contrary, if minimal opportunities to receive feedback on teaching practices exist, self-efficacy will likely diminish (Phan & Locke, 2015).

Physiological Arousal. The emotional, physical, and physiological well-being of an individual can influence a person's perceptions of their abilities in various situations. According to Schunk & DiBenedetto (2016), "Strong emotional reactions to a task provide cues about an anticipated success or failure" (p. 36). An individual's ability to gauge their physical and emotional state contributes to the development of self-efficacy. Learning how to manage positive and negative emotions helps individuals identify and reach their goals (Bandura, 1986). Interpreting stress indicators such as anxiety or nervousness as a normal response to a new experience, rather than an indicator of incompetence, can build PSTs' self-efficacy (Howardson & Behrend, 2015).

An individual's experiences can influence their development. Bandura's (1997) four sources of self-efficacy provide a lens to examine which experiences contribute to the development of a pre-service teacher's self-efficacy.

Context
Program and Scope Given the current climate of education and a focus on teacher retention, TPPs have been charged to lead educational reform with consideration of PSTs. Therefore, it is imperative TPPs create holistic experiences that bridge theory and practice. With this in mind, a mid-sized Midwest metropolitan university revised the scope and sequence of their undergraduate program to embed carefully constructed field experiences aligned to TPP coursework. Key components of the scope and sequence include increased time in field-based experiences, aligned coursework, development of community partnerships, and supporting PSTs and community partnerships with instructional coaches. PSTs spend over 135 hours in field-

based experiences prior to clinical practice (i.e., student teaching) with the support of instructors, instructional coaches, and mentor teachers (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Program Scope & Sequence
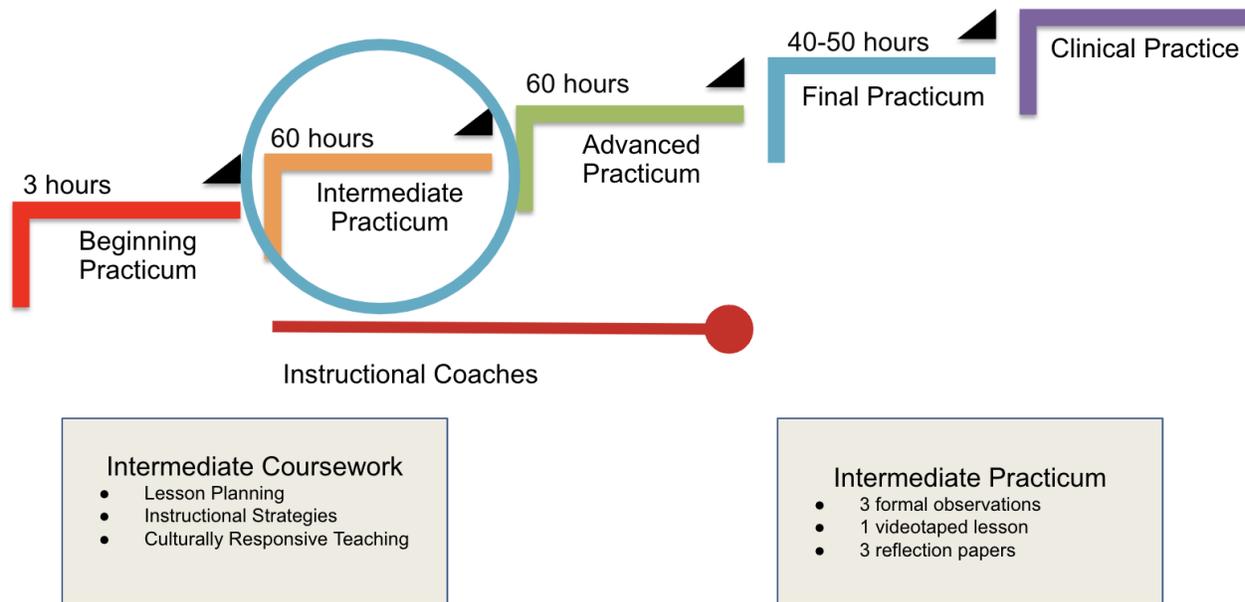
The intermediate practicum experience is the second field-based experience in the sequence. The first half of the semester, PSTs attend class on campus where they engage with content centered on lesson planning, instructional strategies, and culturally responsive teaching. As PSTs transition to their 60-hour field-based experience, the initial week in classrooms consists of observation and learning the routines and procedures of the classroom. During this field-based experience, PSTs are expected to plan and implement three lessons that are observed by instructors and instructional coaches. Instructional coaches (IC) are unique to the program as they work alongside course instructors to co-facilitate learning on campus and conduct observations during field-based experiences. The IC serves as a non-evaluative thought-partner with the goal to help the PST reflect on their teaching and improve their practice. After a teaching episode, the IC uses open-ended questioning to prompt the PST to examine the realities of their teaching while collaborating to celebrate successes, problem solve challenges, and set goals to foster continuous growth. In addition to observations and coaching conversations, PSTs write guided reflection papers focused on their field-based experience and reflect on one video recorded lesson.

Sequential field-based experiences are structured in a similar fashion with content delivered on campus and pre-service teachers releasing to field-based experiences that are supported by instructors and instructional coaches. The scope and sequence support scaffolding these experiences, and each semester the requirements for teaching interactions, observations, coaching conversations, and video reflection intensify.

Methods

This study examines initial data collected from early program participants engaged in their intermediate field-based experience (see Figure 1). We used a holistic multiple case study design (Yin, 2018) to pursue the following research questions: What experiences are most influential in developing pre-service teachers' self-efficacy? Why were those experiences most influential? This paper is situated within a larger longitudinal multiple case study that seeks to understand the experiences PSTs have had throughout their university coursework and field-based experiences that were most influential to developing their confidence as a teacher.

Drawing on the work of Yin (2018), a case study is rooted in looking at the process, understanding, and interpretation of a phenomenon such as a program, event, or process within its real-world context. This study used multiple case study design to gain a better understanding of the individual experience of participants and to examine the similarities and differences within or between cases (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Four individual cases were bound within a Midwestern, mid-sized, metropolitan university. We utilized thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to gain an in-depth understanding of the relevant university coursework and field-based experiences applied during the intermediate block that aided in developing the candidate's self-efficacy.

Participants and Context The larger longitudinal study will follow participants as they progress through the intermediate, advanced, and final practicums as well as clinical practice. Stake (2006) notes multiple case study designs should utilize no fewer than 4 cases and no more than 10. For this study, we report initial findings from four participants enrolled in the intermediate practicum block who completed a 60-hour field-based experience in a local urban school district. We used comparable case selection (Miles et al., 2014) to recruit participants with relevant characteristics, such as their enrollment in the intermediate practicum and sequence of coursework thereafter. Participants consisted of four pre-service teachers who all attended the same 4-year, mid-sized, midwestern, metropolitan university. Participants pursued a variety of degrees ranging from an elementary education degree, early childhood inclusive education, and a secondary education degree.

Table 1. Participants.

Participant	Practicum Level	Major/Concentration
Bethany	Intermediate Practicum	Elementary Education
Jenna	Intermediate Practicum	Elementary Education
Payton	Intermediate Practicum	Secondary Education
Wendy	Intermediate Practicum	Early Childhood Inclusive

Data Collection Data reported in this paper was derived from four individual open-ended, semi structured interviews. One-on-one interviews took place with each participant via Zoom within two weeks of completing their intermediate field-based experience at the end of the university

semester. Both researchers were involved in the preparation of the questions and were present for the interviews. One researcher led the interview by posing questions and the other researcher took descriptive notes. The questions (see Appendix) asked during the semi-structured interviews allowed participants to reflect on both successes and challenges experienced in the university classroom and practicum and examined support and new knowledge that was gained throughout the semester. The initial 30-minute interviews were conducted in Spring 2022 and the video recording was transcribed for analysis in Summer 2022.

Data Analysis We interviewed the participants at the end of the Spring 2022 semester to gain perspective about what experiences provided through both their coursework and practicum had an impact on their self-efficacy as it related to teaching. Interview transcripts were housed on a secure password protected server. To protect the anonymity of all participants, identifying information from each unit of data was removed and each participant was provided a pseudonym.

We used thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to explore the data set. Data was analyzed in five phases. First, we reviewed participants' transcripts to familiarize ourselves with the data. Individually, each researcher developed initial codes and used open coding to identify common semantic descriptors in the second round of analysis. Once data was initially coded, we examined the descriptors to determine patterns and identified themes that aligned with Bandura's four sources of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Collaboratively, we reviewed the data to calibrate and refine codes and their alignment to the themes.

Findings

In the following sections, we report the results of participant takeaways and share themes noticed in their responses.

Application Participants shared that the practicum experience afforded them the opportunity to bridge theory to practice, meaning they could take what they were learning in their coursework and directly apply it to the classroom setting. Payton highlighted how they had a chance to implement what they were learning and apply it across multiple settings and contexts. They shared, "I'm not only implementing what I'm learning and practicing [in practicum], I'm also implementing it there as well [my job]. As a whole…I'm using and learning and expanding myself as a teacher." Another participant highlighted how the experience affirmed the need to utilize instructional strategies discussed in class. Wendy shared, "I guess I never thought that I would need to [tell students to raise their hand to share ideas], until I didn't do it. And then I did it. And then I saw how big of a difference it made." These opportunities for application served as a substantial component in their learning and development as a teacher. This was validated when Bethany shared, "I don't think I would've gotten [the practice] if I had just a lecture class with readings and things like that. Having that experience is probably the biggest component out of all of it."

Repetition Participants also described the benefit repetition, or repeating a task or experience more than once, had on their development as teachers. Bethany shared how the repetition within the microteaching structure yielded better results and teaching outcomes. They shared, "The first time it's very rough because you've never really done it, but by the eighth time, you have it all set." These in-class opportunities allowed participants to conceptualize content and consider

effective ways to model and deliver content to students. Participants also described the impact repetition had on their teaching and planning. Payton reflected on how their ability to plan lessons developed over the course of experience. They reflected, "didn't stress on it as much as I did in the beginning and that was a breakthrough for me." Another participant highlighted the impact the practicum experience had on their understanding of managing materials and transitions in lessons. Wendy shared, "I definitely planned better, and I just made sure I had the stuff there, to hand them, cause the first lesson, I just handed out their materials earlier and I was like, you don't need these yet". These repetitive experiences developed an awareness in the participant that was not present before having the opportunity to facilitate lessons with students.

Modeled Instruction Participants discussed how opportunities to observe and watch others assisted in growing their confidence as a teacher. All four participants highlighted that having coursework on campus where instructional strategies were modeled first, and then spending the latter part of the semester in field-based experiences was beneficial. Bethany stated, "The fact that we were able to start the class in lecture for a while before we jumped to the field helped." The carefully designed structure of coursework prior to releasing to a field-based experiences provided PSTs with opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding in the initial months of the semester and apply it in the practicum setting. Jenna echoed this benefit by sharing, "I always made sure to use a lot of the strategies [in practicum] that we used in class. I would say that was a success for me."

Simulated teaching opportunities facilitated by instructors and coaches were utilized during pull back sessions or seminars to model effective instructional strategies that could be immediately implemented in the field-based experience. Wendy shared, "We had a Friday Zoom seminar with different [instructional] strategies. When I was teaching my final lesson, I had moments where I was like I can use this. [Then] I tried it, and it worked." Jenna also saw the benefits in watching others teach the same content. They shared, "We did a lot of role playing, which allowed us to see different perspectives but understand it in our own way."

Participants also described the impact that observation had on their confidence as they entered the classroom. Bethany described their first days in their P-12 classroom. "When we first went to field for 2400, we only went twice instead of all four days to sit and observe. It was helpful to just watch …I was able to see right away the routine [the teacher] had established. The kids also are used to you a bit more, since they see you observing rather than just coming in and doing stuff right away." Payton also shared how time to observe and acclimate to the environment allowed them to feel more comfortable. They shared, " I was scared to death of going in there, I felt like I wasn't going to be able to do it. I ended up teaching three of my four lessons and realized the best way to get comfortable was to just talk to them."

Feedback Participants often referenced the impact the feedback provided through observations from an instructional coach or instructor had on their growth and development as a teacher. Jenna shared, "When our coaches and professors brought us in for feedback, that was very helpful, too. Telling us what we did well but also what could've gone better, because a lot of stuff that they were saying I would've never thought of had they not shared it with me." Jenna also went on to highlight how this developed the ability to receive feedback when sharing, "I would be super nervous for observations or to see feedback, because I mean, it's just for me, it was always awkward. But then I learned to embrace it when I saw it more as help." It's evident that

PSTs' ability to both accept feedback and apply it developed through the course of the semester and field-based experience.

Participants also referenced the role lesson plan feedback had on their growth and development through the semester. A strong focus of the intermediate coursework is lesson planning and participants highlighted the benefits of collaborating with instructors to critically analyze and evaluate their lesson plans. Jenna explains, "She would sit down and talk [with us], and she gave us a lot of detailed feedback. That was very helpful too." Brittany shared how this experience led them to seek informal feedback from others when formal opportunities were not provided to ensure the plan contained focus and clarity. She states, "When I was doing the lesson plans, I would have someone else read it over to see if it makes sense for someone who isn't teaching it." These collaborative feedback structures are contributing factors to participants developing confidence in their lesson planning ability.

Reflection Video reflection was also consistently discussed by participants as having an impact on their growth and development. Participants shared the aha moments and the impact the self-analysis opportunities had on their development and lesson design approach. Wendy notes this moment by sharing, "It bored me to watch myself teach. So, after that, I spent a little more time making some cute little posters. When I had to use the whiteboard, I tried to use at least a couple different colors that made sense. Just better visuals." Wendy goes on to reflect on the use of video to foster reflection. They share, "It was not something that I enjoyed doing, but then once I did it, and got to watch it, I definitely learned a lot from it." Jenna reflects on how reflection helped them grow by stating, "I would say reflection was a big part. Being forced to go back and watch yourself teach, you could catch everything. When our coach and teacher brought us in for feedback that was helpful too." These reflections highlight the opportunities and impact video reflection had on PSTs' ability to both observe and reflect on their teaching.

Expectations of the Profession Prior to beginning their TPP, PSTs have formed beliefs about teaching and schools based on their prior schooling experiences, but as PST began facilitating lessons, they became keenly aware of the workload associated with teaching. Wendy stated, "I was not expecting there to be so much work involved in making a single lesson plan. I had to get really good at managing my time, and this isn't the course that you can be like, 'I'll do that later' because you have to teach your lesson tomorrow whether you are ready for it or not.'" Brittany echoes a similar sentiment by stating, "I am not staying up super late…I'm getting up in the morning, eating food… I have to do all the things to be present in the classroom."

Teacher Identity Most notable in participant responses was descriptions of the transition that took place as they moved from the college classroom to the P-12 environment. Participants noted how they had to shift their mindset from being a college student to seeing themselves as a teacher. Payton noted, "I still feel very much like a student, so getting into the classroom you begin to take on the role of the adult." Payton goes on to share, "I feel like I'm learning so much more because my mind is different from listening as a student. I was like, okay, this is how I'm gonna use this in my classroom, and this is how I'm gonna do that. Getting into the classroom changed my whole perspective." As participants reflected on how they grew throughout the semester, Jenna describes how important it is to not just like kids, but to also like teaching. They explain, "(You) have to make sure you are being intentional and not just putting fun projects together, but still aligning it to state standards and goals… I never really thought about how big it

was to make sure you were going back to that assessment part." As participants reflected on their experience, they began to note how they were building their teacher identity and understanding the realities of the classroom.

Analysis & Discussion

This study explored the following questions: What experiences are most influential in developing pre-service teachers' self-efficacy? Why were those experiences most influential? The initial findings from this study are supported by Bandura's (1997) four sources of self-efficacy and contribute to the development of a teacher's self-efficacy (Table 2).

Table 2. Themes connected to Bandura's Self-efficacy Framework

Theme	Connection to Bandura's Framework
Application	Mastery Experience
Repetition	Mastery Experience
Modeling	Vicarious Experience
Feedback	Verbal Persuasion
Reflection	Verbal Persuasion
Expectations of the profession	Physiological Arousal
Teacher identity	Physiological Arousal

These findings can help inform the work of other TPPs as they plan for opportunities to maximize PSTs' self-efficacy development. TPPs must consider what authentic learning opportunities are created for PSTs to bridge theory to practice. As noted by the participants, hands-on opportunities, or mastery experiences, created meaningful opportunities for PSTs to apply newly learned strategies and knowledge in real world contexts. Experiencing the teaching process for themselves is critically important to PSTs developing pedagogical and reflective skills, as well as teacher efficacy (Darling-Hammond, 2012; Liakopoulou, 2012; McGlamery & Harrington, 2007). These experiences afforded PSTs repeated opportunities to plan, implement and reflect on lessons, which serves as a substantial element in their learning and development as a teacher. When a PST experiences repeated success with different tasks, self-efficacy is cultivated and maintained even if failures occur occasionally (Cansiz & Cansiz, 2019). This solidifies that hands-on experiences provided through practicum experiences are a critical component in the development of PSTs' self-efficacy.

Initial findings also show opportunities to observe others effectively teaching and modeling instructional strategies contributed to PST's ability to feel confident to complete a task independently. These mastery experiences, often in-class microteaches, were used to simulate authentic teaching opportunities, allowing PSTs to gain knowledge and understanding that could

later be applied in the practicum setting. Oluwatoyin & Ademiluyi (2022) found that microteachings helped PSTs develop confidence and time management skills and offered them increased exposure to various teaching methods. These controlled opportunities allowed PSTs to acquire and refine the necessary range of skills, knowledge, and attitudes to develop their teaching practice before entering the real classroom. Additionally, field-based experiences and mini-teachings provide opportunities for PSTs to engage in representation, decomposition, and approximation (Grossman et al., 2009). In other words, in the university setting, PSTs have opportunities to observe modeled teaching (representation). Decomposition refers to breaking down complex tasks and understanding the "why" behind the practice (Grossman et al., 2009). Through mini-teachings, instructors can be intentional with helping PSTs understand the nuances of an instructional strategy and how to refine their teaching through repeated opportunities for practice. These experiences can be coupled with authentic classroom experiences to develop PSTs' implementation skills and opportunities to "practice" teaching concepts before working with children in P-12 schools. PSTs can then apply this learning in the classroom (e.g., approximation) and receive feedback to support their growth.

PSTs also need opportunities to reflect on their teaching with a more knowledgeable other (Vygotsky,1979). Feedback can be used to not only foster critical reflection on one's teaching, but it can also be a form of verbal persuasion (Bandura, 1986). Fostering reflective practice provides PSTs opportunities to use self–discovery to identify strengths of their teaching and areas of growth. Carefully constructed conversations between an instructor or coach and a PST, help shape a PST's image of themselves as a teacher. The use of praise and encouragement can affirm the teacher's strengths and help them explore strategies to grow in their practice. Universities should explore coaching structures (i.e., instructional coaching, cognitive coaching, student-centered coaching) to support faculty in serving as a thought partner that guides reflective conversations. Time must be devoted to supporting PSTs during field-based experiences in order to create space for verbal persuasion through feedback, support, and mentoring (Clark & Newberry, 2019). This support can influence the PST's perceptions of their abilities to work with P-12 learners.

In addition to the use of feedback being used as a form of reflection, video proves to be a powerful tool to help PSTs bridge the gap between perceptions of their teaching and reality. Sherin et al. (2021) states, "Recording classroom video can provide rich opportunities to notice and learn more about students' thinking and ways of participating in classroom activities. It can also give teachers the opportunity to notice things about their own teaching practice" (p. 48). Recordings of teaching provide a platform for PSTs to reflect on their teaching, notice strengths and areas of growth, and can be used to set short-term and long-term goals. Developing reflective practitioners requires universities to adopt protocols and frameworks that promote this practice. Watching video of oneself can become a cumbersome and daunting task without guidance and direction. Knight (2014) suggests using protocols such as "Watch Yourself" and "Watch Your Students," which outline specific instructional practices to look for while watching the video. Well-developed protocols can help move PSTs from being teacher-centered in their reflections to more student-centered.

Teacher preparation programs involve not only discovering the skills and knowledge of teaching, but also what it means to be a teacher (Singh and Richards, 2006). Findings highlight that the intentional experiences created for PSTs fostered realizations about the profession and provided robust opportunities for them to transition their lens from being a student to becoming a teacher. Henry (2016) found pre-service teachers can make quick shifts in forming their identity.

They note, "The shift from not seeing herself [participant] as a teacher (and concurrent experiences of self-doubt and disillusionment), to perceiving herself as someone capable of working with and helping students could take place in a matter of minutes" (p.303). Carefully designed coursework partnered with field-based experiences play a special role in developing teachers' identities; therefore, it is important to recognize how personal and professional experiences aid in the development of teachers.

Conclusion

The goal of teacher preparation programs is to equip teachers with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to employ best practices that empower both their teaching and student learning. From the initial interviews conducted, the researchers found that PSTs reflected on aspects of both their coursework and practicum experience that aligned to all four sources of self-efficacy (Bandura,1997). We recognize a limitation to this study is the need to better understand the identity of the teacher candidate (i.e., demographics) and how this shapes their work in the classroom. This data will be collected in the next round of interviews to aid in a more holistic case study. Given the results of this initial study, we continue to collect data to explore the experiences of pre-service teachers and the structures and supports PSTs identify in building their self-efficacy. Finding effective ways to link theory learned in campus coursework and practice in the field is essential to developing teachers.

As teacher preparation programs continue to explore structures that effectively support PSTs' self-efficacy development, it is important TPPs identify the components of their program that can most effectively train highly qualified teachers. Though we acknowledge this study is limited to the experience of four pre-service teachers, the preliminary findings of this case study demonstrate that practicum experiences, microteachings, video analysis and feedback structures are meaningful, authentic experiences that positively contribute to PSTs' self-efficacy. These meaningful experiences prove to be strong components for TPPs to consider as they look to maximize PSTs' potential and effectiveness in P-12 classrooms.

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Appendix

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. *What practicum-based experience(s) during the semester helped you grow in your development as a teacher?*

2. *What coursework or in-class experiences have helped you grow in your development as a teacher?*

3. *Tell us about a success you had while in the field. What contributed to your success?*

4. *Tell us about a challenge you experienced during the semester and how you overcame this challenge.*

5. *How have you grown and developed this semester as an educator? How is this similar or different from previous semesters?*