

The Perceived Benefits of Coaching in Online Literacy Clinics

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Educating literacy educators in online teacher preparation programs is an area in need of research. As online literacy teacher programs become more prevalent, it will become increasingly important to study the benefits and challenges of various online literacy clinic designs. This study investigated the perceived interactions between tutors and external coaches in online practicum courses to identify what kind of learning impact the presence of coaches might have on future literacy educators. Grounded theory analysis of tutor and coach interviews and tutor course reflections, supplemented with field observations, highlights three distinctive features of perceived benefits of coaching involved: (a) improved reflection and achievement; (b) better collaboration; and (c) being present in the joint activity. The findings also call for more collaboration between online literacy educator preparation and instructional technology coaches and programs.

The literacy field is on a challenging journey, as evidenced by the *Standards for the Preparation of Literacy Professionals* (International Literacy Association, 2017) and the current trend to move literacy clinic courses online (Helfrich & Smith, 2011). On the one hand, entire literacy programs have been moved online to eliminate the challenge of driving to campus for some students or free the classroom space for other purposes (Risko & Reid, 2018). On the other hand, the complexity of the standards and growing diversity of the P-12 students call for increasing rigor in the preparation of literacy professionals. In addition, these standards stress teacher collaboration, which can be more difficult in online environments because time and place require more forethought in designing online curricula than synchronous face-to-face instruction and collaboration. Not all teacher education programs have the expertise to design such learning environments.

Moreover, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a demand to move clinical experiences online to maintain the Center for Disease Control's (CDC) guidelines for social distancing. Because the pandemic caused many K-12 schools to shift from in-person learning to online or blended learning, learning and teaching in literacy courses that prepare future literacy specialists dramatically changed as well (Laster, 2020). Many literacy clinics had to switch to online delivery because K-12 schools could not host master's degree literacy students at school sites for the purpose of tutoring children.

Also, the urge to teach such courses online in March 2020 created chaos and uncertainty, especially for those who needed to switch instantly (Laster, 2020). In spring 2020, some face-to-face literacy clinics even shut down, while those that remained in operation had to go through a significant transformation in instructional delivery methods. As a result, some became a one-layered remote clinic. That is, the supervisor/coach was remote from the tutor, and the tutor taught face-to-face in classrooms or clinics.

Some began functioning as two-layered remote clinics (Laster, 2020), with the supervisor/coach being remote from the tutor and the tutor also being remote from the student. In other cases, when it was impossible to run a clinic, instructors turned to state education departments' guidance regarding which alternative learning experiences could count as clinical experiences when tutoring children face-to-face could not take place.

The literacy field also drew awareness to digital divides that teaching online created for children learning remotely. Many children had no access to computers or the Internet. In some cases, while some children used technology to access various texts and content, other children used technology as rote drill practice, similar to worksheets. There were also issues with the constraints of technologies, especially regarding the extent to which the technologies allowed the teachers to scaffold learning. Many teachers had difficulties scaffolding instruction using learning technologies especially with young children (Laster, 2020).

In other instances, students' learning was reduced to accessing messages from the teacher, such as, "Make sure to read every day," as opposed to the teacher working more with the child. As a result of the new circumstances caused by the pandemic, instructors teaching clinic courses had to tackle multiple layers of new course delivery, both in terms of how to deliver such courses well using online modes of instruction, as well as how to guide future literacy professionals in teaching children via online technologies.

Taking into account the new need to devise a rigorous online education preparing future literacy professionals in ever-changing circumstances, this study was paramount in respect to determining how literacy programs might adroitly shift to online clinical experiences in a way that can effectively support teachers' teaching and learning. This article describes a study of the ways in-service teachers worked as coaches in online clinics and the ways graduate students perceived the coaches' presence and coaching.

Findings from this study contribute to a need for research involving online literacy teacher preparation (which includes insights into to using online tools to improve reflection, peer feedback to increase teacher reflection, video for preservice teachers' reflection, and digital tools to aid in incorporating authentic children's literature into instruction; Karchmer-Klein & Pytash, 2019). At the time when literacy clinics have undergone changes in delivery due to both internal demands and COVID-19 restrictions, the field needs to experiment with and enhance existing and new ways for offering instructional delivery, such as employing external coaches from local schools.

Our aim was also to explore participants' perspectives on coaching practices involving external literacy coaches in online literacy clinics as an addition to peer and instructor collegial feedback. Studying perspectives on novel practices like online coaching from external literacy professionals may lead to substantial understanding of the value of learning, which can be positively linked to outcomes (Brantmeier, 2005; Cochran et al., 2010; Donato et al., 2000; Graham, 2004; Mills et al., 2006, 2007; Wesely, 2012).

Perceptions are also significant to this study because they consequently influence teachers' behavior (Roelofs & Terwel, 1999). Just like teachers' perceptions relate to their own teaching behavior, our tutors' and coaches' perceptions appeared to correspond to their own dispositions regarding teaching and coaching collaboration in clinic courses, as well as their own professional learning communities in their local schools. Second, insight into perceptions may lead to improvement of teaching. Since teaching is built from teachers' perceptions (Lee & Tsai, 2005), reflective practice about teachers' perspectives on coaching can shape and improve teaching. In addition, it is important to allow multiple voices to research perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs that take into account various unique perspectives to locate new directions for research (Wesely, 2012).

By describing how participants perceived the practice of online coaching, we hope to encourage teacher educators to consider employing such experiences during the formal preparation of literacy professionals. The main research question for this study was, "In what ways did tutors and coaches perceive coaching in online literacy clinics?" By framing the question in this way, we did not assume that their perceptions of this coaching experience would be either positive or negative, but we were curious to see what these perceptions were. Since we did not grade tutors' course reflections for content and we interviewed tutors after they graduated, we minimized the extent to which participants would be swayed in their responses. We shared course reflections with the coaches without tutors' names, and we informed tutors that these reflections would be shared anonymously.

Coaching

Literature on coaching in general describes the power of coaching as a practice, which Scribner and Cole (2020) defined as "socially developed and patterned ways of using technology and knowledge to accomplish tasks" (p. 17). Socially developed and patterned ways of good coaching are typified as coming from dedicated coaches who talk through problems as

they arise in situ, raise questions and ideas, and facilitate such tenets as self-esteem, motivation, and achievement in the coaches' mentees (Serrat, 2017).

Coaching differs from conventional training in a way that the practice of coaching focuses on the person, helping the person reflect without imposing ideas. Coaching is also continuing in nature, not a one-time event (Serrat, 2017). It should also involve accurate questioning, active listening, and clear feedback.

Various studies showed effectiveness of coaching in several disciplines. Jones et al. (2016) conducted a meta-analysis of research on the success of coaching provided by external or internal coaches in the areas of management, health care, and teaching and noted a positive impact on skills, with positive effects resulting from e-coaching and stronger effects from internal coaches and multisource feedback. Bachkirova et al. (2020) used mixed methods to study coaching in medical systems to evaluate coaching and found that coaching substantially contributed to participants' changes in their practice.

Within the field of education, coaching has been intensively studied, as well. For instance, Allan (2007) examined formative evaluation reviews, data from reflection notes, and an extensive summative feedback evaluation questionnaire in which the research supported the practice of coaching, in that the secondary-level staff benefited from coaching as professional development. In early elementary education, Ehri and Flugman (2018) investigated the effectiveness of the long-term coaching of first grade teachers on using systematic phonics. Mentors taught teachers how to provide systematic phonics instruction to their 1,336 students. Monthly ratings by mentors revealed that teachers improved their phonics teaching skills with many reaching the highest ratings by May. Silver et al. (2009) studied a university-based coaching program for new administrators and found that participants had a positive opinion about coaching as well as about a personal feel to it.

Instructional Technology Coaches

In the education field, although coaching has some commonalities across different niche fields within education, there are also some unique differences in terms of practice since these disparate areas of education have their own standards for preparation of such professionals. The need for coaching in instructional technology has grown (Johnston, 2015; Peterson, 2015), as students in schools use more educational technology (i.e., laptops, phones, and tablets) and the integration of technology into the curriculum is required. In addition, such support has grown recently due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As teachers needed to move instantly to online learning without adequate preparation time, such a move required support from instructional technology coaches (Bakhshae et al., 2020).

An instructional technology coach, someone who has studied instructional technology at the master's degree level, serves on a district's technology team and assists teachers in personalized ways in using technology to enhance their instruction. Essentially, instructional technology coaches

are school leaders who usually have teaching experience, as well as advanced education in educational coaching in order to provide what Bakhshae et al. (2020) called “deep coaching” (p. 3).

Moreover, the presence and help from an instructional technology coach encourages teachers to use technology in teaching (Beglau et al., 2011). Such coaches also constantly improve their coaching practice, including their knowledge about technology integration strategies, establish professional relationships with educators conducive to improving instruction and outcomes, model technology integration, and guide educators in designing technology-enhanced learning experiences that meet students’ needs and interests. Additionally, they design professional learning for educators in the area of incorporating technology, they help in collecting and analyzing students’ data, and they support both students and teachers in digital citizenship (Hew & Brush, 2007; International Society for Technology in Education, 2011; Kim et al., 2013; Ottenbreit-Leftwich et al., 2010; Zhao & Frank, 2003).

Research also shows that teachers view instructional technology coaching more favorably than professional development workshops (Sugar, 2005). Similarly, MacDonald (2018) investigated the effectiveness of the role of an instructional technology coach in a K-8 school district and found that coaching by an instructional technology coach was more effective than conventional professional development as such coaching was individualized and situated.

Research also points to the effectiveness of instructional technology coaching. In a recent study, researchers found that teachers who collaborated with educational technology coaches utilized technology more often for teaching and reported feeling more confident in their ability to use technology to better engage students in learning than their peers who did not collaborate with such coaches (Bakhshaei et al., 2020). However, it is also important to note that such coaching should have certain characteristics in order to be effective. Bakhshaei et al. (2019) noted that teachers should be seen as partners in these collaborations. They also noted that coaching needs to be personalized and focused on individualized teaching challenges with solutions immediately tried. In addition, they stressed that support for teachers should be sustained and coaches should be supported so that they can support teachers in all content areas. Ottenbreit-Leftwich et al. (2020) identified similar features of successful coaching, such as relationships with teachers and personalized support. Consequently, these successful coaching features resulted in higher levels of technology integration.

Literacy Coaches

Literacy coaches also work with teachers and handle establishing professional relationships, modeling to and guiding teachers, and providing professional development; however, these activities are devoted to strengthening literacy teaching in a school district (International Literacy Association, 2017). In addition, literacy coaches can help teachers in integrating digital technologies, especially to enhance students’ myriad literacies.

Literacy coaches must have at least a master's degree in literacy. Coaching in literacy is “a process of facilitated inquiry that enables teachers to make decisions, solve problems, and set and achieve both individual goals and the goals of the organization, specifically to improve classroom instructional practices and student literacy learning” (Bean & Ippolito, 2016, p. 5). In school settings, literacy coaches help teachers use data to inform literacy instruction, model effective literacy strategies, observe teaching and provide feedback, and meet with teachers and provide one-on-one coaching. In addition, such coaches can coordinate the school literacy program and help administrators in literacy curriculum.

Literacy coaching has been also the core idea in preparation of future literacy professionals in literacy clinical experiences because it aims at increasing teachers' expertise (Lockwood et al., 2010). Teachers' expertise has a tremendous impact on students' literacy development (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Snow et al., 2005).

The results of a recent nationwide survey indicated a continuing need for university graduate preparation programs to include experiences designed to prepare candidates for coaching roles in authentic situations to teach how to use coaching language effectively in coaching situations (Bean et al., 2015). Usually, instructors play the role of coaches in literacy clinics (Laster, 2013), or doctoral students who often assist instructors (Collett, 2012). Additionally, in some programs, graduate students act as coaches and mentor preservice teachers (Maloch et al., 2015) or get involved in peer coaching, where some are coached by more experienced teachers (Massey et al., 2019).

Although research on coaching by individuals other than course instructors is scarce, this research suggests that such practices are valuable (Massey et al., 2019). The emerging research also points to the affordances of digital tools that can make such coaching possible (Howell et al., 2019).

Research on utilizing in-service teachers as coaches who work in collaboration with university faculty members in online literacy clinics and are not themselves students taking these courses is scarce, because online clinics are new phenomena themselves and current research mostly describes various online clinic designs (Helfrich & Smith, 2011; Lilienthal, 2014; Vokatis, 2018). In other instances, some studies on online clinics describe tutors' collaboration mostly with each other (Massey et al., 2019; Sharma & Pang, 2015).

In this article, we use the term *tutors* in reference to graduate students taking literacy clinics. We use the term *coaches* in reference to in-service teachers with a master's degree in literacy hired by the literacy clinic to coach tutors.

Conceptual Framework

We adopted a sociocognitive perspective for this study, particularly the notion of communities of practice while situating students' learning within a particular community of practice (Wenger, 2011) – where members of this community of practice aim to become effective literacy specialists. The

concept of community of practice is particularly suitable for these community interactions because the coaching community described in this study consisted of individuals who did not only share the same interests but also learned from each other in joint activities and, thus, built shared practice as a result. This shared practice can be developed through such activities as problem solving, requesting information, seeking experience, reusing assets, or visits.

Study Design

This study follows a qualitative case study design (Yin, 2018). Specifically, it is a systematic investigation of a community of tutors and coaches who engaged in coaching for the purpose of providing tutors with learning opportunities from experienced teachers. For the analysis of transcribed interviews and course reflections, we implemented a grounded theory approach (Corbin & Strauss, 2015) as well as reflexivity (Dowling, 2008) in order to establish trustworthiness of this research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Background

Our department is housed in a 4-year liberal arts public college and offers two nationally accredited reading programs for master's level students: Master of Education, Literacy Education Birth-Grade 6, and Master of Education, Literacy Education Grades 5-12. Each tutor takes two required clinics after finishing foundational courses, as well as before enrolling in action research courses to finalize the master's program. Each clinic is a three-credit course involving not only weekly tutoring of a child, but also course readings and discussions.

In each clinic, the tutor received a final grade. For example, if tutors completed the program as full-time graduate students, after they completed foundational courses the prior the summer they would take the first clinic in the fall and the second one in the spring. If tutors took the program as part time, they would take the clinics in the 2nd year of the program. In the first clinic, tutors teach single students, and in the second clinic, they teach groups of two to four students.

Until spring 2016, our tutors took literacy programs in the blended version, taking all but the clinical coursework online and taking literacy clinics face to face. Before 2015, clinic courses were university based, and most of students were university employees' children. In 2015, clinics moved to a P-12 setting and, in 2016, transferred to an online mode. Once clinics went online, our tutors tutored students in schools where they worked or substituted. Tutors recruited students with school administration's approval and recommendation.

Clinic Design

To establish online clinics, we modified Toll's (2016) problem-solving model of coaching and used video of teaching as a primary tool. First, video allows one to capture and easily transmit a complex activity (Marsh & Mitchell, 2014). Second, because video can be viewed in depth after

teaching takes place, the video-artifact allows for in-depth reflection, as opposed to relying only on memory, which may result in missing some aspects (Tripp & Rich, 2012). In our clinics, the coach watched a video from each student and provided feedback following Toll's model.

According to this model, coaching started with a problem identified by the tutor. We modified the model slightly to fit the demands of online teaching. Using the model, the coach would ask the tutor a question that helps the tutor in identifying the problem: "When you think of the reading and writing you want your students to do and the teaching you want to do, what gets in the way?" (Toll, 2016, p. 416). However, in the online clinic environment, face-to-face conversations between the tutor and the coach are difficult to achieve. Therefore, we provided tutors with this helpful question while explaining what it means to identify a problem.

A synchronous video conference between the coach and tutor occurred later in the process. First, after tutoring, the tutor identified and described a tutoring problem in the form of a video reflection. The coach reviewed the video and provided written feedback to the tutor that detailed some suggestions on how to solve the issue. Then, tutors used the feedback in their next tutoring session and contacted the coach to schedule a video conference to follow up on the coach's feedback incorporation of the instructional methods and to brainstorm further solutions, which aligns with the continuing coaching cycle described by Toll (2016).

In our clinic, each coach interacted only once with each tutor in this way. The second interaction took place with the instructor of the course. Synchronous video conferences with coaches occurred based on a rotating schedule and were one on one (one coach and one tutor). Each conference took about 30-60 minutes, depending on the needs of the conferencing tutor. Each conference started with the coach asking how helpful the feedback was with addressing instructional challenges, how the teaching session went, and what new issues arose that the coach could help with. The coaches were also open to additional requests of instructional support.

We designed our online clinic as a one-layered remote clinic. This means that the supervisor/coach is remote from the tutor, and the tutor teaches school children synchronously face to face. In our clinics, the supervisor/coach did not observe in-the-moment teaching but watches videos of recorded teaching. Only video conferences between the coach and the tutor that follow teaching occurred synchronously. However, in remote clinics at other institutions, in-the-moment observations may take place. In March 2020, our clinics began to also function as two-layered remote clinics (Laster, 2020), with the supervisor/coach being remote from the tutor, and the tutor being remote from the student.

Study Participants

Eighteen tutors and three coaches participated in the study. We recruited tutors from three sections of a master's level online clinic. Most of tutors had 1-2 years of teaching experience, and some were substitute teachers. All three coaches were former students of first author Vokatis, and they had completed literacy clinics with her in face-to-face clinics. At the time

of coaching, one coach had 4 years of teaching experience as a classroom teacher. Another coach had 5 years of experience as a classroom teacher and 3 years as a literacy specialist. The third coach had 2 years of experience as a literacy specialist and as special education teacher.

We asked them to coach in the clinics because they performed well as students and peer coaches in the past, all had teaching experience, and all expressed a great interest in working with graduate students. At the time of the study, the coaches were no longer graduate students. They received a modest stipend through a university-sponsored grant that covered their coaching work, consisting of providing written feedback for each tutor once and connecting with each tutor once to discuss how teaching with the coach's written feedback worked. In addition, one eligible coach received in-service credits for participation. They coached in addition to their regular teaching duties. Because the coach could coach each tutor only once, the course instructor needed to coach as well to ensure that each tutor received a proper amount of feedback.

Prior to coaching, the first author Vokatis met with coaches and provided training by engaging the coaches in providing feedback using already existing clinic videos to make sure that our coaching was in line with the teaching and learning literacy we promoted in the courses. Once coaching started in the courses, the training did not stop but changed. The instructor met with coaches to discuss teaching cases that were more challenging and required sharing ideas about handling a particular teaching problem to provide the best possible direction for the tutor and the tutored child. We matched coaches with particular course sections randomly. Once coaching started, coaches familiarized themselves with the course on Blackboard.

First author Vokatis also periodically debriefed with coaches to discuss some instances of coaching to make sure that our coaching would be similar. Coaches also received journal entries from tutors, in which tutors described how coaching improved their instruction, if it did. As far as Vokatis's role as instructor, she also coached and graded all course assignments. Second author Gibbins is a colleague from the same institution. Although he is not directly involved in teaching in clinics, his expertise in organizing and leading professional development with preK-16 educators as part of the National Writing Project allowed us to work together on various internal grant applications that would support stipends for practitioners providing coaching.

Data Collection

For this study, we analyzed 18 tutors' course reflections and 18 transcripts from interviews with them. We also interviewed three literacy coaches who coached these tutors in three course sections in fall 2017. Because our focus was tutors' perceptions of coaching, these interviews and course reflections were our main qualitative data. We did not analyze video coaching sessions for this study, as such data would require different analytical tools and methods of analysis that would not align to the research questions of this study.

The grading factor did not influence interviews and course reflections since we interviewed the tutors after they had graduated, and we did not grade their course reflections for substance. The reflection prompt was, “What are your experiences from interacting with the coach?” Each Skype videoconferencing interview took approximately 15-20 minutes, focusing on the value of distance coaching experience from tutors’ and coaches’ perspectives and incorporating communities of practice (Wenger, 2011). Because communities of practice are created by people who want to improve their practices through engaging in learning from each other to build a shared practice, our questions asked participants to share what they learned in these interactions. We started in an open-ended way by asking participants to describe these experiences. Tutors shared learning gains with Vokatis in emails, and their course reflections informed the second question.

Interview questions for graduate students included the following:

- Describe your experience of being coached in this course.
- What did you learn from the coach that immediately transferred to your tutoring in the course?
- What did you learn from the coach that transferred to your teaching beyond this course?
- What did you learn from the coach that immediately transferred to your collaborations with peers when you were taking this course?
- What did you learn from the coach that immediately transferred to your collaborations with other teachers, beyond this course?
- What suggestions do you have for improving coaching in online clinics?

Interview questions for coaches included the following:

- Describe how this experience will revise or change your online coaching in the future as well as your own professional classroom teaching.
- What do you think tutors were able to learn from you about instruction and coaching?
- How do you see improving coaching in online literacy clinics?

Vokatis also engaged in observing and taking anecdotal notes from observations throughout the entire semester. In these observations, she noted the kinds of issues that emerged in interactions between tutors and coaches and what solutions she would employ. She also noted what the tutors and coaches shared in emails with her and in the course regarding how they valued these interactions. Based on these observations, there was no ill-advised, inconsistent, or inappropriate feedback.

Data Analysis

We fully transcribed and analyzed interviews and course reflections using a grounded theory approach (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). The grounded theory approach suits the subject of this research because this study is the first analysis of perceptions of this type of coaching in online literacy

clinics. According to the procedures for developing grounded theory, the technique is supposed to build a theory, and therefore, the analysis will be “the interplay between researchers and data” (Patton, 2002, p. 127). To build a theory, we needed to be involved in the inductive analyses consisting of discovering themes and patterns.

Following procedures of grounded theory analysis, we first read and reread the interview transcriptions and tutors’ course reflections and created open codes (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) that reflected specific features of tutors’ and coaches’ learning experiences (See a sample of such coding in the [appendix](#)). As we continued this inductive analysis (Patton, 2002) or what Strauss and Corbin called comparative analysis, to create open codes, we then engaged through axial coding to come up with primary themes to capture prominent features of these experiences. Informed by the notion of community of practice and, particularly, joint activity and shared practice, we created themes while remaining open to possible new aspects of perspectives on coaching in online clinics. The themes were then refined and further validated through relating and comparing the themes, checking data against the themes, and triangulating the identified themes with field observations.

For example, several codes, such as Online Literacy Coaching as Being Present in the Joint Activity, Showing Literacy Coaching Practice, and Shared Expertise in Coach-Tutor Interactions, became the following theme: Coaching in Online Clinics as Offering New and Powerful Coaching Potential. We then refined the theme to The Perception of Being Present in the Joint Activity.

We coded the data together, in face-to-face meetings, and discussed any disagreements during this process. In negotiation of our ideas, we developed a dialectic that improved our analytical decisions (Barry et al., 1999). That is, by sharing and negotiating our thinking and differences, we thought through our positions and justified them in face-to-face data analysis meetings, and if an argument could not be justified, it became apparent that it was weak. The refined themes and codes are elaborated in Results.

Subjectivity Statement

As researchers, we were also aware of our subjectivities. Because first author Vokatis researched her own online clinics, this attachment could have influenced this study design and results (as noted in Peshkin, 1994). However, as reflexive researchers (Dowling, 2008), we adhered to principles of establishing trustworthiness outlined by Lincoln and Guba (1985), such as credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Therefore, we both examined potential biases. Also, because second author Gibbins had not been involved in creating the online clinic and teaching it, his more distanced position aided in balancing Vokatis’s more subjective position throughout the research process, including research questions, interview questions, and data analysis that we always conducted together during our data analysis meetings.

Results

The data analysis identified three overarching themes that characterized this coaching. These themes are summarized in Table 1 and elaborated in the following section. We reported the themes with attention to reflexivity about audience, and especially with attention to presenting findings in useful and understandable ways (Patton, 2002). Because the goal of any coaching is to improve teachers' ability to enhance children's literacy, we started with tutors' perception of reflection and students' literacy improvement and then progressed to benefits in improving tutors' collaboration with other teachers and ways this online environment built coaching presence.

Table 1
Themes and Codes That Characterize Perception on Coaching in the Online Environment

Themes	Codes
The Perception of Improved Reflection and Achievement	Online literacy coaching as helping in reflecting on teaching practice; Online literacy coaching as beneficial to children's literacy achievement.
The Perception of Better Collaboration	Online coaching as providing a model for constructive collaborations with colleagues in the course and beyond the course; Online coaching as providing a model for innovative, technology-enhanced collaborations; Online coaching as providing confirmation of already existing collaboration practices; Online coaching as providing rare teacher collaboration opportunities for substituting teachers.
The Perception of Being Present in the Joint Activity	Online literacy coaching as being present in the joint activity; Showing literacy coaching practice; Shared expertise in coach-tutor interactions.

The Perception of Improved Reflection and Achievement

Research shows that literacy coaching offers a powerful way for improving children's literacy achievement, as it asks tutors to reflect on their practices and helps in tailoring instruction based on the response to learners' needs (Collett, 2012; Laster, 2013; Maloch et al., 2015). However, this literature referred mostly to tutoring children in traditional, face-to-face clinics. Research is only starting to show that peer coaching in online clinics is a powerful tool that strengthens coaching skills (Massey et al., 2019).

This study elucidated the perception of the strength of coaching in an online environment, in which teachers who already had some prior experience with coaching and took literacy clinic courses previously were employed to provide such experience to students, beyond coaching by instructor and peers. Tutors perceived that they benefited from coaching

in terms of three areas: their reflection, their instructional practices, and their students' progress. While there are still limited studies on online clinics overall (Karchmer-Klein & Pytash, 2019; Sharma & Pang, 2015), within the field of literacy, this study began to illuminate the perceived benefits of collaboration between such coaches with tutors learning to become literacy specialists in an online literacy clinic.

Improved Reflection Through Shared Practice

Tutors' course reflections on coaching and interviews showcased their interaction with the coach as a helpful community of practice formed by people who wanted to improve their practice by learning from each other ways to solve instructional problems (Wenger, 2011) and grow as reflecting educators. Research shows that coaching has a huge impact on improving reflection on instruction (Collett, 2012). In this study, tutors mentioned both becoming reflective, in general, and also in regard to reflecting on tutoring videos and better preparation for coaching. Similar to these tutors' remarks, coaches also expressed the value of these interactions for their own professional reflection toward their growth as both teachers and coaches.

Some tutors stated that coaching helped them in becoming reflective teachers, in general. However, many focused on specific instances of interactions with coaches and reflected on concrete benefits related to becoming better reflecting teachers of literacy as a result of this interaction. Such instances included reflecting on stepping in too soon with instruction, reassuring about teaching strategies and learning more strategies, reflecting on instruction in videos, and reflecting on better participation in coaching meetings.

Gina appreciated how coaching helped her realize she was stepping in too soon, "It wasn't until my coaching conference that I realized sometimes I step in too soon." Another tutor, Rylan, mentioned how, when she and her coach engaged in the discussion on a Skype videoconference, the coach helped her realize how valuable questioning is as well as offering ideas for prewriting strategies. In addition, in many cases, tutors indicated that what they learned from the coach occurred in the shared practice. We italicized wording in the following excerpts that indicate not only what the tutors learned about reflecting but also about the shared and joint aspect of this learning. In the interview, one student, Rylan said,

And I had reflected on that, and Claire [coach] actually said, "No. You had natural questioning. It was really smooth." And the only feedback she had given me was a prewriting spelling[sic], was it really important to sound out words ... like prewriting. ... We came up with ideas together, and she was very helpful with helping me think outside the box for prewriting.

As evidenced in the excerpt, the tutor stressed that she and the coach came up with instructional ideas pertaining to prewriting together, in shared practice, as they were reflecting.

Some tutors mentioned how interactions helped them in reflecting on their tutoring videos. As tutors prepared for their interactions with their coaches on the Skype platform, as the core joint activity in this practice (Wenger 2011), the tutors rewatched the video and thought about what was happening in a recorded segment of teaching and how written feedback from the coach helped in addressing the issue and to what extent it helped. Beyond that, the coach helped the tutor in the further analysis of the video. Alex described her experience:

I liked Skyping with her directly. To me I feel like *a conversation just flows* better when we're speaking over the phone or face to face. ... So when we did have the opportunity to Skype, it I felt like it did help me and *made me look at something in my teaching video* that I didn't really recognize before.

In this excerpt, the tutor pointed to learning about reflecting on her instruction from the video as a result of coaching that felt like a conversation.

Tutors also reflected on how to improve their own participation in the joint coaching activity. Hannah stated she would "keep a record of coaching conversations," and Eva said she would be prepared better for a coaching conversation with a record sheet. Eva also noticed her participation in coaching would improve "by taking the questions I have for my coach and *integrating my own thoughts into my questions.*"

Coaches also spoke about how this experience helped them in reflecting on their own practice, as coaches and teachers. As they reflected, they either talked about how their practice can be helpful in coaching tutors or how more experience they gained through coaching in the clinic course influenced their own practice as teachers and coaches.

Coach Lucille explained how coaching in the clinic course was beneficial for children and mentioned she could transfer her own practices from her literacy specialist's job to coaching in the online clinic class. Thus, she reused her teaching assets (Wenger, 2011) to contribute to building shared practice:

... and the other thing too is with students setting goals for the students they tutor, we need to be able to adapt to the needs of the students in the class. So, if we see that we need support with book introductions, or phonics instruction, *we can seek resources to upload for the class to support that work.* It is the same as using your data in a classroom to inform your instruction, and it can change from day to day, that fluidity needs to be able to happen in here as well, especially within the coaching model.

In this excerpt, the coach stated that sharing her own resources that came from her teaching experiences, such as the way she teaches phonics or the way she conducts book introductions, could be a reused asset that she can provide in the course, which can support tutors taking clinic courses as they need to respond to their students' instructional needs.

Coach Kate reflected on how coaching helped her in thinking about her own teaching practice improvement. Kate saw the value of the videos and thought she could record such videos for herself to understand better what was happening during instructing a group of children:

I really just *learned a lot about reflection* and how important that is. So, when I'm struggling with a group, *I might want to voice record it on my phone* for my own purposes just to hear back the conversation and go from there. Because in the moment, you do miss a lot of those things that are happening with three or four students, so it's just a recording for myself to see...

Kate, as this excerpt shows, thought about what she learned as a coach to improve her own practice by recording her own instruction. This was not something she did in her own teaching, but as she saw how this practice benefited the tutors, she wanted to incorporate it herself.

Data presented in this section indicates that both tutors and coaches said the shared coaching practice they engaged in helped them in reflecting on their instruction. As current research on coaching in literacy clinics shows, since coaching aims at increasing teachers' expertise (Lockwood et al., 2010), teachers' perception of becoming more reflective indicated such a possibility for advancing their expertise.

Improving Teaching Through Shared Practice

The previous section discussed participants' reflection as an important aspect resulting from the shared practice. In this section, we present data in which participants went beyond reflection and talked about their perceived improvement of their teaching. Tutors mentioned improvements such as understanding students' instructional needs and providing wait time. In addition, they went in more detail discussing tenets such as becoming more strategic teachers or teachers who are more open to experimenting with technologies.

Both course reflections and interviews showcased many perceived benefits that coaching in this clinic had for tutors' perception of improved instruction. Such improved instruction is always a coaching goal. Coaches made instructional recommendations meant to improve instruction (as also in Collet, 2012). Several tutors stressed that this collaborative experience helped them in individualizing teaching, a central tenet to what should occur in all clinics (Toll, 2016).

For instance, Kaysie elaborated, "The *experience of collaborating with a coach* will stick with me as I continue to teach. Specifically, *focusing on students as individuals* to best meet their own specific needs." Tutors also mentioned that coaches shared with them advice tutors could immediately incorporate into their teaching. Such advice included using emojis in place of punctuation marks to help the tutee in reading with expression, understanding student's instructional needs, providing wait time, not teaching too many things at the same time, creating more concise objectives, trying multiple strategies to increase comprehension, students' learning ownership, more independence and motivation, making lessons

fun and engaging, learning how to augment resources, and ideas for deepening critical literacy.

Some tutors elaborated in more detail on such instances of collaborative learning of a concrete literacy strategy that resulted in the tutor's improvement in becoming a more strategic teacher. Kristen, for instance, spoke about coach's help in teaching decoding:

Collaborating with Kate will help my strategic teaching because I learned a new set of skills to bring to students that are having trouble with decoding skills. It is a fun and interactive way to get them thinking about the word and are more independently using the strategy.

In this excerpt, the tutor stressed that this shared, collaborative practice equipped her with more teaching strategies, such as strategies for decoding words, that allowed her to be more effective in helping young students become more independent with word solving.

Meanwhile, David described how the coach pushed his thinking regarding experimenting with classroom tools, which was done through an online coaching conversation. The coach suggested some solutions and, consequently, using the white board resulted in David's increased openness toward trying different modalities:

So, I think the one thing that she mentioned to me was, when working with a student who tends to get distracted from what we are working on, she said *try to use a multimodal form of instruction*. So, she [David's coach] said instead of having him simply write two sentences on a page, a piece of loose leaf, she said, "Why don't you try having him write it on the white board..." [audio cut out]. And just that simple suggestion made it easier. When I use different forms of writing and different forms of reading, whether it be books, or YouTube videos I had him watch, switching it up from day to day was really the way to get him to focus more and kind of make my lessons more unique.

In this excerpt, the tutor reported how valuable an informal conversation with the coach was. Coach's suggestions expressed in conversational and informal ways made it easy to try new ideas and see how they would work.

Data discussed in this section showed that tutors said the shared, collaborative practice they engaged in helped them improve their teaching by equipping them with teaching strategies rooted in coaches' practice and assisting them in individualized teaching that incorporated multimodal ways of teaching.

Improving Student Achievement Through Shared Practice

As discussed in the previous sections, tutors perceived benefits of this shared experience in the area of reflecting on teaching practice and gaining a richer repertoire of teaching strategies. The tutors also expressed how what they learned in the collaboration with coaches resulted in their

students' improvement across a scope of literacy skills, such as writing and reading, and in terms of more engagement for students in the course or in the classroom. This result attests to the perception of improved student achievement built in shared practice. Improving students' literacy achievement is the core task for literacy specialists and, therefore, an important tenet for future literacy specialists to learn.

Research points to tenets like building better partnerships with schools as influencing the effectiveness of such clinical preparation (Darling-Hammonds, 2014). As online clinics disrupt the classic schools and university partnerships, however, there is a need to experiment with new ideas regarding strengthening their effectiveness.

For instance, in reflecting on how the coach helped the tutor in addressing an instructional problem in a special discussion at the end of the course, Eva said the use of technology as encouraged by the coach changed her student's engagement. Her problem about which she turned to the coach was that her student was distracted during the writing portion of the tutoring session.

The coach introduced me to several apps that might help engage my tutee in our future instructions. *My collaboration experience* with the Coach will influence my strategic teaching in the future by getting more familiar with technology. After incorporating Snap Type to my tutor session, I noticed that my tutee loved using technology, and even though he was reluctant on the "work," when he realized we would be using an iPad and an app, he quickly changed his demeanor.

The tutor not only stressed that the help she received from the coach during the tutor-coach collaboration would contribute to her strategic teaching, but she also noticed that her student became more motivated to write due to several technologies she introduced as encouraged by the coach.

Dorothy also described how her coach's suggestion resulted in a concrete improvement for her student. Dorothy focused on how a certain, innovative idea of using emojis — a coach's reused asset — helped in encouraging the student to use punctuation suggested by the coach during a coaching conversation:

I did work on her punctuation, and that was a very tricky topic for her. She didn't really understand the concepts, so the coach gave me a suggestion to use an emoji, which the student had prior knowledge with, so without the help of coach I would not have had used that background knowledge of my tutee and been able to reach her in that way. ...Yeah, so, she was able to all of a sudden add periods to her sentences, or exclamation points depending on how she felt when she read her sentence.

As noted by the tutor in the excerpt, she valued coaching and referred to the coach's ideas as suggestions made by the coach, which indicates she perceived coaching as not imposed but shared in a friendly, conversational

manner. This coaching led to a visible improvement in her child's punctuation in writing, as noticed by the tutor.

Some tutors shared experiences that resulted in improving children's writing fluency and process. For instance, Rylan's interactions with the coach helped her in nudging the student toward flow that was missing, with less focus on spelling:

We lost the flow of the sentence. So, she was like, "Okay, have her go back and read that sentence over." So that's more so what I mean in regards to that. But that, I *immediately implemented that the next week*, because I wanted to get her in the habit of "that's not what we're focusing on."

Eva described how a coach's suggestions on helping the student add details improved his writing:

We had talked about having him add details to his graphic organizer. He had great ideas but he would just put a little bit down, which had added to him not writing enough, or adding enough details. So, we also had him read it out loud, so that when he was reading it, he was able to hear what he was saying and think "Maybe I should add to this as well."

In this excerpt, Eva used the pronoun "we," which indicated that she considered coaching as working together to figure out the best plan for instruction, and ultimately, she noticed a positive result.

Tutors also elaborated on coaching for reading for word decoding and comprehension, resulting in a shared teaching practice carried even to tutor's classroom (Wenger, 2011). Diana, for instance, shared how coaching feedback on how to model was helpful for both tutoring and her teaching:

...I learned that I need to provide an appropriate model for my students. I need to replicate what I want them to do before asking them to do it. *I think my coach pointed out that I need to focus more on modeling, and I think that helped.* I learned a lot, but that was the most important one. *I was able to apply that not only to my tutoring but to my classroom as well,* and that was really helpful.

As Diana learned from the coach, she took what she learned and applied the shared practice in her own teaching.

Kaysie described insights she gained from the coach in terms of supporting a more advanced reader:

... I was working with a first grader. He was pretty advanced in reading; he was a high-level reader, which in the beginning of the first grade you don't see very often. So, she just helps me, having the experience to know, this is how you might be able to help him

with comprehension instead of decoding, and working through the text. These could be some questions you could ask.

As Kaysie recalled, the coach helped her focus on skills that were most important in aiding the advanced learner to move forward.

Alex described a reading strategy the coach suggested, which helped her students in monitoring comprehension, stressing such features of this joint activity as exchanging ideas:

So, it's really nice to have that collaboration and hear other people's ideas, and what they have done or maybe things they have done and worked with their students, other than just finding things on the internet. So, it was a good experience for me, I actually implemented what she suggested and it worked for me. And if it continued in the upper grades and everything with that student, then she would have shown a lot of growth.

The tutor remembered this experience as collaborative and effective, as she found the ideas the coach shared working in her teaching.

Skylar shared about her struggle in tutoring and how a simple, creative activity suggested by the coach turned her tutoring around:

... So, I was struggling with my student, she had her hands here, and she had them there, and they were in her shirt. She was having trouble tracking so *Kate suggested* I make a fun little wand for her to track with. So, *I went out and made a sparkly wand, and she was really excited about it, and I tried it out the next session and immediately there was no more fidgeting or playing with her hands*, and it seemed like she was enjoying herself more, and there was no more nervousness around the reading – really went away, and as the weeks went on, she really didn't need it anymore, and that's exactly what coach Kate said.

This excerpt illustrated that the coaches' advice was rooted in teachers' daily practice and creative, and this creativity, shared as suggestions, was often beneficial for tutors' students in the tutors' eyes.

Many tutors mentioned how coaches offered advice in terms of several effective decoding strategies. Sadie recalled how the coach suggested a tip that helped in teaching the student about blends and digraphs:

We had talked about the digraphs and the blends. She had suggested using, like, a crayon or a highlighter to draw attention to those blends and those digraphs. Um, so you know when they come up, they can be, like, "Oh, I know that!" And we used that in the next session, and it seemed to help a little bit! Even the first time around.

This excerpt and the previous ones illustrate our finding that tutors perceived their students as benefiting from the joint coaching activity meant to solve instructional problems regarding writing and reading.

Tutors also tended to use wording such as “talk,” “conversation,” “we,” “collaboration,” and “sharing ideas” – all markers of coaching practice that was shared and worked on together – and they explicitly described how strategies shared by the coaches resulted in students’ better literacy skills or engagement.

The Perception of Better Collaboration

In addition to tutors’ perceived improved reflection and growth in terms of strategic teaching and improvement in the area of tutored students’ literacy growth, they also discussed benefits in terms of their growth as teachers who can collaborate with other teachers. The emerging research in the area of coaching in online clinics points to the importance of providing collaborative opportunities, in which future literacy specialists have a chance to enact collaborations in the most authentic ways, based on their own teaching (Massey et al., 2019).

Participants in this study appreciated this joint activity as resulting in better collaboration with their colleagues. This joint activity apparently opened participants to collaborative opportunities because the clinic allowed praxis; moreover, the tutors reported productive experiences with it due to coaches being able to build trust (as also in Dozier, 2006). As coaches and tutors engaged in this joint activity (Wenger, 2011), the tutors perceived it as a model, in praxis, of building relationships in such communities of practice. Also, tutors who were taking this clinic as substitute teachers and for whom collaborating with the coach provided an opportunity for interacting with a more experienced colleague, valued this experience.

Seeking Collaborative Professional Experiences

First, the tutors said that coaching provided them with models of collegiality because it helped them understand its value and led them to actively seek opportunities from other educators in their local schools. The tutors also talked about the importance of gravitating toward more experienced teachers, understanding how coaching can result in improving students’ achievement, reassurance about the value of their existing interactions with coaches at work, and ways remote coaching could be transferred to their schools where they work.

Regarding models for collegiality, Kaysie liked how her professional growth was strengthened in the class due to collaborating with more experienced colleagues and the way they collaborated in a relaxed atmosphere in which opinions and ideas were simply shared: “I know I’m new, and I know I’m growing as a teacher, and as a literacy – hopefully one day specialist – *getting an opinion or an idea was always helpful*, and that is exactly what happened during the coaching classes.”

Mary elaborated on her understanding of the value of collaboration in connection to students’ learning:

I can further improve my skills as one being coached by understanding that I am partnering with the literacy coach and

that collaboration will allow for success. ...In order to promote change in my classroom and within the school I work, we must all work together and collaborate.

In this excerpt, the tutor expressed her understanding of the coaching in this course as an effective collaboration that had potential to improve student learning; therefore, the tutor valued such collaboration.

Dave also expressed the value of coaching and elaborated, specifically, on the importance of gravitating toward experienced teachers who can coach as a great opportunity for a new teacher: "It's all about knowing people, and *knowing professionals like literacy coaches* who've worked with new teachers *can be really important for a new teacher* in their journey to becoming the best."

Daria mentioned how in the coaching interaction she learned what such joint activity with teachers (Wenger, 2011) should be like and noted how comfortable she felt asking any questions during these interactions: "I *felt very comfortable* with Claire and felt as though *I could ask her anything that I needed help with* or more guidance with. This is exactly how I would want my partnerships to be like."

Kaysie elaborated on how this experience opened more opportunities to collaborate with other teachers: "However, reaching out and discussing individual needs with colleagues and coaches is *something that I will turn more to going forward*." Hannah talked about how she learned about navigating interactions with other teachers by being more open to accept new suggestions from them: "I think it's allowed me to *open up with teachers* and allowed me to *take in their suggestions*."

Hannah also shared how uplifting this collaboration was in relation to being a successful teacher, thus showing a tight connection between joint activity and developing a shared repertoire as a result: "When we *identify the importance of change* and how a *supportive relationship* can help us through the change we need, we can *continue to be successful educators*." As she mentioned the process of identifying an instructional need and working with the coach toward addressing the need, she clearly equated this process with becoming a successful educator who can take this shared practice and incorporate these jointly created solutions into teaching.

Kaysie talked in more detail about gaining confidence for interacting with other teachers, an important takeaway from this joint activity she hoped to transfer with other colleagues:

But I also *learned from her that just to take ideas from others*. I wasn't afraid to take her advice; she was so nice about it. *She was, like, "Try this!"* We are all young educators, so just *being open and to reach out to others*. That so many others have ideas too, that may be different from my own, and just *embracing it*, is something that I can take with me in my career. ... Yeah, *it added confidence*, and I can take these ideas and use them.

As evidenced in this excerpt, the tutor perceived that her collaboration with her coach helped her gain more confidence to reach out to other teachers to get more teaching ideas to try out.

In addition, Alex stressed the importance of such collaborations: “And *you should try and collaborate even if you don’t have that coach*. There may be other teachers with 10 years of experience, and have tried a bunch of different strategies...”

The excerpts in this section demonstrate the ways interacting with coaches allowed tutors see the value of this joint coaching activity to learn from each other and build shared practice (Wenger, 2011) at the beginning of their teaching career and become more open to such coaching interactions in the future.

For some tutors, like Kris, this experience also modeled and confirmed the usefulness of the coach-tutor interactions. Kris mentioned how experiences in her school resembled the collaboration with the coach in the clinic: “So, to me, doing the video coaching, I was like ‘Oh, this is kind of what I do with my colleagues on a daily basis.’”

Some students also mentioned that these remote coaching conversations could be done in similar ways where they work. Kris, for instance, expressed that collaborating with coaches taught her that negotiating meaning in this community of practice can happen in disparate ways:

This experience has shown me that a good discussion about strategies and plans for improvement *don’t have to be “formal,” conference-room affairs; they can be meeting via video chat* or a conversation in the hallway. If the parties involved are invested in reflecting on practices and willing to change, an *effective coaching conversation can occur anywhere*, at any time.

In this excerpt, the tutor discussed her realization that coaching can be effective even if it is done in the form of a virtual conversation, and actually, such an informal manner can be useful.

David also mentioned that these coaching experiences can be utilized in schools because they create opportunities for joint activity and enhance it:

I think *you can also make connections on the Internet*. I had never known Lucille. I never knew Lucille before the course, since you set us up together, and we really got to experience the collaboration. *It kind of got me thinking, “There are tons of people out there that I can talk to.”* All I really need to do is reach out, and talk to different people, and get networking to find out how to collaborate on a more consistent basis.

For this tutor, too, the online collaboration opened the door for thinking about extending such experiences beyond the course and connecting with other educators remotely.

The excerpts in this section illustrate how tutors considered the coaching experience as a model of collaboration they would like to experience in their teaching; and this experience helped them build confidence to look actively for coaching opportunities including both literacy coaches and teachers.

Taking Action Through Joint Activity

Some tutors also described how coaching in this course resulted in taking action to transform the nature of interactions in their schools to reach similar levels of shared coaching practice experienced in coaching in the literacy clinic. They noted that they transferred what they experienced in the clinic course to their own settings and modified it to their own circumstances.

Julia, for instance, came up with a plan for recreating this coaching experience in her own school, within the existing grade level team of collaborating teachers:

I want to use my grade level team more now in order to get knowledge and advice to help better my instruction for my students. In a sense, *I can work with my grade level team to coach each other through our data driven instruction.*

Diana also stated how this activity deepened her collaboration with teachers and how she was not afraid of reaching out to other teachers to get some new suggestions: *“I would reach out to other teachers in the room for how I could have done things differently.”* Mary also described how this coaching experience increased her collaboration with a literacy specialist in her school, transforming it in a way that was more conversational and aimed at negotiated understanding (Wenger, 2011):

While I was taking this course, I didn’t talk to the AIS teacher too much other than when she was in my room. I did like having the coach in the class though, so *I suggested that we meet more often, like, one to one* and I bring my running records and she bring hers just *to see what we were seeing.*

Excerpts in this section evidenced some action the tutors took to transfer their coaching experiences gained in coaching in literacy clinics to their own school settings.

Improving Peer Coaching

Beyond attempts to transfer the coaching-to-coaching opportunities in tutors’ school districts, some tutors also mentioned how interacting with coaches helped them in coaching other peers in the course, thus attesting to building shared practice also among themselves. Alex said,

Well, I think that the *feedback that I got from Claire helped me when I was watching other people’s videos.* I was thinking about some of the things that Claire said to me, and I was able to give

those ideas to them about that or that this is something that I was having trouble with.

Creating Novel Learning Opportunities

For some tutors, the opportunity to interact with coaches had additional benefits, beyond learning how to coach a peer or being able to get involved in coaching in tutors' school districts. Like Hannah, some tutors did not hold teaching positions at the time of taking online clinics and were substitute teachers. Because of this status, they did not have many opportunities to collaborate with other teachers. When asked about prior coaching experiences, Hannah said that she had little interaction with teachers when she was taking clinic courses: "So, at that time I was taking this course, I was just subbing. So, I didn't have a lot of interaction or collaboration with other teachers." As Hannah pointed out, this coaching opportunity was excellent for her, because she could not have more sustained collaboration with other teachers when she was substituting. Therefore, interacting with a more experienced teacher from whom she could learn about ways to improve instruction and collaborate in the course was an opportunity to fill a gap.

Coaches also spoke about the value of collaboration in this course for their own benefit. Claire mentioned how coaching in the clinic improved her own professional relationship by becoming a more active participant in communities of practice established at her school: "Yeah, *it made me more comfortable with coteaching* because I feel like *the more I did it, you have to be more assertive* and explain your feelings about it and not let one person overtake the teaching and instruction." This coach really appreciated this opportunity because it allowed her to gain more confidence in her own interactions with other teachers in her school district.

The excerpts in this theme illustrated that tutors perceived that they benefited from the joint coaching activity beyond solving instructional problems. They spoke about how this coaching provided a collaborative and conversational coaching model they would like to experience beyond the course and how they even attempted to put it in practice in their schools at the time of taking the literacy clinics.

The Perception of Being Present in the Joint Activity

Up to now, the themes showed how the tutors benefited from coaching in terms of improving reflection, instruction, and a collaborative aspect of teaching. The third theme uncovered the features of coaching online that substantially helped in this growth. Even though the coaching was conducted online, tutors expressed that it "felt" equivalent to coaching face to face. The emerging research began to point to digital tools that allow coaching to be conducted in online settings (Howell et al., 2019). Our data pointed to coaches' specific feature of their digital presence that enriched coaching online.

During virtual coaching sessions, coaches shared expertise in a collaborative, interactive way; moreover, this interaction projected strong

coaching presence, creating a feeling that resembled face-to-face joint activity, including being able to build trust to work together. In addition, as the tutors revealed, even though technology created some challenges, these challenges did not overshadow the value of this coaching. This presence should serve as a model for similar interactions in other online literacy programs. This study attests to impact remote coaching can have on this community of practice due to some important features.

Remote Problem Solving, Supporting, and Trusting

First, the tutors felt comfortable, at ease, respected, supported, and cared for, which indicates that coaching via technology can still support the desired features of coaching described in literature on coaching in traditional, face-to-face settings (Toll, 2016). Liz, for instance, mentioned how she was nervous at first but how quickly she also realized that the coach is there to just provide support:

At first, *I was nervous* as to what we would talk about and how the conference would go. I then realized that Coach is there to provide support and guidance. ...*She was there to simply give her input in hope that it will help further the students' success.*

Daria stressed her coach's openness and kindness as important features of this joint activity: "Everything *Claire suggested*, she did it *very kindhearted*. She was always *open and positive*. She never came at something like she didn't think that was working. She never said it in a negative way." As apparent in this excerpt, this tutor felt the coach's caring and openness in this online environment of working together through sharing suggestions to help children grow in literacy.

Many tutors experienced these interactions as supportive, communal, or trusting, with coaches listening carefully and being genuinely interested in the tutors' ideas. Skylar attributed the successful coaching experience to the way the coach started the Skype videoconference connection:

... nervous that I just wanted to do a good job, but the best thing was that *she was friendly* and started off by *getting to know me and my job* and talking about the students and then working right into what the meeting was right about.

In this excerpt, the tutor said the way the coach started the conversation, with genuine interest in the tutor's job and her students, helped in diminishing nervousness about being coached.

Sadie praised her coach for being an especially careful listener who genuinely and carefully paid attention to what the tutor described:

...when Kate was coaching, she did a really *good job of fading back and listening*, taking in what I was saying. She was, she wasn't doing, you know, what people tend to do. You listen to respond, you're not listening.

Julia also explained the reciprocity of the coaching conversations. Julia stressed she was not the only one to ask questions, but the coach asked them as well: “I not only was able to ask questions, but the *coach asked me questions* too, which *helped create a mutual collaborative, and friendly environment.*” The tutor not only stressed the reciprocity but used multiple words, such as “mutual,” “collaborative,” and “friendly” that highlighted the joint aspect of this practice.

Apparently, based on tutors’ perceptions, coaches were able to establish a friendly and trusting relationship (as described in Dozier, 2006), and tutors highly valued this type of connection.

Online Problem Solving Perceived as Similar to Face-to-face Collaboration

In addition to tutors’ perceptions of friendly and trusting relationship with their coaches, some tutors equated the experience of interacting with the coaches through Skype videoconferencing with face-to-face collaboration. Interestingly, none of them said they would rather interact face to face. David used the term face to face to speak about the remote interaction with his coach:

The experience of collaborating with Amanda was a relief, knowing that *I can speak to someone face to face* about the issues I am having during my tutoring sessions. She is a knowledgeable literacy coach and I value her feedback.

For Alex, too, these experiences were close to face-to-face chats with the coach, as she used wording such as “sit down” and “chat.” She said, “Claire coached me a couple of times. I liked Skyping with her directly. To me I feel like a *conversation just flows better when we’re speaking over the phone or face to face.*”

As apparent in these excerpts, tutors appreciated and valued Skype videoconferencing connections with coaches and equated them with face-to-face interactions. While receiving written feedback from the coach initially allowed tutors to use coach’s feedback immediately to start tailoring instruction to the needs of the student, for Alex, Skyping allowed the conversation to flow more naturally.

Some tutors described in more detail how the coach built the online coaching presence, stressing the partnership and personal touches, such as offering personal email and being open to myriad topics. Rylan said,

She was *very open to helping us beyond this course.* I told her too, I was doing fourth grade for the first time and then second grade, too, for the first time, so I was talking to her about that change, and she was *just very open* and talking about things other than coaching, which something to me, you have to relate who you’re going to be coaching and what you’re going to be working with. And I think that she did a good job at that and she worked hard at that, but it *didn’t seem like it was difficult for her*, like it was *genuine.*

For Rylan, the genuine, informal aspect of the Skype videoconference conversation was the key. She valued the fact that the coach did not simply start coaching but was making a connection to the tutor and was interested in the tutor's teaching job.

Leah described her realization of support, similarity, and the connection she gained during this interaction. The coach's sharing about her own classroom made the connection more personal and mutual and allowed for coaching to naturally emerge from the initial conversation:

She (the coach) was talking about, "Oh, my first-grade classroom," *she was telling me about her life*. We are all in the same situation. ... *We just have to be supportive of each other and understanding* before you can tackle any big issues that were going on.

As these excerpts showed, the coaching opportunity allowed the tutors to experience how one can build a professional relationship with another teacher and how coaching can naturally be a part of that trusting relationship that starts with coaches being genuinely interested in teachers' professional lives.

Overcoming Challenges Reveal Value

Although tutors noted the many positive aspects of coaching in virtual settings, coaching in virtual settings had also some drawbacks. In the interviews, tutors reflected further on coaches' online presence, noting especially their understanding of the difficulty of conveying professional and yet personal coaching through the online mode and voicing its value. However, as they voiced these difficulties, they also expressed that they were overcome. Hannah shared her awareness of how remote coaching can be difficult, so some aspects have to be considered. "It's *hard to convey tone over the computer*, so you never want anyone to think that something so simple that you might be suggesting, they might be reading it and thinking, 'Oh, this is so mean!' You never know!"

She added that interacting with a coach on the Skype platform, or at least seeing them teach, was great: "I don't know if that makes sense, but to actually see them. Even if it is just a video tape of themselves. You know, it just allows you to get a better sense of the person who's helping you." David focused on how, in spite of technical difficulties, coaching online can be successful and worth continuing:

The hardest part was really schedules, finding a schedule and figuring out when can we talk ... and also the technical aspect of it. I did run into some issues, like as you just saw, the network problem. ... But as far as doing the one-on-one conversing, I thought it went very well. ... I would coach other people in the same way.

Tutors understood that coaching through a Skype videoconference might be harder to conduct than face to face, but it was still valuable and could set the stage for coaching in similar ways for the tutors.

Coaches also opened about their presence. Kate (a coach) mentioned her understanding of how difficult it was for the tutors to become open to this collaboration. She said, “I think that *they were very open to start*, which is a little nerve wrecking for students who are being observed and for the ones being coached...” Claire said that this experience helped her in becoming a good listener: “I think it *helped me to listen to tutors better and listen with more of a purpose.*”

Building a Four-Layered Shared Practice

As the coaches were able to build trusting and effective coaching presence valued by the tutors and discussed in the previous sections, tutors and coaches also talked about how this virtual experience created an opportunity for benefits stemming from sharing between coaches with tutors and tutors with tutors. In the first layer, the coaches highlighted the shared aspect of coaching. In the second layer, the tutors focused on what they learned about the coaching practice from the coaches. In the third layer, the tutors spoke about using what they learned from coaches in coaching peers. In the fourth layer, the tutors mentioned the fact that they shared similar experiences with the coaches who also took a literacy clinic course. This mutual sharing was yet another unique feature of this community of practice. Research has begun to show how tutors can benefit from coaching in online learning (Massey et al., 2019), but our study also included external coaches’ perspectives.

When the coaches talked about what they shared, they indicated both practice aspects and the nature of that sharing. Lucille talked about how she can share her own video of teaching to provide an equivalent of a visit to her classroom and her own experiences of working under the pressure of annual professional performance review (APPR):

They could ask questions about things like APPR and how to incorporate those into your instruction. Another thing is sharing videos of my own teaching. For example, I did a video of a book introduction with my own students at school and shared it with the course channel for students to see it.

She also added about sharing other assets: “There are *a lot of resources that I use daily* in my own instruction, and whenever I think of a student benefiting from that resource in these courses, *I can just upload it for them.*” Kate also stressed reusing her assets and tip sharing: “... and when we Skype, *they were really happy that you suggested it this way*, I would have never thought to do that for writing, I would have never thought to do that for reading.” Claire elaborated on sharing her current classroom experiences:

...it was me using my experiences to help them with things they haven't yet experienced. ...Have you had similar experiences in the classroom? What did you do? And they could understand that I wasn't there to tell them what to do better and point out all their mistakes, but I was there to help them grow through our similar experiences, and I was able to share my experiences which we were able to discuss.

As the coaches stressed, they were able to connect with tutors through sharing their own instructional assets remotely, including new type of visits (Wenger, 2011), as realized through coaching via a Skype videoconference.

As the coaches emphasized the shared aspect of their practice in the virtual space, in the eyes of the tutors the coaches were able to model the practice of coaching in ways that felt natural and relaxed. The tutors saw how beneficial having a coach was, because they had an opportunity to interact with the more experienced teacher in the course. In the eyes of the tutors, interacting through digital tools did not diminish the quality of what the students learned. Julia said, "This experience has helped me see literacy coaching in action. I learned *how relaxed and collaborative literacy coaching could be*." Dorothy elaborated in more detail on these benefits of coaching: "[Coaching] *helped me to see how beneficial a literacy coach can be*. It helped me to see that *a literacy coach is an extremely helpful asset to have* in a school to ensure the greatest quality literacy instruction for students." As Dorothy said, interacting with coaches in the course allowed her to improve instruction.

Tutors also discussed what specifically they learned about literacy coaching in this online environment. It is evident that through the construction of online-coaching presence, the coaches were able to contribute to online learning. Emily stressed the importance of embracing the change in instruction: "When being coached I will consider *the importance of accepting change* and allowing it to play out in my instruction." Kristen also stressed the many benefits of having a coach in school: "This experience taught me how valuable a literacy coach can be in schools. For new teachers, or teachers who may not have been trained in specific literacy skills, having a *coach can help guide us to implementation of strategies*." Alex added, "Having a coach to discuss your students and their needs is very important to have in a district. *It allows you to learn new strategies and techniques* that you can implement into your classroom."

In interviews, tutors elaborated even more on how the online-coaching experiences provided them with valuable models of coaching practice; the tutors compared it to experiences from their own schools. As a result, the tutors vowed to bring these coaching models to their schools as they saw how they can be applicable. Diana said,

I will bring that with me to work with teachers and remember to keep it relaxed and based on providing feedback. I think that veteran teachers are not so open to being given feedback, and I want to promote being open and honest and accepting criticism.

David described what he learned from coach Lucille:

Lucille taught me that everyone has knowledge and experience that can greatly benefit other teachers looking to improve their craft. ... I will always look to seek out colleagues for advice, and Lucille taught me that it does not have to be colleagues I am close with.

David appreciated learning about being open to seeking advice from professionals with whom he is not necessarily close, which is a crucial disposition for teachers as they constantly seek improvement of their instruction. They can turn to literacy coaches if they are available in their districts.

Dorothy learned how to start a coaching conversation, which would be useful if she became a literacy coach herself: “So, the way that coach gave me the advice was that *she started with something I did well and then gave me something that I could improve or work on and then how to change that.*”

Kaysie elaborated on the process of coaching itself and found it was useful to return to the problem shared with the coach. After the tutor received written feedback from the coach and taught trying to implement that feedback, getting together with the coach to discuss how this teaching went and how else it could be adjusted created a sense of coaching continuity:

It did teach me *I might bring up a problem or a question*, but then maybe *I would go back to her and let her know how it went and keep up with that question so that it was ongoing and updated.*

Liz, on the other hand, saw how what she learned about coaching was reflected in her daily school practice. She saw how the coaching practice featured in the course she was taking worked and made a connection with similar practices taking place where the tutor worked:

So, we do have a literacy consultant, but I was also working with another fourth-grade teacher after school and *looking at the upcoming reading materials, so she’s even coaching me* because she’s been there. So, *I’ve been seeing what I’m learning about.*

Liz also said she thought she used what she learned from the coach regarding how to approach coaching to coach her peers:

Oh, absolutely I think so, *because the way we spoke within the group chats was the way we were conversing with our coach.* So, it was nice to see that we kept that same model and just used it in our own chat.

Kris saw how the model of coaching she learned can be easily transferred to any school: “Those kinds of things (coaching) *I can see where that can easily be utilized or done within my school day.*” Moreover, Eva mentioned how her school district was interested in the coaching model she was involved in the clinic:

If you talk about literacy coaching at the Middletown School District, *they’re very interested* because they’re used to this woman coming in and giving them stuff and saying this is how you do it; there’s no *personal connection* to them.

As evidenced in this excerpt, tutors considered coaching in the online clinic as a real model of coaching in schools.

Both tutors and coaches also expressed their ideas for improving this online coaching. Some said they did not see anything needing improvement. Others said that they would love to have more interaction with coaches and would also like to see them teach, even if this would mean watching some videos of their teaching. Coaches had similar reflections.

The tutors also talked about both experiences of sharing with their peers in the virtual environment and with their coaches. As the coaches interacted with tutors, tutors learned how to coach and collaborate with teachers and used what they noticed in their peer-coaching interactions, thus stressing that learning about coaching in this community of practice had its direct application. In this process, the fact that coaches took such a clinic in the past and could also share those experiences was valuable. Skylar discussed how what the coach shared was extended in tutors' online discussions:

The students [tutors] and I started talking about ways to create reading trackers with our students to create more engagement for our students, and we started talking about that more in depth, I guess, in a discussion post to share different ideas, and it was all sparked because of the conversation I had with coach.

For Kaysie, the value of sharing these experiences with those who went through the course themselves was valuable and, possibly, would be extended through similar digital tools beyond the clinic course:

But I do think that having a student who's been through this — well an educator — who's been through this before, just to say, "Hey, I'm doing this, what should I do?" And that can foster a long-term pen pal ...

As evidenced in the excerpts, both coaches and tutors highlighted the multilayer sharing aspect. While the coaches considered their coaching as essentially sharing their practice, the tutors valued a possibility to interact with coaches. They considered learning from them to be an experience they could use in the course, as they collaborated with their peers, and beyond the course. They also highlighted the sharing aspect of going through the same course experiences.

Discussion

The present study sought to understand the perceptions on nature of interactions in a unique professional community, involving graduate students taking an online clinic and coaches who took the same clinic in the past. Currently, online literacy clinics are a novel phenomenon, with research just starting to emerge (Karchmer-Klein & Pytash, 2019). Due to the COVID-19 crisis, another clinic model emerged, the "two-layered online clinic" (Laster, 2020), in which not only an instructor connects remotely with tutors but children connect remotely with tutors as well.

As online clinics can disrupt the quality of clinical preparation, the field needs to experiment and examine various approaches to online clinical

courses, because research that describes how to strengthen the quality of clinical experiences focuses mostly on face-to-face clinics. This study, with an innovative and novel approach to coaching in online clinics, contributes to the growing field of research on various online literacy clinic models by pointing to some new findings. At the same time, certain findings are in tune with what literature on face-to-face clinics has already highlighted (Darling-Hammond, 2006, 2014).

In terms of research findings that are consistent with the current research on literacy clinics, especially in terms of perceptions in education (Brantmeier, 2005; Cochran et al., 2010; Donato et al., 2000; Graham, 2004; Mills et al., 2006, 2007; Wesely, 2012), this study showed that the participants perceived coaching as helpful, thus substantiating previous research on perceptions and how they may relate to teaching behaviors. In addition, the findings from this study support findings from studies showing that incorporating coaches such as peer coaches in clinic courses can be a valuable practice (Collett, 2012; Maloch et al., 2015).

These research findings are also in tune with prior research involving instructional technology coaches. For instance, Bakhshaei et al. (2020) found that teachers who collaborated with educational technology coaches perceived themselves as more effective teachers, which is similar to how tutors in this study perceived themselves. In addition, as Ottenbreit-Leftwich et al. (2020) identified the features of successful coaching to consist of relationships with teachers and personalized support leading to better teaching, tutors in our study also stressed similar features.

However, some findings shed new light on using external coaches in online clinics, showing that there is a lot of promise and potential in designing an online clinic course in a way that can support graduate literacy students while transforming their teaching and professional relationships with other teachers by including coaches. Our analysis pointed to several areas in which graduate literacy students and coaches valued this experience, thus suggesting that this type of practice should be implemented and studied further.

Potential for Transforming Coaching Skills

Findings in the first theme indicated that this community of practice was perceived as beneficial for students' literacy learning. While literacy research already pointed to such a value of coaching, this research referred mostly to tutoring in traditional, face-to-face clinics (Collett, 2012; Laster, 2013; Maloch et al., 2015). Research on coaching in online clinics is only starting to emerge and points to benefits in terms of graduate students learning how to develop their coaching moves and skills (Massey et al., 2019) and how to use online tools to improve reflection, as well as how to use peer feedback to increase teacher reflection (Karchmer-Klein & Pytash, 2019). This study illuminated such benefits further, in terms of both tutors' growth as teachers and collaborators when given the opportunity to interact with coaches in the online environment.

First, tutors perceived this experience as joint, conversational, and beneficial for their own reflection on teaching and shared how they utilized

resources shared by coaches. These perceptions are consistent with what literature on coaches in face-to-face clinics described (Karchmer-Klein & Pytash, 2019). Tutors elaborated in detail on how these online coaching conferences helped them in engaging their students more as writers and readers at the students' individual levels of literacy and how sometimes coaches offered creative ideas and pushed their tutors' instructional practices further. Moreover, coaches shared their practice by reusing assets from their own instructional practices, something they utilized daily, which benefited both tutors and their students. If tutors and coaches expressed these feelings, such collaborations then would be desirable and beneficial to integrate in online clinics.

Potential for Transforming Collegial Relationships

As the tutors gained an understanding of perceived uplifting benefits of the collaboration with the coaches, they vowed both to seek such opportunities for interacting with more experienced teachers in their jobs and to engage themselves in this type of community of practice as future literacy specialists or coaches. Such perceptions of benefits are novel in both literature on coaches and emerging literature on online clinics (Massey et al., 2019). Some tutors described how their experiences with coaches had changed their professional interactions during the time of taking the course in their individual professional learning communities. For some tutors, who were current substitute teachers, the opportunity to interact with coaches was additionally beneficial because, as substitute teachers, they did not have opportunities to collaborate with other teachers; therefore, the online coaching opportunity served as a valuable experience within a collegial setting that had been missing due to their marginal experiences of being substitute teachers. Coaches, too, spoke about how they themselves benefited. One of the coaches mentioned that her collaborations in coteaching improved as a result of gaining confidence in the experience of coaching a tutor in the online clinic.

Potential for Enhancing Coaching With Technology

The final theme explains how participants perceived the possibilities for creating powerful and innovative coaching presence in an online clinic. In this theme, it was apparent that tutors noticed certain features of online, joint activity that allowed them to compare this experience to face-to-face interactions. In terms of instructional coaches then, this study showcases how coaching can be done using technological platforms. The majority of research on coaching has shown that this professional development is effective, but most of these studies researched coaching in face-to-face settings (Bean et al., 2015; Collett, 2012; Lockwood et al., 2010; Maloch et al., 2015; Massey et al., 2019). This study begins to show possibilities of coaching in online clinics via conferencing technology, where the participants perceived this coaching as effective, beneficial, and empowering. The emerging research also points to digital tools that can aid in such coaching (Karchmer-Klein & Pytash, 2019) or reflecting (Howell et al., 2019), but this study sheds new light on the potential of such technologies when used by external coaches in online literacy clinics.

Many participants who spoke about such experiences stressed that, even though coaching was delivered through technology, it felt supportive and

trusting. The tutors even equated it with a natural conversation in which coaches were genuinely interested in tutors' teaching careers beyond the locus of coaching. Moreover, many tutors described relief when they began to engage in solving instructional problems with their coaches.

Tutors also acknowledged the difficulty of conveying coaching through technology but appreciated how coaches were able to achieve strong coaching presence. Coaches also described aspects of presence. Kate mentioned how she understood it would take some time for tutors to open up to a more experienced colleague, while Claire mentioned how this coaching helped her in becoming a better listener. Sharing expertise and resources was also a big part of the coaching presence that contributed to its success. These perceived features open a new way of thinking about how coaching can occur and the types of coaching dispositions that would be desirable in an online environment.

Implications

Implications for practice are vast. Because the benefits perceived by the participants point to the potential of transforming beginning in-service teachers' literacy teaching and collaborative dispositions, online literacy programs should consider inclusion of online coaching to offer collaborative opportunities for graduate literacy students, beyond the traditional, typified interactions with college-level instructors and peers.

Implications for Transforming Teaching

With only one synchronous, online interaction on the Skype videoconferencing platform, both tutors and coaches perceived positive transformation of their teaching practices and professional relationships. Therefore, we may infer even further positive transformative professional development when given even more opportunities for synchronous online coaching in online literacy clinics. Our advice would be to ensure that such coaches do not only have some experience in coaching but also are familiar with literacy teaching theories that shape the teaching and learning in literacy clinics.

For this reason, employing coaches who previously took such clinics themselves would be a beneficial option. The clinic instructor should take a note of graduate students whose professional demeanor and coaching skills show they have great potential to be coaches in the future and cultivate a professional connection with them. Our advice is to also start at a small scale and employ a coach or two by taking advantages of internal institutional grants that could support coaches' reimbursement. It is also important to collect sufficient data to be able to show the effectiveness of such coaching, including how it makes literacy teacher preparation better than taking clinic courses with no such coaches.

Implications for Preparation of Literacy Teachers Vis-a-Vis Technology

Implications with regard to the preparation of literacy teachers vis-a-vis technology are also important to consider. Since coaching based on videos

of tutoring relies on high-quality teaching videos recorded by tutors, graduate students need targeted technical support in recording teaching videos, with attention to sound quality and camera positioning to capture high-quality interaction. Video quality influences the quality of feedback. Poor recordings may not show important details of teaching and interaction between the tutor and the student.

Even though our tutors received detailed description of what is required regarding video quality, many videos could have been of higher quality if proper technical support and practice in recording such videos occurred during educational studies. Such practice could also include understanding why video quality matters in coaching. Since many literacy graduate programs are going online, preparing future literacy graduate students for video recording during their undergraduate studies would be desirable.

In addition, this need creates a potential for collaborating between literacy graduate students and instructional technology graduate students. As instructional technology graduate students need practice in training teachers in using technology, they could provide such coaching to literacy graduate students who need to record better instructional videos.

Implications for Education Technology for Teachers

While instructional technology deals mostly with helping teachers incorporate technology into their teaching (Beglau et al., 2011; Johnson, 2015; Peterson, 2015), this study revealed that teachers would also benefit from working with instructional technology (IT) coaches on how to use technologies to properly record their tutoring videos and connect with each other for the most optimal coaching sessions.

Implications for Teacher Professional Development

In terms of teacher professional development, this study also provided some implications. Because tutors experienced positive learning experiences in these remote interactions with coaches, professional development programs should consider similar models to extend what tutors experienced in these clinics. It might be beneficial to provide one-on-one professional development, in which the experienced literacy coach or IT coach and the teacher can connect in a professional conversation aimed at refining instruction, a similar coaching practice seen in this study. Such professional development should focus on ways to initiate, develop, and sustain collaboration between coaches and teachers.

Implications for Theory

Implications for theory are also worth pointing to. Because this community of practice operated only remotely, the joint activities depended on the affordances and constraints of technologies. Therefore, further research and employing this theory may additionally enrich its terms. For example, it would be interesting to see how the affordances of other digital media such as the Zoom or GoReact platforms might expand on coaching interactions in developing presence that allows coaches to

implement digital visits to further share assets and problem solve with their tutors.

Future Research Directions

Since this study revealed that perceptions of coaching were favorable, further research on the ways graduate students develop professional relationships with external coaches and perceive what they learn in these interactions in a variety of online clinic designs is needed. Such research would also help in determining more nuance in the technological architecture and affordances of different designs in developing online coaching presence and, therefore, in training future online coaches. We are interested in exploring this direction in research. In addition, further research can be conducted on video conferences between tutors and coaches, using such analytical tools as discourse analysis to reveal further the nature of such coaching.

Limitations

Our study has some limitations. First, the findings are based mostly on tutors' and coaches' perceptions. While the perceptions are valuable, they cannot provide evidence of coaching effectiveness. In addition, due to the limitations of the pilot itself (i.e., every tutor was coached only once by providing written feedback and once in a coaching conference and only by one coach), our data was limited to single instances of such coaching. These constraints occurred due to the reimbursement the stipends provided. Third, the study took place in only one site and with a small group of participants. It would be beneficial to conduct a larger study across a variety and different types of teacher education programs that are offering similar literacy coaching clinics (e.g., public, private, rural, suburban, and city).

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Appendix Coding and Rationalizing Codes (Excerpt)

Code

Coaching as helping in reflecting

Data

I really just learned a lot about reflection and how important that is. So when I'm struggling with a group, I might want to voice record it on my phone for my own purposes just to hear back the conversation and go from there. Because in the moment, you do miss a lot of those things that are happening with 3 or 4 students, so it's just a recording for myself to see...
Kate (coach)

If I'm struggling with this one group of students and how their grasping the material, how can I make it more uh, engaging, and more in riches for them. So doing those types of feedbacks would really help me in my teaching for this position, and every position.
Kate (coach)

I enjoyed my experience. It was interesting to actually
Hannah

They were similar but there wasn't as much reflection in the informal coaching. It was kind of like this is what I would recommend, there wasn't really a follow up. Where I feel like we had a lot of follow up and we had a lot of reflecting on our teaching and reflecting on our meeting with our literacy coaches in the course.
Diana

my experience was, it was hard for me to originally to go back and view my video tape because i don't like being critical. And its hard for me to pinpoint things for me to work on. But at the same time...
Diana

Because when it's happening you can't reflect because it's happening in that moment, but when you get to go back and see it, you can go back and reflect on it.
Diana

And I do notice that teaching is almost like golf. It's very mental, and if I go into a lesson thinking 'this is going to be great. This going to be awesome, the kids are going to be engaged, the kids are going to learn', that it is so! And if I go in thinking 'oh man, this is going to be a disaster' then it sorta just happens. I think it's all in here sometimes.
David

And I had reflected on that, and Marie actually said 'no. You had natural questioning, it was really smooth.' And the only feedback she had given me was a prewriting spelling, was it really important to sound out words...like

pre-writing...we came up with ideas together, and she was very helpful with helping me think outside the box for prewriting.
Rylan

Sometimes in the discussions you sometimes answer your own inquiries because you are opening up that dialogue. It help...it helps you become more self-reflective, just giving yourself the opportunity to discuss it with someone else.
Kris

Yeah. I guess, being more receptive and not getting, trying not to be so defensive when you're getting any kind of feedback. Not trying to constantly defend what has been done so that I am more open to hearing the suggestions and advice. And that's something I'm...when I speak to another person, I have to be aware that they're probably building up the same type of defenses that I would be building up in those circumstances.
Kris

Yeah. We, in our district, we've been talking more about growth mindset. So, I'm thinking to myself, I really should have that as, "how can I make this better, instead of I did it because X, Y, Z reasons, and...
Kris

I feel like when I am teaching and being held accountable for it, so someone's watching me or I'm trying to make myself better I feel like I go in with a better attitude and I'm more prepared.
Alex

So when we did have the opportunity to Skype it I felt like it did help me, and made me to look at something in my teaching video that I didn't really recognize before.
Alex

Rationale

Participants make clear reflective and metacognitive responses in relation to interacting with coaches or tutors (graduate students).