Alternative Route to Licensure Teacher Candidates' Understanding and Use of Empathy

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Abstract

Empathy, defined as both emotional and cognitive perspective-taking, is considered to be an important teacher disposition; however, limited research exists on the implementation of empathy alongside the experiential teaching practicum within alternative route to licensure (ARL) programs. The purpose of this study is to examine ARL teacher candidates' (TCs) beliefs about empathy, their empathetic actions, and the role of teacher preparation in developing empathy in candidates' teaching. Using constructivist grounded theory, we collected data over two cohorts of our preparation program. We analyzed ob-

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servations, interviews, a survey, and pedagogy coursework from the second cohort to generate findings. Our findings highlight empathy in teaching as educating from the learner's standpoint and creating positive interactions through empathy. Our analysis suggests that explicitly focusing on empathy throughout a teaching practicum can help TCs develop student-centered understandings of empathy that extend notions of imaging oneself in the other's place.

Keywords: empathy; alternative route to licensure; teacher candidates

Introduction

Teacher shortages, high levels of teacher attrition and turnover, and a focus on diversifying the teacher workforce have influenced the expansion of alternative route to licensure (ARL), or accelerated teacher certification, programs in recent years (Miller et al., 2019; Scott, 2019). Existing in most states, ARL programs, known under different names which vary by state, are defined as "any alternative to the 4-year or 5-year undergraduate teacher education program, including both those programs that have reduced standards and those that hold teachers to the same standards as college- and university-based undergraduate teacher education" (Zeichner & Schulte, 2001, p. 266). This route allows teacher candidates, who intern in schools during their practicum experience, to become teachers of record while completing coursework or other requirements for a standard teaching license (Darling Hammond et al., 2002; Humphrey & Wechsler, 2008).

This is considerably different from traditional programs that require student teaching before licensure. Candidates in ARL programs are often comprised of students looking to begin a teaching career after obtaining a Bachelor's degree in a non-educational domain or would like a career change. They are also likely to be more diverse as well as teach in areas of high needs such as math and science in urban settings (Roach & Cohen, 2002). In areas where there is a teacher shortage, ARL programs can help supply schools with teachers who have earned a conditional license in less time compared to their peers in traditional teacher preparation programs. Often, these positions are in schools with high turnover rates and deemed hard to staff, which can become a proxy for urban schools with high levels of students of color on free and reduced lunch (Lee, 2019).

These schools are also, arguably, those most in need of qualified educators who are well-prepared to work with culturally and linguistically diverse learners. As ARL programs continue to grow and evolve, further understanding of ARL programs, and pre-service and in-ser-

vice teachers therein will contribute to important discourse around the complexities of both short-term and long-term ARL teacher development, preparedness, and effectiveness.

Existing research on teacher effectiveness identifies empathy as one of 11 essential dispositions for an effective teacher and an invaluable component of best practices for teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students (Gordon, 1999; Ladson-Billings, 2014; Warren, 2015a, 2018). However, one's dispositions arguably shape the application of empathy. Thus, empathy proves important when cultivating teachers' dispositions because empathy creates patterns of behaviors in how one chooses to interact and participate in the education environment (Warren, 2018). Empathy can be defined, and best understood, as both emotional and cognitive perspective-taking. Cognitive perspective-taking is the "anchoring dimension" because it is needed for empathic concern (Warren, 2018, p. 171).

Teachers' student perception acquisition, followed by the utilization of student perception influences the teacher's pedagogical decision making incorporated in a monotonous process presented as applying empathy (Warren, 2014). The process of applying empathy can guide one's decision making, which is crucial during a TC's experiential student teaching and practicum. For students in ARL programs, the time spent in K-12 schools engaging in clinical teaching experiences can range from a few weeks to one year (Humphrey & Wechsler, 2008). This is significantly less time interning in schools compared to a traditional four-year program that includes multiple practicum experiences and student teaching as requirements for licensure. Given this, we focus our study on alternative route to licensure teacher candidates' (ARL TCs) empathy development in our program to consider their preparation to enter the field.

Purpose

The purpose of our study is to examine a group of ARL TCs beliefs about empathy, their *empathetic actions* (or the absence of empathetic actions), and the role of teacher preparation in developing empathy in candidates' teaching. We focus exclusively on ARL TCs because these candidates in our program only spend four weeks interning before being eligible for a conditional teaching license. We were interested in understanding if our approach to candidate development could impact their development of empathy as a disposition of effective teaching in such a short time frame. In this study, empathetic actions refer to observable instances of perspective-taking on the part of (1) program

staff towards AR TCs; (2) ARL TCs in relation to their peers; and (3) ARL TCs towards the middle school students they taught during their practicum experience. We acknowledge an intentional focus on empathy in the structure of one cohort of our summer teacher preparation program (TPP) and consider the impact of the program itself alongside ARL TCs initial perspectives of empathy in our analysis. Our research questions were:

1. How does the TPP (instructors, mentors, and experiences) shape teacher candidates' understanding of empathy?

    a. How do teacher candidates use empathy in their practice?

    b. In what areas might empathy be lacking?

Review of Literature:
Empathy in Teacher Candidate Development

Empathy has been defined across disciplines in a variety of ways with no concrete understanding of a uniform definition (Warren, 2015b). Empathy can be observed as early as infancy and development of its processes and applications continue throughout adulthood (Decety & Lamm, 2006). This development is impacted by one's own experiences and interactions and can be practiced and applied in various contexts. In congruence with Warren (2015b), we do not intend to conflate being an empathetic person with professional demonstrations of empathy through application, or as a teaching disposition.

Rogers' (1969) notions of the importance of empathy in teaching and learning continue to be foundational in defining teacher empathy. He asserts, "[w]hen the teacher has the ability to understand the student's reaction from the inside, has the sensitive awareness of the process of how education and learning seems to the student…the likelihood of learning is significantly increased" (p. 158). Teacher empathy has been defined as "the ability to express concern and take the perspective of a student" (Tettegah & Anderson, 2007, p. 50). Tettegah and Anderson further contend that whether conscious or unconscious, cognitive or emotional, the theory and application of empathy require perspective taking, or being able to credibly represent another person's perspective in a manner that is believable to that person (p. 50). In this sense, teacher empathy develops as educators attempt to understand their students' actions, reactions, and interactions, and respond based on that understanding. Teachers acquire new understandings from practical efforts, specifically achieving diverse and adequate methods to acquire new knowledge of students' and students' backgrounds, re-

spectively, through the portrayal of "perspective taking as an act of knowing" (Warren, 2018, p. 174). Perspective-taking supports the acquisition of new knowledge for teachers with students to help teachers make appropriate decisions to facilitate effective learning and build interpersonal relationships (Warren, 2018). The process of perspective-taking may encourage the teacher to support relationship building with the student and further understand, from the view of the student, what the student needs (Burton, 1990).

Imagine self (IS) and *imagine others* (IO) are the two primary dimensions of perspective taking (Batson et al., 1997; Warren, 2018). IS is defined as responding to the condition or context by personal experience and preference. This perspective-taking version is centered by ego and does not take into consideration the other person's culture or point-of-view in evaluating and responding. For example, a teacher may conclude that a student's low academic performance is due to low aptitude or preparation and not his or her teaching. IO conversely, is a more altruistic approach to empathy that centers the other person even if doing so means inconveniencing or negatively reflecting on oneself. This is evident, for example, when a teacher reflects on his or her own pedagogical failures when delivering content that may impact the student's performance (Warren, 2018, p. 174). In IO, the teacher takes into consideration the ecological system of the community, school, classroom, and relationship to the student when assessing student barriers (Warren, 2018).

When teachers exhibit empathy in their pedagogy, both students and teachers can benefit. One benefit of teacher empathy is positive student-teacher relationships. Additionally, empathy can contribute to a teacher's ability to personally connect with and meaningfully care for students, which in turn can improve academic engagement and achievement (McHugh et al., 2013; Williams, 2010). Boyer (2010) proposed that student perceptions of teacher empathy contribute to the student's positive feelings and inspirations toward their own learning. Similarly, Gordon (1999) concluded that when students perceive their teachers as being caring, behaviors and academic performances improve. In addition to positive outcomes for students, teacher empathy has been associated with teacher self-efficacy and perceptions of school culture. In a study with 100 in-service teachers, Barr (2011) determined that empathetic teachers are more likely to support students through interpersonal problems, consider in-school and out-of-school learning opportunities from an asset lens, and critically examine policies and governance structures from perspectives other than their own (p. 367). Pre-service teachers who actively participated in field

and practicum experiences within culturally and linguistically diverse student environments, produced a considerable increase in empathy for those students (Brown et al., 2011).

Despite potential benefits of empathy in teaching and learning exchanges, little has been done to advance empathy as a central tenet within TPPs (Warren, 2018). There has been research, discussion, and mentions of the impact of empathy on teacher dispositions, culturally responsive pedagogies, and classroom applications; however, further research is needed to more fully evaluate how approaches to teacher preparation can contribute to TCs use of empathy in their practice, specifically when prepared though alternative routes that offer limited time for clinical experiences.

Conceptual Framework of Empathy in ARL TC Preparation

It is important to note that scholars who have studied empathy in teacher education do not view it as a trait one simply has or does not have; empathy is viewed on a continuum, and teachers can become more empathetic over time with experiences and interventions (McKinnon, 2018). Further, we do not assume that teacher candidates enter preparation programs lacking empathy; instead, we build our work from the belief that candidates come to our program with a foundational understanding of what empathy is. In addition, we posit that a TPP desiring to increase ARL TCs understanding and use of empathy must develop an appropriate programmatic stance. We also understand that teacher empathy can be viewed as subjective and interpreted differently based on the observer's own understanding of empathy (Warren, 2015b). From this perspective, along with the literature cited above and our own experiences with ARL TCs, we developed a conceptual framework of influences on ARL TC understanding and use of empathy (see Figure 1) that guides the present study.

We posit that ARL TCs' foundational understandings of empathy along with the programmatic stance of our TPP (as actualized by the second author's pedagogy) directly influence both how ARL TCs made sense of the experiential learning opportunities that make up the program's structure and how they defined and applied empathy in their practice. Similarly, the programmatic structure—including full-day teaching, beginning the first week, support from a mentor teacher (MT) and site facilitator (SF), coursework taught be the second author, and responsibilities outside of the classroom such as hall monitoring and cafeteria duty—was essential to shaping ARL TCs' understandings and use of empathy in their practice. Our conceptual model represents
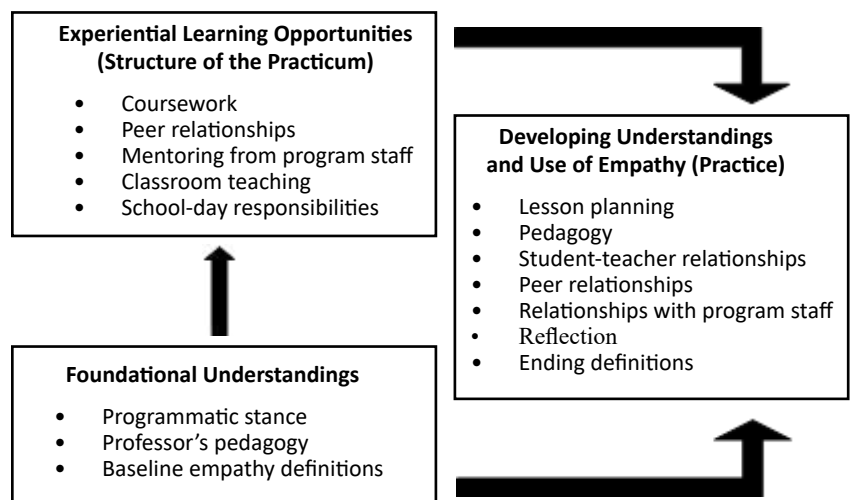
our central aim in this study: to examine ARL TC's beliefs about empathy and their empathetic actions throughout our TPP in relation to their foundational beliefs and the structure of our practicum.

Methods

This research relies on constructivist grounded theory methods (Charmaz, 2001) which builds from the presumption that social life is emergent, and social actions should be studied where they naturally occur (Charmaz, 2001). The constructivist nature rejects grounded theory's positivist and objectivist underpinnings to privilege the phenomenon being studied over the methods themselves. According to Charmaz (2001, 2014), distinguishing factors of constructivist grounded theory include: carefully attending to data collection while simultaneously analyzing collected data, utilizing emergent methods and returning to the field to collect additional data to fill gaps, and developing midrange theories rooted in interpretations of the data through constant comparison of analysis and extant literature.

This method was appropriate because our approach to the research and data shifted over the course of two years as we collected data, returned to the field with new insights and questions, and developed our conceptual model. We began in Summer of 2018 with a cohort con-

Figure 1
Influences on alternative route to licensure teacher candidates'
understanding and use of empathy

sisting of 14 teacher candidates, four mentor teachers, and four site facilitators. Initial data collection included observations of TCs while teaching in their practicum, a survey of TCs and their mentor teachers and site facilitators, and individual interviews. In the survey data, all mentors and site facilitators who completed the survey indicated that they used empathy daily in their practice with TCs. However, interview data from teacher candidates seemed to contradict those self-reports. Our preliminary analysis of that data indicated that mentor teachers related to TCs' experiences empathetically. That is, they made decisions that reflected an understanding of TCs' feelings, thoughts, and actions. However, these decisions did not always result in TCs feeling empathy from their mentor teachers or reflecting on empathy in their practice. Based on our analysis, we concluded that mentor teacher empathy most directly influenced how TCs related to their mentor teachers but did not necessarily translate into their teaching or dispositions. From that first set of data, we identified not knowing participants' definitions of empathy as a central gap in our data. We then began to review additional literature on empathy in pre-service teacher education and made changes to our program and data collection for Summer 2019.

Participants and Context of the TPP

This study presents findings from ongoing research with nine alternative route to licensure teacher candidates (ARL TCs) and their mentor teachers and site facilitators. The TCs were graduate students pursuing secondary educator licenses through an ARL program. Overall demographics of ARL TCs enrolled at the institution from 2016-2019 in the College of Education were reported as 58% female and 42% male with 56% of those students identifying as White, 20% Hispanic, 7% two or more races, 6% Asian, 6% unknown or "other," 4% Black or African American, and 1% American Indian or Alaska Native. All participants took part in an intensive summer TPP that included a practicum experience and a pedagogy course. Summer 2019 students were grouped by subject area, with two classes for English, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Given our enrollment (three English ARL TCs, one math ARL TC, two Science ARL TCs, and three social studies ARL TCs), some candidates were paired 1-1 with a content-area mentor while others shared a mentor. Our approach to providing mentorship also included providing site facilitators who supervised four to five ARL TCs along with the content-area mentor (see Table 1).

The summer TPP, first implemented in 2015, was designed to provide year-round opportunities for ARL TCs to complete coursework

and serve as a community outreach initiative that provides free academic enrichment for middle school students. The most recent statistics of the program's school district shows the district is serving a student population that is approximately 46% Hispanic/Latinx, 25% Caucasian, 14% Black/African American, 7% Multiracial, 6% Asian, 1.6% Hawaiian Pacific Islander, and less than 1% Native American (CCSD Fast Facts, 2018-2019). According to 2017-2018 data of the school district, approximately 64% of students qualify for federal free and reduced lunch programs.

To be eligible for enrollment, middle school students and their parents must have completed an application. The 2019 program had over 340 student applications submitted; however, due to limited space and the number of ARL candidates participating in the cohort, 240 students enrolled. However, with changes in student attendance throughout the summer, there were on average 120 students participating in the 4-week program. Our first-day roster included the potential of 44 students, in the largest classroom, and 23 in the smallest classroom with actual attendance numbers averaging under 20 per class. Classroom rosters were divided by grade level. There were three 6th grade classes, two 7th grade classes, two 8th grade classes, and one ninth grade class. Thirty-three percent of students were self-identified on program applications as Black/Non-Hispanic, 33% of students identified as Hispanic, 20% identified as White/Non-Hispanic, and remaining 15% identified as Asian, Hungarian, Mixed, and/or "other." The program qualified for free food assistance, provided by a community vendor, because of socio-economic demographic information of the community in the surrounding areas. Given this context, the ARL program supports the preparation of candidates in similar contexts of the community they may enter upon completion.

Table 1
Participants

TC Name	Content Area	Mentor Teacher	Site Facilitator
Daniel	Social studies	Tyler	Sue
Richard	Social studies	Tyler	Sue
Jason	Social studies	Kate	Lloyd
Frank	Science	Kevin	Lloyd
Samuel	Science	Fawn	Lloyd
Ashley	English	Cathy	Lloyd & Sue
Isabel	English	Owen	Sue
Henry	English	Owen	Sue
Penelope	Math	Allison	Lloyd

The program staff included administrators, site facilitators, and mentor teachers who were recruited and hired by university faculty overseeing the program. During the 2018 and 2019 programs, the first and second authors co-directed the program. While slight changes to the program have been implemented, such as adding a community-engaged learning experience during the 2019 TPP, the program's theoretical underpinnings remained consistent. We sought to prepare ARL TCs to meet the needs of diverse students in our local schools, understanding that teaching and learning is an exchange mediated by culture, expectations, and past experiences. ARL TCs are not only taught about but also have culturally relevant pedagogies modeled for them throughout their summer practicum. The second author, who has expertise in culturally relevant and sustaining pedagogies, taught secondary pedagogy course during the TPP. A program expectation is that ARL TCs end the summer knowing that effectively implementing curriculum requires knowing kids as well as (if not better than) content. From this perspective, building classroom environments conducive to learning is a result of efforts taken to build relationships and meet the holistic (social, emotional, and academic) learning needs of students. We believe that empathy is an essential component in the learning process for the ARL TCs.

Researcher Positionality

In addition to serving as program directors, the first two authors were also lead researchers who consented participants, developed protocol, conducted interviews and observations, sent surveys, and led the team in analyzing data. The fourth and third authors collected observation data during first and second cohort TPPs respectively. Our intimate involvement in the program, as well as the research, was essential to our ability to engage in grounded theory methods in that we could incorporate insights from our data analysis into the curriculum and instruction that shaped candidates' experiences. For example, we added an empathy journal component to the secondary pedagogy course for the 2019 cohort based on our data analysis to that point. Having direct influence over programmatic and curricular decisions allowed us to engage in the iterative process of asking questions, collecting data, analyzing data, and generating new ideas and questions consistent with grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014)

Data Collection

Data collected from the 2019 cohort included 20 classroom observations of the ARL TCs during their practicum teaching, six participant interviews, which took place in the fall of 2019, and TC assignments from the pedagogy course, including an empathy journal and reflections.

Classroom observations were conducted using a structured observation protocol (see Appendix A) that we modified between Summer 2018 TPP and Summer 2019 TPP. Our analysis of 2018 practicum observations included ARL TC actions but were not explicitly focused on empathy. Our codes from that data set were used to create categories within the observation protocol to ensure that all observers were looking for similar words and actions during 2019 ARL TCs' practicum teaching.

To date, we have collected six interviews with 2019 cohort members: both of our site facilitators, two mentor teachers, and two ARL TCs. While not our intention, these groups of participants reflect the triad approach within our TPP. In other words, for each of the ARL TCs we interviewed, we also interviewed that candidate's mentor and site facilitator. Each semi-structured interview lasted between 22 and 63 minutes. Unique protocols were developed for each participant group while all included a section specifically about empathy, including questions or prompts such as: How do you define empathy? How important is empathy to your practice? Describe a particular time you modeled/used empathy.

Consent for participating in this research included ARL TCs allowing us to use their coursework as data. Specifically, for this study, we focused on candidates' empathy journals, which were collected during the Summer 2019 TPP. Each week, ARL TCs met once for their secondary pedagogy course following a half-day of teaching middle school students. As part of that course, ARL TCs were asked to respond to a journal prompt during each class meeting. Responses varied in length from one to two paragraphs. Journal prompts included: How do you define empathy? Describe a situation during which you received empathy in the program this week. Describe a situation during which you used empathy in the program this week. What new insights do you have about teaching and learning based on your understanding of empathy?

Data Analysis

Based on our conceptual model, we began by line-by-line coding ARL TC definitions of empathy from the 2019 summer cohort. The definitions of empathy were analyzed to gain an insight into students' foundational conceptualizations of empathy. This informed our

first-level coding of *empathetic actions* across remaining data sources, including interviews, observations, and open-ended survey questions. In addition, we read those data sources to refine empathetic actions in relation to apriori codes based on our data from the 2018 data. Those codes were: imagining oneself in another's place (-), understanding another's feelings (-), understanding another's thoughts (-), understanding another's actions (-), and understanding another's background (-). Those codes, which are consistent with extant literature on perspective-taking (Warren, 2018), were organized into an Excel sheet to identify frequencies and guide further analysis, including the influence of particular individuals (University Professor, Mentor, Peer). The symbol (-) was used to indicate a lack of empathy. Though both the literature and researchers understand empathy to be on a continuum, using empathy as a binary, as in present or not present in a given situation, provided depth to our coding in relation to our research questions. In other words, we analyzed the presence or absence of empathy in individual instances from the data to evaluate how ARL TCs use empathy in their practice and where empathy might be lacking.

To minimize the bias of the first two authors in the data analysis process, we engaged in multiple rounds of individual and collective coding. We also utilized systematic memoing (Charmaz, 2014) to document and question our thinking throughout the data analysis process. Moreover, we met regularly as a research team to discuss literature, coding, and tentative themes throughout the analysis process. While these memos and meetings did not serve as data sources for the findings below, they allowed us to document our emergent ideas, align our tentative coding with literature, and crystalize insights across data sources.

Findings

Our framing of the study allowed us to emphasize perspective-taking as empathetic action. This orientation is consistent with our data in that instances of affective displays of empathy were limited. To provide insight into our research questions, we explicate two themes: (1) teaching from the learner's standpoint; and (2) creating positive interactions through empathy. Within each theme, we provide examples of ARL TCs using empathy in their practice and instances when empathetic actions are lacking. By doing so, we draw attention to the impact of empathy in teaching and learning exchanges. In the last section of this paper, we use our findings to discuss the significance of the study and implications for ARL TC development as well as future research on empathy in the preparation of ARL TCs.

Teaching from the Learner's Standpoint:
Teacher Candidates and Their Supervisors

ARL TC's baseline definitions of empathy reflected the importance of perspective-taking. Empathy was described by eight ARL TCs as understanding someone else's feelings and emotions with five explicit references to understanding another person's perspective or "putting yourself in their shoes and attempting to understand where they are coming from." These definitions are consistent with denotative meanings of empathy and are also reflected in the examples ARL TCs provided for receiving and using empathy throughout the program. Our data suggested the greatest source of empathetic actions noted by ARL TCs and observed throughout the program came from their mentor teachers (MTs). MTs provided encouragement and emotional support by helping ARL TCs feel understood. For example, Penelope shared how her mentor made her feel understood:

> We were both very overwhelmed and confused at the beginning [of the program] but worked through it together. She definitely understands the issues I've been having with students being very low and has helped me deal with this by offering support and strategies. She understands that math is very different from a lot of other subjects and has been very empathetic toward everything I am dealing with. Allison is the best!

Warren (2014) emphasized that those who supervise pre-service teachers should model empathy for and with them. In this case, Allison modeled IO for Penelope by providing teaching strategies and pedagogical support. Allison also asked Authors 1 and 2 for more demographic information about the middle school students in the program to try and understand who they were holistic. She wanted as much information as possible to help address what she understood as an achievement gap through plan lessons and support in the classroom. Rosenberg (1998) and Warren (2014) discuss the danger of teachers assuming they know the students they teach and describe a "false empathy" and a "false sense of involvement" with racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse students. According to Warren and Hotchkins (2015), when one puts his/her/their own needs, desires, and views over the intended beneficiary, false empathy is being used. Through observational data, conversations, and her ARL TC's interview, Allison did not blame the "lower achieving students," but, instead, conveyed to Penelope that it is "her responsibility to help students as a teacher" and modeled an empathic teacher disposition to support student success.

Similarly, Ashley (ARL TC) shared the following reflection of a lesson debrief she had with Lloyd (Site Facilitator):

> I was honest about the things I've been struggling with, and he listened and offered encouragement. He told me, 'Be gentle with yourself,' and that is something I am clinging to. Even if things don't go as planned, I remind myself that this is a learning experience and that the tough periods will help me become a better teacher. Him listening to me meant a lot and has led me to go to him for advice since then.

Pre-service teachers with low self-efficacy and resilience typically concentrate on emotional support for their distress; however, teacher educators that model empathy can provide developmental support along with ways to handle adversity (Evans-Palmer, 2016). The practicum experience can be particularly stressful for ARL TCs given the limited time they have in the classroom, as Ashley alluded to in the quote above discussing her struggles. When stress levels rise, teacher resilience lowers along with perceptions of ability to engage and teach students (Smylie, 1990). MTs and site facilitators (SFs) can motivate, engage, and instruct struggling ARL TCs through empathy. TPPs that support such behaviors from supervisors can better position the ARL TCs to assume similar practices as an in-service teacher (see Warren, 2018).

MTs also provided pedagogical support by offering advice rooted in their own experiences of having been early career teachers. Because of their own perspective-taking and ability to understand what ARL TCs are experiencing during the practicum experience, as well as understanding the needs of students and what they also may be experiencing, MTs were influential in helping ARL TCs perspective take when lessons did not go as smoothly as anticipated by asking them "well, how would you want to learn this?" MTs helped guide the ARL TCs in answering some of their own questions about improvement by just asking them to put themselves in the student's shoes. Sue, a SF, used this approach when providing feedback to Ashley after a lesson that was described as a "complete disaster." Ashley's response to Sue's perspective-taking prompt was, "I wouldn't wanna, you know, just sit," and Ashley quickly developed a more hands-on approach for the following classes. According to Warren (2018), empathy and perspective-taking guides professional decision making and provides opportunities to be reflective in teaching practices and supports the mechanisms in understanding and "knowing young people" (p. 170). Beginning TCs often cannot critically analyze or reflect on lessons; more often, they use descriptions and superficial evaluations. The first description of the lesson being "a complete disaster" was a superficial response to a

less than desirable lesson; however, prompting from the MT to try and understand what the students were experiencing created a mechanism for a more critical analysis and improvements.

Conversely, there was a lack of empathy used by supervisors toward TCs during some observations as well as reflected in aspects of interview data. For example, Sue used her experience in the classroom and as an administrator to conduct a transactional approach to mentorship with the TCs, where her focus was arguably on what she could receive from the process as well as what she could provide. She explained in the interview how she enjoyed working with the program to leverage an opportunity for recruitment to "cherry pick" new hires for her school. She also noted that it was easy for her to identify standout TCs and how she focuses efforts toward those students. She stated:

> After a couple of weeks that becomes really clear, really fast, in a program that intense, if they're going to make it or they're not going to make it. The ones that you know, you really kinda invest a little bit more after the second and third week and the ones that you know are gonna just thrive in the profession, you kind of give them [extra attention and support] because there's a couple of them that you know, you're like 'you're gonna get hired, you're gonna get into this job, you are gonna hate your kids, kids are gonna hate it.'

In this instance, the researchers consider that giving more attention to "thriving" ARL TCs and not to those that are struggling, may have been displaying a lack of empathy to those ARL TCs that need more support as well as their future students knowing that struggling ARL TCs may become full-time teachers of record in the near future. While Sue's approach may have been pragmatic for teacher recruitment from her perspective as an administrator, she noted having a difficult time perspective-taking with Henry (ARL TC) throughout the program. For example, she described their interactions and feedback sessions by consistently wondering about Henry, "Are you listening [laugh] or processing, maybe processing is the better word, are you processing what we are saying to you?" Perspective-taking is intended to help deepen what a teacher knows about how to best respond to student needs and implications for decision making to help meet those needs. It requires meaningful interactions and relationships with students without it being egocentrically rooted (Warren & Hotchkins, 2015). A lack of empathy from an MT to a TC could negatively impact the candidate's development if empathy is not modeled or perceived in other aspects of the program.

***Teaching from the Learner's Standpoint:
Teacher Candidates and Their Peers***

Throughout our program, ARL TCs were observed displaying empathy toward each other. This occurred, in part, as ARL TCs co-taught and reflected on their experiences together. Three English ARL TCs, Ashley, Isabel, and Henry, completed our summer 2019 program. Isabel and Henry shared a classroom and mentor teacher while Ashley's co-teacher and assigned mentor both left before the end of the summer. This created tremendous stress for Ashley, and she was able to rely on her peers for emotional support. Isabel, who had previous teaching experience, explained how she used cognitive empathy in her interactions with Ashley:

> It was my first year [teaching] last year and so I am able to relate to a lot of her worries and concerns. I can also offer advice that I was able to figure out through experience and trial and error in the classroom. I have tried to be a good friend, to listen, and to offer advice when appropriate.

Isabel's efforts to be empathetic were recognized by Ashley, who noted several times how much she appreciated her peers' support, both through communication and journal reflections. In this case, Isabel felt she used empathy with her peer Ashley, and Ashley perceived her peer's empathetic actions. Isabel understood how Ashley felt being a new ARL TC, and Ashley used those empathetic actions for comfort and advice.

At the same time, Isabel and Henry had a markedly different interpersonal relationship. During observations of their co-teaching, Henry reviewed elements of a lesson with students without providing details during his solo lesson. Isabel stepped in to explain each element in more detail and solicit examples from students in the room. Isabel's interaction with Henry reflected her lack of understanding of his feelings and actions. In her interview, she noted:

> I felt like I didn't really understand Henry's wavelength. Like I was communicating, and he couldn't understand the things that I was saying sometimes. And I would always be like, 'I don't know. I tried [to communicate with him].' ...Owen spent that extra time making sure that Henry got the extra attention that he needed, and I was just like, 'You help him. He needs it more than I do.'

Our analysis suggests that it is difficult to empathize when you do not believe you understand the other person's perspective and/or that the other person does not understand you. This impacted the personal con-

nection Isabel had with Henry, their teaching practices, and Isabel's ability to provide the same kind of emotional support she gave Ashley. Her comment encouraging Owen (MT) to spend additional time supporting Henry was more reflective of sympathy than empathy. While Henry did not participate in an interview to further provide his perspective, the researchers observed a perceived disconnection between Henry and his peers. This may be because he was not enrolled in the pedagogy course alongside his peers during the TPP. This may have contributed to the other ARL TCs building relationships with each other because of the opportunities for peer feedback, lesson planning, practicum debriefs, and space for shared experiences.

Teaching from the Learner's Standpoint: Teacher Candidates and Their Students

When applied to their teaching, empathy manifested pedagogically as ARL TCs learned to be responsive to student actions and needs. However, these skills were still developing for most of the ARL TCs and therefore inconsistent. For example, Ashley was observed using perspective-taking during three of her teaching periods where her mentor described her as being engaged with students and having a more student-centered approach; in turn, the students were engaged in classroom learning. However, on the same day of observation, in another period, observational notes discussed a more teacher-centered approach in her teaching. In that period, students were observed being off task and not engaged in learning. ARL TCs often come to the classroom with predispositions of teaching, perhaps more teacher-centered approaches, often with biases and expectations, and personal experiences that take time, reflection, feedback, and knowledge of inclusive pedagogies (Warren, 2018). In this instance, Ashley did not engage in perspective-taking from the student's point-of-view during that period and resumed back to her comfort zone at the front of the classroom while not being aware of students not actively participating in their learning.

Creating Positive Interpersonal Interactions through Empathy

Student-teacher relationships are informed by the interactions students and teachers have with one another. When teachers respond to students in a manner that students perceive as supportive or caring, they are more likely to positively engage while the inverse is also true (Jackson, 2020). Building relationships with students through perspective-taking as an expression of empathy assists teachers with be-

ing able to "negotiate professional decisions that facilitate their teaching effectiveness" (Warren, 2018, p. 173). In our analysis of ARL TCs' use of empathy, we explicitly considered their actions toward students, which established or hindered positive interpersonal interactions. We did this to consider the impact of empathetic actions (and a lack thereof) on classroom relationships.

We analyzed ARL TCs' classroom actions and interactions in relation to perspective-taking. As evidence of imagining oneself in another's place, we considered actions that demonstrated critical reflection on how a student would receive various pedagogical approaches. For example, actions such as providing and reiterating clear instructions, giving students ample time to complete assignments in class, quietly correcting incorrect answers, and praising students throughout a lesson were coded as perspective-taking. In reflecting on his use of empathy in his teaching, Jason, a social studies ARL TC, shared, "When one of my students got upset from getting a question wrong in a verbal quiz, I connected with him. I informed him that even I get things wrong, and it feels bad, but that's what learning is for." By using an incorrect response from a student as a teachable moment for the entire class and sharing personal experiences, Jason was attempting to create a classroom culture where mistakes are opportunities for additional learning while also attempting to personally connect and build rapport.

In an observation of Daniel and Richard, who co-taught a social studies class, Daniel demonstrated another type of positive interaction: supporting a student when classmates do not. The students were asked to assemble as Congress, and an individual volunteered to be the Vice President. This was met with sighs and a loud, "NOOOOO!" To this, Daniel responded, "I, for one, believe in our VP" and allowed the student who volunteered to serve that role. These types of pedagogical decisions reflect perspective-taking that considers the feelings of students and provides opportunities for teachers to develop caring relationships with their students.

When ARL TCs did not demonstrate perspective-taking in their teaching, this was manifested in actions such as not checking for understanding during lessons, providing examples that were difficult for students to relate to, and not recognizing or acknowledging when students were disengaged. This was most evident in our data from Henry. In his classroom teaching, Henry was observed moving through his planned lessons without attending to his students' learning. For example, in one lesson, he explained the concepts ethos, pathos, and logos using a PowerPoint but did not ask students to discuss. Instead, he moved directly into asking for students to identify examples of the concepts in videos he selected.

Cathy, an MT who worked most closely with Ashley but also observed Henry, noted that students were off task throughout the lesson and that Henry "needs better whole class re-direction techniques." These comments were consistent with other observations of Henry's teaching, and several times Isabel stepped in to support the content delivery. She was able to translate the content to students and increase engagement when Henry struggled. We contend that Henry was not teaching with the learners in mind as much as he was working to enact a lesson plan that he believed would be interesting. In turn, this limited his ability to create positive interactions with students who behaved in markedly different ways when he was teaching compared to those same students' behavior when Isabel was in front of the class.

ARL TCs had opportunities to build positive interpersonal relationships before, during and between classes as well as during their free time every day. Authors 1 and 2 explicitly explained that ARL TCs needed to be present before the school day began and during students' free time, which was spent in the lunchroom or outside. Some ARL TCs were observed utilizing this time to build relationships with students more effectively than others. For instance, Frank, an ARL TC in science, described a situation where he felt he was being supportive and empathetic toward a student:

> It was actually during the break…I noticed one of the students was crying. So, I approached her and asked her what was going on. She told me her sister was kind of talking about her. So, I kind of like redirected the issue. I was giving her support, like it doesn't matter what anyone else thinks about you; you do you because that's all that matters to yourself.

While we recognize Frank's efforts in connecting with students outside of the classroom, we also acknowledge that it could be centered on "false empathy." False empathy can occur when a teacher takes action that helps a student but more explicitly serves to minimize his/her/their own discomfort and/or receive a personal benefit (Warren & Hotchkins, 2015). We acknowledge this because we cannot ascertain Frank's motive in displaying concern for this student. However, if Frank was engaging in false empathy, his interaction with this student can be considered positive in that he was able to establish rapport with her that translated into her academic engagement. He reflected, "[This student] was very apathetic at first and then she became almost my star student." This shift occurred towards the end of the program after Frack invested in demonstrating care with her.

Discussion and Implications

We began this study with a focus on better understanding how our program shaped ARL TC's understanding of empathy. This study was designed to bring the experiences of one cohort's empathic development during a 4-week teaching practicum. Each ARL TC's empathy journal provided insight into their developing ideas of defining empathy but the role of empathy in their pedagogy. In tandem with their pre-existing definitions and the programmatic stance and pedagogy that incorporated reflecting on empathy, experiential learning opportunities helped ARL TCs connect empathy to their teaching and productive ways for ARL TCs to engage in the *imagine others* form of perspective taking.

Our data indicate that ARL TCs engage empathy in their pedagogy foremost by developing and implementing lessons with student learning in mind. Doing so requires ARL TCs to suspend their personal beliefs of how to teach and instead consider their students' learning needs. As we see this, ARL TCs applied an *imagine others* form of perspective taking and can considered the impact on both their philosophies and decision-making when approaching learner engagement. According to our ARL TCs and evident in our data, mentor teachers modeled this by perspective-taking with pre-service teachers in order to build supportive relationships and provide guidance for their teaching. The modeling reflected a particular approach to student-centered pedagogy that is not simply utilizing models of learning that allow for student choice and inquiry such as cooperative or problem-based learning (see Arends, 2015); instead, our data suggest that student-centered pedagogy is a philosophy of teaching that requires teachers to plan, implement, and reflect on instruction from the perspective of the learner. Engaging this form of student-centered learning is a function not only of pedagogical content knowledge but also the result of applying empathy in teaching based on understanding students' backgrounds, feelings, and actions.

At the end of the program, students were asked to revisit their definitions of empathy and its role in teaching. Consistent with the beginning of the summer, the majority of the students defined empathy as perspective-taking or understanding others' points of view. However, their definitions were more nuanced to include "understanding the emotional needs of others," "understanding students as individuals," and "adapting to other's needs." These definitions not only center more cognitive notions of empathy, but they are also accordant with ARL TCs pedagogical approaches. Arguably, the initial, denotative articulations of empathy were more aligned with the *imagine self* dimension of

perspective-taking as opposed to *imagine others*. As ARL TCs became more reflective about the role of empathy in teaching and more familiar with the students in their classes, their definitions became more aligned with IO.

In response to our last research question ("in what areas might empathy be lacking?"), we summarize our insights in concluding that empathy was lacking most in relationships where one person could not understand or relate to the perspective of another. This was evident in several interactions Henry had with his peers and supervisors. Isabel admitted she "didn't really understand Henry's wavelength," and though stated differently, both Owen and Sue expressed similar sentiments. We were not able to interview Henry for this study and, therefore, cannot determine if he perceived a lack of empathy. However, our analysis of his teaching suggests further consideration of how a perceived lack of empathy during practicum experiences might impact an ARL TC's teaching practices is worth further study.

Scholars of ARL teacher preparation, effectiveness in the classroom, and the potential impact when teachers are not prepared for the profession, acknowledge more research needs to be done in this realm (Darling-Hammond, 2007; Cochran-Smith & Villegas, 2015), especially regarding the continuum development and application of empathy. The ARL context is different from the traditional teacher educational pathway for many reasons, one of those reasons being the limited time an ARL pre-service teacher has in developing their disposition, under the guidance of a mentor, before being the teacher of record in their own classroom. Therefore, the time spent with a mentor to model professional empathic applications and perspective taking is critical in their teacher empathy development. However, with the understanding that ARL programs will continue to expand, our contribution to current discourse and research is that exposure, direct instruction, and reflection around empathy in an ARL program may have positive impacts, such as a more nuanced definition and understanding of empathy, an awareness of ARL TCs' empathic perspective-taking in lesson planning and engagement, and an intentionality to build relationships inside and outside of the classroom context. Conversely, when empathy was not evident, relationships were rooted in frustration and a lack of understanding of the other person's perspective.

Future Research

The conceptual model we constructed helped us ground our meaning making in aspects of our program that most directly influenced

ARL TC's experiential learning opportunities in relation to empathy. However, our program's structure did not include several aspects of teacher preparation that candidates might encounter elsewhere, such as volunteering in afterschool programs, parent-teacher conferences, or year-long placements that might allow a fuller view of students as learners and members of a broader community. This is significant in thinking about how ARL TCs engage perspective-taking in various aspects of the work of teaching. Future research should examine additional influences on ARL TCs' understanding and use of empathy over an extended period. Examination of ARL TCs using critical reflections on empathy across teaching contexts for the duration of a longer practicum could further inform our collective understanding of ARL TCs' development.

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Appendix A
Observation Protocol

Date:

Observer:

Mentor Teacher:

Grade Level & Content Area: (attach course outline from instructor if available)

ARL Student(s):

Start time: _____   End time: _____

Number of middle/high school students in attendance: _____ of _____

Brief description of setting:

Selective Observation:

Time (start & end)	Perspective Taking (language that reflects putting oneself in another's place) OR Lack thereof *Include Mentor Teacher/ARL, ARL/ARL, ARL/middle & high school students*	Understanding ARL experience (language that reflects understanding ARL program, pressures, expectations) OR Lack thereof	Emotional support (language that reflects a shared emotional response aka affective empathy) OR Lack thereof *Include Mentor Teacher/ARL, ARL/ARL, ARL/middle & high school students*

Additional field notes:

Thoughts/Feelings/Interpretations/Questions