HUMANIZING LITERACY COACHING

by

EMILY CHRISTINE CAYLOR

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Oakland University
Rochester, Michigan

Doctoral Advisory Committee:

Gwendolyn Thompson McMillon, Ph.D., Chair
Linda Doornbos, Ph.D.
Dana Robertson, Ed.D.

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To my wife Molly, to my supportive family, friends, and advisors, and
to the many teachers and coaches who have served as the inspiration for this work

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Emily Christine Caylor

PREFACE

In this manuscript style dissertation, two versions of The Humanity of Literacy Coaching research manuscript are presented; the original version submitted to *Literacy Research and Instruction* on July 14, 2023 is presented in Chapter 2. The revised version of The Humanity of Literacy Coaching that was resubmitted to the Professional Development in Education Journal on October 8, 2023 is presented in Chapter 3. In addition, the practitioner manuscript, The Collaborative Literacy Coaching Framework for Transformation submitted to *The Reading Teacher* on September 30, 2023 is presented in Chapter 4.

ABSTRACT

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Advisor: Gwendolyn Thompson McMillon, Ph.D.

The Humanity of Literacy Coaching

Literacy coaching has the potential to center humanizing professional learning pedagogies–promoting equity, disrupting oppression, and recognizing the complex humanity of teachers. This potential can be realized through the use of deep reflection to support teachers' awareness of what guides their behavior and further strengthened by complex supportive relationships with literacy coaches. These humanizing coaching practices not only re-humanize teachers but can influence changes to literacy instruction. Yet, humanizing approaches are often overtaken by more behavioristic approaches in literacy coaching models and the urgency of pandemic-related acceleration pervading schools. In this article, I share the findings of a case study in which I, as a literacy coach, explored the relationship between elements of a humanizing model of literacy coaching, including complex relational and reflective work, and a teacher's willingness to change her literacy instruction. Implications are shared on the potential of utilizing a conceptual framework guided by Maslow's (1943) theory of humanism and Korthagen's (2004) onion model could influence teachers' willingness to change and humanize professional learning.

The Collaborative Literacy Coaching Framework for Transformation

Literacy coaching is professional learning designed to provide teachers with supportive partnerships as they enhance their instruction (L'Allier et al., 2010). However, this enhancement requires teachers to make changes to long-standing practices. To prepare for change, teachers must have the psychological safety and time to explore their beliefs, values, and identities and how these factors influence their willingness to change (Dewey, 1933). Literacy coaches can prepare teachers for this work by using The Collaborative Literacy Coaching Framework for Transformation, which focuses on the cultivation of relationships, the examination of intrapersonal factors, the acknowledgment of their instructional impact, and the need to plan for change. I will share the framework and the stories of three teachers who were better prepared for change while working within it.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

NDEA	National Defense Education Act
ESEA	Elementary and Secondary Act
PD	Professional development
PL	Professional learning
ISD	Intermediate School District
STEM	Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics
BGC	Beginning getting to know you conversation
IP	Initial co-planning session
O1	First observation
R1	First reflective co-planning session
O2	Second observation
R2	Second reflective co-planning session
O3	Third observation
FRC	Final reflective conversation
IP	Interview with principal
CLCF-T	Collaborative Literacy Coaching Framework for Transformation
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and all other identities not encompassed in the acronym

CHAPTER ONE

HUMANIZING LITERACY COACHING

The field of education is in constant evolution, driven by the pursuit of better literacy outcomes for children. Despite funding and dedicated efforts by administrators and educators, there is an ongoing need in literacy, as evidenced the most recent nationwide standardized assessment of reading, the Reading Test administered by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in 2022, where approximately two-thirds of children in fourth- and eighth-grade scored at or below the basic level of proficiency (National Assessment, 2022). Reform movements often attempt to remedy this need through various professional learning initiatives to teachers.

Consequently, educators are also expected to be in a constant state of evolution, first, as they are asked to adapt and refine their teaching methodologies in professional learning and, then, as professional learning initiatives shift. Models of professional learning, such as literacy coaching, attempt to support educators through the dynamic processes of change. Literacy coaches work closely with teachers to identify their specific needs, offer personalized professional learning, and help them implement the learning effectively in their unique contexts. However, behavioristic models of literacy coaching models can focus superficially on behavioral changes and fail to acknowledge the complex relational and intrapersonal factors that impact sustained instructional change. Literacy coaching, however, has the potential to support complex and sustainable changes to instruction--through the intentional acknowledgment of humanity.

The research I present in this dissertation seeks to delve into the critical theme of humanizing professional learning pedagogies within literacy coaching models (Allen, 2022). By centering humanization, this agenda advocates for models of literacy coaching to recognize and provide space for the inherent humanity of teachers and the complexity of sustained change in order to promote true transformation of literacy instruction. The manuscripts The Humanity of Literacy Coaching and The Collaborative Literacy Coaching Framework for Transformation (CLCF-T) are examples of this agenda, which are interrelated by (a) capitalizing on the power of the teacher-coach relationship (Robertson et al., 2020), (b) providing time for deeply reflective opportunities within models of coaching (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005), and (c) focusing on how an awareness of how intrapersonal factors guide behavior can emerge through opportunities for deep reflection (Dewey, 1933; Korthagen, 2004; Tanaka, 2015).

Teacher-Coach Relationships

One humanizing literacy coaching principle that I explored in my first dissertation manuscript, The Humanity of Literacy Coaching, explore the teacher-coach relationship and its role in fostering psychological safety. Psychological safety is important as teachers are asked to change, because a deep level of psychological safety can support teachers in increasing their willingness to change (Carmeli et al., 2009). Data from the multiple-case study that I conducted suggest that coaches can spend time and attention on their relationships with teachers in order to support teachers as they make changes to their practices. Additionally, the data from this research suggests the need to further explore the complexities of different teacher-coach relationships and their influence on changes to teachers' practices.

Likewise, my second dissertation manuscript focused on the cultivation of relationships through strategies, such as consistency, active listening, recognition, and distributed expertise (Cutrer-Párraga et al., 2021). Having concrete strategies are important as they lay the groundwork for the pivotal work of building trust in the teacher-coach relationship (Robertson et al., 2020). The inclusion of cultivating the teacher-coach relationships in a coaching framework may reinforce its significance and encourage dedicated time to this endeavor.

Deeply Reflective Opportunities

Another component of humanized literacy coaching that I explored in my first dissertation manuscript was the power of deeply reflective opportunities during reflective coaching conversations. Opportunities to reflect are crucial to continuous improvement (International Literacy Association, 2017); however, deeply reflective opportunities allow teachers to focus on how their professional growth can align with their identities, experiences, and beliefs about education (Korthagen, 2004). To explore the use of deep reflection in a model of humanized literacy coaching, I adapted and explored the use of reflective conversation protocols that included questions about a teacher's values, beliefs, or identities and how these intrapersonal factors were realized in their instruction. In order to promote sustained change to practice and the honoring of teachers' inherent humanity, my data suggests coaches need to consider adding deep reflections questions in order to support teachers' intrapersonal awareness.

Likewise, my second dissertation manuscript, The Collaborative Literacy Coaching Framework for Transformation (CLCF-T), integrated deep reflection into a humanized framework for coaches. I created this coaching framework to acknowledge

three steps to help teachers prepare for sustained change—the cultivation of teacher-coach relationships, the excavation and acknowledgment of the influence of intrapersonal factors on instruction, and planning for change through vision development and lesson design. These stages align with the stages for change in the Transtheoretical Model (Prochaska et al., 2005), a dynamic framework that chronicles the psychological stages of precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, and maintenance through which individuals progress as they make significant behavioral changes. The CLCF-T might be used to guide coaches as they select deeply reflective questions.

Intrapersonal Awareness

The final component of humanizing literacy coaching that I explored in my first dissertation manuscript focused on how an awareness of how intrapersonal factors guide behavior can emerge through opportunities for deep reflection (Dewey, 1933; Korthagen, 2004; Tanaka, 2015). Providing the time and deeply humanizing prompts when engaging teachers in reflection not only acknowledges the often quick solution-focused time teachers receive to reflect (Korthagen, 2004) but it also acknowledges the transformative impact on instruction (Dewey, 1933; Korthagen, 2004; Tanaka, 2015). As teachers become more aware of the impact of their beliefs and identities on their instructional moves, the insights have the potential to foster the willingness to change this instruction. Based on data from my research, coaches can foster psychologically safe spaces in which to engage teachers in deep reflection, influencing teachers' willingness to change their instruction.

Likewise, my second dissertation manuscript acknowledged the connection between psychological safety developed through the teacher-coach relationship, deeply

reflective opportunities, and a teacher's willingness to change in a framework for transformative coaching. This addition transforms frameworks from a surface-level reflection of behavior such as, What did you do? How did it work? What will you do differently? (Knight, 2008) to a deeply reflective process that allows teachers the space to process psychological factors that impact and can support changes to their behavior. To address this, I created the CLCF-T to serve as a way for coaches to acknowledge the ways teachers can prepare for change by cultivating the teacher-coach relationship, examining and acknowledging the ways in which intrapersonal factors guide teachers' behavior, and planning change. This preliminary coaching framework can be used in conjunction with other coaching models in order to acknowledge the complexity and psychology of change.

Summary

My research agenda includes exploring the power of humanizing professional learning pedagogies, such as literacy coaching, to impact teachers' intrapersonal awareness and, subsequently, their willingness to change. Both manuscripts in this Manuscript Style Dissertation focus on how the teacher-coach relationship and deeply reflective opportunities in humanized models of literacy coaching can contribute to influencing teachers' willingness to change. Humanizing literacy coaching frameworks, such as the ones utilized in my research, could support coaches and models of coaching to potentially influence teachers' willingness to engage in sustained transformation of their literacy instruction.

CHAPTER TWO

THE HUMANITY OF LITERACY COACHING VERSION 1

Introduction

Since its inception, a constant of public education has been its evolution (Long, 2014). What began as an unregulated exclusive system is now a highly regulated system intended for all children, regardless of social markers. A myriad of voices have interacted with historical, political, and sociocultural factors, contributing to this evolution. Throughout this evolution, there has been very little consensus about who should teach, what should be taught, and how to support teachers to ensure high academic achievement (Long, 2014).

One thing federal policymakers and scholars have agreed upon is the significant impact of teachers on academic achievement (Burroughs et al., 2019; Darling-Hammond, 2000) and the importance of teachers' learning opportunities (Long, 2014). These opportunities have often taken a behavioristic approach, influencing change by providing teachers with new knowledge or skills, repetitive practice, and feedback (Korthagen, 2004; Long, 2014). Yet, privileging behavior has given rise to strictly regulated (Long, 2014) and deeply dehumanizing models (Carter Andrews et al., 2016). The lingering effects of a global pandemic risk exacerbating this embedded dehumanization by promoting the "quick, standardized evaluation" of learning for children and teachers, while ignoring the "socio-cultural, embodied, relational, and affective nature of teaching and learning" (Shelton et al., 2020, p.125).

However, humanity is at the heart of education–the sheer humanity of learning and growing and the humanity of teachers who support this learning (Day, 1999). To acknowledge this humanity and best support teachers, I advocate for humanizing professional learning pedagogies. I will use Allen et al. (2022)'s definition of humanizing pedagogies as methods working to promote equity, disrupt systemic oppression and dehumanization, and prioritize the humanity of children, families, and teachers. I propose three essential components of humanizing pedagogies–deep reflection to foster awareness of interconnected humanity (Korthagen, 2004); relationships to support the psychological safety needed to reflect (Robertson et al., 2020); and contextual awareness to acknowledge that learning is situated in social contexts (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Literacy coaching has the potential to prioritize humanizing pedagogies by centering the partnership between the coach and teacher and providing space for deep reflection during the implementation of research-supported practices (Knight, 2008). However, recent research (Kraft et al., 2018; Sailors et al., 2017) suggests its mixed outcomes on children's learning. Because literacy coaching is complex human work, more research is needed to explore the role of deep reflection, relationships, and multi-faceted contexts in both children's and teachers' learning (Robertson et al., 2020). This research would advocate for the essentiality of humanizing professional learning pedagogies and may uncover relational and contextual factors that improve teacher practice to improve children's learning.

To contribute to this field, I explored how deep reflection and relationships influence teachers' awareness of their layered humanity and willingness to make instructional changes in literacy coaching. In the following sections, I share relevant

literature, the conceptual framework, and the methodological rationale. Then, I share and discuss findings relevant to humanizing literacy coaching.

Literature Review

Models of Teacher Learning

Two key statutes of the 1960s dramatically expanded the federal government's role in education–(1) the National Defense Education Act (NDEA), in response to the perceived defense crises of Sputnik I and II, and defining a successful education as global competition, and (2) the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), after President Johnson declared a "war on poverty" and provided financial assistance for the education of children in low-income families (Long, 2014). Despite increased oversight and funding to education, there was no observable impact on classroom instruction or learning outcomes. Future legislation added language about professional development (PD) for teachers, yet with few changes to learning outcomes (Long, 2014).

Top-down PD reforms assumed direct instruction would improve teachers' skills and classroom instruction, similar to the instruction for children (National Reading Panel, 2000). This assumption spawned training PD models–or the presentation, demonstration, practice, and feedback of a new skill or strategy. Although Joyce (1987) found these models effective, Little (1993) argued they ignored context, content, and challenges teachers experienced and Lieberman (1995) concluded they would not lead to whole-school change. Instead, a model was needed that contextualized teachers' learning for authentic classrooms and focused on the deep transformation of practice (Lieberman, 1995).

Growth-in-Practice

This alternative to training models was developed using the rationale of (a) pedagogical content knowledge–the specialized pedagogies of content areas (Shulman, 1986)–and (b) reflective practice–thinking during or after situations about the causes and possible alternative actions (Schön, 1983). This model was substantiated by research on learning grounded in context and reflection rather than top-down mandates (Kho et al., 2020). As a result, growth-in-practice "professional learning" models were developed, distinguishing themselves from PD in five important ways:

- Sustained collaborative work as opposed to fragmented independent work;
- Knowledge creation with teachers as opposed to knowledge consumption of teachers;
- Utilization of teacher expertise as opposed to only utilizing external consultants;
- Specific problems of practice as opposed to decontextualization; and
- Active engagement as opposed to passive compliance (Lieberman & Miller, 2014).

Although consensus is lacking on all elements of effective professional learning, researchers agree that a focus on content, engagement, and relevance (Yoon et al., 2007) with many reflective opportunities (Dunst et al., 2015) are common features that make learning effective for teachers. The growth-in-practice model embodies these features and has the potential to be an effective model when implemented with attention to support, context, and humanity (Lieberman & Miller, 2014).

Literacy Coaching. Literacy coaching is one growth-in-practice model that can positively impact children's literacy achievement and prioritize humanity through support from coaches, contextualized learning, and a focus on deep reflection for change (Desimone & Pak, 2017). Subject area experts, or literacy coaches, often use iterative flexible cycles of preparation, implementation, and reflection to support the implementation of instructional practices until the intended goals for children are met (Knight, 2008). In preparation, there is a "co-construction of understanding between the coaches and teachers in the implementation of the lessons to take place" (Kho et al., 2020, p.1794). During implementation, teachers and coaches work together to implement the co-planned research-supported practices, with coaches using activities such as observing, providing feedback, modeling, and co-teaching (Knight, 2008). During reflection, coaches and teachers think about instruction and its effects on children's learning, often bringing to light areas of cognitive dissonance that need to be resolved through change (Kho et al., 2020; Schön, 1983).

Change. The implementation of new literacy practices through literacy coaching often requires teachers to make "complex, collaborative, conceptual changes" (Cutrer-Párraga et al., 2021, p.39), emanating from top-down mandates and potentially leading to resistance of change (Bean & Ippolito, 2016). A true change of practice also requires personal change because of the intersections between personal and professional humanity (Tanaka, 2015; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010), also potentially resulting in teachers' resistance to change their literacy instruction (Parsons et al., 2018).

Professional learning models that embody adult learning principles, such as relevancy, collaboration, and reflection, are more likely to acknowledge potential

resistance and influence changes to teachers' instructional practices (Desimone & Pak, 2017; [State] Association of Intermediate School Administrators, 2016). As a model that centers adult learning principles, literacy coaching has the potential to provide space for this acknowledgement and influence. However, although resistance to top-down mandates and personal changes is common and understandable, it has received little attention in literacy coaching research and requires a level of psychological safety to do so collaboratively (Cutrer-Párraga et al., 2021).

Relationships. The teacher-coach relationship at the heart of a literacy coaching model (Robertson et al., 2020) appears to be key to fostering a deep level of psychological safety for overcoming resistance to change (Carmeli et al., 2009). With consistency and presence, this relationship can develop first through informality and later through genuine displays of empathy, encouragement, and praise (Cutrer-Párraga et al., 2021; Rainville & Jones, 2008). The relationship then deepens with the positioning of coaches as co-learners, assuming "equity in knowledge, experience, and emotional exchange" (Robertson et al., 2020, p.64). Instructionally-focused collaborative relationships can also increase implementation, thereby increasing children's learning outcomes (Gutierez, 2015). Although professional elements of the teacher-coach relationship, such as positioning and pedagogies, are often explored in research (Robertson et al., 2020), the personal elements of relationships and their impact on teachers' willingness to change are rarely explored (Finkelstein, 2019; Ippolito et al., 2021). Another part of the literacy coaching model that needs to be explored more deeply is the personal elements of reflection.

Reflection. Many professional organizations recognize reflective practice as a standard for high-quality teaching, using "reflection" (Learning Forward, 2013; National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2016) or synonyms like "critique" and "evaluate" (International Literacy Association, 2017) as crucial steps in the continuous improvement cycle and the rationale for respective standards of practice. Reflection is also cited as essential to improve learning for children (Sodian et al., 2012). Consequently, many literacy coaching models provide structured opportunities for reflecting on new learning (Dunst et al., 2015), practice (Goodnough, 2010), or children's learning (Brennan et al., 2018). To encourage reflection, effective coaches actively listen to teachers by paraphrasing and questioning (Reichenberg & Boyd, 2019). Many models of literacy coaching also include more structured reflection on behavior during lessons (e.g., What did you do? How did it work?) (Knight, 2008).

However, unclear definitions of reflection, the invisibility of reflection, and the "complex, rigorous, intellectual, and emotional enterprise" of reflection "that takes time" (Rodgers, 2002, p.844) make it important to clearly define structured reflection. Additionally, structured reflection often focuses on quick solutions, ignoring the impact of teachers' humanity on instruction (Korthagen, 2004). Yet, for transformational changes, teachers need opportunities for deeper reflection, defined by Korthagen (2004) as reflecting on one's identities and mission with the potential to "consciously direct their own development, in accordance with their personal identity, and their inspiration and enthusiasm for their profession" (p.91). Becoming aware of how behavior aligns with beliefs and values can deeply influence change, both professionally and personally, through the awareness of factors that guide behavior and the development of new insights

(Dewey, 1933; Korthagen, 2004. There is a need to uplift and explore how humanizing reflection impacts teachers' willingness to change their instructional practices. However, the potentially humanizing elements of reflection, relationships, and willingness to change are not often considered in the research on the outcomes of literacy coaching.

Mixed Outcomes. Despite policymakers' and researchers' support of literacy coaching (Kraft et al., 2018), literacy coaching research has mixed effects on teachers (Neuman & Cunningham, 2009) and children (Kraft et al., 2018). This inconclusiveness suggests that more research is needed into its humanistic elements–the teacher's willingness to change their practices (Cutrer-Párraga et al., 2021), the teacher-coach relationship (Robertson et al., 2020), and the role of deep reflection in teachers' learning (Korthagen, 2004). However, the social contexts in which literacy coaching is situated consists of complex humanistic elements and impacts professional learning models, such as literacy coaching, in nuanced ways worthy of attention (Feeney, 2016; Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Social Context

Social contexts are defined by Hunt and Handsfield (2013) as "local contexts such as interpersonal relationships, policy contexts such as required curriculum and high-stakes testing, and social constructions of difference such as issues of class, race, gender, and so on" (p.54). In a large-scale meta-analysis of elementary coaching, Kraft et al. (2018) found that there was "substantial variability" (p.561) of effects depending on these social contexts. Consequently, literacy coaching is inseparable from this context (Kraft et al., 2018; Lave & Wenger, 1991), and its organizational and individual factors "must be

regarded as fundamentally and exceptionally different than what can be generally found or experienced" (Feeney, 2016, p.18).

Rural regions are one such social context that influences teachers and children (Comber, 2015; Thomas & Fulkerson, 2016). Accounting for the majority of U.S. counties (Ratcliffe et al., 2016), rural regions have been defined as "not included within an urban area" (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020, p.1) with low housing unit and school enrollment density (Arsen et al., 2022). Although there are other more detailed definitions of rurality, policymakers default to the U.S. Census Bureau's (2020) definition for its statistical capacity (Rural Health Information Hub, n.d.). However, this narrow exclusionary framing prioritizes urbanized regions and ignores the complexities of urban/rural classification (Ratcliffe et al., 2016). Arsen et al. (2022) suggested rural regions faced additional educational barriers–"teacher recruitment and retention, broadband internet access, serving children with mental health problems, and declining enrollment and state funding" (p.36).

The pandemic is another social context that has more recently influenced the education of both teachers and children (Aguaded et al., 2023). Extended closures and transitions to distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in children's declining academic achievement, or "learning loss" (Pier et al., 2021, p.1). Although this deficit-oriented term previously referred to the loss of knowledge over the summer (Aguaded et al., 2023), it has now instigated two pandemic-era reactions–(1) increased federal funding for additional tutoring opportunities and staffing (U.S. Department of Education, 2022a) and (2) promotion of acceleration (Pearson, 2021). Acceleration focuses on closing gaps in learning through access to "grade-appropriate

assignments…and teachers who hold high expectations" as opposed to remediation which widens the "academic gap between students who are being remediated and their grade-level peers" ([State] Department of Education, n.d.a., p.1). Although this approach reportedly advances academic achievement, it positions schools as efficient knowledge factories (Shelton et al., 2020) and perpetuates dehumanization. Despite the complexities of rurality and the ever-widening academic expectations after the pandemic, little guidance or funding has been provided for teachers' professional learning (Allen et al., 2022; Reimers et al., 2020). To support children and teachers, more attention must be paid to the post-pandemic nuances of rural social contexts by researchers, policymakers, and other educational stakeholders to provide responsive and impactful professional learning opportunities.

Purpose

Although there is research on components of literacy coaching (e.g., content, dosage, duration), this study adds to the dearth of research exploring humanity and context in literacy coaching (Hunt & Handsfield, 2013; Robertson et al., 2020). I explored how the deep reflection of one experienced elementary teacher, her relationship with me–a literacy coach and researcher, and the social context impacted her willingness to change her literacy practices. I asked:

- What role do deep humanistic reflection and coaching relationships play in mediating the teachers' awareness of their personal and professional inner layers?
- How does the awareness of personal and professional inner layers influence a teacher's willingness to change their literacy practices?
- How does social context impact this work?

Conceptual Framework

Building on separate bodies of research suggesting the importance of literacy coaching, relationships, humanistic reflection, and social contexts for deep transformation of teachers' literacy practices, I grounded my study in Maslow's (1943) theory of humanism and Korthagen's (2004) onion model.

Humanism

Maslow's (1943) theory of humanism posits people are driven by the desire to realize their potential by satisfying hierarchical needs, progressing from survival, physical safety and security, emotional security, esteem, and, finally, self-actualization. The needs most relevant to this study are (a) esteem–developed through gaining self-confidence and respect from others, and (b) self-actualization–focused on self-development and personal growth. According to Maslow (1943), growth and learning are unlikely to occur without satisfying these needs, suggesting the deep-seated influences of behavior and the connections to relationships and context.

Onion Model

Similar to Maslow (1943), Korthagen's (2004) onion model visualizes behavior as influenced by deep inner and outer layers. The deepest layer is mission, defined as inspiration; the layers then expand to include identities, beliefs, competences, and environment. For teachers, reflecting through these interrelated layers can spark awareness of the connection between layers and how they teach and learn (Korthagen, 2004). According to Meijer et al. (2008), this awareness has the potential to deepen and instill more enthusiasm for reflection.

Bridging Humanity for Change

To capture both the behavioral influences of relationship and context (Maslow, 1943) and layered humanity (Korthagen, 2004), I propose the literacy coaching model presented in Figure 1 (see end of chapter for figures and tables) grounded in context with two key bridging mechanisms to center the personal and professional humanity of teachers:

1. Deep reflection to promote awareness of these humanities; and
2. Relationships to build psychological safety for deep reflection.

Despite the vast amount of literature that supports the separate components of this conceptual framework, there is still a need for research that examines the combined influences of these components on outcomes for teachers and children in literacy coaching models (Robertson et al., 2020). Because components in this framework cannot realistically be extricated, I used this framework to acknowledge their complex and contextual interactions.

Methodology

The data for this study was collected from a larger qualitative using multiple-case study design (Creswell, 2013) as a framing methodology of my work with two elementary writing teachers participating in humanized coaching cycles. The larger study aimed to examine and compare the contextualized influence of structured deep reflection and supportive relationships on both teachers' willingness to make changes to their instructional practices. Qualitative case study methodology was the most appropriate choice, as it allowed a wide exploration of my conceptual framework grounded in empirical evidence (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). The methodology was also selected

to prioritize the inherent humanity of teachers and their contextual influences by positioning knowledge as the social construction of reality (Yin, 2017). Multiple-case studies were also used to analyze data within and across each case (Yin, 2017). This article draws on the experiences of one participant, Barbara [all names are pseudonyms], to explore changes she made to her literacy instruction and the influences of complex and contextual interactions with deep reflection and relationships.

Participants

I used purposeful sampling (Patton, 2002) to recruit Barbara for the larger study because of our unique relationship. Barbara was an experienced teacher at Masonville Elementary, one of the schools where I serve as a literacy coach. Our work led to multiple personal conversations where we shared and asked about each other's identities. Despite contrasting identities, a deeper personal connection had transpired between us than I had experienced with other teachers. Barbara also consistently asked to work together which was not common for teachers at Masonville. This study aimed to explore how our relationship and deep reflection influenced Barbara's awareness of her layered humanity and her willingness to change literacy instruction during a coaching cycle in a nuanced social context. Consequently, I also purposefully sampled Barbara's principal, Peter to provide more insight into this context.

Social Context

Okanaw Intermediate School District is an educational service agency in the rural Midwest. Masonville Elementary is a K-6 public school in Okanaw County, enrolling approximately 500 children (U.S. Department of Education, 2022c). Despite little racial diversity (U.S. Department of Education, 2022b), the percentage of children receiving

free- and reduced-priced meals in Masonville increased ([State] School Data, n.d.a) and the average proficiency on the statewide standardized literacy assessments has also decreased over the last five years ([State] School Data, n.d.b). During my time serving Masonville, the social markers of teachers rapidly changed, with the number of new teachers rivaling the dwindling number of veteran teachers.

Early literacy coaching was legislatively mandated in 2016 (Act No. XXX) and Masonville complied with legislation for five years by utilizing me as a part-time coach. Peter occasionally promoted literacy coaching, but there were varying levels of buy-in and resistance, resulting in different relationships between literacy coaches and teachers across districts. Additionally, because of pandemic-related disruptions to learning, coaching occurred minimally for two years.

Data Collection

For this study, Barbara asked to teach a unit from a curricular resource I introduced with standards-aligned units integrating literature and STEM to teach scientific concepts and utilizing technology for content and engagement (Ansberry & Morgan, n.d.). Barbara selected a unit on the properties and bodies of water, and we organized this work into the previously used model of coaching cycles (Sweeney & Harris, 2016) with three key humanizing adaptations.

Traditional and Adapted Coaching Cycle

The first adaptation to the coaching cycle was gathering more information about Masonville Elementary from Peter to better understand its broader social context prior to the coaching cycle (see Appendix E). The next adaptation was engaging Barbara in a Getting to Know You conversation (i.e., interview) to learn about her educational beliefs,

values, identities, and context before we began the traditional coaching cycle (see Appendix F). Our work then began to progress through a traditional coaching cycle, with Barbara and I (1) determining her goals (i.e., persuasive writing), (2) co-planning the use of research-supported strategies (Shora & Hott, 2016), (3) collaborating on ways to embed this strategy into the unit, and (4) co-teaching the first lesson– co-delivering content and discussing formative assessment. After each lesson, I engaged Barbara in the next adaptation–adding deep reflective questions about how Barbara's values, beliefs, or identities were realized in each lesson to our established reflective and co-planning conversations on implementation and learning outcomes (see Appendix G). The final adaptation occurred after the unit was completed, adding deep reflective questions about how Barbara's humanity impacted changes to her literacy practices (see Appendix H).

The primary data sources from the coaching cycle were five semi-structured interviews and three observations of traditional and adapted elements of the coaching cycle–(1) the 30-minute Getting to Know You conversation, (2) two co-planning sessions which lasted for two and a half hours, (3) two 30-minute video-recorded reflective and co-planning interviews, and (5) one 30-minute final reflective interview–and three observations totaling three hours. Table 1 outlines each data source, abbreviations, and categorization as traditional or adapted. Interviews were used to provide an authentic comprehensive picture of Barbara's experiences (Alshenqeeti, 2014) while enabling her to "speak in their own voice and express their own thoughts and feelings" (Berg, 2007, p.96). Observations were then selected as a way to record the participants' enactment of changes to their literacy instruction (Polkinghorne, 2005). All of Barbara's data were recorded with video recording platforms and then uploaded to Temi, digital speech

recognition software, to be transcribed. Video recordings were used to capture the humanity of Barbara–her emotions and nonverbal communication–while increasing the verifiability of the data (Paulus et al., 2017) in all interviews and observations.

Data were supplemented with a 35-minute interview with Peter, audio recorded with a digital recording device and transcribed using Temi. Only audio recordings were used as the aim of Peter's data was to capture context about Masonville rather than observational data about his nonverbal communication (Paulus et al., 2017). Field notes were collected throughout all interviews and observations, describing pertinent details about the setting, nonverbal communication, responses to questions, and changes to protocols (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2018). After I collected field notes, I reflected and wrote on my role in the process and assessed my biases and feelings.

Data Analysis

Barbara's interview data were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). After uploading and transcribing interview data, I rewatched recordings while reading transcripts to inductively code data (Thomas, 2006). Although the conceptual framework provided a focus for analysis, I coded without expectations and derived codes from Barbara's words (Thomas, 2006). Then, I reflexively read through codes and grouped them into categories (see Table 2 for a sample). Once categories emerged, I reread through data, codes, and categories to determine saturated themes. Throughout the analysis process, I also wrote analytic memos to reflect on "coding processes and code choices; how the process of inquiry is taking shape; and the emergent patterns, categories and subcategories, themes, and concepts in [my] data" (Saldaña, 2016, p. 44).

After completing data analysis for Barbara's interviews, I then engaged in the selective coding (Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019) of observations of Barbara's instruction and Peter's interview. First, I rewatched recordings of observations and listened to Peter's recording while reading transcripts. As I watched and listened to data, I selectively coded segments of the data that related to themes from Barbara's interview data (Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). Then, I engaged in the selective coding of Peter's interview for insight into the social context of Masonville Elementary.

Findings

Impact of Deep Reflection

"No one has ever asked me that before," Barbara said tearfully during our final reflective conversation (FRC). I had engaged Barbara in reflective conversations for four years. However, this one was different. Rather than solely standardized questions about outcomes, I engaged Barbara in deep reflection related to a common topic of our conversations–educational, societal, and instructional change. Throughout reflection, Barbara shared she "hadn't really thought about" (FRC) these questions and reflected on the intersection of her personal and professional layers. These deep reflective opportunities generated a new awareness of her humanity and its relationship to her teaching for both Barbara and myself.

Awareness of Layered Humanity

Two themes emerged from Barbara's burgeoning awareness of her intersecting and layered humanity–tradition and isolation. Tradition is defined as "an inherited, established, or customary pattern of thought, action, or behavior" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.a., line 1a) and isolation as "detachment from others, often involuntarily" (Merriam-

Webster, n.d.b., line 16). Within each theme, there were several contexts where the theme played a significant role.

Tradition

Throughout conversations, Barbara compared traditions of how things "used to be" to how things were "nowadays" (BGC, FRC). Barbara held traditional beliefs and identities in four different contexts–(a) professionalism, (b) discipline, (c) educational expectations, and (d) technology. These contextually bound traditions were crucial layers of Barbara's personal and professional humanity.

Professionalism. Barbara described her professional identity as a "well-seasoned" teacher (IP) and shared an intersection with her personal identity, "This is going on [many] years, and why I am I not retiring? What else am I going to do?" (BGC). As Barbara expressed traditional beliefs of professionalism, including pride and respect, she also demonstrated a new awareness of one of her personal and professional values:

> I've watched a lot of teachers come and go over the years. The generation when I first started was very professional. They were proud of who they were. They wanted people to grow up and be teachers and be respectful. Respect is a big word for me, I guess, isn't it? I say that quite often. (BGC)

Discipline. Discipline was another respect-oriented belief that emerged from traditions Barbara had experienced and significantly influenced her professional identity. Barbara implicitly defined discipline as children showing "respect" (BGC, O3, FRC), teachers being "strict" (BGC), "taking things seriously" (BGC), and being "responsible" (FRC). The origins of this belief began in Barbara's early personal experiences with her parents and influenced how she raised her children (BGC):

> My dad was a very…whew…disciplinarian and he was only around till I was maybe six or seven, but I think having a single parent raising two children and working and having to do all that, I learned to help adults. I learned to respect them. (BGC)

As a professional, discipline was also important to Barbara:

> Discipline is a big thing with me too. Not that I love to discipline students, but I respect their wishes and I believe they need to respect their classmates and me and talking when someone else is talking or not listening doesn't really fly. So I kind of run a tight ship, but, yet, they have fun and they're learning. (BGC)

Educational Expectations. Throughout many conversations, Barbara discussed her traditional educational expectations and changes to these expectations, especially in writing:

> [The state] expects kids to learn things at a younger age than they used to, comparing to when I started and to now–all the things that I would've never taught, this kind of [persuasive] writing–when we first started and that was in the early [decades]. But times changed along with everything else. (BGC)

When asked if she felt prepared for this evolution. Barbara tearfully shared:

> You learn the knowledge to teach what you have to teach, but they don't teach you the real-world situations that you encounter… But, you know, a lot of it is nobody ever tells you how to do it or shows you. They just, you know, I don't know if you're expected to, to know it or college doesn't prepare you for some things like that either. (FRC)

Technology. Barbara initially held traditional beliefs about technology and its role in education, stating that using technology was "all fine and dandy but you do have to learn to do paper-pencil things" (FRC). Barbara discussed her rationale, "I think kids need to learn to not rely on technology to do things because, you know, if the internet's down, they don't know what to do" (BGC). Barbara also held the personal and professional identity of a non-technology user and attributed skilled use of technology to younger people, like me (FRC), the children in her classroom (IP), and her daughter who would help her create digital documents and presentations for her lessons (IP). This discomfort in her limited knowledge and use of specific technology also appeared in negative beliefs about herself, including calling herself "stupid" (FRC) and "dumb" (R2). When using new technology, Barbara would refrain from showing her limited knowledge during lessons and instead encourage the children in her classroom to show her how to do it, "[The children] are probably more tech-savvy than I am, because I'll say, 'Well, I don't remember how to do this.' Then they'll go, 'Well, wait now.' That way I don't look so dumb" (IP).

Isolation

In many conversations, Barbara expressed feelings of personal and professional isolation. This isolation occurred in three contexts–(a) her early life, (b) her community, and (c) her profession. Barbara also expressed an awareness of how her personal isolation contributed to the development of her professional identities, values, and beliefs.

Early Life. The stigma of the divorce of Barbara's parents resulted in early isolation for Barbara (BGC, FRC). Barbara said that "people used to tease me back then" (BGC) and those experiences caused a "big hurt" (FRC). The experiences of isolation had

a defining role in the development of Barbara's personal and professional identities as "outgoing" (BGC) or "brash" (BGC, FRC). Barbara described how these experiences led to those identities, "The outgoing personality has come from having [the] stigma way back in the [past] of having divorced parents and you always had to stick up for yourself" (BGC).

Community. Barbara's personal experiences with divorce also led to isolation in her community's church. Because of the divorce, Barbara's mother was shunned by the church because "you just didn't do things like that" (FRC). As an adult, Barbara still perceived isolation at church and it impacted her personal beliefs:

> Church is hard for me. I don't go, but my husband's a very religious person and he understands where I'm coming from. But it's very hard for me to go because I don't know [if they will] accept me. For me, you know, I have [a certain style of] hair, and [in] some churches you're not supposed to cut your hair or wear jewelry or whatever. He understands, but, you know, it's still hard for him that I'm not accepting of going to church. But you can't look down on somebody, you know. You can't look down on you[rself] because of who you are. (FRC)

Professional. Barbara also expressed feelings of professional isolation from other teachers at Masonville, ascribing the isolation to her personal and professional identities, her educational beliefs, and the system of professional learning available at Masonville Elementary.

Identities. Barbara's self-described "brass" or "black-or-white" personality (BGC) contributed to professional isolation, "Now, some people don't mind it, because they know exactly how I feel about something. Some people take that the wrong way, but

it's kind of the person that I am too" (BGC). This professional isolation contributed to personal isolation for Barbara with context from Peter, " It's hard to not have teachers in social groups in a small town" (PI). Barbara's identity as a veteran teacher and a non-technology user also contributed to professional isolation between her and younger technology users at Masonville Elementary:

> So, you know, I may not be on Facebook or whatever, but you need to respect my wishes. If I was, you know, a different gender or whatever, they need to respect that from me…And I think they have their own ways of doing things, but it's a different world. It's a different generation. (BGC)

Educational Beliefs. Barbara's traditional educational beliefs around discipline and other teachers' perceptions of these beliefs have resulted in some professional isolation. Barbara said that some teachers describe her as "mean" and "strict" (FRC). Barbara also experienced professional isolation after expressing her professional beliefs of holding high expectations for children to another staff member:

> At [a] parent night, I [said] I had the bar set high, because I think if you put the bar high, they can reach that bar because you help them to reach that bar. If you set the bar low and aren't expecting them to do anything, then they're not going to do it. But you set the bar high and I think they can achieve that. [Another staff member] didn't like when I said, 'You set the bar high.' They said, 'How can you expect children to do that?' I said, 'They can do anything and achieve anything they want to if they only believe in themselves.' (FRC)

Professional Learning. Barbara also expressed feeling isolated within the context of professional learning at Masonville Elementary. Barbara did not feel prepared to

change her instructional practices, “Nobody ever tells you how to do [new instructional practices] or shows you. You’re just expected to know and do it” (FRC). Although Barbara attributed the lack of preparation to inadequate teacher education (FRC), she also attributed this to the limited professional learning opportunities at Masonville (FRC). Peter shared that there were more opportunities during the pandemic to facilitate in-person professional learning opportunities due to a “half day on Friday” where “teachers had time to work and to get some stuff done” (PI). However, the half days were not often used for professional learning opportunities and Peter suggested that “union things” stopped this adapted schedule (PI).

Impact of Relationships

My relationship with Barbara impacted our work together during this coaching cycle in complex, interacting, and, at times, hidden ways. The complexity hinged upon Barbara’s experiences of personal and professional isolation and her perceptions of my experiences of personal and professional isolation. Because Barbara and I had many personal conversations, she knew many of my personal identities–a child of divorce, a lesbian, a close relative of people in the LGBTQIA+ community, and someone who identified as agnostic.

After talking about her experiences of professional isolation because of a perceived generational gap, Barbara said “If I was, you know, a different gender or whatever, they need to respect that from me. I respect that from you” (BGC). Although Barbara did not explain what she meant, I recognized that she was connecting her experiences of professional isolation with her perceptions of my personal isolation as a lesbian and from my familial connections to the LGBTQIA+ community. Again, when

discussing her childhood experiences of being isolated because of her parents' divorce, she suggested, "So, that was a big blow, so to speak…I'm sure you've had some blows kind of, because of who you love" (FRC). Later in the conversation, Barbara connected our isolation again saying, "But you can't look down on somebody, you know? [They] can't look down on you because of who you are, who you love, or who you don't love, or whatever. You know what I'm saying?" (FRC). Barbara also alluded to her perceptions of my experiences of professional isolation, "Some people don't like working with you, you know. I've said it before. If the ISD thinks that you're important, then you're important" (FRC).

Because of Barbara's perception of our shared isolation experiences, she often found our connections where I had not seen them. When Barbara discussed her perceptions of declining professionalism, she assumed that I knew this was a perception that we held, "I wish the teachers nowadays, of course you know this, would take their job as a professional. You know how I feel about it" (BGC). Although we never talked explicitly about the professionalism of teachers, it was a belief to which she alluded. When Barbara talked about the "broken families" of divorce and the difference between her own family, she suggested that these "parents aren't the same parents that probably you and I had" (BGC). Although we are in different stages of life and our parents would have been very different ages, Barbara assumed that we were similarly raised.

Barbara described relationships with coworkers as a major factor that affected her as a teacher and whether or not she stayed in a position (BGC). In these relationships, she often described what they needed to improve in their instruction and what she could share with them (FRC). However, the bridge of connection between us seemed to open up

Barbara to connecting in new ways if the relationship was bridged. She described herself as a “student” to me (FRC) and said, “I think you've taught me somewhat how to do [more partner work]” (FRC). Barbara described this bridge further as, “You help me. I help you” (FRC).

Influence on Willingness to Change Instructional Practices

Despite the brevity of this coaching cycle, Barbara expressed a willingness to change her instructional practices, “So I guess I, I have to change with the time with some things too because you're so used to not having it so you adapt” (FRC). Barbara’s willingness to change her instructional practices was evident in four areas of instruction with Barbara committing to (a) use technology to make learning more interactive, (b) provide opportunities for different types of writing, (c) organize the content of lessons into smaller chunks, and (d) connect with colleagues.

Use Technology

Despite Barbara’s insistence on using paper-pencil and initial aversion to technology, she stated wanting to use fewer worksheets and more realistic and interactive activities during the initial planning session (IP). Barbara’s rationale was, “I think they learn more by doing” and children “have to know what [writing in science] is like in the real-world” (IP). The unit we worked on during the coaching cycle included interactive activities that Barbara had not used and thought would be “fun” (IP), such as children taking a virtual field trip and using Google Earth to locate bodies of water (Ansberry & Morgan, n.d.). In the reflective and co-planning conversation after the first lesson we co-taught, Barbara commented on how children were “excited” and “into” Google Earth when finding and exploring bodies of water, “They were doing it as they were putting

their iPads away and I said, 'We'll finish it tomorrow'" (R1). In the same conversation, Barbara shared that she was using technology more during her planning, searching for relevant books on Google for a different unit (R1). In the final reflective and co-planning conversations, Barbara suggested additional ways to integrate technology into lessons, such as children typing out their writing or her presenting content in a slideshow (FRC). Barbara suggested that she viewed coaching as a mechanism for learning, "It's a learning experience for me because, you know, I'm not real[ly] good with technology but, you know, I understand how it works now myself." (R1)

Provide Opportunities for Different Types of Writing

Before this coaching cycle, Barbara often used self-created informative writing prompts, such as "Describe the life cycle of a pumpkin seed" (O1). During the coaching cycle, we co-created a science journal that would give children space to write about their observations throughout the interactive lessons (IP). Despite this type of journal writing being new to Barbara (FRC), she "like[d] the idea" and wanted to use it with other subjects" (FRC). Barbara also decided to integrate persuasive writing into the unit, as it was a text type that she did not experience earlier in her career (IP). She perceived persuasive writing as more difficult, and she had not done as much of this type of writing during the rest of the school year (IP).

Organizing Lesson Content into Smaller Chunks

Barbara also changed the way she organized lessons and attributed this change to our work in the coaching cycle. When co-planning the use of the new persuasive writing strategy (Shora & Hott, 2016), we organized the instruction into small chunks of content, such as focusing on teaching and practicing writing topic sentences during one lesson

instead of all of the types of sentences (IP). Regarding changes to her organization of future lesson content, Barbara said, “I've learned to do that differently this year, like taking it a piece each day, you know, where before I probably would've done it in two days” (FRC).

Connecting With Colleagues

Barbara implicitly and explicitly shared her professional isolation in the way that other teachers sometimes described her, the generational gap she faced as an experienced teacher, and her self-imposed isolation from her personality. During our final reflective conversation, Barbara admitted, “I’m not used to working with someone. I’m not used to that. I’m used to being by myself” (FRC). However, throughout the coaching cycle, Barbara expressed the desire to connect with others. She wished to continue connecting with me as she “enjoyed” (IP) me coming into her classroom, because I helped her “branch out of what [she] knows” (R2) and gave her “some ideas to use in other areas” (IP). Barbara also expressed a desire to share the writing of the children in her classroom with her colleagues (FRC):

> Barbara: “But I think my kids do really, really well in writing and understanding how to write well.”
>
> Researcher: “Yeah, and it sounds like you want to share that.”
>
> Barbara: “I do.” (FRC)

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore how humanized and contextualized reflection and relationships within a model of literacy coaching mediated Barbara’s awareness of her personal and professional layers of humanity. Additionally, this study

aimed to explore how Barbara's awareness of the interconnectedness of these layers influenced her willingness to change her instructional practices. Throughout the study, Barbara's layers of humanity were prioritized and unearthed through structured opportunities for humanistic reflection and our complex multifaceted relationship. Furthermore, Barbara developed a greater awareness of these layers and a willingness to change instructional practices which were previously tied to deeply held personal and professional beliefs. In the following section, I will interpret these findings as they relate to the research questions and discuss their research contributions.

Personal and Professional Humanity

Barbara's instructional practices were guided by her values, beliefs, and identities of tradition and isolation, resulting from the interplay of her complex and contextualized humanity. This finding supported Korthagen's (2004) assertion that behavior is guided by an individual's values, beliefs, and identities. However, this finding supports the addition of personal layered humanity to Korthagen's (2004) onion model, as it was clear that both Barbara's personal and professional lives played a role in her complex humanity. Barbara's personal and professional experiences with isolation and change contributed to her beliefs about herself, her colleagues, her children, and education generally. This finding also substantiates the inclusion of both personal and professional layers of humanity in my developing conceptual framework, and points to the need to consider both of these layers of humanity and their unique intersections. These unique intersections are important as they acknowledge a teacher's humanity and provide insight into the layered and complex rationale for a teacher's behavior in the classroom (Korthagen, 2004) and their deep-seated needs (Maslow, 1943).

Humanized Reflection

The structured opportunities for humanistic reflection (Korthagen, 2004) supported the emergence of Barbara's complex layers of humanity, which in turn led to new insights for Barbara about how her values influence her instruction. These findings support the large body of research that positions reflection as a mechanism for learning (Dunst et al., 2015). By asking previously unasked questions, Barbara unearthed her interconnected layers of humanity.

Because the opportunities for deep reflection made a significant contribution to Barbara's insights into her interconnected personal and professional humanity, these findings advocate for the prioritization of professional spaces to explore teachers' deep-seated needs as humans (Maslow, 1943). Considering Maslow's (1943) suggestion that growing and learning are deeply connected to these needs, professional spaces in which teachers are encouraged to reflect through their deep layers of humanity may have the potential to positively impact teachers' learning. These spaces would also recognize the inherent humanity of each teacher (Korthagen, 2004), the deeply complex process of reflection (Dewey, 1933; Rodgers, 2002), and the need for professional change to occur at a personal level as well (Tanaka, 2015).

Relationships

The personal relationship that Barbara and I developed played a complex role in her deep reflection. Because I shared my personal and professional identities as a child of divorce, a lesbian, and an outsider to Masonville Elementary, Barbara referred to these identities during deep reflective opportunities and perceived shared experiences of isolation. Although it is unclear exactly what role Barbara's perceptions of our shared

identities played in her ability to deeply reflect or in our teacher-coach relationship, the subsequent unearthing of significant shared personal and professional identities would not have occurred without the prioritization of Barbara's humanity through deeply reflective questions and the development of personal and supportive relationships. This finding suggests that shared identities may have provided a level of psychological safety to deeply reflect on personal identities and experiences. This finding aligns with the assertion of Robertson et al. (2020) that our deep relationship was built on our unique humanity and the "equity…in emotional exchange" (Robertson et al., 2020, p.64). Future research could further explore this relationship with data related to how and why teachers make changes within a coaching cycle.

However, this finding also adds to the limited body of research on personal coaching relationships (Finkelstein, 2019; Rainville & Jones, 2008) in two ways. First, it suggests that engaging in humanizing reflection with teachers is a complex and powerful endeavor that takes time, requiring the accelerated learning factory for children and teachers (Shelton et al., 2020) to decelerate to allow for deeper and more substantial reflection. It also suggests that the humanizing reflective opportunities in Korthagen's (2004) onion model require the bridging mechanism of relationships suggested by my conceptual framework. The duality of the teacher-coach relationship (Rainville & Jones, 2008), providing a psychologically safe space for Barbara to explore her deep layers of humanity (Carmeli et al., 2009) and generating these opportunities for reflection (Rodgers, 2002), uniquely adds considerations for the nuanced development of relationships in literacy coaching models.

Willingness to Change Instructional Practices

Throughout the study, Barbara made or was willing to make many changes to her instructional practices in literacy. At the same time, she was increasing her awareness of her interconnected layers of personal and professional humanity and we were developing a deep and authentic relationship. Although causal claims cannot be made about these insights or our relationship directly influencing Barbara's willingness to change her instructional practices, Barbara made reference to our relationship and what she learned to do within the coaching cycle when discussing changes. This finding suggests the link between psychological safety, relationships, and willingness to change (Carmeli et al., 2009). This finding also supports the large body of research that suggests collaborative relationships can lead to the increased implementation of new practices (Gutierez, 2015). The significant level of authenticity in our collaborative relationship to which Barbara alluded when discussing changes also substantiates Cutrer-Párraga et al's (2021) assertion that these two elements may be related. Future research that uses larger and diverse samples of coaches and teachers has the potential to support Korthagen's (2004) assertion that deep reflection can result in the improvement of instruction (Korthagen, 2004).

However, the findings related to relationships and willingness to change also point to the complexities of co-existing personal and professional elements of teacher-coach relationships suggested by previous research (Finkelstein, 2019; Rainville & Jones, 2008) and present in Barbara's perceptions of my identities. The findings also contribute to the limited body of research on the role of humanizing professional learning pedagogies in influencing deep levels of change in teachers' instructional practices

(Ippolito et al., 2021; Robertson et al., 2020), pointing to the need for continued multi-faceted interrogation of relationships, reflection, and the influencing of change in humanizing professional learning pedagogies.

Implications

Literacy Coaches

There are two clear implications for literacy coaches from this study– Understanding the power of relationships between literacy coaches and teachers can help literacy coaches prioritize the development of relationships before immediately beginning standardized and behavior-focused coaching cycles. When coaches take the time to learn about the values, identities, and beliefs of the teachers they work with, there is the opportunity for more meaningful and collaborative conversations. There is also the opportunity to influence deeper levels of change by determining the layered humanistic rationale that guides teachers' behavior.

The continued use of reflecting beyond the layer of behavior can also create a psychologically safe space for greater risk-taking and more sustainable changes made to instructional practices. Additionally, by making an effort to understand the values, beliefs, and identities of the teachers with whom they work, literacy coaches can also better find entry points for change and support. Ultimately, the implications of research on learning about teachers' values, identities, and beliefs as people and professionals are clear. By making an effort to understand the values, beliefs, and identities of the teachers with whom they work, literacy coaches can prioritize humanity–acknowledging the person at the center of the professional–and provide a psychologically safe space to engage in risk-taking and change.

Administrators

There are three clear implications for administrators from this research–(a) prioritize time at the beginning of the year for teachers and literacy coaches to develop relationships, (b) ensure that literacy coaches are equipped with the tools and the knowledge to dig deeply into a teacher's humanity, and (c) foster a psychologically safe space for this work to occur. Although the school calendar is filled with competing priorities, the power of relationships and the need to recognize the humanity of all teachers illustrate the foundational importance of this work. Many literacy coaches enter into this work with advanced degrees or specialized training in literacy. However, to engage in this psychological work, literacy coaches must be equipped with knowledge, strategies, and support to enter into deep reflection. At the foundation of all of this work is the psychologically safe culture in which to be a human. This psychological safety can begin to be developed by administrators through their explicit valuing of this work, open lines of communication, and engagement in this work.

Figure 1

Bridging Change Through Reflection and Relationships Conceptual Framework

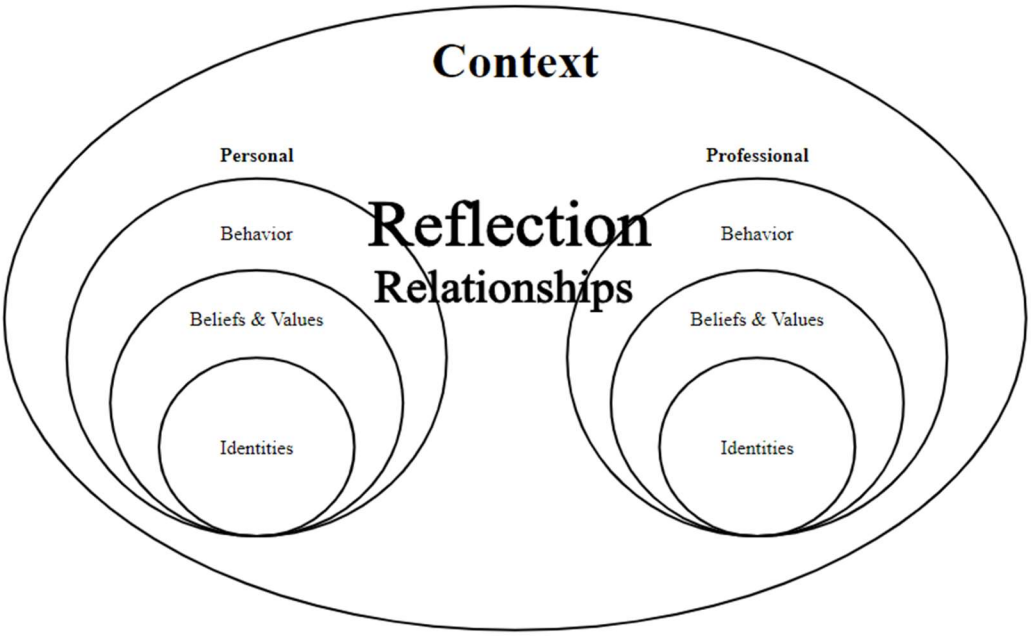

Figure 1. Within the sphere of social context lies the personal and professional humanity of the teacher (i.e., identities, beliefs and values) which guides their behavior in the classroom. For the scope of this study, competences were not included in layered humanity. Personal and professional humanity is bridged by reflection and relationships.

Table 1

Traditional and Adapted Elements of the Coaching Cycle

Data Source	Abbreviation	Traditional or Adapted
Beginning getting to know you conversation	BGC	Adapted
Initial co-planning session	IP	Traditional
First observation	O1	Traditional
First reflective co-planning conversation	R1	Adapted
Second observation	O2	Traditional
Second reflective co-planning conversation	R2	Adapted
Third observation	O3	Traditional
Final reflective conversation	FRC	Adapted
Interview with principal	PI	Adapted

Note. The traditional and adapted elements of the coaching cycle have been listed as data sources and abbreviated.

Table 2

Sample of Primary Inductive Codes and Categories

Data Source	Primary Inductive Code	Category
BGC	"I wish teachers nowadays would take their job as a professional."	Professionalism
R1	"I've learned to do it in smaller chunks, and then it's not an assignment."	Changes
R2	"It still amazes me how much more information they know now than [children in grade-level] had to know when I first started."	Expectations
FRC	"You had to be a little girl and a grown-up all at the same time."	Early life
PI	"Some come here to be social and others come [to] work."	Relationship with other teachers

Note. A sample of primary inductive codes, their data source, and how they were categorized is shared here.

CHAPTER THREE

THE HUMANITY OF LITERACY COACHING VERSION 2

Introduction

Since its inception, a constant of public education has been evolution (Long, 2014). What began as unregulated and exclusive is now highly regulated and intended for all children. Numerous legislative and funding initiatives have intersected with historical, political, and sociocultural factors, contributing to this evolution. Despite these overhauls, there has been no observable impact on instruction or outcomes and little consensus about how to ensure academic achievement (Long, 2014).

Policymakers and scholars have agreed upon teachers' significance and the need for professional development/learning (Burroughs et al., 2019). However, top-down professional development (PD) reforms assumed one-size-fits-all approaches would improve teachers' skills and instruction, (Long, 2014). Although research suggested approaches were effective, these PD models have not resulted in sustained or systemic changes to achievement (Long, 2014).

Professional learning (PL) was developed as an alternative to these PD approaches, positioning collaborative (Robertson et al., 2020) and reflective (Dunst et al., 2015) learning opportunities to enact systemic change in teacher practice and, ultimately, student achievement. PL models like literacy coaching can embody many of these features (Desimone & Pak, 2017) and humanize teachers' learning opportunities. Using Allen et al.'s (2022) definition of humanizing pedagogies–methods working to promote equity, disrupt systemic oppression, and prioritize humanity, literacy coaching can

prioritize humanity by centering teacher-coach relationships (Robertson et al., 2020) and providing space for deep reflection (Knight, 2008). Humanizing elements, such as psychologically safe teacher-coach relationships and deep intrapersonal exploration (Korthagen, 2004) can shift teachers' willingness to change and lead to transformed instruction (Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010).

Moreover, post-pandemic reactions to children's declining achievement have exacerbated dehumanization by promoting accelerated learning–closing learning gaps through access to "grade-appropriate assignments…and high expectations" ([State] Department of Education, n.d). rather than investing in the power of humanizing PL. Although children's academic achievement is at the heart of teacher learning and acceleration reportedly advances achievement (Pearson, 2021), it exacerbates deeply dehumanizing PD models (Reimers et al., 2020; Shelton, 2020) by:

- Emphasizing urgent and efficient behavioral changes;
- Exacerbating strict regulations;
- Disregarding the significant impact of building the capacity of teachers; and
- Overlooking the "socio-cultural, embodied, relational, and affective nature of teaching and learning" (Shelton et al., 2020, p.125).

Although there is research on logistical components of literacy coaching (e.g., content, dosage, duration), its inconclusiveness and complexity, along with post-pandemic positioning of PL, suggests more research is needed into its humanistic components–the interpersonal dynamics of teacher-coach relationships (Robertson et al., 2020) and deep reflection to engage teachers' intrapersonal awareness (Korthagen, 2004)–and their relationship to teachers' willingness to change. This study would

advocate for humanity and add to research by exploring how deep reflection and the teacher-coach relationship impacted one experienced elementary teacher's willingness to change her literacy instruction with two research questions:

- What role do deep reflection and teacher-coach relationships play in mediating the teachers' intrapersonal awareness?
- How does intrapersonal awareness influence teachers' willingness to change instruction?

Literacy Coaching

Literacy coaching is commonly defined as subject-area experts working with teachers in goal-focused and data-driven cycles of preparation, implementation, and reflection stages (L'Allier et al., 2010). In the preparation stages, coaches and teachers work toward a "co-construction of understanding…in the implementation of the lessons to take place" (Kho et al., 2020, p.1794). During implementation stages, teachers and coaches implement co-planned research-supported instructional strategies, with coaches observing, providing feedback, modeling, or co-teaching (Knight, 2008). During reflection stages, coaches support teachers as they consider instruction's effects on children, bringing to light unresolved areas of cognitive dissonance (Schön, 1983). Throughout coaching cycles, coaches' support gradually reduces as teachers' confidence to implement increases (Sailors et al., 2017).

Research suggests literacy coaching can enhance teachers' literacy instruction by increasing teachers' knowledge of effective literacy instruction and building their confidence to provide this instruction (Kraft et al., 2018. Despite its potential impact, research on literacy coaching suggests mixed outcomes for children (Kraft et al., 2018).

Robertson et al. (2020) suggest a myriad of complex factors can lead to the mixed outcomes of literacy coaching, including interpersonal factors in teacher-coach relationships and intrapersonal factors of deep reflection.

Relationships

Teacher-coach relationships appear to be key to fostering a deep level of psychological safety for developing the willingness to change (Carmeli et al., 2009). These relationships can first develop through empathy, encouragement, and praise (Cutrer-Párraga et al., 2021) and deepen as coaches and teachers become co-learners, assuming "equity in knowledge, experience, and emotional exchange" (Robertson et al., 2020, p.64). Although professional elements of teacher-coach relationships, such as positioning and pedagogies, are explored in research (Hunt & Handsfield, 2013), personal elements of relationships and their impact on teachers' willingness to change are rarely explored (Finkelstein, 2019). Yet, these interpersonal and affective dimensions of teacher-coach relationships serve as psychologically safe foundations of a key component of the coaching cycle–reflection.

Reflection

Many professional organizations include reflective practice as a crucial element of high-quality teaching and the process of continuous improvement (Nikola, 2021). Consequently, many literacy coaching models include stages of structured reflection, with questions such as, What did you do? How did it work? (Knight, 2008). However, this reflection often focuses on quick, surface-level solutions (Korthagen, 2004) rather than leaning into the complexity of change (Dewey, 1933). For true transformation to occur, teachers need time to engage in deeper reflection–considering one's identities and

mission to "consciously direct their own development, in accordance with their personal identity, and their inspiration and enthusiasm for their profession" (Korthagen, 2004, p.91). Becoming aware of the alignment of behavior with intrapersonal factors and its resulting insights can deeply influence teachers' willingness to change (Dewey, 1933; Korthagen, 2004; Tanaka, 2015).

Willingness to Change

Top-down PD initiatives often require teachers to make "complex, collaborative, conceptual changes" (Cutrer-Párraga et al., 2021, p.39) and can lead to teachers resisting change (Bean & Ippolito, 2016). However, teachers' willingness to change–acknowledging change is necessary and building capacity to implement changes (Wang et al., 2020)–significantly impacts their support for new initiatives. PL models embodying adult learning principles, such as relevancy, collaboration, and reflection, are more likely to acknowledge potential resistance and influence teachers' acknowledgment of the need for instructional changes (Desimone & Pak, 2017). As a model centering adult learning principles, literacy coaching can provide space for this acknowledgment and influence ([State] Association of Intermediate School Administrators, 2016).

Conceptual Framework

Building on separate bodies of research suggesting the importance of literacy coaching, relationships, and deep reflection for developing teachers' willingness to change their literacy instruction, I grounded my study in Maslow's (1943) theory of humanism and Korthagen's (2004) onion model.

Humanism

Maslow's (1943) theory of humanism posits people are driven by the desire to realize their potential by satisfying hierarchical needs, progressing from survival, physical safety, emotional security, esteem, and, finally, self-actualization. Needs relevant to this study are (a) esteem–developed through gaining self-confidence and respect from others, and (b) self-actualization–focused on self-development and personal growth. According to Maslow (1943), growth and learning are unlikely to occur without satisfying these needs, suggesting the deep-seated intrapersonal influences of behavior and the connection to relationships.

Onion Model

Similar to Maslow (1943), Korthagen's (2004) onion model visualizes behavior as influenced by deep inner and outer layers. The deepest layer is mission, defined as inspiration; layers then expand to include identities, beliefs, competences, and environment. For teachers, reflecting through these interrelated layers of humanity can spark awareness of connections between layers and how they impact their instruction (Korthagen, 2004). According to Meijer et al. (2009), this awareness can deepen and instill more enthusiasm for self-reflection.

Bridging Willingness to Change

To capture both the influences of relationships (Maslow, 1943) and intrapersonal awareness (Korthagen, 2004), I propose a model of humanized literacy coaching with two key bridging mechanisms to connect these influences with teachers' willingness to change (see Figure 2):

1. Deep reflection to promote intrapersonal awareness and insights; and

2. Relationships to build psychological safety for deep reflection.

Despite the vast amount of literature supporting separate components of this conceptual framework, there is still a need for research examining the combined influences on teachers' willingness to change in literacy coaching models (Robertson et al., 2020). Because components in this framework cannot realistically be extricated, I used this framework to acknowledge their complex interactions.

Methodology

Data for this study was collected from a larger qualitative study using a multiple-case study design (Creswell, 2013) to explore humanizing literacy coaching. Qualitative case study methodology allowed a wide exploration of the components of my conceptual framework, grounded exploration in empirical evidence, and prioritized humanity by positioning knowledge as a social construct; multiple case studies were used to analyze data within and across each case (Yin, 2017). The larger study aimed to examine and compare the influences of deep reflection and teacher-coach relationships on teachers' willingness to make changes to their instruction from my work with two elementary classroom teachers. This article draws on the experiences of one of those teachers, Barbara [all names are pseudonyms], to explore her willingness to make instructional changes and the complex interactions and influences of deep reflection and the teacher-coach relationship.

Context

Okanaw Intermediate School District (ISD) is a rural Midwestern educational service agency. Masonville Elementary is a public elementary school serviced by Okanaw ISD, enrolling approximately 500 children (U.S. Department of Education,

2022b). Despite little racial diversity (U.S. Department of Education, 2022a), Masonville had a high percentage of children receiving free- and reduced-priced meals ([State] School Data, n.d.a) and a decreasing average proficiency on statewide standardized literacy assessments ([State] School Data, n.d.b).

In compliance with legislation (Act No. XXXX, 2016), Masonville Elementary contracted me as a part-time literacy coach through Okanaw ISD for four years. Throughout my work at Masonville, coaching was promoted inconsistently and was disrupted by the pandemic. Despite those disruptions, I worried more about how my contrasting political (Mettler & Brown, 2022), sexual orientation (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021), and religious (Public Religion Research Institute, 2020) identities as a progressive, agnostic lesbian from the suburban Midwest would impact partnerships with teachers who held different identities.

Participants

I used purposeful sampling (Patton, 2002) to recruit Barbara because of our unique relationship. Although I will describe Barbara's identity, vague descriptions are, at times, necessary to safeguard her identity and maintain confidentiality, considering my professional connection to Masonville. Barbara was a White elementary veteran teacher at Masonville. She identified as a conservative, Christian, heterosexual woman who was born and raised in Masonville. Barbara requested to work together, and this work led to multiple opportunities to share personal and professional identities. Despite many contrasting identities, a deeper personal connection transpired between us–more so than with other teachers– and provided space to explore the teacher-coach relationship and test the impact of deep reflection on Barbara's willingness to change.

Data Collection

I used two data sources to enhance the trustworthiness of my study and provide a thick, rich description of Barbara (Flick, 2018)–(1) semi-structured interviews for an authentic comprehensive picture of experiences (Berg, 2007), and (2) observations to record the enactment of instructional changes (Polkinghorne, 2005). I recorded and transcribed seven semi-structured interviews (5 hours)–two "Getting to Know You" conversations (1 hour), two co-planning sessions (2.5 hours), and three reflective conversations (1.5 hours)–and three lesson observations (3 hours) using digital software (see Table 3). Field notes described settings, nonverbal communication, and other pertinent details, and reflecting on these notes allowed me to process and assess my biases and feelings (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2018).

All data sources were embedded into our previously used model of coaching cycles (Sweeney & Harris, 2016). For this cycle, Barbara selected to integrate research-supported persuasive writing strategies (Shora & Hott, 2016) into a four-week science unit on bodies of water for her class of 20 White students from an integrative STEM and literature curriculum, which launched and taught science through children's literature, utilized multimedia, and integrated STEM activities (Ansberry & Morgan, n.d.). First, we met to establish goals and integrate the writing strategies. For three weeks, I then provided Barbara with weekly needs-based support, either by co-teaching alongside her or observing her lessons and providing feedback. After each lesson, I facilitated structured reflection with Barbara, focusing on her instruction and children's achievement in previous lessons and, ultimately, the overall unit. Although this was

primarily a traditional coaching cycle (Knight, 2008), there were two key humanizing adaptations.

Traditional and Adapted Coaching Cycle

The first adaptation was a "Getting to Know You" conversation. I engaged Peter, Barbara's principal, in this conversation to better understand Masonville's context (see Appendix E) and then I engaged Barbara in this conversation to understand her educational beliefs, values, and identities (see Appendix F). The second adaptation was adding depth to structured reflection, asking Barbara how her values, beliefs, or identities were realized in her instruction (see Appendix G) and how these intrapersonal factors impacted her willingness to change instruction (see Appendix H).

Data Analysis

I analyzed interview data using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006)–rewatching recordings while reading transcripts to inductively code data, coding without expectations and deriving codes from Barbara (Thomas, 2006). Then, I reflexively read codes and grouped them into categories (see Table 4). Once categories emerged, I reread data, codes, and categories to determine saturation. To further saturate categories, I selectively coded data from observations and Peter's interview data (Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). Throughout analysis, I ensured trustworthiness with two key strategies, (1) analytic memos–reflecting on "coding processes and code choices; how the process of inquiry [took] shape; and the emergent patterns, categories and subcategories, themes, and concepts in [my] data" (Saldaña, 2016, p. 44)–and (2) dependability and confirmability auditing with my doctoral advisor–assessing data analysis for reliability and absence of bias (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Findings

Impact of Deep Reflection

"No one has ever asked me that before," Barbara said tearfully at the end of the unit (FRC). Although I had repeatedly engaged Barbara in reflection, this conversation was different. Rather than solely behavior-focused questions, I engaged Barbara in reflection related to her beliefs, identities, and experiences. Throughout reflection, Barbara shared she "hadn't really thought about" (FRC) these questions and reflected on personal and professional intersections. These deep reflective opportunities generated a new intrapersonal awareness of her humanity and its relationship to her teaching for both Barbara and myself.

Awareness of Layered Humanity

Two themes emerged from Barbara's burgeoning intrapersonal awareness–tradition, "an inherited, established, or customary pattern of thought, action, or behavior" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.a., line 1a), and isolation, "detachment from others, often involuntarily" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.b., line 16). Within both themes, there were multiple significant categories.

Tradition

Throughout conversations, Barbara compared traditions of how things "used to be" to how things were "nowadays" (BGC, FRC). Barbara held traditional beliefs and identities in four different categories–(a) professionalism, (b) discipline, (c) educational expectations, and (d) technology. These traditions were crucial intrapersonal layers for Barbara.

Professionalism. Barbara described her professional identity as a "well-seasoned" teacher (IP) and shared intersections with personal identities, "This is going on [many] years, and why I am I not retiring? What else am I going to do?" (BGC). As Barbara expressed traditional beliefs of professionalism, including pride and respect, she also demonstrated a new awareness of one of her personal and professional values:

> I've watched a lot of teachers come and go over the years. The generation when I first started was very professional. They were proud of who they were. They wanted people to grow up and be teachers and be respectful. Respect is a big word for me, I guess, isn't it? I say that quite often. (BGC)

Throughout deep reflection, Barbara reflected on her great respect for the traditional values of teaching, emphasizing the integral role of pride and respect. Like professionalism, traditional beliefs about discipline also played a crucial role in shaping Barbara's educational beliefs.

Discipline. Discipline was another respect-oriented belief emerging from Barbara's experiences and significantly influencing her professional identity. Barbara implicitly defined discipline as both teachers and children showing "respect" (BGC, O3, FRC), "taking things seriously" (BGC), and being "responsible" (FRC). Origins of this belief began in Barbara's early experiences and influenced how she raised her children (BGC), "I think [because I had] a single parent raising two children and working and having to do all that, I learned to help adults. I learned to respect them" (BGC). Barbara's traditional beliefs about discipline were rooted in her experiences with respect and guided her actions in the classroom. Educational expectations were another tradition impacting Barbara's instruction and her beliefs about education.

Educational Expectations. Throughout many conversations, Barbara discussed her traditional educational expectations and changes to these expectations, especially in writing:

> [The state] expects kids to learn things at a younger age than they used to, comparing to when I started and to now–all the things that I would've never taught, this kind of [persuasive] writing–when we first started and that was in the early [decades]. But times changed along with everything else. (BGC)

When asked if she felt prepared for this evolution. Barbara tearfully shared:

> You learn the knowledge to teach what you have to teach, but they don't teach you the real-world situations that you encounter… But, you know, a lot of it is nobody ever tells you how to do it or shows you. I don't know if you're expected to know it or [if] college doesn't prepare you. (FRC)

Barbara discussed traditional educational expectations, their evolution, and her preparation to teach these evolutionary expectations. Barbara's beliefs about technology were also traditional.

Technology. Barbara held traditional beliefs about technology's educational role, stating using technology was "all fine and dandy but you do have to learn to do paper-pencil things" (FRC). Barbara discussed her rationale, "I think kids need to learn to not rely on technology to do things because if the internet's down, they [won't] know what to do" (BGC). Barbara identified as a non-technology user and attributed the skill to younger people like me (FRC), the children in her classroom (IP), and her daughter who helped her create digital lesson content (IP). Her discomfort with her limited technology knowledge manifested itself through negative self-perceptions (R2, FRC), leading her to

avoid showing her limited knowledge (IP). Instead, she would encourage children to help, "[The children] are probably more tech-savvy than I am, because I'll say, 'Well, I don't remember how to do this.' Then they'll go, 'Well, wait now,'" (IP). Barbara's traditional beliefs about technology and her identity as a non-technology user were significant intrapersonal factors.

Barbara was deeply influenced by traditions, including beliefs about professionalism, discipline, educational expectations, and technology. Although these traditions emerged from and contributed to her personal and professional identities, they also influenced Barbara's instruction and interactions with students. Another theme emerging from Barbara's deep reflection was isolation.

Isolation

In many conversations, Barbara expressed identities and experiences of isolation. This isolation occurred in two significant categories–(a) her early life and (b) her profession. These personal and professional experiences of isolation and the associated identities were significant intrapersonal factors for Barbara.

Early Life. The generational stigma of her parents' divorce resulted in early isolation for Barbara (BGC, FRC). Barbara said, "People used to tease me back then" (BGC) and those experiences caused a "big hurt" (FRC). Isolation had a defining role in developing Barbara's personal and professional identities as "outgoing" (BGC) or "brash" (BGC, FRC). Barbara described how these experiences led to those identities, "The outgoing personality has come from having [the] stigma way back of having divorced parents and you always had to stick up for yourself" (BGC). Although Barbara's

early experiences of isolation were significant and contributed to deep-seated personal identities, they also played a role in her feelings of professional isolation.

Professional. Barbara also expressed feelings of professional isolation, ascribing isolation to her personal and professional identities, her educational beliefs, and systems of PL.

Identities. Barbara's self-described "brass" or "black-or-white" personality (BGC) contributed to professional isolation, "Now, some people don't mind it, because they know exactly how I feel about something. Some people take that the wrong way" (BGC). Barbara's identity as an experienced teacher and a non-technology user also contributed to professional isolation between her and younger technology users at Masonville Elementary:

So, you know, I may not be on [social media] or whatever, but if I was, you know, a different gender or whatever, they need to respect that from me…And I think they have their own ways of doing things, but it's a different world. It's a different generation. (BGC)

Rooted in her early life experiences, Barbara's educational beliefs also contributed to her professional isolation.

Educational Beliefs. Barbara's traditional educational beliefs around discipline and other teachers' perceptions of these beliefs resulted in professional isolation, with some teachers describing her as "mean" or "strict" (FRC) or disagreeing with her professional beliefs of holding high expectations for children:

At [a] parent night, I [said] I had the bar set high, because I think if you put the bar high, they can reach that bar because you help them to reach that bar. If you set the

bar low and aren't expecting them to do anything, then they're not going to do it. But you set the bar high and I think they can achieve that. [Another staff member] didn't like when I said, 'You set the bar high.' They said, 'How can you expect children to do that?' (FRC)

Barbara expressed feelings of professional isolation because of her traditional educational beliefs of discipline and high expectations. However, Barbara also felt isolated from growth opportunities, such as professional learning.

Professional Learning. Barbara expressed feeling isolated in her professional learning and did not feel prepared to change her instruction, "Nobody ever tells you how to do [new instructional practices] or shows you. You're just expected to know and do it" (FRC). Although Barbara attributed the lack of preparation to inadequate teacher education (FRC), she also attributed this to limited PL opportunities (FRC), "I don't get a chance to learn about new things" (R4). She also expressed the desire to engage in these opportunities, "I wish that there [was] more PD" (FRC).

Barbara's journey of self-awareness during our coaching conversations revealed two prominent themes in her personal and professional lives–tradition and isolation. Tradition acted as an important component of her professional beliefs and identities related to professionalism, discipline, educational expectations, and technology and served as a significant influence on her instruction. Isolation also impacted Barbara and her instruction. Barbara's early experiences, educational beliefs, and PL systems contributed to her professional isolation. Through deep reflection, Barbara had the time to consider the origins and complex interplay between these two significant intrapersonal

themes. Our supportive teacher-coach relationship also contributed to Barbara's ability to engage in these reflective opportunities and develop her intrapersonal awareness.

Impact of Relationships

My relationship with Barbara impacted her reflection and intrapersonal awareness in multi-faceted, complex, and interacting ways. Barbara implicitly described our relationship as a student-teacher relationship, describing herself as a "student" to me (FRC), "I think you've taught me somewhat how to do [more partner work]" (FRC). However, Barbara also considered our relationship multi-faceted, describing it as reciprocal, "You help me. I help you" (FRC).

Complexity hinged upon Barbara's isolating experiences and her perceptions of my experiences of personal and professional isolation. Because Barbara and I had many conversations, she knew many of my personal and professional identities–a child of divorced parents, a lesbian, and a coach who was experiencing disruptions to coaching. After talking about her experiences of professional isolation because of a perceived generational gap, Barbara said "If I was, you know, a different gender or whatever, they need to respect that from me. I respect that from you" (BGC). Although Barbara did not explicitly explain her meaning, I recognized she was connecting her experiences of professional isolation with her perceptions of my personal isolation as a lesbian.

Again, when discussing her childhood experiences of being isolated because of her parents' divorce, she suggested, "So, that was a big blow, so to speak…I'm sure you've had some blows kind of, because of who you love" (FRC). Later, Barbara connected our isolation again saying, "But you can't look down on somebody, you know? [They] can't look down on you because of who you are, who you love, or who

you don't love, or whatever. You know what I'm saying?" (FRC). Barbara also alluded to her perceptions of my experiences of professional isolation, "Some people don't like working with you, you know. I've said it before. If the ISD thinks that you're important, then you're important" (FRC).

Because of Barbara's perception of our shared isolation experiences, she often found our connections where I had not seen them. When Barbara discussed her perceptions of declining professionalism, she assumed I knew this was a perception we held, "I wish the teachers nowadays, of course you know this, would take their job as a professional. You know how I feel about it" (BGC). Although we never talked explicitly about teachers' professionalism, it was a belief to which she alluded. When Barbara talked about "broken families" of divorce and her own family, she suggested these "parents aren't the same parents that probably you and I had" (BGC). Although we are in different stages of life and our parents would have been very different ages, Barbara assumed we were similarly raised.

Barbara recognized several aspects of my identity and drew parallels between her experiences of professional isolation and her perceptions of my isolation, creating a sense of shared understanding and empathy. Although we had not explicitly discussed them, Barbara identified connections between our personal and professional beliefs and experiences which opened up new ways of connecting and learning, including developing her willingness to change instruction.

Influence on Willingness to Change Instruction

Despite the brevity of this coaching cycle, Barbara expressed a willingness to change her instruction, "So I guess I have to change with the time with some things too

because you have to adapt" (FRC). Barbara's willingness to change her instruction was evident in four areas of instruction with Barbara committing to (a) use technology for interactivity, (b) provide opportunities for different types of writing, (c) organize lesson content into smaller chunks, and (d) connect with colleagues.

Use Technology

Despite Barbara's initial aversion to technology, she wanted to use fewer worksheets and more authentic and interactive activities (IP). Barbara rationalized, "I think they learn more by doing" and children "have to know what [writing in science] is like in the real world" (IP). The unit included interactive activities Barbara had not used, such as children taking virtual field trips and using Google Earth (Ansberry & Morgan, n.d.). During the first reflection, Barbara commented on how "excited" and "into" children were when finding and exploring bodies of water on Google Earth, "They were doing it as they were putting their iPads away and I said, 'We'll finish it tomorrow'" (R1). In the same conversation, Barbara shared she was using technology more during her planning, searching for relevant books on Google for a different unit (R1). In the final reflection, Barbara suggested additional ways she planned to integrate technology into lessons, such as presenting digital content or including digital publishing (FRC). Barbara also viewed our work together as a mechanism for this willingness to change, "It's a learning experience for me because, you know, I'm not real[ly] good with technology but, you know, I understand how it works now myself." (R1) This learning also appeared in her openness to including different types of writing.

Provide Opportunities for Different Types of Writing

Before this coaching cycle, Barbara often used self-created informative writing prompts, such as “Describe the life cycle of a pumpkin seed” (O1). During this cycle, we co-created a science journal giving children space to write about their observations throughout interactive lessons (IP). Despite this type of journal writing being new to Barbara (FRC), she “like[d] the idea” and wanted to use it with other subjects” (FRC). Although she perceived persuasive writing as more difficult and had not done as much of this type of writing (IP), Barbara planned to continue integrating persuasive writing, as it was a text type she did not often experience earlier in her career (IP). Similar to the inclusion of opportunities to write different types of text, the organization of writing units was also an instructional practice Barbara developed a willingness to shift.

Organizing Lesson Content into Smaller Chunks

Barbara also planned to change her lesson organization and attributed this willingness to change to our work together. When co-planning the use of persuasive writing strategies, we organized instruction into small chunks of content, such as focusing on topic sentences during one lesson instead of an entire paragraph (IP). This process shifted Barbara’s willingness to organize future lesson content, “I've learned to do that differently this year, like taking it a piece each day, where before I probably would've done it in two days” (FRC). In addition to her willingness to teach different types of texts to students and restructure lesson organization into manageable segments of learning, Barbara also demonstrated a willingness to address professional isolation by connecting with colleagues.

Connecting with Colleagues

Throughout the coaching cycle, Barbara described relationships with coworkers as a major factor affecting her as a teacher and whether or not she stayed in a position (BGC). In these relationships, she often described what they needed to improve in their instruction and what she could share with them (FRC). At the same time, Barbara implicitly and explicitly faced professional isolation, admitting, "I'm not used to working with someone. I'm not used to that. I'm used to being by myself" (FRC). However, our connection seemed to bridge her intrapersonal awareness of the significance of connection. Barbara wished to continue connecting with me, because I helped her "branch out of what [she] knows" (R2) and gave her "some ideas to use in other areas" (IP). More significantly, Barbara expressed a desire to connect with her colleagues by sharing children's writing (FRC):

> Barbara: "But I think my kids do really well in writing and understanding how to write well."
>
> Researcher: "Yeah, and it sounds like you want to share that."
>
> Barbara: "I do." (FRC)

In this brief coaching cycle, Barbara demonstrated a willingness to change in several areas, including her intention to incorporate interactive technology, provide opportunities for a variety of text types, organize lesson content into smaller segments, and connect with her colleagues.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore how humanized reflection and relationships mediated Barbara's intrapersonal awareness within a model of literacy coaching. Additionally, this study aimed to explore how this awareness influenced

Barbara's willingness to change her instruction. Throughout the study, Barbara's layers of humanity were prioritized and unearthed through structured opportunities for deep reflection and the psychological safety of our complex multifaceted relationship. Furthermore, Barbara developed a greater intrapersonal awareness and a willingness to change instruction which was previously tied to deeply held personal and professional beliefs.

Personal and Professional Humanity

Barbara's instruction was guided by the complex interplay of her values, beliefs, and identities of tradition and isolation. This finding aligns with Korthagen's (2004) assertion that behavior is driven by intrapersonal factors but highlights the need to consider both personal and professional intrapersonal factors, as it was clear that Barbara's personal and professional experiences of isolation and tradition contributed to her beliefs about herself, her colleagues, her children, and education generally. This finding substantiates my conceptual framework which points to the need to consider the intersection of personal and professional intrapersonal layers. These unique intersections are important as they acknowledge a teacher's humanity and provide insight into the layered and complex rationale for a teacher's behavior during instruction (Korthagen, 2004) and their willingness to change (Maslow, 1943).

Deep Reflection

Structured opportunities for deep reflection (Korthagen, 2004) supported the emergence of Barbara's intrapersonal awareness, which in turn led to new insights about how her values influenced her instruction. These findings support the large body of research positioning reflection as a mechanism for learning (Dunst et al., 2015). By asking

previously unasked questions, Barbara unearthed her interconnected layers of humanity. Because deep reflection significantly contributed to Barbara's intrapersonal awareness and subsequent insights, these findings advocate for the prioritization of professional spaces to unearth deep-seated needs (Maslow, 1943). Considering Maslow's (1943) suggestion that growing and learning are deeply connected to these needs, professional spaces in which teachers are encouraged to deeply reflect may have the potential to positively impact teachers' learning. These spaces would also recognize teachers' inherent humanity (Korthagen, 2004), the complexity of reflection (Dewey, 1933; Rodgers, 2002), and the need to promote personal and professional intrapersonal awareness (Tanaka, 2015).

Relationships

Our complex teacher-coach relationship played a complex role in Barbara's deep reflection. Because I shared personal and professional identities, Barbara perceived shared experiences of isolation during opportunities for deep reflection. Although it is unclear exactly what role Barbara's perceptions of our shared identities played in her ability to deeply reflect or in our teacher-coach relationship, the subsequent unearthing of significant shared personal and professional identities would not have occurred without prioritizing Barbara's humanity through deeply reflective questions and developing a personal and supportive teacher-coach relationship. This finding suggests shared identities may provide a level of psychological safety for deep reflection and aligns with the significant impact of a teacher-coach relationship built on the "equity…in emotional exchange" (Robertson et al., 2020, p.64). Future research could explore the impact of

personal teacher-coach relationships on teachers' willingness to make instructional changes within a coaching cycle.

However, this finding also adds to research on personal coaching relationships (Finkelstein, 2019) in two ways. First, it suggests engaging in humanizing reflection with teachers is complex, powerful, and time-consuming, requiring the accelerated learning factory for children and teachers (Shelton et al., 2020) to decelerate for deeper and more substantial reflection. Second, it suggests the humanization in Korthagen's (2004) onion model requires complex bridging mechanisms of relationships and reflection, considering the personal and professional duality of teacher-coach relationships (Rainville & Jones, 2008) and the nuanced nature of psychological safety within the relationship (Carmeli et al., 2009). These complex relational factors are significant considerations for the development of humanizing literacy coaching models.

Willingness to Change Instruction

At various points in the study, Barbara expressed the willingness to change her literacy instruction. At the same time, she was developing intrapersonal awareness and we were furthering our deep and authentic relationship. Although causal claims cannot be made about these insights or our relationship directly influencing Barbara's willingness to change her instruction, Barbara referred to our relationship and what she learned to do within the coaching cycle when discussing her willingness to change. This finding suggests connections between psychological safety, teacher-coach relationships, and the willingness to make instructional changes (Carmeli et al., 2009; Robertson et al., 2020). The significant authenticity in our relationship to which Barbara alluded when discussing potential changes also substantiates Cutrer-Párraga et al's (2021) assertion that these two

elements may be related. Future research using larger and more diverse samples of coaches and teachers can further explore the relationship between the teacher-coach relationship (Robertson et al., 2020), opportunities for deep reflection (Korthagen, 2004), and teachers' willingness to change (Carmeli et al., 2009).

However, the findings related to relationships and willingness to change also point to complexities of co-existing personal and professional elements of teacher-coach relationships suggested by previous research (Finkelstein, 2019). These complexities are present in Barbara's perceptions of my identities, contributing to research on the role of humanizing PL pedagogies in influencing teachers' willingness to change instruction (Robertson et al., 2020). These nuanced complexities point to the need for continued multi-faceted interrogation of relationships and reflection to influence change in humanizing PL pedagogies.

Limitations

Qualitative case study research served as an invaluable tool for exploring and understanding intricate the internal and social phenomena of the teacher-coach relationship and its interaction with opportunities for deep reflection. To utilize a long-standing relationship and collect naturalistic data, Barbara was purposefully sampled to utilize our long-standing teacher-coach relationship to explore the impact of deep reflection. To generalize findings across different contexts, studies with larger sample sizes of teachers and coaches with different levels of relationships should be conducted. There are three other significant limitations associated with the deeply reflective and relational nature of this study.

The first limitation is time. Although this model can prepare teachers for deep levels of transformation, the strong emphasis on relationship development and fostering of reflective practice requires a substantial investment of time. For literacy coaches who work with many teachers, work with teachers for a short amount of time, or work within districts that are solely focused on urgent acceleration, this coaching model may clash with practical realities. Addressing this limitation may require systemic changes to coaching models, focusing attention on how teachers change and reducing caseloads rather than solely on behavioral changes.

The second limitation is depth. Because the framework suggests delving into teachers' beliefs, identities, and experiences, there is a strong emphasis on psychology. Although these intrapersonal factors are crucial for meaningful transformation, they can also blur the lines between coaching and therapy. Literacy coaches are not licensed therapists, and this work may lead to potential ethical dilemmas. The challenge inherent in this coaching model is to strike the right balance between addressing psychological factors and maintaining professional boundaries.

The third limitation is sensitivity. Sharing personal identities often occurs naturally in working relationships and can create a more inclusive, supportive, and trusting environment. However, this may be a sensitive issue for both coaches and teachers who are hesitant to cross professional boundaries. Similar to the balance between psychology and coaching, literacy coaches must be sensitive to boundaries and ensure a deeper level of sharing is always consensual and respectful.

Implications

Literacy Coaches

There are two clear implications for literacy coaches from this study. The first implication is the necessity of understanding the power of teacher-coach relationships. Literacy coaches must prioritize developing relationships before standardized and behavior-focused coaching cycles. When coaches take the time to learn about teachers' values, identities, and beliefs, there are opportunities for more meaningful and collaborative conversations (Korthagen, 2004). There are also opportunities to influence deeper levels of change by supporting teachers' intrapersonal awareness of their instruction (Dewey, 1933; Tanaka, 2015).

The second implication is the impact of deep reflection on psychological safety on greater risk-taking and sustainable instructional transformation (Robertson et al., 2020). By making an effort to understand teachers' values, beliefs, and identities, literacy coaches can acknowledge interactions between personal and professional humanity and provide a psychologically safe space to engage in risk-taking and change. Additionally, this developing intrapersonal awareness can help literacy coaches find entry points for support.

Administrators

There are three clear implications for administrators –(a) prioritize time to develop teacher-coach relationships, (b) ensure coaches are equipped with tools and knowledge to lead this psychological work, and (c) foster a psychologically safe space for this work to occur. First, although school calendars often have competing priorities, the power of teacher-coach relationships and teachers' intrapersonal awareness illustrate the

need to align calendars with this sustained humanizing work. Second, many literacy coaches enter into this work with advanced degrees or specialized training in literacy. However, to engage in this psychological work, literacy coaches must be equipped with knowledge, strategies, and support to enter into deep reflection. Third, foundational to this work is the psychologically safe culture that humanizing PL requires. This psychological safety can begin to be developed by administrators through their explicit promotion of this work, open lines of communication, and their engagement in this work.

Figure 2

Bridging Willingness to Change Through Reflection and Relationships Conceptual Framework

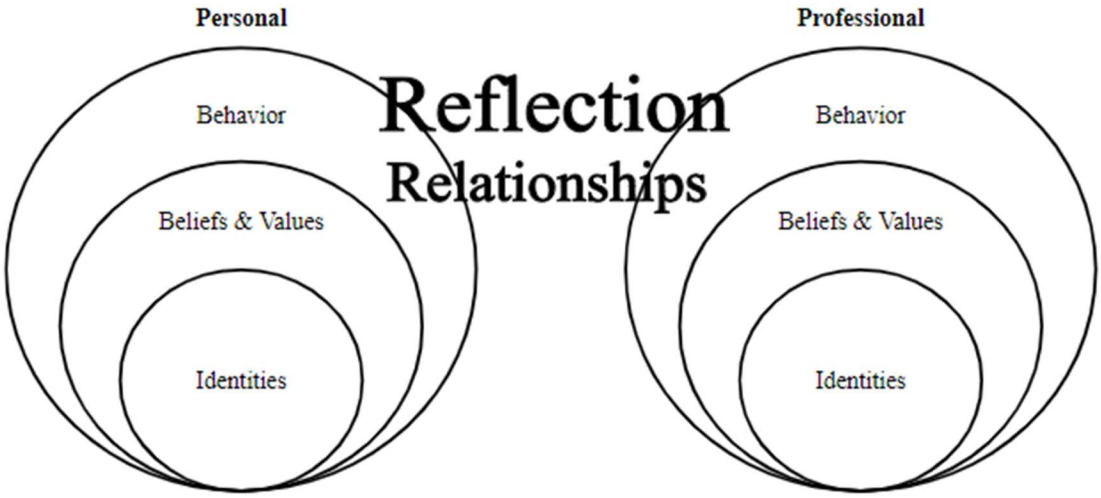

Figure 2. A teacher's instruction is guided by their layered personal and professional humanity (i.e., identities, beliefs and values). Deep reflection and teacher-coach relationships can act as bridging mechanisms to develop intrapersonal awareness between the two realms of the teacher. For the scope of this study, competences were not included in layered humanity.

Table 3

Traditional and Adapted Elements of the Coaching Cycle

Data Source	Abbreviation	Traditional or Adapted
Beginning getting to know you conversation	BGC	Adapted
Initial co-planning session	IP	Traditional
First observation	O1	Traditional
First reflective co-planning conversation	R1	Adapted
Second observation	O2	Traditional
Second reflective co-planning conversation	R2	Adapted
Third observation	O3	Traditional
Final reflective conversation	FRC	Adapted
Interview with principal	PI	Adapted

Note. The traditional and adapted elements of the coaching cycle have been listed as data sources and abbreviated.

Table 4

Sample of Primary Inductive Codes and Categories

Primary Inductive Code	Category	Theme
"I wish teachers nowadays would take their job as a professional because teaching is a profession just like nursing, just like being a policeman and take it seriously and not think they can do [pauses, deep sigh] oh, because it's the 21st century that they can do whatever they want. They need to learn to be a professional because that's why you chose this position." (BGC) "I've watched a lot of teachers come and go over the years. The generation when I first started was very professional. They were proud of who they were. They wanted people to grow up and be teachers and be respectful. Respect is a big word for me, I guess, isn't it? I say that quite often." (BGC)	Professionalism	Tradition
Discipline is a big thing with me too. Not that I love to discipline students, but I respect their wishes and I believe they need to respect their classmates and me and talking when someone else is talking or not listening doesn't really fly. So I kind of run a tight ship, but, yet, they have fun and they're learning. (BGC) "My dad was a very…whew…disciplinarian and he was only around till I was maybe six or seven, but I think having a single parent raising two children and working and having to do all that, I learned to help adults. I learned to respect them." (BGC)	Discipline	Tradition
"It still amazes me how much more information they know now than [children in grade-level] had to know when I first started." (R2) "[The state] expects kids to learn things at a younger age than they used to, comparing to when I started and to now–all the things that I would've never taught, this kind of [persuasive] writing–when we first started and that was in the early [decades]. But times changed along with everything else." (BGC)	Educational Expectations	Tradition

Table 4 - Continued

Sample of Primary Inductive Codes and Categories

""I think kids need to learn to not rely on technology to do things because, you know, if the internet's down, they don't know what to do." (BGC) "It's a learning experience for me because, you know, I'm not real good with technology but, you know, I understand how it works now myself." (R1)	Technology	Tradition
"You had to be a little girl and a grown-up all at the same time." (FRC) "The outgoing personality has come from having [the] stigma way back in the [past] of having divorced parents and you always had to stick up for yourself." (BGC)	Early Life	Isolation
"So, you know, I may not be on [social media] or whatever, but if I was, you know, a different gender or whatever, they need to respect that from me…And I think they have their own ways of doing things, but it's a different world. It's a different generation." (BGC) "Now, some people don't mind it, because they know exactly how I feel about something. Some people take that the wrong way, but it's kind of the person that I am too." (BGC)	Professional - Identities	Isolation
"Some people don't like me as a teacher because I have such a structured classroom and it's not free for all and noisy and all that." (BGC) "At [a] parent night, I [said] I had the bar set high, because I think if you put the bar high, they can reach that bar because you help them to reach that bar. If you set the bar low and aren't expecting them to do anything, then they're not going to do it. But you set the bar high and I think they can achieve that. [Another staff member] didn't like when I said, 'You set the bar high.' They said, 'How can you expect children to do that?' I said, 'They can do anything and achieve anything they want to if they only believe in themselves.'" (FRC)	Professional - Educational Beliefs	Isolation

Table 4 - Continued

Sample of Primary Inductive Codes and Categories

"You learn the knowledge to teach what you have to teach, but they don't teach you the real world situations that you encounter." (FRC) "Nobody ever tells you how to do [new instructional practices] or shows you. You're just expected to know and do it." (FRC)	Professional - Professional Learning	Isolation

Note. A sample of primary inductive codes, their data source, their categories, and themes is shared here.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE COLLABORATIVE LITERACY COACHING FRAMEWORK FOR TRANSFORMATION

Teaser Text

Discover how the Collaborative Literacy Coaching Framework for Transformation foregrounds the psychological roots of change and the humanity of teachers, preparing them to enhance literacy instruction and achievement.

Introduction

In the wake of pandemic-era disruptions to traditional learning, the federal government funded support for children, ensuring safe learning environments, mental health support, and additional learning opportunities (U.S. Department of Education, 2022). However, teachers received little support to accommodate ever-widening academic expectations of students (Robinson et al., 2023). Whereas professional learning models like literacy coaching can support children and teachers by building teachers' knowledge, enhancing literacy instruction, and ultimately, increasing children's literacy achievement (Dunst et al., 2015), these models often focus on teachers' ability to conform to initiatives. To promote transformation, literacy coaches must guide teachers to do the psychological work before changes can occur–the deep excavation and acknowledgement of intrapersonal factors (International Literacy Association, 2018). Although this work is time-consuming and not explicitly embedded into common coaching models (Knight, 2008), deep levels of reflection are essential to set the stage for deep and long-lasting instructional changes.

The Need for Collaborative Transformation

As an experienced elementary literacy coach and doctoral student in the rural Midwest, the importance of enhancing literacy instruction while acknowledging the complex factors that support deep levels of change quickly became evident. Early in my career, my efforts to influence change to literacy instruction were often met with resistance. Although I became frustrated, I resolved to spend time exploring the lived realities of the teachers with whom I worked to better understand the resistance.

What I discovered was that teachers were not exhibiting resistance; instead, teachers were grappling with challenges unique to rurality and the post-pandemic world that I had not experienced previously as a classroom teacher in urban and suburban areas. In their rural communities, the nearest city was approximately 30 miles away and disconnected from universities, high-quality professional learning providers, and other opportunities to engage in professional learning. This isolation of their rural community exacerbated the post-pandemic teacher and substitute teacher shortage, forcing teachers to take on even more roles and grapple with limited support. At the same time, administrators, faced with the urgency of rapidly declining test scores, often started multiple initiatives to accelerate and remediate learning for children. Despite their dedication to supporting children, rural teachers were pulled in multiple directions and often lacked access to the resources and spaces that were supportive of change and growth. Recognizing the needs of teachers, I developed the Collaborative Literacy Coaching Framework for Transformation (CLCF-T) that would address the need to influence changes in teachers' behavior while acknowledging the deep psychological work that must occur for transformation.

Collaborative Literacy Coaching Framework for Transformation (CLCF-T)

The CLCF-T is guided by the Transtheoretical Model and the significance of the teacher-coach relationship (Prochaska et al., 2005). Originating from the world of therapy, the Transtheoretical Model describes a series of readiness stages–pre-contemplation (e.g., reflecting on behavior and the benefits of change), contemplation (e.g., exploring ways to change and setting goals), and preparation (e.g., planning relevant strategies)--through which people are supported before they change. Although many administrators and literacy coaches expect teachers to quickly change in the best interests of children, these changes may require teachers to make shifts to long-standing practices. Consequently, readiness for change is a significant consideration. The CLCF-T also focuses on the strength and support of the teacher-coach relationship, as a safe space for teachers to engage in the deep psychological work of change (Robertson et al., 2020). Using these two guiding principles, the CLCF-T collaboratively engages teachers and coaches through four steps to prepare for the transformation of literacy instruction: (1) cultivating relationships, (2) examining intrapersonal factors, (3) acknowledging gaps between current and research-supported practices, and (4) planning the changes needed to close any gaps.

Murphy Elementary

I implemented the CLCF-T at Murphy Elementary (pseudonyms have been used), an upper elementary school with 15 classroom teachers, serving approximately 300 children in the rural Midwest. The majority of children were White (90%) and eligible for free-or reduced-price meals (75%) (State's Center for Educational Performance and Information, 2023). As an educational service agency employee and part-time coach, I

provided support to teachers at Murphy, ranging from consulting to co-teaching, for approximately four years. As collaborative learning opportunities were inconsistent and focused on multiple priorities, literacy coaching was teacher-directed.

I recruited three teachers–Lauren, Leslie, and Kim–to work together on a new self-selected literacy instructional strategy with the CLCF-T as a guide for the school year and following summer. Lauren had been teaching for approximately 10 years; I shared new literacy practices informally with her but had not engaged her in any coaching. She decided that we would work together on planning a narrative writing unit. Kim had been teaching for 20 years, and we had been working closely to implement many new literacy practices for my time at Murphy. Leslie had been teaching for approximately 30 years, and, similar to Lauren, we had not worked closely. I worked with both Kim and Leslie on planning research-supported independent activities in reading. Additionally, I recruited other regional literacy coaches to use the CLCF-T over the summer, and we reflected on the work in a focus group. All conversations were recorded with the permission of teachers, coaches, and my university's ethics review board. In the following sections, I will describe each step of the CLCF-T, share actionable strategies for coaches to use, and highlight the impact from the stories of Kim, Leslie, Lauren, and myself.

Cultivation

In the CLCF-T, the foundation of transformation rests in the cultivation of the teacher-coach relationship. Just as a tree's growth depends on the quality of the soil it's planted in, the success of literacy coaching and changes to classroom practice rest on the strength and depth of this essential relationship (Robertson et al., 2020). However, trust

does not materialize immediately; the coach must intentionally put in time and work, beginning with relationship-building strategies, such as the ones in Table 5. This work of cultivation can have a great impact on a teacher's readiness for change, as in Kim's story.

The Impact on Kim

During a conversation, Kim reflected on the impact of our relationship: "You just took me for who I was. You never judged me when those lessons were a flop. You just always encouraged me to be better. You knew my weaknesses and you just wanted me to get over that. Where I just felt like I wasn't good enough or competent, you just kept pushing me, 'Hey, you got this.'" Kim credited the recognition and patience she received in our teacher-coach relationship as part of the support for the psychological work of change.

Excavation and Acknowledgment

The next step in the CLCF-T is the excavation of intrapersonal factors and acknowledgment of a need to change. Just as gardeners must excavate the ground before planting a tree, literacy coaches must support teachers in reflecting beyond the surface with questions that focused on how intrapersonal factors–such as beliefs, identities, values, identities, and emotions–connect to their instruction and how they might support or hinder their readiness to change (see Table 6) (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005). By paraphrasing teachers' reflections, coaches help teachers acknowledge the alignment or gap between research and practice and the contributing intrapersonal factors, using stems such as, "It is important to you that…," or "What you are hoping to achieve is…" (Reichenberg & Boyd, 2019). The teacher's readiness for change begins with seeing that

a change is necessary and the coach can better understand what it might take to support the teacher in making change, as in Leslie's story.

The Impact on Leslie

During the focus group, I reflected on the impact of supporting Leslie in the excavation process: "There were tears almost immediately because there was something there that we really needed to dig into. She didn't feel very confident in teaching reading. During our first conversation, she was very supported, and then, she was the one that was directing the ship, which I think that's going to really build her confidence as she tries something very new next year." With a supportive teacher-coach relationship established, Leslie could engage in intrapersonal excavation in a safe space. Together, we uncovered the psychological work of confidence building that needed to be addressed for her to enhance literacy instruction for children.

Planning

In the final step of the CLCF-T, just as gardeners support the growth of a tree by surrounding it with soil, literacy coaches and teachers work together to support the teacher in changing their literacy instruction. Because teachers have acknowledged the intrapersonal factors that may support or hinder their ability to make the necessary changes, they are ready to set goals for specific changes, develop an instructional vision, and design instructional activities that align with the necessary changes (L'Allier et al., 2010). Although this is a step that teachers can complete independently, literacy coaches can provide invaluable support through the power of collaborative coaching activities, such as providing professional learning, co-planning, and continuing to foster self-

reflection throughout this process (see Table 7). As demonstrated in Lauren's story, working together to implement new changes can increase teachers' readiness for change.

The Impact on Lauren

After our work together, Lauren discussed the importance of co-planning before she made changes to her writing instruction: "You know how frightened I was of it at the beginning? Not because I didn't think the kids would enjoy it, but just because I didn't feel comfortable teaching it. I think my comfort level has grown exponentially as far as being able to plan it out. I attribute a lot of what I have been able to do and the success that I feel like I have had to our conversations and our working together." In Lauren's journey of transformation, collaborative planning significantly contributed to her readiness to make changes to her practice.

Final Thoughts

Kim, Leslie, and Lauren's stories illustrate how the CLCF-T helped them prepare for changes in their literacy instruction driven by psychological work and a strong foundation of collaboration. Each step of the CLCF-T was necessary for the start of their transformative journey. Cultivating strong teacher-coach relationships laid the groundwork for trust, openness, and a sense of psychological safety, enabling each teacher to engage in intrapersonal excavation and acknowledge their need for change. The deep exploration of intrapersonal factors illuminated their beliefs, values, identities, and emotions, offering valuable insights into the alignment of their teaching practices with these personal convictions. Finally, the planning phase empowered each teacher to plan their transformed instructional approach with the support of a literacy coach. The CLCF-T's holistic approach addressed the multidimensional aspects of readiness for

change, preparing a profound shift to literacy instruction and underscoring the transformative power of collaboration and introspection in the educational journey.

As we navigate the post-pandemic educational landscape, it is increasingly clear that models of professional learning, including literacy coaching, must evolve to prioritize the complex psychological work of change asked of teachers when working to enhance literacy instruction. The CLCF-T represents a significant step in this evolution, providing a pathway to administrators and literacy coaches that concentrates on the time, collaboration, and deep reflection it takes to truly prepare teachers for transformed literacy instruction. This pathway has the potential to not only lead the way to the growth of students as readers and writers but also to the growth of teachers as reflective practitioners.

Table 5

Strategies for Cultivating Relationships

Strategy	Examples of Coaches' Actions
Consistency and Presence	Work with teachers consistently, frequently, and over a sustained period.
Active Listening	Seek to understand teachers by prioritizing time for them to speak and paraphrasing their thoughts and concerns.
Recognition	Encourage and praise teachers' efforts when they experiment with new teaching practices.
Distributed Expertise	Focus on the teachers' priorities and ensure instructional decisions are made by teachers.
Patience	Give teachers the time needed to understand, process, and navigate through changes in their practice.

Table 6

Questions for Intrapersonal Excavation

Intrapersonal Factor	Questions
Beliefs	• What are some beliefs you have about…? • How might that belief show up in…?
Identities	• What kind of teacher do you want to be? • How might you make this happen?
Values	• Why is this important to you? • What might you need to tap into within yourself to make this happen?
Emotions	• How are you feeling about that? • Why do you think you are feeling that way?

Table 7

Coaching Activities to Prepare for Change

Coaching Activities	Examples of Coaching Activities
Professional learning	• Provide or facilitate professional learning content • Engage teachers in reflection around the content
Co-planning	• Set goals and learning objectives • Discuss explicit instruction, guided practice, and independent practice
Fostering self-reflection	• Ask questions like "How are you feeling about…?" or "What else might you need for…?"

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

My research agenda has focused on humanizing models of literacy coaching. The papers in my dissertation represent examples of this agenda and focus on the influences of (a) the complexity and significance of the teacher-coach relationship and (b) the power of deep reflection to engage teachers' intrapersonal awareness on their willingness to make instructional changes. To extend the findings of these studies on humanizing professional learning pedagogies, I plan to develop my future research agenda to include the investigation of humanizing professional learning pedagogies with regard to (a) better understanding the role humanization plays in teachers' instructional changes, (b) connecting the psychology of change to humanizing pedagogies, and (c) providing models of professional learning systems that embody humanization.

Previous research on humanizing pedagogies often focuses attention on changes to teachers' intrapersonal factors, rather than changes to instruction or student achievement (Caylor, under review; Hunt & Handsfield, 2013; Mangin & Dunsmore, 2015; McGugan et al., 2023; Rainville & Jones, 2008; Robertson et al., 2020). Although these changes are key precursors to engaging in sustained transformation of instruction, they do not fully capture the full intent of this work. To disrupt the dehumanizing standardization of student achievement and the singular focus on behavioral changes in teachers, it is important that future research of humanizing literacy coaching works to disrupt these inequitable systems through the promotion of broader measurements of students' growth as readers and writers and teachers' instructional changes as complex

professionals. A possible successive project research agenda addressing equity and broad measurements of growth could include the following projects.

- Project 1: Provide targeted systems coaching to district leadership teams focused on embedding humanizing professional learning pedagogies into their process of continuous improvement to investigate both intrapersonal changes and instructional changes, asking (1) What changes are teachers making to their literacy instruction?, (2) What changes are happening at the layers of values and beliefs?, and (3) To what do teachers attribute these changes?
- Project 2: In the same partnerships, focus on the following research question, How are changes to literacy instruction impacting children—using comprehensive measures of literacy development, achievement, and growth?

A research agenda focused on systems work could ensure that schools recognize the significance of humanization on both teachers and children as well as their important role in building humanization into systems of professional learning for systemic change.

Further, the findings from The Humanity of Literacy Coaching: Bridging Willingness to Change Through Reflection and Relationships (Caylor, in progress), demonstrate a need for exploring the impact of humanization on large and diverse samples of teachers and coaches to better understand the nuances of each humanizing component. For example, Barbara was a Veteran educator and our relationship was well-established. Another successive project research agenda could shed light on how nuances, such as the relationship length, the coaches' expertise in deep reflection, or the coaching context of the school, impact changes to teachers and students. Projects could include:

- Project 1: Provide targeted professional learning for coaches to build their expertise with deep reflection and investigate effects of humanizing professional learning on one of their teacher-coach relationships and subsequent coaching work. Data sources could include mixed-methods surveys, observations, interviews, and focus groups with coaches, focusing on, (1) the contextual of the relationship, (2) the context of the system of coaching (3) expertise in deep reflective practices, and (4) perceptions of teachers' instructional and intrapersonal changes.
- Project 2: Investigate the effects of humanizing professional learning from the perceptions of teachers working with coaches. Data sources could be similar to those from Project 2, focusing instead on, (1) changes to their literacy instruction, (2) changes occurring at the layers of values and beliefs, and (3) why changes are occurring.
- Project 3: Investigate the effects of the same teacher-coach relationships and coaching work on the student literacy achievement from each nuanced partnership, asking, How are these changes impacting children—using comprehensive measures of literacy development, achievement, and growth?

By focusing on multiple teacher-coach partnerships and aligning perceptions from coaches, teachers, and children, a comprehensive picture of the impact of humanizing professional learning pedagogies could be provided.

In sum, my planned research agenda will build on existing research about humanizing literacy coaching, which is important to provide equitable learning opportunities for both children and teachers (Shelton et al., 2020). The agenda will focus

on the embedding humanizing professional learning pedagogies into models of systemic change (Biancarosa et al., 2010) for the disruption of dehumanization (Shelton et al., 2020) through the use of university-school partnerships (Swick et al., 2021). As part of this agenda, I also plan to marry the multiple intentions of models of humanized literacy coaching by investigating intrapersonal and instructional changes to teachers as well as changes to the literacy development, achievement, and growth of children.

APPENDIX A

CONFIRMATION OF IRB APPROVALS

Date: 10-8-2023

IRB #: IRB-FY2023-169
Title: Influencing Deep Learning of Teachers Through Multi-Layered Core Reflective Dialogue in Layered Environments of Belonging and Policy
Creation Date: 1-27-2023
End Date:
Status: Approved
Principal Investigator: Emily Caylor
Review Board: OU IRB
Sponsor:

Study History

Submission Type	Review Type	Decision
Initial	Exempt	Exempt

Key Study Contacts

Member	Role	Contact
Gwendolyn Thompson McMillon	Co-Principal Investigator	mcmillon@oakland.edu
Emily Caylor	Principal Investigator	ecaylor@oakland.edu
Emily Caylor	Primary Contact	ecaylor@oakland.edu

Date: 10-8-2023

IRB #: IRB-FY2023-327
Title: Bridging Teachers' Personal And Professional Humanity For Change Through Reflection- And Relationship-Based Literacy Coaching
Creation Date: 6-9-2023
End Date:
Status: Approved
Principal Investigator: Emily Caylor
Review Board: OU IRB
Sponsor:

Study History

Submission Type Initial	**Review Type** Exempt	**Decision** Exempt

Key Study Contacts

Member Emily Caylor	**Role** Principal Investigator	**Contact** ecaylor@oakland.edu
Member Emily Caylor	**Role** Primary Contact	**Contact** ecaylor@oakland.edu
Member Gwendolyn Thompson McMillon	**Role** Co-Principal Investigator	**Contact** mcmillon@oakland.edu

APPENDIX B

LETTER OF REJECTION FROM LITERACY RESEARCH AND INSTRUCTION JOURNAL FOR THE HUMANITY OF LITERACY COACHING MANUSCRIPT

Literacy Research and Instruction - Decision on Manuscript ID ULRI-2023-0063

4 messages

Literacy Research and Instruction <onbehalfof@manuscriptcentral.com> Tue, Sep 19, 2023 at 11:31 AM

Reply-To: chaseyoung@shsu.edu
To: ecaylor@oakland.edu

19-Sep-2023

Dear Dr Caylor:

Thank you for submitting your manuscript to Literacy Research and Instruction (LRI). After a thorough reading and careful review of your manuscript by the members of the editorial team and a blind review by your peers, we regret that your manuscript has not been accepted for publication in LRI.

The reviewer comments are included at the end of this letter. We anticipate that you will find them to be constructive and helpful. We hope our decision and the explanation we provided will be useful to you regarding this manuscript as well as future submissions. Again, thank you for submitting your manuscript to LRI.

Sincerely,
Chase Young, Bethanie Pletcher, Patricia Durham, and Juan Araujo
Editors, Literacy Research and Instruction

APPENDIX C

LETTER CONFIRMING SUBMISSION TO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN EDUCATION JOURNAL FOR THE REVISED HUMANITY OF LITERACY COACHING MANUSCRIPT

Professional Development in Education - Manuscript ID RJIE-2023-0387

2 messages

Professional Development in Education <onbehalfof@manuscriptcentral.com> Sun, Oct 8, 2023 at 4:12 PM

Reply-To: pdie@st-andrews.ac.uk
To: ecaylor@oakland.edu

08-Oct-2023

Dear Ms Caylor:

Your manuscript entitled "The Humanity of Literacy Coaching: Bridging Willingness to Change Through Reflection and Relationships" has been successfully submitted online and is presently being given full consideration for publication in Professional Development in Education.

Your manuscript ID is RJIE-2023-0387.

Please mention the above manuscript ID in all future correspondence or when calling the office for questions. If there are any changes in your street address or e-mail address, please log in to Manuscript Central at https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/rjie and edit your user information as appropriate.

If you haven't already done so, Professional Development in Education would like to encourage you to add an ORCiD ID to this submission. Please log in to Manuscript Central at https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/rjie to add your ORCiD ID to the article's information by adjusting your account settings.

You can also view the status of your manuscript at any time by checking your Author Centre after logging in to https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/rjie.

Should your paper pass the preliminary screening, it will be sent to reviewers for comment.

Thank you for submitting your manuscript to Professional Development in Education.

Sincerely,
Professional Development in Education Editorial Office

APPENDIX D

LETTER CONFIRMING SUBMISSION TO READING TEACHER FOR THE COLLABORATIVE LITERACY COACHING FRAMEWORK FOR TRANSFORMATION MANUSCRIPT

Manuscript submitted to The Reading Teacher

1 message

The Reading Teacher <no-reply@atyponrex.com> Sat, Sep 30, 2023 at 10:05 AM
To: Emily Caylor <ecaylor@oakland.edu>

Dear Emily Caylor,

Your manuscript "The Collaborative Literacy Coaching Framework for Transformation: Humanizing Prerequisites for Reflective Practitioners" has been successfully submitted and is being delivered to the Editorial Office of *The Reading Teacher* for consideration.

You will receive a follow-up email with further instructions from the journal editorial office, typically within one business day. That message will confirm that the editorial office has received your submission and will provide your manuscript ID.

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APPENDIX E

GETTING TO KNOW YOU CONVERSATION

- How would you describe yourself as a teacher?
    1. Follow-up: Can you talk a bit more about where those descriptions came from?
- Talk about your beliefs about:
    1. Education
        1. Follow-up: Where do you think those beliefs came from?
        2. Follow-up: Why is that?
    2. Children
        1. Follow-up: Where do you think those beliefs came from?
        2. Follow-up: Why is that?
    3. Writing
        1. Follow-up: Where do you think those beliefs came from?
        2. Follow-up: Why is that?
- Can you share what's important (or what else is important) to you as a teacher?
    1. Follow-up: Talk a bit more about where you think these came from.
    2. Follow-up: Why is that?
- What are the top three things that affect:
    1. You as a teacher?
        1. Follow-up: Talk a bit more about each of the effects.
    2. Children in your classroom? What are the effects?
        1. Follow-up: Talk a bit more about each of the effects.
    3. Families of the children in your classroom? What are the effects?
        1. Follow-up: Talk a bit more about each of the effects.

- So, let's talk more about the school and classroom you work in. Can you describe your school and classroom?
    - Follow-up: How do you think the children in your classroom would describe the school and classroom?
    - Follow-up: How do you think the families of the children in your classroom would describe the school and classroom?
    - Follow-up: How do you think community members would describe the school and classroom?
- Can you tell me about a time when you felt like you really belonged at the school? How did that make you feel?
    - Follow-up: What about a time that you didn't feel like you really belonged at the school? How did that make you feel?
- Do you feel like you belong now?
    - Follow-up: Why or why not?
    - Follow-up: What are some of the things you do to connect with other teachers and staff? Children in your classroom? Families of the children in your classroom?
- What are some of the challenges you face in feeling a sense of belonging to the school or creating a sense of belonging in your classroom?
- What does belonging mean to you?
- Is feeling a sense of belonging important to you?
    1. Follow-up: Why or why not? If yes, in what ways?

- Do you think belonging is different in your personal life as compared to your role as a teacher?
- Do you think belonging is important to the children in your classroom?
    1. Follow-up: Tell me more about that.
    2. Follow-up: Why do you think that?
- Do you think belonging is important to children's families?
    1. Follow-up: Tell me more about that.
    2. Follow-up: Why do you think that?
- Do you think belonging is important in your school's community?
    1. Follow-up: Tell me more about that.
    2. Follow-up: Why do you think that?
- I'm really trying to explore and better understand the deep learning and transformation of teachers. What else do I need to ask you that I haven't that will help with that?

APPENDIX F

REFLECTIVE AND CO-PLANNING CONVERSATIONS

- So, tell me a little bit about your morning leading up to the lesson.
    - Follow-up: How are you feeling about that?
    - Follow-up: Did the children know that this was happening?
- What about how the children in your class were doing this morning?
    - Follow-up: How were they feeling about that?
    - Follow-up: How do you know?
- What did you want to achieve or create during that lesson?
    - Follow-up: What about what you wanted ***children*** to achieve/create?
    - Follow-up: Can you talk a bit more about why you wanted to achieve/create this?
- What else did children need to know/be able to do to achieve this?
    - Follow-up: Why was this important to you?
- Let's look at the children's writing/learning from the lesson and make note of what they are achieving in relation to the goals you set and what they may still need support on.
    - Follow-up: How do you know that?
    - Follow-up: What do you think children were thinking during this work?
    - Follow-up: How do you think children were feeling during this work?
    - Follow-up: Why do you think that was?
- What are some of the things that supported children in meeting the goals you set?
    - Follow-up: What makes you say that?
    - Follow-up: Why do you think that is?
    - Follow-up: What did you do to make this happen?

    - Follow-up: What did you need to tap into within yourself to make that happen?
    - Follow-up: Was there anything else that helped make this happen?
    - Follow-up: How will you continue to use these insights in the next lesson(s)?
- What are some of the factors that made it harder to support children in meeting the goals you set?
    - Follow-up: What makes you say that?
    - Follow-up: Why do you think that is?
    - Follow-up: What might you need to do about that?
    - Follow-up: What might you need to tap into within yourself to make that happen?
    - Follow-Up: Is there anything else that might help make this happen?
    - Follow-Up: How will you continue to use these insights in the next lesson(s)?
- Now, let's walk through the next lesson(s) and talk through ways that you will support children's continued progress as writers in this unit and ways that you will support children who need more support.
    - Follow-up: What will that lesson look like?
    - Follow-up: How will you plan to support the different needs of the children?
    - Follow-up: What do you need to be able to do this?
    - Follow-up: How can you tap into yourself to make this happen?

- Follow-up: How can I help?

APPENDIX G

FINAL REFLECTIVE CONVERSATION

- So, now that the unit is over, how are you feeling as compared to how you felt about it before you started teaching it?
    - What were some of the things that have contributed to the changes in your feelings?
- What are some of the ways that your teaching has changed as a result of us working together?
    - Why do you think that is?
    - Has your understanding of science or writing changed as a result of this unit?
        - In what ways?
        - How?
- In a few of our conversations, you talked about having a background in social emotional. How does that background affect your teaching?
    - How about the children in your classroom?
- You've also talked a lot about how much teaching and the information that you have to teach has changed. What are some ways that your teaching has changed over the years?
- Let's talk about change more generally. Think about a time when you made a big change in your life, whether that be your personal or professional life. What were some of the things that influenced that change?

- What are some of the things that stop you from making change?

APPENDIX H

PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW

- What are the top three things that affect:
    1. You as an administrator? What are the effects?
        1. Follow-up: Talk a bit more about each of the effects.
    2. Teachers at your school? What are the effects?
        1. Follow-up: Talk a bit more about each of the effects.
    3. Children who attend your school? What are the effects?
        1. Follow-up: Talk a bit more about each of the effects.
    4. Families of the children who attend your school? What are the effects?
        1. Follow-up: Talk a bit more about each of the effects.
- So, let's talk more about the school environment. Describe your school environment.
    - Follow-up: How do you think the teachers would describe the school environment?
    - Follow-up: How do you think the children would describe the school environment?
    - Follow-up: How do you think community members would describe the school environment?
- Can you tell me about a time when you felt like you really belonged at the school? How did that make you feel?
    - Follow-up: What about a time that you didn't feel like you really belonged at the school? How did that make you feel?
- Do you feel like you belong now?
    - Follow-up: Why or why not?

    - Follow-up: What are some of the things you do to connect with staff? Children?
- What are some of the challenges you face in feeling or creating a sense of belonging to the school?
- What does belonging mean to you?
- Is feeling a sense of belonging important to you?
    1. Follow-up: Why or why not? If yes, in what ways?
- Do you think belonging is different in your personal life as compared to your administrative role?
- Do you think belonging is important to your staff?
    1. Follow-up: Tell me more about that.
    2. Follow-up: Why do you think that?
- Do you think belonging is important to the children in your school?
    1. Follow-up: Tell me more about that.
    2. Follow-up: Why do you think that?
- Do you think belonging is important to children's families?
    1. Follow-up: Tell me more about that.
    2. Follow-up: Why do you think that?
- Do you think belonging is important in your school's community?
    1. Follow-up: Tell me more about that.
    2. Follow-up: Why do you think that?

- I’m really trying to explore and better understand the deep learning and transformation of teachers along with the impact of environmental factors like belonging. What else do I need to ask you that I haven’t that will help with that?

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