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**MENTORING DIALOGUES: AN INVESTIGATION OF THE DIALECTICAL  
TENSIONS AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES IN MENTORING  
RELATIONSHIPS**

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A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of Social Sciences

University of Denver

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In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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Paul J. Kosempel

November 2008

Advisor: Mary Claire Morr Serewicz

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Title: MENTORING DIALOGUES: AN INVESTIGATION OF THE DIALECTICAL TENSIONS AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES IN MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

Advisor: Mary Claire Morr Serewicz

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## ABSTRACT

In the past 30 years, mentoring has gained perhaps the largest recognition of any phenomenon related to career success. Much of the current research that has explored mentoring relationships has been conducted in fields other than communication studies, although better communication is often the recommended solution to improve mentoring. The majority of research has focused on the outcomes of mentoring relationships, rather than the process of mentoring relationships. Mentoring has also not been studied through a relational dialectics perspective. This study explored the communication dynamics within mentoring relationships through a relational dialectics theoretical lens. The study utilized multiple methods including prompted joint conversations as well as individual interviews. Data was analyzed using thematic analysis (Owen, 1984). Significant findings include eight dialectical tensions constituted in mentoring relationships: openness-with and closedness-with, openness-to and closedness-to, integration and separation, stability and change, equality and hierarchy, individual goals and organizational goals, personal and professional, and structure and flexibility. Five management strategies were also discovered: spiraling inversion, segmentation, reaffirmation, balance, and denial. The identification of these tensions and management strategies led to a greater understanding of mentoring relationships, built on existing research to highlight the complexity in mentoring relationships, as well as supported the conceptualization of relational dialectics theory.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION AND JUSTIFICATION OF STUDY

#### Overview

In the past 30 years, mentoring has gained perhaps the largest recognition of any phenomenon related to career success (Allen, Lentz & Day, 2006; Anderson, 2005; Hoffman, Jackson, & Smith, 2005; Kuijpers & Scheerens, 2006). Mentoring is typically seen as a helping relationship in which a more senior or experienced individual guides a junior or lesser experienced individual to assist them with psychosocial or career development. Relationships between mentors and protégés happen both formally and informally (Kram, 1988). That is, mentors and protégés often find one another without any outside assistance or structure creating informal relationships. Additionally, numerous organizations have sought to create formal mentoring relationships in order to take advantage of the learning that can take place in such partnerships (Baugh & Fagenson-Eland, 2007). In contemporary society, mentoring has been a frequently recommended relationship for anyone who is seeking to learn more, become more, or achieve more. Much of the current research that has explored mentoring relationships has been conducted in fields other than communication studies, although better communication is often the recommended solution to improve mentoring relationships (Bokeno & Gantt, 2000; Orland-Barak, 2001). Additionally, the majority of research has focused on the outcomes of mentoring relationships, rather than the process of mentoring

relationships (Allen, Lentz, & Day, 2006; Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz, & Lima, 2004). As would be expected, mentoring has not been studied through a relational dialectics perspective. Relational dialectics is a theoretical approach which has been extremely fruitful in gaining a rich understanding of a variety of different interpersonal relationships (Baxter & Braithwaite, 2007).

This study will explore the communication dynamics within formal mentoring relationships through a relational dialectics theoretical lens. Specifically, the aim of this study is to describe mentoring relationships in a specific teacher training program. As such, the goal is not for these results to be entirely generalized to all mentoring relationships. Rather, the study will provide a descriptive exploration of communication dynamics of mentoring relationships between mentor and protégé teachers in one specific teacher residency program. First, a review of the current literature is included to justify the study of mentoring from a processual perspective, rather than the predominant instrumental approach.

### Justification

Much of the current research on mentoring has shown that mentoring has great potential to impact career success and the psychosocial development of protégés (Allen, et al., 2004; Bahniuk, Hill, & Darus, 1996; Baugh, Lankau, & Scandura, 1996; Kram, 1988). Although mentoring has great potential for these outcomes, a number of studies of mentoring relationships also reported the potential of negative relational outcomes (Boyle, 2005; Cataldo, 2001; Eby & Allen, 2002). These negative outcomes are magnified when mentoring programs are not well structured. Often, mentoring programs create more problems than solutions (Boyle, 2005; Cataldo, 2001). Additionally, Eby and

Allen (2002) even discovered that mentoring programs with poor fit between mentors and protégés, as well as manipulation and distancing behavior among mentors and protégés, actually led to negative career outcomes. The amount of research on mentoring relationships that outlines both the positive as well as the negative outcomes provides support for the necessity to study this relationship further. Obviously, mentoring is a relationship that has great potential for both beneficial and detrimental outcomes. Understanding this relationship better could lead to a greater chance of actualizing the positive outcomes.

Another justification for this research study is the predominance of monologic approaches in understanding mentoring relationships. Monologic approaches assume that individuals are unitary rational beings that autonomously make decisions about how they go about their lives. The abundance of research that has been conducted that focuses on personality measures or other individual attributes lends support for this claim of monologic approaches. Specifically, mentoring has been studied with focus on individual characteristics such as agreeableness, openness to experience, extraversion (Bozionelos, 2004); need for achievement, need for dominance, self-esteem (Fagenson-Eland & Baugh, 2001); masculinity, femininity (Fagenson, 1989; Scandura & Ragins, 1993); other-oriented empathy and helpfulness (Waters, 2004); and locus of control and upward striving (Allen, Poteet, Russell, & Dobbins, 1997). These studies are representative of the body of mentoring research which examines mentoring by looking at the roles and characteristics of two individual participants.

Communication scholars have long advocated for understanding interpersonal relationships more processually in that relationships are constituted in communicative

acts between participants (Duck, 1994; Duck & Pond, 1989). Goldsmith and Baxter (1996) discuss Saville-Troike's (1989) construct of a speech event and they articulate the need for researchers to take the "focus away from the communicative acts of autonomous individuals to a focus on the joint accomplishments of participants" (p. 88). Rather than understanding communication as a tool that individuals use to achieve their goals in relationships, employing a constitutive focus explores ways in which our relationships are enacted jointly in communication (Duck & Pond, 1989). The speech event is a useful concept to examine in that it "is a unit of joint social activity" that enables researchers "to understand the constitutive function of communication" (Goldsmith & Baxter, 1996, p. 89). Given this alternative view of understanding relationships, it is paramount for future research to focus on communication between interactants. The current study is justified provided that it seeks to identify speech events to lead to an understanding of how mentoring is constituted in communication as a process.

Bokeno and Gantt (2000) apply this line of thought specifically to mentoring relationships. They acknowledge the predominant monologic focus on mentoring as a developmental relationship and assert the need to view mentoring dialogically as relationship development. In other words, the monologic approach sees mentoring as a way that one individual transfers knowledge or skill to another individual relying on communication as instrumental. On the other hand, the dialogic approach is a process enacted through communication in which both parties mutually engage in meaning making and develop their relationship. Bokeno and Gantt (2000) provide a compelling theoretical argument for understanding the process of mentoring dialogically, however, no research has been conducted which seeks to further this understanding in actual

mentoring relationships. The current study seeks to address this limitation by examining communication within mentoring relationships.

As noted above, the vast majority of the research is primarily focused on the outcomes and characteristics of mentoring relationships, rather than the process of mentoring relationships. Given the potential benefits and risks of mentoring relationships, a greater understanding of the relational process that takes place within mentoring is justified. Such understanding of the process of mentoring could potentially lead to maximizing the benefits of mentoring relationships while minimizing the negative relational outcomes.

A specific theoretical application for this study that aims to better understand the process of mentoring relationships is relational dialectics. In addition to the contribution to the knowledge base of mentoring relationships that this study could potentially impact, it is also merited in its ability to further develop the theory of relational dialectics. First, one aim of this study is to better understand naturally occurring communication in mentoring relationships. The majority of current research supporting the theoretical development of relational dialectics has not taken this approach (Baxter & Braithwaite, 2007), so this study presents a great opportunity to do so. Additionally, formal mentoring relationships are somewhat different from the majority of relationships that have been studied using relational dialectics, such as family or romantic relationships. The difference lies in the professional nature of these relationships as well as the formal structure of mentoring relationships. Given this significant difference, studying mentoring presents an opportunity to examine and extend the theory of relational dialectics.

In summary, this particular study is justified for a number of reasons. First, mentoring is a type of relationship that is understudied compared to the vast array of research on other relationship types like romantic and family relationships. Additionally, the study of mentoring has been primarily focused on the characteristics and outcomes of mentoring relationships. As such, an understanding of the dynamics within mentoring relationships is lacking. Given that mentoring programs are often recommended solutions to problems in education, youth development, and business, a thorough understanding of the process of mentoring is well merited. Finally, this study aims to enrich the research available on the theoretical development of relational dialectics. Its import is thus relevant to both a practical understanding of mentoring as well as a theoretical understanding of interpersonal relationships.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL APPROACH

#### Review of Literature

##### *Conceptualization of mentoring*

The term mentor originates from Greek mythology and refers to a character in Homer's *Odyssey* (1961). Mentor was entrusted to care for Telemachus while Telemachus' father, Odysseus goes off to war to Troy and beyond. The concept of mentoring in the present day has developed in some ways from its historic origins, and an analysis of contemporary definitions is useful to an understanding of the relationship.

One of the foremost referenced authors on mentoring is Kathy Kram, whose research study of mentoring in work environments was one of the largest conducted on mentoring at the time. Kram (1988) describes mentoring as a developmental relationship occurring in an organizational context that benefits both individuals and allows "individuals to address concerns about self, career, and family by providing opportunities to gain knowledge, skills, and competence, and to address personal and professional dilemmas" (p. 4). Intrinsic to her definition is an age and experience difference between the two individuals. Two other key aspects of this relational description are its developmental nature and its organizational context. Carmin (1988) offered a developmental definition of mentoring, asserting that mentoring "is itself developmental and proceeds through a series of stages which help to determine both the conditions

affecting and the outcomes of the process” (p. 6). The difference in Carmin and Kram’s definitions lie in the description of mentoring as a relationship vs. a process.

Others have defined mentoring more generally. For instance, Zey (1984) defines a mentor as “a person who oversees the career and development of another person, usually a junior, through teaching, counseling, providing psychological support, protecting, and at times promoting or sponsoring” (p. 7). Zey’s definition leaves open the possibility that mentors do not necessarily have to be senior to protégés, and Zey also focuses on the activities of the mentor rather than the results. Such a possibility is also evident in Allen and Poteet’s (1999) definition of mentors as “individuals who have guided, sponsored, or otherwise had a positive and significant influence on the professional career development of another employee” (p. 63).

An alternate definition was provided by Chao, Walz, and Gardner (1992) and focused to a great extent on the organizational aspect of mentoring. “Mentorship is defined as an intense work relationship between senior (mentor) and junior (protégé) organizational members. The mentor has experience and power in the organization and personally advises, counsels, coaches, and promotes the career development of the protégé” (p. 624). An interesting aspect of this definition is the assumption of power possessed by mentors in the organization, which seems to be solely based on seniority.

Mentoring can also be described as a relationship that contains both personal attributes such as counseling and psychological support, as well as role attributes such as training and education, and thus meets the criteria of a blended relationship (Bridge & Baxter, 1992). Specifically, they define blended relationships as “the many kinds of personal relationships that can function simultaneously with both personal and role

components” (p. 201). Most of the existing research that examines blended relationships focuses on intimate relationships in the workplace (Dillard, 1987; Dillard & Miller, 1988; Dillard & Witteman, 1985). Dillard (1987), for example, found effects on workplace performance due to intimate relationships. In some cases, employees involved in workplace romances performed better after they became involved in a relationship, indicating an interaction between the personal aspects and the role aspects of the blended relationship. Bridge and Baxter examined friendships in the work place (1992) and identified benefits for employees who took part in these blended relationships. In particular they found that friendships benefited work relationships in four ways: information access, work-related assistance, psychological support, and improved work relationships. The role aspects of this blended relationship enabled their friendships through accessibility, commonality and bonding opportunities. Additionally, Bridge and Baxter (1992) discovered the following relational dialectics in workplace friendships: autonomy-connection, openness-closedness, judgment-acceptance, impartiality-favoritism, and equality-inequality. This study, as well as the Dillard study (1987), provides background and support for the study of the blended relationship of mentoring. Mentoring would be expected to share similar aspects to friendships and romantic relationships in that it similarly contains both role and personal attributes. As such, a definition of mentoring should include characterizing this relationship as blended.

The definitions of mentoring described above have a common characteristic in that they all assume a greater experience level of mentors compared with protégés, possibly based on age or seniority in the organization. Thus, a definition of mentoring should include this aspect. Also, all of the definitions share the notion that mentoring

leads to benefits in areas of psychosocial development, career development, and education or training, which is another key component to include in a mentoring definition. One distinction among the definitions is the description of mentoring as either a process or a relationship. Given the focus of this particular study, which seeks to incorporate relational dialectics, mentoring will be explored as a relationship that is mutually negotiated and enacted in communication. From this analysis, the following definition is proposed for use in this study. Mentoring is an interpersonal blended relationship enacted in communication in which a person with greater experience (the mentor) and a person of lesser experience (the protégé) mutually negotiate to gain psychosocial, career and/or educational development.

#### *Outcomes of Mentoring Relationships*

The current body of research that identifies outcomes of mentoring research is extensive and outlines both benefits and drawbacks of mentoring relationships. As such, an abundance of research exists which provide a clear understanding of the benefits that may be actualized through mentoring relationships. Through a meta-analysis of existing mentoring research, Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz, and Lima (2004) found career development benefits such that protégés, in contrast to those without mentors, consistently received higher compensation, greater opportunities for promotion, and higher job satisfaction. Baugh, Lankau, and Scandura (1996) found similar career benefits for female protégés who perceived higher potential for advancement in their organization when compared with employees without mentors. Career benefits were also substantiated by a number of other authors (Bahniuk, Hill, and Darus, 1996; Eby and Lockwood, 2005; Pompper and Adams, 2006; Ragins and Cotton, 1999; Scandura, 1992;

Wallace, 2001; Wellington, 2001; Zey, 1984). In addition to benefits received by protégés, a modicum of research has focused on the benefits that mentors receive from the relationship. Benefits received by mentors include the ability to fulfill developmental needs of generativity (Kram, 1988), greater learning, personal gratification, enhanced managerial skills (Eby & Lockwood, 2005), higher salary, perceived career success (Bozionelos, 2004), job assistance, additional information, and prestige (Zey, 1984).

In addition to benefits that individuals can receive, research has also been conducted to identify the potential benefits for organizations. It has been suggested that mentoring can benefit organizations through improved job performance, employee morale, and organizational commitment, and a solid base of research exists to support these claims. The most robust area of research enumerating the benefits that organizations receive from mentoring relationships surrounds employee performance. In fact, numerous studies have shown that mentoring relationships lead to both improved job skills and increased performance and productivity (Alleman, 1989; Kalbfleisch & Bach, 1998; Paglis, Green, & Bauer, 2006; Ramanan, Taylor, Davis, & Phillips, 2006; Villar Angulo & Alegre de la Rosa, 2006; Wasserstein, Quistberg, & Shea, 2007; Williamson & Fenske, 1998). Also, Kalbfleisch and Bach (1998) and Zey (1984) discovered that a higher level of organizational commitment and loyalty resulted from mentoring relationships. A few authors also discovered that mentoring contributed to increased retention of employees as well as recruitment given its appeal to prospective employees (Alleman, 1989; Kalbfleisch & Bach, 1998; Zey, 1984).

The other side of the outcomes-based mentoring research focuses on the potential damage that can be caused through mentoring relationships. The negative outcomes for

protégés in mentoring relationships often include feeling neglected or perceiving a lack of support from their mentors (Eby & Lockwood, 2005; Kilburg & Hancock, 2006).

Mentors, on the other hand, often feel a sense of inadequacy, discomfort, and great tension in deciding how to mentor (Eby & Lockwood, 2005; Kilburg & Hancock, 2006; Siebert, Clark, Kilbridge, and Peterson, 2006). Additionally, a number of researchers identified great potential for mentoring relationships to be fraught with manipulation and betrayal given the inherent power differential (Carruthers, 1993; Sundli, 2007; Zey, 1984). Specifically related to cross-gender pairings, Wellington (2001) identified additional issues in mentoring such as stereotypical gender assumptions, paternalism, sexual tension, innuendo from others about the true nature of the relationship, jealousy of respective spouses, inability of male mentors to address issues of bias, and differing preferences in social activities. Clearly, in addition to the positive outcomes of mentoring relationships, a number of potential negative outcomes also exist.

Mentoring is a relationship that has great potential for benefiting individuals and workplaces. On the other hand, it also can result in quite negative outcomes for both mentors and protégés. If mentoring can result in negative outcomes for both mentor and protégé, it stands to reason that a better understanding of this relationship could alleviate some of these unfortunate occurrences. This study will bring a new perspective to mentoring relationships by adding to the abundant outcomes-oriented research with a focus on how mentoring relationships are constituted in communication. A greater understanding of the dynamics within mentoring relationships will enhance the experience of mentors and protégés, given more accurate expectations.

### *Limitations of Existing Research*

Mentoring is a relationship that has been researched extensively. From the existing research, it is clear that mentoring is a complex relationship worthy of study. By conducting an analysis of the current research, one can gain a perspective of future research directions. The first aspect to examine in current research concerns the methodology used in past studies. The vast majority of studies on mentoring included only one member of the mentoring pair, either mentors or protégés. Only a handful of studies included the perspectives of mentors and protégés in the same population (Eby & Lockwood, 2005; Kalbfleisch & Davies, 1993; Pompper & Adams, 2006). Future research in mentoring should address this limitation by gaining access to mentor-protégé pairs. Another methodological limitation to the majority of studies uncovered in this review is the inclusion of only one method in collection of data. Orland-Barak and Klein (2005) conducted one of the few studies with multiple methods and found contradictions between self-report and actual interaction. Kram (1988) relied solely on interview data and theorized a developmental model that was inconsistent with a turning-point analysis conducted with the Retrospective Interview Technique (RIT) by Bullis and Bach (1989). These two cases raise the possibility that other studies that relied on only one method could possess limitations. Researchers studying mentoring should incorporate this understanding into future research by relying on multiple methods in data collection.

In addition to methodological limitations in the extant body of research on mentoring, an analysis of the literature yields theoretical concerns. Much of the current research on mentoring is linear based and solely rests on deductive reasoning. One of the predominant ways that mentoring has been understood is through a developmental

perspective (Kram, 1988). Kram conducted multiple studies of mentoring relationships and discovered four stages of the mentoring relationship: initiation, cultivation, separation, and redefinition. Initiation refers to the start of the relationship whereas cultivation represents the significant growth portion of the relationship. This phase eventually yields to separation when a protégé and mentor move apart due to either personal or organizational changes and is followed by a phase of redefinition of the relationship under new terms. Kram suggests that although these stages are not distinct, relational participants proceed through these four predictable stages. The developmental perspective put forth by Kram (1988) was effectively brought into question by Bullis and Bach (1989) in their turning point analysis of mentoring relationships. They discovered turning points at various stages of mentoring relationships that did not fit with the expected developmental stages for the relationship. For instance, they found mentors and protégés who needed to redefine their relationship early on in the process. As such, they argued for the need to understand mentoring outside of the perspective of a linear process.

An abundance of applied research has also been conducted on mentoring. Although this research is helpful in understanding aspects of mentoring, it is somewhat limited in its lack of a theoretical base. In fact, the vast majority of studies examining mentoring relationships were conducted without grounding in a specific theory. Only a few studies in the extant literature (Chiles, 2007; Kalbfleisch, 2002; Kalbfleisch & Davies, 1993) incorporated a specific theoretical base from which to proceed. Rather, the existing research base built on prior research through a deductive process of identification of causes and effects. This study, which seeks to incorporate relational dialectics, can be

of greater utility and contribute to a more in-depth understanding of this relationship given its theoretical bent.

Studying mentoring through relational dialectics will likely yield a richer understanding of this complex relationship in contrast to the perspective gained from a developmental model. Additionally, mentoring is an understudied interpersonal relationship compared with more universally recognized relationships, such as friendships, romantic relationships, and familial relationships. Thus, a study of mentoring through a relational dialectics perspective is merited in that it may offer new insights into the advancement of the theory of relational dialectics.

The lack of research on mentoring relationships coming from the field of communication studies is unfortunate. The mentoring research studies that have been conducted through communication have led to worthwhile findings and reinforce the need to study it further through a communication lens. (Bahniuk, et al., 1996; Buell, 2004; Bullis & Bach, 1989; Kalbfleisch, 2002; Kalbfleisch & Bach, 1998; Kalbfleisch & Davies, 1993; Wrench & Punyanunt, 2004; Young & Cates, 2005; Young & Cates, 2004). Ironically, communication ability seems to be consistently raised in most of the research presented as a prescription for effective mentoring, even though the studies that make this recommendation are not based in the communication discipline (Orland-Barak, 2001). Nevertheless, such consistency also supports the notion that communication in mentoring relationships needs to be studied further in future research.

An analysis of the current body of literature relevant to mentoring indicates three significant limitations. First, the majority of research relies on the perspective of only one relational partner, either the protégé or the mentor. Second, researchers have failed to

incorporate multiple methods of data collection to a great extent. Additionally, research grounded in the field of communication or in relational theory has been conducted only to a limited extent. This study aims to address some of the limitations in current research by incorporating multiple methods in a study of communication behaviors among mentor pairs that is grounded in relational dialectics theory. A discussion of relational dialectics theory and its applicability to the study of mentoring follows.

### Theoretical Approach

#### *Relational Dialectics Theory*

In the early 1980's the concept of dialectics began to be integrated into contemporary relational theory and research practices in part with a groundbreaking essay by Altman, Vinsel, and Brown (1981) on social penetration and privacy regulation. Baxter and Montgomery (1996) incorporated this work along with other influences (Bakhtin, 1981; Murphy, 1971) to conceptualize a theory of relational dialectics. Baxter and Montgomery (1996) assert that dialectics involve a set of conceptual assumptions that “revolve around the notions of contradiction, change, praxis, and totality” (p. 6). The concept of contradiction is central to dialectics, and refers to “the ongoing dynamic interaction between unified opposites” (p. 10). Unified opposites are two opposing poles of a phenomenon where the presence of one influences the other, and neither pole can exist without the other. The notion of change in relational dialectics is constant. That is, the tension between two opposites results in an ongoing interplay which may develop linearly, cyclically, or spirally. The third aspect of dialectics is praxis, which Baxter and Montgomery (1996) define simply as the notion that “people are at once actors and objects of their own actions” (p. 13). Praxis helps to explain the temporal dimension of

dialectics in that actors make communicative choices that are “informed by the historicity of prior interaction events and informs future events” (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996, p. 14). Finally, totality is the fourth concept of relational dialectics and refers to the absolute interdependent relationships between phenomena or dialectical oppositions. This totality is understood as a knot of contradictions that should be identified through relational research. In other words, dialectical tensions act upon one another, and the researcher seeks to understand these interrelationships among contradictions. Useful to the understanding of dialectics is that dialectical holism centers on the notion that contradictions are used as the unit of analysis. This assumption also instructs another aspect of this perspective in that contradictions are located at the level of the relationship. In other words, the theory privileges the study of interaction rather than the study of individuals.

The authors also identified three main examples or categories of contradictions, although they cautioned against relying on these suggested contradictions of relating in a cookie-cutter fashion. Doing so could result in ignoring new, different, and equally valid contradictions. It could also be tempting to miss the subtle variations in contradictions. According to Montgomery and Baxter (1997), there are infinite possibilities of dialectical tensions in relationships. Nonetheless, the three primary contradictions extant in relationships are integration-separation, expression-nonexpression, and stability-change. Integration-separation refers to the pull to either integrate into or separate from a relationship. Integration is characterized by communication that emphasizes connection, bonding, and association, whereas separation includes communicative acts of autonomy, independence, and freedom. Expression-nonexpression refers to the tension between

openness and closedness or revelation and concealment. In their initial description of dialectical tensions, Baxter and Montgomery (1996) distinguish between the dialectics openness-to/closedness-to and openness-with/closedness-with. The openness-to and closedness-to dialectic is the degree to which individuals demonstrate a willingness to receive information. Disclosure and sharing in communication are examples of openness-with, and privacy and withholding represent examples of closedness-with. Stability-change reflects the tension between such oppositions as predictability or certainty with spontaneity or novelty. Stability can be identified through communicative acts that stress the status quo, constancy or permanence, and the theme of change is reflected in communication of transformation, newness, and variation.

In addition to the presence of three primary dialectical tensions, proponents of relational dialectics theory also suggest the presence of infinite possibilities of unique dialectical tensions (Baxter & Braithwaite, 2007; Baxter & Montgomery, 1996). Numerous studies have been conducted which support this assertion in the continued identification of new and different dialectical tensions. For instance, Cools (2006) discovered two unique dialectics specific to intercultural couples called privilege-disadvantage and belonging-exclusion. Participants experienced a pull between feeling privileged to be in an intercultural relationships as well as being disadvantaged by not being as comfortable speaking the language of their partner. The tension between being welcomed into a new culture versus feeling like an outsider was also evident in these relationships. Braithwaite and Baxter (2006) provided further evidence for the presence of infinite dialectical tension in their study of stepchildren's perceptions of nonresidential parents. In particular they discovered a tension between parenting and nonparenting

which represented stepchildren's ambivalence of their nonresidential parent's parenting behavior. Another representative example of the presence of infinite unique tensions is provided by Dickson, Hughes, and Walker (2005) who identified the tension between traditional and non-traditional gender roles for women in later-life dating relationships. They discovered that women in later-life dating relationships were torn between wanting to be financially independent and pay for their own meals versus wanting more traditional treatment such as having men initiate dates and open doors for them. These three studies are representative of a larger research base which provides compelling evidence for the presence of infinite dialectical tensions in relationships.

Another significant aspect of the theory concerns the management strategies employed by relational parties (Baxter & Braithwaite, 2007; Baxter & Montgomery, 1996). Baxter and colleagues identified a number of management strategies that parties in relationships use to manage dialectical tensions: spiraling inversion, segmentation, balance, integration, recalibration, reaffirmation, denial, and disorientation. The first six, they argued, are functional strategies whereas the last two are considered dysfunctional toward the relationship. Baxter and Montgomery (1996) described spiraling inversion as follows: "relationship parties tack back and forth through time, alternating an emphasis on one dialectical pole with an emphasis on another dialectical pole" (p. 285). Segmentation refers to the negotiation of parties by either topic or activity domain which will emphasize one dialectical pole over the other. An example is declaring a topic off limits, which emphasizes the dialectical pole of nonexpression. Balance is a strategy akin to compromise, "a response in which both dialectical demands are fulfilled partially" (p. 285). When both dialectical poles are fulfilled completely at the same time, parties enact

the strategy of integration. Recalibration can be thought of as redefinition, described by Baxter and Braithwaite (2007) as “when a relationship pair is able to reconstruct a contradiction so that the dialectical demands are no longer experienced as oppositional” (p. 286). Reaffirmation is present when both parties acknowledge and appreciate the presence of both polarities of a dialectical tension. All of these six strategies are deemed functional strategies as they value the dialectical nature of relating and work well to help parties in relationships manage the contradictions in their relationships. The other two strategies suggested, denial and disorientation, are not seen as functional. Denial refers to parties in a relationship ignoring the existence of a polarity of a contradiction. It is deemed not functional as both poles of a dialectic are necessary for a relationship to function. Further, disorientation occurs when relationship parties see relational contradictions as impossible and/or completely negative so that they give up on managing the tension productively.

Of the research examined, relational dialectics has been employed as a theoretical construct in a number of relational types including marriages, long-distance dating relationships, family relationships, and workplace friendships. Relational dialectics has been a useful heuristic in understanding more about all of these relationships. Specifically, a number of studies utilized relational dialectics and discovered both primary dialectical tensions (Baxter, Braithwaite, Bryant, & Wagner, 2004; Baxter, Braithwaite, Golish, & Olson, 2002; Braithwaite & Baxter, 2006; Bridge & Baxter, 1997; Hoppe-Nagao and Ting-Toomey, 2002; Pennington, 2004; Spitzberg, 1990) as well as previously unidentified contradictions (Bridge & Baxter, 1997; Cools, 2006; Meyer, 2003). Further, researchers benefited by using relational dialectics as a theoretical base to

understanding communication behaviors as management strategies of dialectical tensions (Braithwaite & Baxter, 1995; Braithwaite, Baxter, & Harper, 1998; Hoppe-Nagao & Ting-Toomey, 2002; Sahlstein, 2006).

Although relational dialectics have been useful in identifying dialectical tensions and management strategies as noted above, no studies were identified in which these theoretical constructs were identified in mentoring relationships. The most applicable study was conducted by Bridge and Baxter (1997), who studied friends in work environments through a relational dialectics perspective. Given the central role communication plays in constituting relationships, and the ability for researchers to better understand relationships through the lens of relational dialectics, it would be extremely valuable to study mentoring with this theoretical grounding.

The first and most obvious reason that relational dialectics should be used to study mentoring is simply to expand upon existing research and respond to calls for additional research from current scholars studying communication and related relationships. First, Baxter (2004) argues that overall her “work to this point has been too distanced from naturally occurring talk between relating parties” (p. 189), and laments that her studies have not included talk between partners. Mentoring is just one of a number of relationship types that could answer this call for more research for naturally occurring talk. Additionally, Waldron (2003) argues that future research in organizational settings should include developmental and dialectical perspectives. Formal mentoring relationships, for example, could benefit from a better understanding of long-lasting patterns rather than solely relying on previous research, which is mostly transactionally based. Finally, Golden, Kirby, and Jorgenson (2006) suggest the need for more research

using relational dialectics in the area of work-life dynamics. Particularly, they argue that relational dialectics is “a potentially fruitful and under-exploited perspective for spanning the divide between organization- and family-based studies of work and personal-life interrelationships” (p. 167). Mentoring is more often than not a relationship that spans the gap between work and personal life. In other words, mentors and protégés who begin as coworkers at one organization often do not stay at the same organization, yet continue the relationship beyond that of one organization. Given the nature of mentoring relationships to extend beyond the workplace, a similar argument to Golden, Kirby, and Jorgenson’s can be made for the fruitfulness exploring mentoring through relational dialectics.

Baxter and Braithwaite (2007) make a slightly different argument in their call for additional research, and their assertion can be directly applied to mentoring relationships. They clarify that “it is important to point out that dialectical scholars do not have a very good understanding of dialectically functional or dysfunctional communication practices” (p. 286). The current conceptualization of the theory maintains that strategies to manage dialectical tensions such as segmentation or balance are functional, whereas disorientation and denial are dysfunctional. Given that mentoring is a relationship that has been abundantly studied with a focus on outcomes, this study presents a new opportunity to focus on the process of mentoring relationships. This focus will be particularly helpful in further developing the theory of relational dialectics through a greater understanding of functional and dysfunctional communication practices.

Another substantive reason for relational dialectics to be used in studying mentoring is the fit between this theory and this relationship. Daloz (1999) discusses the role of mentors of adult learners and describes learning as a dialectical process, with

protégés/students moving ahead even though they may appear to be retreating or going sideways. Mentors should be aware that change happens due to the ongoing interplay of the tension between dialectical opposites, which is sometimes linear, but often is cyclical or spiral. Given this argument that change in mentoring relationships happens through the pull of dialectical tensions (Daloz, 1999), it is logical to further substantiate this with research. Golden, et al. (2006) make a strong case for the use of relational dialectics to study identity in relationships that span different contexts. They argue that relational dialectics:

points to a much more fluid concept of identity than provided by more conventionally atomistic notions of roles, as well as to personal identity as the site of dialectical contradictions that are nonetheless necessary parts of the whole person existing in productive tension, rather than a fragmented set of roles enacted in response to changes in setting or interactants. (p. 172)

Additionally, the authors mention that the types of relationships that could benefit through this understanding of the whole person are friendships that develop through the course of a work place project or a relationship between family members who decide to work together. They continue to assert that these work-life situations fit well to be understood using the four components of dialectics: contradiction, totality, change, and praxis. A mentoring relationship shares a number of similarities with these types of relationship in both its ability to span boundaries and also its need to be understood in a fluid, dynamic way. Another way of putting this argument is that the complexity immanent in mentoring relationships necessitates the use of relational dialectics in order to fully understand it.

## Research Questions

Both the existing research on mentoring as well as the body of research explicating relational dialectics substantiates the need to study mentoring further from the perspective of relational dialectics. An analysis of the mentoring literature demonstrates an opportunity to gain a richer understanding of the relational dynamics in order to maximize the positive benefits of mentoring and minimize the significant relational risks. Further, reviewing the tenets of relational dialectics provides a clear indication that mentoring could be understood better through this lens. Specifically, through a relational dialectics perspective, researchers would be expected to discover both primary and unique dialectical tensions, as well as various management strategies of dialectical tensions. Given that mentoring has not yet been studied through relational dialectics, an exploratory study is warranted. Thus, the following research questions will be explored.

RQ1: What dialectical tensions are present in mentoring relationships?

RQ2: What strategies are used to manage dialectical tensions in mentoring relationships?

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURES

#### *Participants*

Participants in this study were recruited from a teacher preparation program based in a mid-sized western university that includes a formal mentoring program. The teacher preparation program is a unique model partnership between a private university, an independent foundation, and two school districts. The school settings include both elementary and secondary school environments in high priority schools. The program characterizes schools as “high priority” when they have a free and reduced lunch rate of over 50% as well as a school demographic population of at least 50% students of color. Mentoring is a key component of this program that matches up experienced teachers with protégés, who are called “fellows.” One unique characteristic of this program is the length of the relationship between mentor and fellow. Fellows and mentors are paired with one another for a ten-month “residency”, which is significantly longer than an average student-teaching experience. Additionally, fellows receive full scholarships to pursue their teaching credentials and Master’s degrees. In exchange, fellows commit to teach in urban schools for five years. To be included in the study, mentors and protégés must have been in their relationship for at least three months, in order to ensure that mentors and protégés have had multiple opportunities for interaction. The current study included participation from 15 active mentor-fellow pairs and 5 “alumni” mentor-fellow

pairs yielding 40 unique participants. Alumni pairs refer to participants who completed the formal pairing of their relationship in a previous year. To aid in recruitment, participants were provided with \$5 gift cards upon completion of their individual interviews. The goal for the study is to achieve theoretical saturation with respect to the thematic analysis (Morse, 1995).

The age range of mentors in the program is from 24 to 53 with an average age of 37 ( $SD=9.61$ ), and the range for protégés is 22 to 38 with an average age of 30 ( $SD=6.27$ ). Of the mentors, 17 mentors are women and 3 are men, whereas 15 protégés are women and 5 are men. Regarding ethnicity, 20% of the mentors are from minority backgrounds and 25% of the protégés identified as ethnic minorities. The mentors have an average of 9.5 years of teaching experience ( $SD=5.77$ ) whereas the protégés have an average of 2 years teaching experience ( $SD=2.49$ ).

### *Measures*

In order to achieve triangulation, two different data collection methods were used: an audio-taped conversation with mentor-protégé dyads and an audio-taped interview with each individual mentor and protégé (Appendix A). The topics for the conversation protocol (Appendix B) were given to the participants, and then the participants were asked to discuss the topics without interference from the researcher in an attempt to capture naturally occurring talk between mentors and protégés. Before progressing to the topics for analysis, the conversation protocol starts with two questions whose principal goal is to increase the comfort level of participants. The protocol was created as an adaptation of McCracken (1988) and Spradley (1979), and as such, incorporates genuinely qualitative questions. Genuinely qualitative questions are those that allow

participants to tell their own story without injection of terms by the researcher. Specifically, this study made use of “grand tour” questions (Spradley, 1979), and the questions each contained subquestions similar to planned prompts (McCracken, 1988) in an unobtrusive manner to allow participants to tell their story.

The obvious benefit of using two data collection tools is to achieve triangulation, which will be discussed in more detail later. In addition to the conversation between mentors and protégés, individual interviews were conducted with both protégés and mentors. One rationale for employing this method is to provide an opportunity for study participants to tell their own story without interference by their relational partner, as the joint conversation with their relational partner is likely to influence the discussion of the individual participants. This methodological tool may also provide an additional outlet for participants to share their experiences as they will not feel as if the conversation is their only opportunity to do so. The questions for this interview were designed to yield a discussion of polarities in relational communication by asking about positive versus challenging aspects in addition to the primary dialectical tensions discussed previously: integration-separation, expression-nonexpression, and stability-change. A number of questions were based on the interview discussion topics used by Braithwaite and Baxter (2006) in a study of stepchildren’s perceived dialectical tensions in communication with their nonresidential parent.

### *Procedures*

This research study was conducted using prompted discussions and interviews in order to understand the lived experience of mentors and protégés and the meaning that is constituted within their experience and interactions (Seidman, 2006). Prompted

discussions between mentor and protégé dyads and interviews of individual mentors and protégés were conducted and audio taped. The mentoring pairs participating in this study were given an ordered series of questions to discuss. They were instructed to spend no more than 15 minutes on any one question, and a programmable timer was used to alert pairs to the fifteen-minute interval. It was quickly discovered after two prompted discussions that the timer was unnecessary as participants did not spend close to 15 minutes on any one question. After the first two discussions, the timer was no longer used, as it was an unnecessary distraction. The goal of the prompted discussion was to collect naturally-occurring talk between mentors and protégés in an attempt to identify how dialectical tensions are constituted in mentoring relationships. Mentors and protégés were also interviewed individually after their dyadic discussion in order to further explore the communication dynamics in their relationship, as well as address any points they were not comfortable discussing in the presence of their relational partner. Unfortunately, at one point, the digital recorder used in this process experienced an electrical surge and digital recordings of two joint conversations and five individual interviews were lost. These joint conversations and individual interviews were redone with these participants. All of the audio tapes were transcribed completely.

Discussions were facilitated and the semi-structured interviews were conducted solely by the primary researcher. All discussions took place in a private room available at the specific school location of mentors and protégés. Typically, conversations and were held in classrooms after the school day or during a teacher break period. Classroom settings varied from elementary to high school settings. A number of interviews were conducted at kids' tables and chairs in classrooms with student work and posters on the

walls. Secondary school classrooms were somewhat more formal and interviews were conducted at individual desks. The settings allowed for minimal interruptions, although there were times when students came into the classroom and the interview needed to be stopped. During the school day, there was typically a good amount of background noise, however interviews that occurred after school contained very little background noise or activity. The joint discussions lasted between 11 minutes and 71 minutes with the average discussion lasting 34.5 minutes ( $SD=15.41$ ). Individual interviews lasted between 11 minutes and 37 minutes with the average of 22.3 minutes ( $SD=6.50$ ). Prompted discussions took place prior to the individual interviews. The prompted discussion with their relational partner and the follow-up individual interview were scheduled such that the follow-up interview was no later than a week after the joint conversation. At the start of the initial meeting, the primary researcher welcomed both the mentor and protégé together, and explained the purpose of the study briefly as “attempting to gain a better understanding of communication dynamics in mentoring relationships.” In addition, the primary researcher discussed the nature of confidentiality, requested that participants sign a consent form which provided a description of confidentiality, outlined the minimal possible risks in participating in a study such as this one, and provided contact information for the primary researcher and the researcher’s doctoral advisor. This request was consistent with the policies of the institutional review board of the primary researcher’s university, which had approved the study protocol. The primary researcher explained that the mentoring dyad should discuss the topics and questions on the handout (Appendix A) in the order given, and that one aim of the study was to capture naturally occurring conversation without researcher interference. The topics and questions for

discussion were described previously in the measures section of this proposal. Upon completion of the discussion, research participants were orally thanked for their time and given a copy of the consent form, as well as a reminder of their individual interview time. The follow-up interview took place typically within a week, but in a few cases, proceeded immediately after the prompted discussion. The follow-up interviews were audio taped as well. Consent forms were signed at both the initial discussion (Appendix C) and the individual interview (Appendix D).

### *Triangulation*

A common strategy to address weaknesses of an individual methodological approach that will be applied in this study include triangulation (Fine, Weis, Weseen, & Wong, 2003; Hall & Rist, 1999; Morse, 2003; Patton, 1990). Triangulation has been defined in numerous ways, but the simplest definition is offered by Denzin (1978), who delineated four different types of triangulation: data, investigator, theory, and methodological. This study seeks methodological triangulation in using multiple data collection methods to study a single problem. Numerous strengths to using triangulation exist and have been argued by multiple authors. Specifically, Fine et al. (2003) made a broad argument that “multiple methods and a deep commitment to engaging with differences (particularly between researcher and researched) form the core of provocative, politically engaged social science” (p. 188). Patton (1990) argues more pointedly for the inclusion of mixed methods in all research given that “no single method ever adequately solves the problem of rival causal factors . . . Because each method reveals different aspects of empirical reality, multiple methods of observations must be employed” (p. 187). The inherent strength in using triangulation lies in its ability to

complement individual methodologies and accommodate for some of the existing weaknesses. A strength of this specific study is the approach of observing dyads mutually constructing a conversation regarding their mentoring relationship. However, this strength is offset by the potential weakness of missing the individual perspective of each relational partner. Adding another data collection method, the individual interview, is an example of triangulation that will accommodate this weakness.

## *Analysis*

In order to analyze data, the method of thematic analysis (Owen, 1984) was used for both the discussions and interviews. Thematic analysis is an appropriate tool for this specific research study given its systematic nature and its distinction from a theory-building approach such as grounded theory. Another manner in which thematic analysis is uniquely suited to this particular study is the ability for a researcher to use it to inductively draw themes from naturally occurring talk and/or responses to interview questions. Specifically, data coding through this thematic analysis process facilitated identification of primary dialectical contradictions as well as new, previously unidentified dialectical tensions.

Owen (1984) defines a theme as “a limited range for interpretations that are used to conceptualize and constitute relationships” (p. 274). Further, Owen suggests three criteria that must be present for identifying themes: recurrence, repetition, and forcefulness. Recurrence refers to statements that have different wording but the same meaning. Repetition is a word or statement that is used more than once, and forcefulness represents an associated verbal inflection, volume, or dramatic pause that a research participant uses to emphasize an utterance.

The audio taped discussions and interviews were transcribed by first listening to the audio recordings and transcribing. Each discussion and interview was listened to a second time in order to increase accuracy. Once all discussions and interviews were transcribed, the transcriptions were read multiple times in order to ensure accuracy and to pay special attention to the identification of themes using recurrence, repetition, and forcefulness (Petronio, Reeder, Hecht, & Ros-Mendoza, 1996). As expected, this

thematic analysis uncovered themes that can be interpreted through the structure of relational dialectics theory. Specifically, the theoretical construct of contradiction described in relational dialectics theory distinguishes between three types of primary contradictions and an infinite number of other possible contradictions. The themes were thus analyzed to determine the presence of the primary contradictions of integration-separation, expression-nonexpression, and stability-change, as well as new dialectical tensions. In fact, these contradictions were used as organizing concepts (Petronio, et al., 1996) through which to conduct the thematic analysis.

### *Saturation*

The joint conversations yielded 213 single spaced pages of text and approximately 12 hours of recording time, whereas the individual interviews yielded 185 single spaced pages of text and approximately 14 hours of recording time (Transcriptions do not include interviewer questions and comments). Theoretical saturation was achieved from the joint conversations when no new themes were discovered after analysis of 13 of the 20 conversations. No new themes were discovered after analysis of 30 of the 40 individual interviews, thus also realizing theoretical saturation. The remaining seven conversations and ten individual interviews were also included and analyzed to maximize the validity of this study's interpretations.

### Summary

Relational dialectics and mentoring are respectively a theory and a relationship that are both fertile ground for additional research. Mentoring is a unique relationship enacted in communication that has been previously studied mostly atheoretically and has not been studied through the heuristic of relational dialectics. This study is intended to

develop a richer, fuller understanding of mentoring relationships through a relational dialectics theoretical lens. Specifically the goal of this study is to clearly identify dialectical tensions extant in mentoring relationships and the corresponding management strategies. Data collection consisted of both prompted discussions between mentor and protégé pairs as well as open-ended interviews with the same individual mentors and protégés. Following this chapter is a discussion of the results of these data collection methods.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

Relational dialectics and management strategies were clearly evident in the data from this study. The following chapter will describe the method of triangulation in this study and its effect on increased validity. Additionally, the chapter contains a detailed description of the dialectical tensions within mentor and fellow relationships in the teacher training program being studied. Finally, this chapter will illuminate the various strategies employed by mentors and fellows to manage dialectical tensions.

#### Triangulation

One intention of the data collection and analysis design, as previously discussed, was to attempt to increase validity through triangulation. Specifically, in addition to building on secondary research in the design of this study, data collection relied on two different methods: (a) joint conversations between mentors and fellows with a list of questions and minimal outside researcher interference and (b) individual interviews of mentors and fellows by the researcher. The two sets of transcribed data were analyzed separately for dialectical tensions using thematic analysis (Owen, 1984). Once a tension was found to exist in one set of data, the other set was analyzed to determine if the tension was also present. Upon this review of the dialectical tensions found, all tensions were found to exist in both the joint conversations and the individual interviews.

Differences in the amount of supporting data were found, yet for each dialectical tension,

the data within each set met the criteria of recurrence, repetition and forcefulness (Owen, 1984). Given the consistency in data between the joint conversations and individual interviews, the discussion of results below will include both sets of data together in order to facilitate a coherent discussion. The second research question explored the use of management strategies in dialectical tensions. The data from the individual interviews and joint conversations were also analyzed separately, and all but one of the management strategies found were present in both data sets. The management strategy of balance both contained forceful language and was recurrent in both the individual interviews and joint conversations. Repetition, however, was not found for balance in the joint conversations. This strategy is included in the results here, given that repetition was found when including both the joint conversations and individual interviews. The data from joint conversations and individual interviews were also combined to provide a more complete picture of each management strategy that was employed by mentors and fellows.

#### Research Question 1: Dialectical Tensions

Through the analysis of the joint conversations and individual interviews, eight dialectical tensions were found in the data, which met the criteria previously mentioned for recurrent themes (Owen, 1984). The contradictions found include the three primary contradictions discussed in great detail by Baxter and Montgomery (1996) and labeled primary by Baxter and Braithwaite (2007): expression and nonexpression, integration and separation, and stability and change. In the current study, however, the contradiction of expression and nonexpression was actually found to include two separate dialectics: openness-with and closedness-with, as well as openness-to and closedness-to.

Additionally, four other dialectics were discovered: equality and hierarchy, individual goals and organizational goals, personal and professional, and structure and flexibility.

### *Expression and Nonexpression*

The first contradiction, expression and nonexpression, involves the degree of openness expressed and desired in a relationship and manifested itself in the current study as two separate dialectics: openness-with and closedness-with as well as openness-to and closedness-to. Openness-with and closedness-with represented the tension between sharing information with a partner and withholding information from their partner. Examples of openness-with included sharing classroom stories, talking about their experiences with kids, discussing personal history, and asking questions of one another. Closedness-with was evidenced when mentors and fellows declared some topics off limits or they expressed a preference for not sharing information. The dialectic of openness-to and closedness-to represented the pull mentors and protégés felt between being receptive to their partners communication versus being reluctant to hear what their partner had to say. An example of openness-to was a mentor asking for feedback from the protégé and an example of closedness-to was a mentor reacting negatively to a disclosure.

*Openness-with and closedness-with.* Mentors and fellows demonstrated the openness-with and closedness-with tension in many instances throughout the data. Specifically, mentors and fellows described numerous examples of disclosure with one another, and also indicated a desire to have open communication with their relational partner. On the other hand, both mentors and fellows provided instances in which they did not share information with their partner as well as their desire to withhold some information. In addition to identifying the presence of both openness-with and

closedness-with in the data, the tension between these poles experienced by mentors and fellows was also identified. All of these examples were found to recur throughout the data. These examples also consisted of repeated key words and phrases and were expressed forcefully through participants' use of volume and vocal inflection in their speech.

The pole of openness-with was found to recur frequently in the data. Specifically, in a joint conversation, one fellow described the desire to share anything with her mentor, and stated: "I feel like I could talk to you about anything, I feel comfortable and positive about the way that we interact in our communication, it's always meaningful, but we kind of have the same sense of humor." (JC5P, p. 12; participants are referred to by ID number with mentors denoted with an "M" and fellows/protégés denoted with a "P", and the page number indicates the page on that specific interview transcription). The openness-with pole of the dialectic was also discussed throughout individual interviews and was described by another fellow.

I also felt safe enough to be able to bring that up, you know what I mean, because there are other times, not with Sandy, but with other people where you just have to walk away and not say anything or whatever, but I feel safe enough that I can speak with her about that and it didn't end up being this big deal. (II1P, p. 2; to protect anonymity, names referring to participants have been changed)

The opposing end of this contradiction was evidenced by a desire to withhold information or by the restriction of the flow of communication. In a joint conversation, a fellow described her desire to protect the relationship by keeping criticism to herself, "I didn't want to hurt our relationship in any way by bringing up something that would be potentially negative" (JC1P, p. 3). Additionally, the closedness-with pole of this

contradiction was demonstrated in individual interviews. One mentor communicated the difficulty in having open conversations:

When there's ever been any issues where I feel like I have to be the mom or be like the mentor and where it's a negative thing on his part, that's really hard for me to do conversations like that. (II11M, p. 2)

In addition to the presence of the dialectical poles of openness-with and closedness-with, the tension between these two poles was also recurrent throughout the data. One mentor described this tension between wanting to keep things private and needing to share information.

She asked me about the principal, she was like, do you like the principal, and I was like, no, and I just kind of talked to her about that and I was thinking gosh I hope this doesn't come back to bite me in the ass because in some ways talking with other mentors I share some things on a need to know basis, like office politics, like sometimes you don't really want to share and at the same time she's going to be applying for jobs she needs to know the reality of the situation and just kind of what she's walking into. (II2M, p. 3)

In this example, the mentor experienced the tension between both poles of the openness-with and closedness-with tension. Specifically, she described the pull between not wanting to share and needing to convey the private details of the reality of the situation.

Another example of this recurrent tension was shared by a fellow who described keeping some family issues from her mentor for weeks and eventually telling her.

I was going through some stuff with my family and it had been going on for weeks and it's that same deal of being in that same space but we're in the same space with 27 other people so it becomes a little harder to share those personal things, so when we had a little bit of time off, I said hey, this is what's happening I thought you should know this is what's going on for me if I seem a little weird or little offbeat that's why kind of thing. I was actually discussing with a friend in class with a friend saying, oh, you know, I've got all this going on, and Maggie doesn't even know and she said oh, you should tell her and I know I should and so I just sort of it was on the top of my mind. (II8P, p. 2)

She attributed part of this tension to logistical issues, such as not having enough time in the classroom, however, the logistical issues are secondary to the relational tension between openness-with and closedness-with. She found a time to talk with her mentor after she consulted with her friend about the tension she is feeling. In addition to the presence of the poles of this dialectical tension, these last two examples demonstrated the recurrent pull felt by participants between the two poles. The dialectical tension of openness-with and closedness-with evidently recurred in the data, satisfying the first criterion of thematic analysis.

Repetition of words to illustrate this contradiction of openness-with and closedness-with was also prevalent. For example, mentors and fellows often used the term “open” or “openness” to describe either their current relationship or their desired relationship. The term “open” was used by most of the mentor-fellow pairs in their joint conversations, and was also regularly used in individual interviews. Specifically, one fellow described the openness in a joint conversation with her mentor:

I know that I can ask you anything and you're going to be honest and open with me about it and it's not going to be a big deal and we're not going to worry about it like things will move on and everything will be okay like it's just really open and honest and I love that that it's not tainted with a lot of other relationship problems. (JC8P, p. 9)

The quote above also uses the term “honest” twice which is another phrase that is repeated often and reflected the openness-with and closedness-with contradiction. Participants also used the phrases “comfortable talking” or “talking about anything” repeatedly: “we're comfortable in talking to each other about anything in life school or nonschool” (JC9M, p. 2). The use of the phrase “talking about anything” was expressed

repeatedly in nineteen interviews and joint conversations. In one illustrative example, a mentor shared in an individual interview her ability to talk with her fellow about “anything”:

I feel like I could tell Amber anything, I mean, so yeah, I think about people that I talk to on a daily basis, I mean all my close friends from school, we've spread out a little bit, I still keep in contact with them, but day to day personal living life things I always talk to Amber. I can imagine sharing things with her that I wouldn't share with other people. (II5P, p. 2)

Additionally, participants repeated the words “candid/candor,” “explicit,” and “transparent” to describe the communication within their relationship: “I have always appreciated her candor” (II16M, p. 3), “we need to communicate, we need to really be explicit” (II10M, p. 1), and “we’re really transparent and open” (II12P, p. 3).

Closedness-with was also communicated by mentors and fellows through repetition of key phrases. Words or phrases that were repeated that supported the presence of this theme included “private,” “personal,” “keep/hold/withhold information,” and “not sharing”. A fellow shared one example with a comment in which he used the terms “private” and “not sharing”: “I don't really share, she is much more sharing in terms of her private life” (II11P, p. 4). Additionally, mentors and fellows repeatedly referred to keeping information from their relational partner. For example, a mentor spoke of protecting her fellow stating “when I feel that it's going to disturb him, that it's going to be too much for him emotionally, then I keep some information from him” (II10M, p. 3). Finally, “personal” was another repeated term used that illustrates closedness-with pole of this contradiction. A mentor described his work focus and the lack of sharing personal stories: “I very much view school as getting work done and try to

be here and get stuff done, and sometimes we miss that personal, that sharing of personal stories that other people do but that's kind of my style” (JC15M, p. 2). The use of repeated terms such as “personal,” “open,” and “private” among others, revealed the dialectical tension of openness-with and closedness-with.

The third criterion described by Owen (1984) that was evident throughout the conversations was forcefulness. In addition to showing recurrence and repetition, a number of the examples provided above also demonstrated the presence of forcefulness. Specifically, mentors and fellows emphasized words in their speech through vocal inflection and volume that relate to openness-with and closedness-with. One fellow articulated openness-with by emphasizing the words “*feel safe enough*” to express her ability to be open with her mentor (II1P, p. 2). Two examples from mentors demonstrated forcefulness in describing the tension between the two poles. One mentor shared the need to share feedback with her fellow as “that's *really hard* for me” (II11M, p. 2), whereas another articulated the need to be upfront with her fellow: “she's going to be applying for *jobs*, she *needs to know the reality* of the situation” (II2M, p. 3). A fellow also expressed this tension when agonizing over the decision to share information with a friend of hers, “I've got *all this going on*, and *Maggie doesn't even know* and she said oh, you should tell her and *I know I should*” (II8P, p. 2). In a joint conversation, a fellow emphatically shared with her mentor her pleasure with the relationship emphasizing the words “open” and “honest”: “you're going to be honest and *open* with me...it's just really *open* and *honest* and I love that that it's not tainted with a lot of *other relationship problems*” (JC8P, p. 9), whereas another emphasized the word “anything” in describing her experience of openness-with her mentor: “I feel like I could tell Amber *anything*” (II5P, p. 2). The third

criterion of forcefulness was also evident in the data through participants' use of vocal inflection to describe the openness-with and closedness-with dialectical tension.

The first theme of openness-with and closedness-with was found in both joint conversations and individual interviews. Additionally, the presence of the theme was supported by examples of recurrence, repetition, and forcefulness. Based on this thematic analysis, significant support existed to legitimize the claim of the presence of the openness-with and closedness-with dialectic.

*Openness-to and closedness-to.* The second dialectic that comprised the expression and nonexpression dialectic that was present in the data was openness-to and closedness-to. This dialectic refers to the degree of receptivity that a participant has to communication in the relationship. In other words, at times when individuals are expressing a desire to receive feedback or welcoming information, they are pulled toward the openness-to end of the dialectic. When individuals are not interested in receiving information, they are being pulled toward the closedness-to pole of the dialectic. The poles of this dialectic as well as the tension between the poles were found in the data and fulfilled the criteria of recurrence, repetition, and forcefulness.

The theme of openness-to and closedness-to was recurrent throughout the data. One fellow expressed her perception of her mentor's openness to questions and feedback in an individual interview. For instance:

She's always been very open and continually says if you ever hear me say anything or you have questions about why I did what I did, please let me know because that keeps her on her toes as well, which I find very refreshing because a lot of people don't appreciate that type of interaction very much. (IIP, p. 4)

The same fellow also perceived her mentor being closed to feedback, demonstrating the tension between these two poles:

It was like my first time when I actually had to question something that she had said and I asked her why she said what she did at conference time with regard to a student, and I think she may have been put off by that initially. (II1P, p. 1)

The opposing end of the dialectical tension as well as the tension itself also recurred throughout interviews and joint conversations. Specifically, one mentor related a time when she was closed to feedback from her fellow and avoided communication with the fellow about that topic:

There was one time he asked me, he made some comment about our guided reading, this was before we switched it and I took it very critically and I was sort of pissed about his comment because he said, I think he said “what we do right now for guided reading really isn't guided reading” and then so I kept replaying that all day in my head, played it all night, and I heard it the next day and I actually didn't mention anything about that for some time probably two or three weeks when we were talking about criticism and feedback. (II7M, p. 3)

Not only did she take offense to the comment, but she also made a conscious choice not to bring the subject up again for two or three weeks demonstrating the tension between closedness-to and openness-to. This is also an example in which the mentor managed closedness-with her relational partner in her response. Another example of closedness was provided in a joint conversation when a fellow clearly articulated the tension between wanting feedback and not really wanting it at the same time. For example:

I saw that when we were, when it was my mini solo and you didn't want to be too hard in my observations...and then even though I insist, be hard with me, I can take it, secretly I'm probably thinking, don't be too hard on me. (JC4P, p. 6)

Although the fellow articulated her openness to feedback, she internalized closedness to feedback by not wanting her mentor to be “too hard on me.” Both dialectical poles of openness-to and closedness-to, as well as the tension between these poles, recurred throughout the data, thus satisfying the first criterion of thematic analysis.

The second criterion of repetition was also realized in the data in that key words and phrases were repeated by mentors and fellows in joint conversations and individual interviews. The words and phrases used repeatedly to indicate the openness-to pole of the dialectic were “accepting,” “open to,” “listening,” and not taking feedback “personally.” The closedness-to pole of the dialectic was evidenced by mentors and fellows repeatedly referring to moving away from “conflict,” refraining from “criticism” and being “uncomfortable.”

The term “accept(ing)” was repeatedly used to denote openness-to. For example Mentor 13 indicated in an individual interview that his fellow was “very, very open and accepting” (II13M, p. 2), and Fellow 18 offered his own perspective of his mentor’s accepting nature as well as his own: “it’s just easy to be with her, so it’s rewarding to know that I can open myself up to her and she’ll accept it and vice versa” (II18P, p. 3). “Open to” was repeatedly used by both mentors and fellows as a direct indication of the presence of this end of the dialectical tension. One example of this terminology was seen in a brief exchange between a mentor and a fellow in a joint conversation:

JC8P: And I think that’s because we are open with each other

JC8M: And I think it’s good too that we’re both willing to admit that we have learning to do and I, we’re both open to suggestions and feedback.

(JC8, p. 9)

The act of “listen(ing)” was another key term that was repeated frequently by mentors and fellow. A compelling example was conveyed by a mentor in her sharing of her appreciation for her fellow’s openness in a joint conversation:

And I think that's what I was most appreciative about is that you are very open and you are listening and you decided hey I'm going to try this or I'm going to do this where a lot of people come into it and are like I already know how to do this I already know what I'm talking about. (JC17M, p. 10)

Finally, participants consistently referred to the notion of not taking feedback “personally,” and this was another phrase that provided evidence of the openness-to theme. Specifically, one fellow shared how she had to be open to receiving feedback in order to become a better teacher:

I mean, yeah, she's told me things that ooh, weren't so great to hear, but I needed to hear them in order to get better at what I was doing in becoming a teacher and I know that, like, I didn't take it personally or harbor any bad feelings or anything about it. (II8P, p. 4)

This use of “personally” is one of a number of terms that indicates repetition of key words in the description of this dialectical tension.

A number of terms were also repeated to indicate the closedness-to pole of the openness-to and closedness-to dialectic, with mentors and fellows referring to moving away from “conflict,” refraining from “criticism,” and being “uncomfortable”. One example of this repetition was present as a fellow described her closedness to conflict and her desire to “walk away” from “conflict”:

I tend to run from conflict or anything that I perceive as being something that might end in conflict, walking away, not feeling like I was as liked as I when I went into the conversation too as being part of that conflict. So, I think there were some conversations that were not had or weren't completed toward the beginning of last year where that just furthered the distance. (II20P, p. 2)

Another term that highlighted the openness-to and closedness-to dialectic which was repeated was “criticism.” One fellow articulated how his mentor would be reluctant to give criticism and his own closedness-to receiving such criticism by articulating how he would likely push back when receiving criticism:

Hopefully going forward, she will not be afraid of criticizing, getting on me which I think, is unfortunately necessary given my personality and I think conveying what she's going to expect and, you know, maybe there might be pushback on my side and that happens. (II11P, p. 6)

Finally, as “comfort” was a repeated term that evidenced openness-to, “discomfort” was a repeated term that evidenced closedness-to. Specifically, one mentor clearly articulated the tension between openness-to and closedness-to using the term uncomfortable:

Being open with each other about what we were each feeling and I knew all I needed to do was talk to her about it but sometimes you get to this point where I really need to talk to you that I don't want to because it's going to feel uncomfortable in the beginning. (II20M, p. 2)

In this example, the mentor shares the closedness-to with the term “uncomfortable” that both parties in the relationship felt regarding difficult conversations in the beginning of the relationship.

“Comfortable,” “accepting,” “open to,” “listening,” and not taking feedback “personally” were all key words and phrases that permeated the data. In addition, mentors and fellows also repeated the phrases moving away from “conflict,” refraining from “criticism” and “uncomfortable.” The repetition of these terms in describing the tension between these poles supported the presence of this contradiction.

The last criterion of forcefulness was also evident in the data collected. Specifically, the mentors and fellows spoke vehemently when describing the tension

present in their relationships. In the examples shared above of recurrence and repetition, mentors and fellows emphasized a number of relevant words and phrases in their description of the tension. One fellow related her perception of her mentor's openness to questions with emphasis as follows: "She's always been very open and continually says if you *ever* hear me say anything or you have questions about *why I did what I did, please let me know*" (II1P, p. 4). The same fellow related the opposite end of the tension using vocal inflection to accentuate her perception of her mentor's closedness-to a particular question: "I asked her *why* she said what she did at conference time with regard to a student, and I think she may have been *put off by that* initially" (II1P, p. 1). Also, from an example of recurrence above, the mentor stressed the words "very critically" and "pissed" in describing her reaction to a comment from her fellow (II7M, p. 3). She also used dramatic pauses to call attention to the time she took when she was closed to future similar conversations "I actually didn't mention anything about that for some time (pause) probably two or three weeks (pause) when we were talking about criticism and feedback" (II7M, p. 3). A fellow described her own experience of this dialectical tension forcefully, changing her vocal inflection to emphasize the words that speak to this tension in the following quote: "even though I *insist, be hard with me*, I can take it, secretly I'm probably thinking, *don't be too hard on me*" (JC4P, p. 6). Her emphasis on "insist, be hard with me" represented her openness-to feedback, whereas her emphasis on "don't be too hard on me" reflected the exact opposite end of the tension. Numerous other examples of forcefulness existed in the data relating to the openness-to and closedness-to dialectical tension. These examples of forcefulness validated the presence of the third criterion of thematic analysis with respect to the openness-to and closedness-to dialectic.

Openness-to and closedness-to is another dialectic that was present in the interview and joint conversation data. Both of these poles were recurrent throughout the data. Multiple examples of repetition of key words and phrases were also prevalent. Participants also used forcefulness throughout to highlight these themes. Satisfaction of these three criteria validates this dialectical tension in the data. The openness-to and closedness-to dialectic was found to exist in addition to the openness-with and closedness-with dialectic. The combination of these two dialectics made up the larger primary dialectic of expression and nonexpression.

### *Integration and Separation*

The second primary dialectical tension found was integration and separation, and this contradiction can be described as the pull between individuals in a relationship connecting with one another versus creating distance from one another. Integration is often akin to connection, closeness, bonding, and dependence whereas separation is akin to autonomy, distance, and independence. Integration was evidenced by relational partners expressing a desire to spend time with one another, whereas separation was often evidenced by the need to have time to oneself. The criteria of recurrence, repetition, and forcefulness were all met for this theme.

Recurrence of this tension was present throughout both the joint conversations and individual interviews. One fellow identified the existence of the integration pole in conveying her desire to be with her mentor the whole year and her appreciation of the closeness with which she was able to work with her mentor:

I mean that's okay if you're subbing, you might see them again, but to really be invested in the kids I think makes me a better teacher. So, I really liked that part of the program where I actually do get a mentor that I hang

out with the whole year, that I get to really pick your brain and try to understand your philosophies and figure out where mine are and how to make them work together and then thinking ahead to what I'm going to do in my own classroom and what I'm going to do if it doesn't work, call you. (JC6P, p. 4)

In addition to her enjoyment of the closeness, she also indicated a desire to continue the relationship by calling the mentor when she needs help next year. In an individual interview, a mentor discussed the same recurrent theme of integration describing the friendship she's established, her anticipation of seeing the fellow, her desire to reach out to her fellow about a student in the class, and her feeling of being on the same wavelength:

We are also really good friends, so it's kind of the best of both worlds. So, you're teaching with someone you really look forward to seeing and talking to... Yeah we have just a little boy who is quite a handful and we are kind of both feeling a little bit stuck, like what do we do, we have tried everything. So, she is gone on Friday and Monday which is a four-day gap, so we usually catch up on the weekends. She'll call and ask how did he do on Friday and there are days when I'm gone where she subs and we usually check in about the little guy and say God this is where I feel really frustrated or I had a really good day with him this is what I did so we're connected on a level where we both feel compassion and we're both terribly frustrated with the student and we're very much on the same wavelength. (II9M, p. 1)

These examples along with many others indicated the recurrent pattern of integration in the interview data.

In addition to the desire to connect with their relational partners, mentors and fellow also expressed the opposite end of the pole toward separation. In an individual interview, one mentor described the mutual need to get personal space from one another:

Absolutely and we feel like that all the time, but now because we have a good relationship we can express that, sometimes I look at Chris and I say it's too much, right? Take your time, go do your stuff, when you have questions come back to me and he sometimes tells me that too. We'll talk

later, you know, but not because we are fighting, it's because we need that personal space, that moment was because of the argument, but absolutely we are two different people and we need space and I think we both try to respect that. (H10M, p. 2)

In addition, this quote emphasized the tension between integration and separation.

Integration is evidenced by the mentor's description of the ability to express the need for space, while at the same time, the need for space indicated the presence of the separation pole. The recurrence of this pole and the tension between the two poles was demonstrated in a quote from a mentor who described the challenge in negotiating both poles.

Specifically, she stated:

I think sometimes things have been challenging for me. This is my first experience having a fellow work in the same department as me so I don't want to be hovering like a little mother hen and I don't want to be completely distancing myself especially because you do have this other mentor who is supposed to be working with you so in that sense it's been hard for me to know when to ask. (JC20M, p. 6)

In this situation, the mentor and fellow had completed their one year structured program and were working in the same school together. Still, the mentor felt the pull between separation and integration to not "hover like a mother hen" while at the same time "not distancing herself." These examples also provided clear evidence of the recurrence of the pole of separation as well as the tension between integration and separation.

In addition to meeting the criterion of recurrence, the data also met the criterion of repetition. Words or phrases that were often repeated to indicate integration included "close(ness)," "connect(ed)(ion)," analogy of "marriage," "friend(ship)," "partnership," and "together." Both mentors and fellows used the word "close" in their joint conversation and individual interviews. For example, one fellow articulated both the feeling of connection and closeness:

I felt like pretty regularly, we get pretty connected. At the first thing in the morning, we come and we give each other a big hug. We always leave and give each other a big hug. I don't know what it is, I can get that close connection. I like that, I like having that feeling, very close. (II10P, p. 1)

Another oft-repeated term was “marriage” and the feeling of being so connected and integrated that the participants felt married to one another. In describing his “connection” to his fellow, one mentor related the marriage analogy:

We're still connected...you know, the whole urban myth of you're not supposed to, like if you're married, you're not supposed to go to bed angry. I don't think we've ever left a day ticked off at each other or left something unsettled. We at least reached a point where at the end it's like, okay, let's try that tomorrow or we'll come back to that. We always have some sort of closure and I've never felt that we've really been truly disconnected. (III4M, p. 2)

Another term that was repeated frequently that revealed the theme of integration was “friendship.” Mentors and fellows often referred to the pull toward integration by describing how their relationship was becoming more like a friendship. One fellow expressed that she is friends with her mentor when asked to clarify a previous comment about her relationship getting stronger, “we're more comfortable with each other. We're able to really, I mean, we're friends, so we're able to confide in each other about things” (III1P, p. 3). Finally, mentors and fellows often used the terms “partnership” and “together” to describe their relationship, “And we have that, we are together in this, we have that partnership really established, I think, so I love the fact that you're there, you're here for me and are somebody that I can rely on” (JC10M, p. 15). In this example, the mentor described the joy she felt and used both “together” and “partnership” to express the desired state of integration.

Repetition of key terms was also present for the separation pole of this contradiction. Specifically, mentors and fellows used the concepts “space,” having “time”

for themselves, and repeatedly identifying the space created by days apart: “Friday,” “Saturday.” For instance, one fellow articulated the need to get away:

We went our separate ways, then I just went home, figured it out on my own, I just needed some space and some time and the next day I came back, told her what I came up with and she said that's fine go, roll with it. I just wasn't in a good spot there are certain times where we spent a lot of a lot of time together and, you know, everyone needs their space once in awhile. (II17P, p. 2)

In addition to repeatedly using the term “space,” participants also used the term “time” or “time away” to describe the same concept of separation from their relational partner. One fellow expressed the need to separate from social gatherings with her mentor: “I just I need that time, I found for me, I have, needed that time to have quiet, to have peace, where I just don't feel like being social and also to get my head on straight” (JC18P, p. 9). Participants also were acutely aware of the physical distance between one another, and frequently repeated the idea of being apart Friday and Monday and the resulting separation. For instance:

I think sometimes with the schedule also, there's a huge, I feel like every week, there's a huge break where we're not in communication, like the Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday thing and then I come back and so, sometimes it feels like I have to be reintroduced in the class like it's less my class, and it's suddenly become your class, and then I'm here. (JC13P, p. 5)

This fellow used the days of the week, as other fellows and mentors did, to recognize a level of separation from her mentor. Repetition of key terms, such as “close,” “married,” “space,” and “time” among others, is another criterion of thematic analysis that was met in the data.

The theme of integration and separation was also evidenced in the transcripts through the use of forceful communication. In addition to other examples throughout the

data, the selected examples above showed compelling evidence of forcefulness. In describing her connection with her fellow, one mentor described how her fellow is someone she “really look[s] forward to *seeing and talking to*” (II9M, p. 1). Further she emphasized the word “connected” and the phrase being “very much on the same wavelength” to stress the feeling of integration (II9M, p. 1). In describing the pull toward separation, another mentor used forcefulness to convey her point. In response to a follow up question asking whether or not she needed personal space, she stressed, “*Absolutely and we feel like that all the time... absolutely we are two different people and we need space*” (II10M, p. 2). Another mentor shared her experience of this tension changing her vocal inflection to highlight the tension: “I don't want to be *hovering like a little mother hen* and I don't want to be completely *distancing myself*” (JC20M, p. 6). Finally, a protégé used vocal inflection to describe her feeling of going from integration to separation with forcefulness: “I feel like every week, there's a huge *break* where *we're not in communication...I have to be reintroduced in the class like it's less my class, and it's suddenly become your class, and then I'm here*” (JC13P, p. 5). Forcefulness was evident through these statements in addition to other examples where participants used volume and vocal inflection to describe their experience of the integration and separation dialectical tension.

Integration and separation is a dialectical tension that clearly was present in the interview data. Both integration and separation recurred throughout the data, key phrases representative of this theme were repeated throughout the transcript, and participants used forcefulness to convey their messages. This theme was also present throughout both joint conversations and individual interviews.

### *Stability and Change*

Stability and change was the third dialectical tension that was found in the interview data. This tension represents the pull between introducing newness, novelty, and uncertainty in the relationship versus maintaining consistency and the status quo. Participants experienced change in numerous ways: developmental change for the protégé, change in the nature of their relationship, and spontaneity. Stability was represented by finding a balance in the relationship, and by having repetition of teaching practices. Similar to the other contradictions, this contradiction was found in both the joint conversations and the individual interviews and was evidenced by recurrence, repetition, and forcefulness.

The tension between these two poles recurred throughout the recorded joint conversations and individual interviews. One fellow described her relationship changing into more of a partnership as she gained more responsibility in the classroom and her mentor felt increasingly comfortable with her.

It's definitely more of a partnership now and that's just a result of time and being comfortable in the classroom with the [program's] model...it's a gradual release and the beginning of our period is an observation period and our chance to build relationships with the kids and so my hand in the actual school day was limited and now I feel it's more of an exchange where I'm starting to, I definitely instruct some of the lessons more. I'm not quite in the planning phase of it yet, but I feel that if the kids have a question they can go to either of us and I think that she has confidence in me to take over the classroom if she's not there she feels comfortable, if I'm subbing I feel comfortable in that way, so I really feel like it's more of a team. (II4P, p. 2)

A mentor also described the changing nature of the relationship in a joint conversation, specifically how the amount of each person talking in the classroom changed.

At the beginning of the year it was more like me talking, there is more teacher talk, where now I think it's much more balanced back-and-forth. There are some days when I talk more and some days when you talk more and I think that's what works, we do this all the freaking time, we talked before second hour, we go through second hour, we talk again, we do all our classes. (JC14M, p. 7)

In addition to the amount of talking, the mentor touched on the communication in the relationship shifting from more “teacher” talk to a more “balanced” dialogue.

The opposite end of the dialectical tension of change is stability, and this was also a recurrent theme in the data. One example of stability that also demonstrated the tension between stability and change was as follows:

I think our relationship is definitely like a work relationship and not a thing where we would hang out after work kind of relationship, so I think that's something that stayed the same is we're still just at that work phase, I think by the end of the year that would change, but I think right now we're just work kind of friends. (II11M, p. 3)

The mentor described her relationship with her fellow as possessing stability in that it was consistently centered on work. At the same time, her comment indicated the presence of the tension in that she foresaw a change that might take place in the future. In a joint conversation with her fellow, another mentor described the difficulty in changing their relationship from one of mentor-fellow to that of equal colleagues.

So, I know it's hard to I think, it would be really hard to work with your mentor the next year out, do you think that that, for some reason, like, I think we work really well together, but it would be hard to change that relationship into one of total collegiality and for me to be able to treat you 100% on your own and allow for that and for you also to stand 100% on your own. (JC7M, p. 2)

This remark was a compelling example of the presence of the stability pole, as well as the ever present tension between change and stability in the relationship, and supported the recurrence of this theme in the data.

The second criterion of repetition was also met for the stability and change dialectical tension. Specific words that were repeated throughout the data in both the joint conversations and the individual interviews that indicated the presence of change were: “change” and “different”. Some words that were repeated were reflective of a greater concept such as “more”, “expand,” “better,” and “increase” which reflected a move toward something greater in the relationship. Also, “grow,” “learn,” and “develop” were often repeated to represent the growth of the individuals and the relationship. Time was another concept that was repeated throughout that indicated change. Specific words that were repeated were references to time periods, such as “year” and “beginning.”

One example of the use of the word “change” that also referenced a time period and the concept of growth was shared by a mentor in a joint conversation with her fellow.

JC7P: Yeah, I hope so, even the days when I'm solo, I feel like that a lot more, like, this is my classroom and I don't want people to come in and tell me how to do things, even if the wheels are falling off

JC7M: Let me go down in my own way man, and I think that's a change and evolution for you over the year that confidence hasn't been there all year long and good growth for you to do that. (JC7, p. 3)

“Different” was another key word that was repeated that represented the change pole of this dialectical tension. One fellow expressed how he and his mentor both changed into better teachers due to difference.

I think that it, it makes us better thinkers to be able to bounce ideas off of each other and allows us to kind of build off of each other's ideas, to be able to come up with a lot better solutions and more effective solutions, being able to be, just makes us better teachers, I think, me for sure, but Carl has said on occasion that he said that he thinks it makes him a better teacher too, of just being able to have a different angle of things and watch somebody that's a rookie teacher kind of take a stab at it, and so I think communicating in that way, being able to bounce ideas off each other and kind of having a different background for teaching, you know, with him being in it for a lot longer than I have coming from different backgrounds,

I think it just makes us into better educators were better able to accommodate kids. (II15P, p. 5)

In this example, the fellow also repeatedly used the terms “better” and “more” effective which further demonstrated the repetition of these key terms underlying the change end of the change and stability contradiction.

The stability end of the dialectic also met the criterion of repetition with the repeated use of the words “same,” “routine,” “always,” and “consistent.” An example using both the words “same” and “always” was shared by a fellow in an individual interview, when she stated:

Well I remember my interview and the first day I met her and she was just very friendly and even then we seem to have a rapport, so there's a humor between us, there's an ease and a comfort, so that's always stayed the same and it may have even strengthened a little bit, but that's definitely always been there, there's been a chemistry. (II4P, p. 2)

Another term that was used repeatedly was “routine.” One mentor described the effect the presence of routines had on relational stability:

Well, I want to say because you have the routine in the classroom and so the student teacher gets into the routine and that makes it stable, and I guess because I trust her it's stabilized, because I know that I can share things with her and that I can kind of open up what I'm planning as if it's professional, you know, how to plan a unit or whatever, and so, I guess that's what maybe stabilized, just the routines that we have. (II4M, p. 2)

Finally, “consistent” was another term used repeatedly by mentors and fellows that reflected the theme of stability. One fellow expressed the consistency of openness and honesty in her relationship which developed a sense of stability.

Well, we're consistently very open and honest with each other, like if I disagree with something then I say I just don't agree with you. A lot of times we'll agree to disagree if there is something, like obviously, he's a master teacher, he's been teaching for 13 years. I don't know what's going on in his brain all the time, like why he's choosing to do certain things and

so I'll question that if I don't agree, because of whatever theory I've read. Clearly I'm a novice teacher and I'll say well, I want to try something else next year. So, it totally works that we do that but I think just the honesty and the openness the feedback that I get is very, it's, I view it through a critical lens like how can I take this to grow and he does the same so that's been consistent throughout I guess, and I guess also, just his overall sense that you can do this has been consistent this whole time too. He's never questioned, you know, maybe you picked the wrong field so it's always been yeah, you can totally do this so that helps too. (II14P, p. 3)

Interestingly, the fellow described how she has grown and changed through a consistent relationship with her mentor. In other words, through the presence of stability indicated by her use of the word consistent, the fellow was able to grow and change in her own development as a teacher. In addition to using the term consistent, this example also demonstrates the repeated use of the word "always." Both poles of the change and stability dialectic were found to satisfy the thematic analysis criterion of repetition.

The third criterion of forcefulness was also met in the transcribed data. In the examples above, the concepts of stability and change were often referred to emphatically by mentors and fellows. Evidence of forcefulness was identified in participants' use of vocal inflection and volume when discussing the dialectical tension. For instance, one fellow described the tension pulling her toward change placing emphasis on the past state and the current state of her relationship, "It's definitely more of a partnership now...*my hand in the actual school day was limited* and now I feel *it's more of an exchange*...so I *really feel* like it's more of a team" (II4P, p. 2). A mentor did the same when he emphasized the change that had taken place in the relationship in the volume and inflection of his speech,

At the beginning of the year it was more like *me talking, there is more teacher talk*, where now I think it's much more balanced back-and-forth. There are some days when I talk more and some days when you talk more

and I think that's what works, *we do this all the freaking time*. (JC14M, p. 7)

In addition to emphasizing the change that takes place through forcefulness, the mentor stated emphatically that they do “this all the freaking time” indicating the copresence of stability in the midst of their changing relationship. Another mentor discussed stability in her relationship with her fellow placing verbal emphasis on the current state of their relationship as a “work relationship” and verbally stressing that the relationship has “stayed the same”, and she also emphasized the phrase “that would change” to indicate the change tension (II11M, p. 3). An additional example of forcefulness was provided by a mentor who was having difficulty envisioning working with her fellow under different circumstances. To describe this, she placed emphasis on the italicized words in the following quote: “it would be *hard to change* that relationship into one of *total collegiality* and for me to be able to treat you *100%* on your own and *allow for that*” (JC7M, p. 2). Two final examples were provided by fellows who described aspects of their relationship that were consistent throughout, stating enthusiastically, “that’s always been there” (II4P, p. 2) and “that’s been consistent throughout” (II14P, p. 3). These comments are exemplary of the forcefulness used by participants to describe the variance between stability and change in their relationships.

The contradiction of stability and change was clearly present in the communication of mentors’ and fellows’ joint conversations and interviews. The examples highlighted above demonstrate the criteria of recurrence, repetition, and forcefulness. Stability and change both recurred consistently throughout the interviews,

key phrases and words were repeated, and mentors and fellows used forceful language to convey their ideas, all of which support the presence of this dialectic.

### *Equality and Hierarchy*

Another dialectic that was discovered in these data was that of hierarchy and equality. This dialectic refers to the continuous tension in the relationship between an authoritative relationship and an equal relationship. Examples were present throughout the data that demonstrated the tension between these poles such as differential classroom ownership representative of hierarchy and sharing classroom tasks as representative of equality. Additionally, mentors and fellows discussed the hierarchical role of the mentor as the teacher or as the supervisor, while also sharing moments of equality in the relationship. This dialectical tension between hierarchy and equality was evidenced by recurrence, repetition, and forcefulness.

The theme of hierarchy and equality recurred throughout both the joint conversations and the individual interviews. One fellow verbalized the hierarchical aspect of the tension specifically referring to the classroom as her mentor's "home" and her own need to subjugate her own thoughts in that "home":

Well, I think that one of the hard things about [this] program or any kind of program where you are put into somebody else's classroom, to me, that's like their home. I would never tell somebody how to parent their children in their home. I just wouldn't do that. I wouldn't expect somebody to come into my home and tell me how to parent my children in my home and my home is a lot like my classroom, it's my environment.  
(II20P, p. 3)

Another fellow articulated this idea in a joint conversation with his mentor, when relating the struggle that some fellows experienced when they tried to own the classroom.

Some of the people who struggle with the program and their relationship, I don't know, it seemed like the mentees wanted to come in there and run the show they wanted to come in there and pretend it was their classroom. I was always, you know, that they were going there and thinking it was like their class. (JC17P, p. 9-10)

In both of these previous examples, both of the fellows expressed the idea that the classroom is not the place or the home of the fellow. Rather, the classroom is owned by the mentor, thus establishing a sense of hierarchy. The opposite end of the tension also recurred throughout the data when mentors and fellows expressed the movement toward equality. In particular, one mentor described her relationship shifting from a fellow-mentor relationship to that of colleagues.

I think that's the first time she kind of felt that move toward I'm becoming a real colleague rather than just this fellow-mentor relationship. I think that's the first time she ever felt totally, she started to get that colleague feeling and my thinking started to shift too because that was in May and everything was almost over for her and you're moving in that position so our relationship is going to change. (II18M, p. 2)

Another mentor conveyed this same sentiment in describing to her fellow seeing him as a friend rather than as a son.

But, you know, this is what is really neat about our relationship, I really see you...before it was kind of as my son, but now I see you as a buddy, kind of a friend. Before it was kind of like a mother thing protecting you. Now, I don't think I'm doing that anymore as if I'm letting you go, you know, go try and also change from that mother thing to really buddies. (JC10M, p. 19)

The notion of a fellow as a son supposes a subordinate role whereas a friend connotes a sense of equality. Both of these examples of equality underscore the presence of the tension between equality and hierarchy. Another example which clearly showed the recurrence of the tension between these two polarities was shared by a fellow who articulated the changing nature of classroom ownership, "sometimes it feels like I have to

be reintroduced in the class like it's less my class, and it's suddenly become your class and then I'm here" (JC13P, p. 5). These recurrent examples were representative of the hierarchy and equality dialectic that recurs throughout the interview data.

The repetition of key words and phrases was also extant in the joint conversations and individual interviews of mentors and fellows. Particularly, participants repeated the terms or phrases "giving responsibility," "power," and "expert" to indicate hierarchy. To express equality, mentors and fellows repeatedly used the terms "mutual," "balanced," "equal," and "partnership." Additionally, they used the phrase "learning from each other" to highlight equality in the relationship. Mentors and fellows also used the terms "my/your/their class," "someone else's kitchen," and "sharing the class" to convey both hierarchy and equality.

"Giving responsibility" is the first key phrase that primarily mentors used to indicate the hierarchy that was present in the relationship. One mentor described how she was able to give more responsibility to her fellow:

I obviously can give more responsibility to her now because she's more comfortable in the classroom and...just trying to get her more involved in actively choosing what we're going to teach or how we are going to teach it instead of me just telling her this is the way to start this lesson and this is how are going to finish it. (II2M, p. 4)

The fact that the responsibility was owned by the mentor, and that responsibility was hers to give, implied a hierarchical power differential. Another word which underscored the hierarchical dimension of the relationship that was used consistently throughout the data by mentors and fellows was "power." One fellow shared the challenges she felt due to the power dynamics in the relationship which emphasized the hierarchy pole of the contradiction.

I think just it's the whole power dynamic I'm talking about, of just being the one that's learning all the time...and it's different when she's in the room the power dynamics are different...I think we talked about it during our interview where I can't really do exactly what I want to because this other person's in the classroom. It's like, it's not really authentic because I am not calling on my own strategies, it's kind of like, her strategies and how she would get attention. So I guess what's challenging is just the power dynamic of it and being the one that has to ask questions and being the one that is assigned things and just being okay with that. So it's not that I don't have control but it's not the autonomy that I enjoy. (II2P, p. 4)

In addition to the term “power,” hierarchy was also emphasized by mentors and fellows through the use of the word “expert.” Specifically, one mentor conveyed her perception of her fellow’s comfort in a subordinate role and her reliance on the mentor as the “expert.”

One thing I think that is lacking is she hasn't given much feedback back to me...which would take her being pretty proactive...she's still pretty much the fellow...she's kind of maintaining her: you're the expert, I'm the fellow stance which at the moment is fine but when she's being the lead teacher she's going to have to step out of that and pretend that she's in charge because you know that's the only way to really learn it...she sees me as, like, the expert that should be telling her what to do. (II2M, p. 5)

In addition to her description of the fellow’s comfort in the subordinate role, the mentor also alludes to the presence of the equality pole of the tension, stating that being in the subordinate role is fine at the moment, but that it is something that is going to need to change, such that the relationship becomes more equal. To express both hierarchy and equality, mentors referred to the concept of classroom ownership through a number of key words and phrases such as: “my/your/their class,” and “cooking in their kitchen.” For instance, one fellow describes how the classroom ownership shifts between her class and her mentor’s class, “sometimes it feels like I have to be reintroduced in the class like it's less my class, and it's suddenly become your class and then I'm here” (JC13P, p. 5). The

two states of classroom ownership shift between the mentor's class and a co-ownership, hence between an equality and a hierarchy in classroom ownership. Another term that was repeatedly used by mentors and fellows to denote classroom ownership was the metaphor that a fellow was cooking in the mentor's kitchen. One illustrative example was from a fellow who specifically described being in "her kitchen" and the associated hierarchical role that implied.

That's another thing about the mentor-mentee relationship, in terms of time, it's her kitchen and it's not like she's my boss, but in a way, there is a hierarchy there so if there's a disagreement, it's sort of, do you voice that or do you just go, you know, I've talked it over with other fellows all right I'll just observe that, you know, and just eat that, I'll have my own classroom soon enough. (III1P, p. 6)

In addition to being described in shared classroom ownership, equality was also demonstrated through the repetition of terms like mutual, balance, equal, partnership, and learning from each other. For instance, to emphasize equality, one mentor stated "communication was really very balanced and mutual as far as who initiated it" (JC16M, p. 2) and a fellow also shared her description of how communication was initiated, stating "I feel like that it's mutual on both of, on both ends, and I feel like you initiate all the time too" (JC13P, p. 3). "Balance" was a term used above with "mutual" that was also repeated in other parts of the data with one mentor explicitly conveying, "I think it's much more balanced back-and-forth" (JC14M, p. 7). In addition to mutual and balanced, participants directly used the term "equal" to emphasize the equality in their relationship. Some participants described a level of equality early on in the relationship whereas others described a process of growing equality. Specifically, a fellow conveyed that his opinions

were of equal validity which contributed to equity in the power dynamic in the relationship. He asserted:

The thing that I appreciate is even though I have an understanding and I think that I've voiced that to Carl, it's still not like a vertical power structure at all. It still seems like my opinions are counted equally and any type of ideas that I have will be listened to completely and fully so that's what I really like, it's that I'm able to pull on an expert while being in a horizontal power structure. (II15P, p. 4)

Other mentors and fellows used the term “equal” to refer to a changing dynamic of the relationship going from a more hierarchical one to a more equal one. One fellow commented:

I guess in the beginning I didn't know anything about teaching at all, I was really nervous. Now I feel a little bit more of an equal with her and like we're working together and I just feel more comfortable in her classroom. (II3P, p. 2)

The equality pole of the dialectic was also evidenced by the repeated use of the term “partnership.” One exemplary use of the term was from a mentor describing the way kids in their class view them.

It has clicked with us, it has just gotten more comfortable and we have a really nice rapport and I think that the kids see us as a partnership and I see it evolving into a really positive relationship. (II4M, p. 2)

In this quote, the mentor expressed both the present state of the relationship as well as touched on the future development. A final key word that was repeated and was used to reflect equality was “learning.” Both mentors and fellows articulated the equal sharing of input into the classroom by pointing out that the relationship was about both of them learning and not just the fellow. One exchange between mentor and fellow demonstrated how they learned together equally in the process.

JC6P: I keep thinking of math when we really play off of each other so much because we're both learning it at the same time  
JC6M: and say I'm not quite learning the program how would you do this, you do this, you do that, how do you do this? I think we do that really well  
JC6P: I do too and I think that's one of our major topics is the content itself and how do we best present it to the students and we do it in front of them. (JC6, p. 5)

The focus on equality was evident when the mentor and fellow acknowledged that they are “both learning it at the same time.” Another fellow expressed this in recounting a time in the classroom when she and her mentor were sharing thoughts on the board in front of the class:

One day he wrote, I don't know what the context was exactly, but he wrote Miss I., so me, is learning, or she needs me to become a teacher and I wrote he needs me to become more South and everybody was asking him, what does that mean, and he was like she's teaching me as much as I'm teaching her which was cool. (II14P, p. 3-4)

Key words such as “learning,” “equal,” “partnership,” “power,” “expert,” etc. predominated throughout the interview data. Such repeated terms and phrases served to underscore the presence of the hierarchy-equality dialectic.

The last criterion that was met establishing the hierarchy-equality dialectic was that of forcefulness. In the examples above, participants used forceful language throughout to convey their meaning. Specifically, the fellow who described how going into someone else's classroom was like going into their home emphasized the following words in her vocal inflection, “that's like their *home*. *I would never tell somebody how to parent their children in their home. I just wouldn't do that*” (II20P, p. 3). She forcefully asserts the presence of the hierarchy pole of the dialectical tension. Another fellow shared this sentiment with similar force describing challenges others faced who ignored the hierarchy pole of the dialectic. “Some of the people who *struggle* with the program and

their relationship, I don't know, it seemed like *the mentees wanted to come in there* and run the show” (JC17P, p. 9-10). A mentor described the movement from one pole of the dialectic to the other that her fellow experienced and accentuated this change in the volume of her speech, “that's the first time she kind of felt that move toward I'm *becoming a real colleague rather than just this fellow-mentor relationship*. I think *that's the first time she ever felt totally, she started to get that colleague feeling*” (II18M, p. 2). Finally, in an example not mentioned above, another mentor emphasized the struggle of sharing her classroom as well as the enjoyment of doing so:

I find what I enjoy a lot is the *trust because it's really hard to give up your classroom... it's a lot of work* and so to have that trust and to feel like *I really can open up my classroom...so I enjoy that I think we click*. (JC4M, p. 6-7)

Through these examples, it is evident that the poles of hierarchy and equality, as well as the tension between the two, were conveyed using forcefulness by mentors and fellows. As such, forcefulness was another criterion that existed in the interview data, thus substantiating the presence of the theme of hierarchy and equality.

Hierarchy and equality was a definite contradiction present in the interviews and conversations of mentors and fellows. This dialectical tension between hierarchy and equality recurred throughout the data. Additionally, a number of key terms and phrases were repeated that reflected the themes, and participants used forcefulness when discussing these themes.

#### *Individual goals and organizational goals*

Another unique dialectic found in the interview data was labeled individual goals and organizational goals and represents the tension between addressing the

developmental goals of individual protégés as teachers versus the organizational goals of teaching students in the classroom. This tension was evidenced most often when mentors and protégés described the need to decide whether they chose to do something to benefit the protégé's development or to benefit the kids in the classroom, often at the expense of the protégé's development. This dialectic was found to recur throughout the data, to be repeated with key terms, and to be described forcefully by participants.

Numerous examples of the individual goals and organizational goals dialectical tension pervaded the text. One fellow clearly articulated the pull to the organizational goals end of the tension as well as the presence of the tension between the two poles stating:

There's always like a pull and like, I need to prepare myself for next year, but then I'm here right now and there are these 15 kids who are like amazing, and I want to do the best that I can for them right now, and I kind of felt that, sort of like at the beginning, should I just be like observing to see what Amber does when this happens and like somebody else is not there and then when I'm teaching should I just pretend that Amber's not here and not ask for help and not include her, but I think right now, it's just more about the kids there's so much that we could do for them and it doesn't matter if it's both of us or one of us. (JC5P, p. 10)

In this example, the fellow felt the need to make a choice between teaching on her own so that she learns for her future and teaching with her mentor which would be better for the kids in their classroom. Another mentor expressed the intense focus on the immediate needs of helping kids in that she didn't have time to even talk with her fellow due to the pressing demands of the classroom. Specifically, she stated:

I think time is difficult sometimes because it's such a hectic, like during the day, we can spend an entire day in the same room and not ever talk to each other just because we're so busy teaching and helping kids and that's why we're here, you know, there can just be meetings or appointments,

just all kinds of things after school where we don't always get a chance to talk as much as if we had this endless amount of time. (II8M, p. 5)

The opposing pole of the dialectic was recurrent throughout the conversations and interviews as well. One exemplar came from an exchange between a mentor and fellow in their joint conversation. They talked about the need to focus on writing down things for the fellow's development in order to avoid capitulating to the immediate needs of the classroom.

JC6M: even though we talk every single day I really think it's important just to sit down and write down some of the things. I think that really helps keep us focused on you, on why you're here.

JC6P: as opposed to just becoming one of the teachers in the room.

JC6M: Right, it helps me remember that you're in a program and you're getting out of it what you need to get out of it. (JC6, p. 7)

In addition to demonstrating the presence of the individual goals pole of the tension, this quote clearly illustrates the pull between the distinct poles of individual goals and organizational goals. Another example of the focus on the individual goals of the protégé occurred when mentors and fellows described the need to experiment with the present classroom in order for the protégé to learn.

One fellow expressed it in this fashion:

Amber's always been like, if you have an idea just go ahead and try it out because this is your place, like, to try those things and if they don't work and they're going to fail and if you're going to change them, like, I want you to have that knowledge so I feel like that she's always trusted me in the teaching sense like if I come to her with something I learned from school. (II5P, p. 3)

In this example, the fellow recounted the mentor's willingness to have something fail with the current students in the classroom in order for the fellow to gain the knowledge of

what works and what does not. These four examples are just a few of the comments in the data that show both the presence of oppositions and the tension between them.

In addition to the criterion of recurrence, the individual goals and organizational goals dialectical tension was also evident in the repetition of key terms used by mentors and fellows. To emphasize the organizational goals pole of the dialectical tension, mentors and fellows repeatedly used the term “for the kids/them.” In one of the examples above, a fellow mentions “15 kids who are like amazing,” wanting to “do the best that I can for them right now,” and that “there’s so much that we could do for them” at the potential expense of her own future development as a teacher (JC5P, p. 15). Another fellow repeatedly used the phrase “for the kids” when describing how he led a lesson with others that prevented him from having a solo teaching experience:

I'm not sure exactly if this is something that we should have done, but for the kids at that moment, that was the best thing to do, you know, being able to have that luxury of having two teachers...and so for the long run, for knowing what it's like to be the one teacher...I don't know if that was the best thing, but I would be willing to sacrifice the way that we did it, knowing it was better for the kids. (JC15P, p. 6)

On the other end of the dialectical tension, mentors and fellows used the terms “experiment” and “focus” to convey the pull toward the fellow’s development.

Specifically, one mentor-fellow pair described the excitement of being creative and trying new ideas which fueled the mentor’s learning:

JC13P: I enjoy playing, like almost, like experimenting like co-teaching and well what can we do what kinds of creative activities I really enjoy the space that you give me a lot of times to experiment, and I enjoy the conversations that we have

JC13M: I do too. I enjoy the new ideas that you bring and I'm excited whenever you have a new class because I know that you'll be bringing and the new learning from that class because I haven't had the opportunity to take a lot of those classes so I was excited when you were talking about

democracy and equity in the classroom and I'm excited to learn some more literacy ideas. (JC13, p. 11)

The experimentation in this example not only contributed to the fellow's learning, but also to the mentor's learning, and it's discussed in such a way that the classroom students' learning is secondary. In addition to the term "experiment," mentors and fellows used the term "focus" to express the individual goals pole of this dialectical tension. One example was used above when the mentor described writing down the goals for the fellow which helped them stay "focused on" the fellow. Another mentor-fellow pair used the term "focus" in a joint conversation to emphasize the tension between immediate organizational needs and the future individual goals of the fellow.

JC3P: Yeah, I know, I think that you have a good point though, because we talk all day long about, like, what's going on and it's harder to do that than it is to sit down and actually focus on it, because, you know, one of us is always doing other things, so we can't be all the way focused so

JC3M: Yeah, that's very helpful to have our time, our sacred time, just the two of us and we know we're focusing on your goals, my goals, how can I support you, next steps, all that good stuff. (JC3, p. 2)

Even though the mentor and fellow acknowledge the immediate classroom demands on their time, they articulate the need to "focus" on the future needs and goals of the fellow. The use of the term focus, along with mentors and fellows "experimenting" versus doing things "for the kids" exemplified the repetition of key terms in the individual goals and organizational goals dialectic.

The final criterion of thematic analysis that was present in the data illustrating the individual goals and organizational goals dialectic was the use of forcefulness. Mentors and fellows frequently spoke with volume, vocal inflection, and dramatic pauses when describing the tension present in their relationship between individual goals and

organizational goals. In an example noted above, one fellow articulated this tension emphasizing the word pull and stressing the present to convey the organization pole of the tension:

There's always like a *pull* and like, I need to prepare myself for next year, but then *I'm here right now* and *there are these 15 kids who are like amazing*, and I want to do *the best that I can for them right now*. (JC5P, p. 10)

Another fellow shared the presence of this dialectic emphatically by using vocal inflection to emphasize that she and her mentor could be working in the classroom for an entire day and “*not ever talk to each other...because we're so busy teaching and helping kids and that's why we're here...we don't always get a chance to talk as much as if we had this endless amount of time*” (II8M, p. 5). Through vocal inflection, she expressed being pulled to the immediate demands of the classroom. In a joint conversation, a mentor expressed the need to focus on the fellow by emphasizing these words in her speech: “I really think it's important just to sit down and *write down some of the things*. I think *that really helps keep us focused on you*, on why you're here” (JC6M, p 7). An additional example of forcefulness was shared by a fellow who emphasized both of the poles of this dialectic in conveying his ambivalence about choosing one pole over the other.

I'm not sure exactly if this is something that we *should have done*, but *for the kids at that moment*, that was *the best thing to do*, you know, being able to have that luxury of *having two teachers...and so for the long run*, for knowing what it's like to be the one teacher...I don't know if that was the best thing, but I would be willing to sacrifice (pause) the way that we did it, knowing it was better for the kids. (JC15P, p. 6)

Finally, a mentor and fellow shared in a joint conversation their enjoyment of experimenting in the classroom to help the fellow develop. Through the use of a dramatic pause and vocal inflection, they conveyed their excitement about this tension.

JC13P: I enjoy (pause) *playing*, like almost, like experimenting like *co-teaching and well what can we do* what kinds of creative activities *I really enjoy* the space that you give me a lot of times to experiment, and I enjoy the conversations that we have

JC13M: I do too. I enjoy the new ideas that you bring...I know that you'll be bringing *the best thinking* and the new learning from that class because I haven't had the opportunity to take a lot of those classes so *I was excited* when you were talking about democracy and equity in the classroom and *I'm excited* to learn some more literacy ideas. (JC13, p. 11)

Through these and other examples, fellows and mentors expressed forcefulness in their descriptions of the individual goals and organizational goals tension. Given the emphasis fellows and mentors used to communicate this tension, it is clear that the forcefulness criterion of thematic analysis was met for this dialectic.

### *Personal and Professional*

The pull between establishing a personal versus a professional relationship is another dialectic that was present in the data. In other words, mentors and fellows described a tension in their relationship between an informal, affective relationship such as friendship and a formal, instrumental relationship such as being work associates. The personal pole of this tension was evidenced when mentors and protégés described doing things together outside of work or sharing information that was not directly related to work tasks. Alternatively, mentors and protégés were pulled toward the professional pole of this tension when they emphasized work-related functions and the importance of maintaining a professional relationship. This tension was evidenced by recurrence of the theme, repetition of key phrases, and descriptions which contained forcefulness.

The personal and professional dialectical tension recurred throughout the data. Mentors and fellows often described affective exchanges of personal life details. For instance, one mentor communicated the example of a reciprocal sharing of experience growing up and its effect on barriers in the relationship.

I know last year, she has shared a lot about her experience growing up which is really central to kind of who she is today, and I have, in turn, shared about my experience growing up as well, specifically, with our moms, we have a lot of similar frustrating experiences for a lot of different reasons, and we both grew up in the Midwest so that has been, I think, that's helped to break down some barriers that may have been there otherwise. (II20M, p. 3)

Another fellow described the comfort talking about personal aspects of their relationship in a joint conversation with her mentor. She not only articulated the topics of communication, but the resulting effect of friendship and her belief that that is a good thing.

I think we, we've become so close that we don't have to communicate out loud. I can just look at you from across the room and you know exactly what I'm thinking, that's funny and so, yeah, I would say that every day we have examples of positive communication with each other. We're interested in what's going on with each other at home and you ask about my family and we talk about your husband's job, and so it's nice because we have developed a friendship and that's a good thing. (JC1P, p. 4)

One mentor talked about developing a friendship with her mentor, but clarified that the need to develop a friendship aided the professional relationship and her ability to address difficult subjects with her fellow.

Because if we didn't have that friendship established then we couldn't have those hard conversations about teaching and about...I was going to say like ways to improve a lesson and whatnot because ultimately it's your classroom, it's my classroom and if there are some things that he isn't doing that's going to hurt the education of my kids, I've got to address that so I think finding that common ground really, really helped us so that way it was easier to have those conversations when they came up. (II17M, p. 1)

Prior to that comment, she discussed aligning her interests with his not only to build the relationship, but even more so, to ease the way for difficult professional conversations.

This quote exemplifies the presence of both poles of the dialectic in the mentor's description of needing a personal connection to facilitate a professional relationship.

Finally, the tension between personal and professional recurred in another joint conversation, where a mentor clearly communicated with her fellow the "tricky balance" between the two. Specifically, she stated:

Other student teachers that I mentored, I found it really challenging to keep kind of that mentor, there's like a mentor and a friend line that I feel can be really tricky sometimes and I feel like we've found a balance, like we can talk about personal stuff and be more on that friend level, but then during the school day, I do see you coming to me for advice. It's definitely more of like, okay this is mentor-fellow time, and then that after hours time is more of our other relationship, I can definitely see that being a challenge for others. (JC5M, p. 9)

Various other examples also recurred throughout the text in addition to these four examples, and demonstrate compelling evidence of the existence of a personal and professional dialectic.

In addition to recurrence, the personal and professional dialectic was also evident given the repetition of key words and phrases representative of the dialectical poles. The personal end of the dialectic was marked by use of the terms "personal," "friend," and "outside." "Outside" refers to the mentors and fellows sharing aspects of their life outside of their work relationship. The professional end of the dialectic was reflected in the terms "professional," "work," "getting work/things done," and "line".

Mentors and fellows often used the term “personal” to indicate the presence of this dialectic. In one instance, a mentor described the importance of placing the “personal” connection over work topics. She stated:

Time for communicating is really hard and we sometimes have to prioritize, if we only have three minutes in the morning to connect, is it going to be about business or is it going to be a personal connection of how were you this weekend? What's up? Is it going to be a priority for the day? I have to do this, this, this today. Where do we do that? And unconsciously, we have decided that the personal connection is really important and so we always check in with how are you? How was your weekend, with the thinking that the business for the day is going to get done whether we share it or not. (II7M, p. 5)

Mentors and fellows also repeated the term “friend” to underscore the personal end of this dialectical tension. One fellow described how her relationship has “evolved” beyond the professional aspect and repeatedly used “friend” to indicate this change.

I don't know, I think it helps us establish a relationship that's based on not just our passion and our desire to want to be good teachers but to want to be friends too...it's evolved from maybe more of a professional relationship to a friendship where I know that when my fellowship is over I can still come to her with questions and ideas and support and she'll still be there for me even though she's not required to do so. (II8P, p. 3)

A final term that mentors and fellows repeated to indicate the presence of the personal end of this dialectical tension was the term “outside” in reference to their relationship and/or communication that was external to their work relationship. One mentor described the need to develop the personal relationship “outside” of the “little box” of her classroom.

We know a lot about each other, like not just in this little box, room here, like, we know a lot about each other outside of school like family and friends and different things and a lot, so I think it's good to know what a person can handle at certain times and what they can't and that they feel comfortable here is everything that's going on and here's how I can handle it and here's how you can help me so I think it's important that we're able

to talk about what's happening in our lives overall and not just in this one arena. (II8M, p. 5)

In this example, the mentor described how both the personal and professional ends of the dialectic operate at the same time. In other words, talking about their lives outside of school facilitates what is going on in the classroom.

Another example of this interplay of the dialectic is present in the repetition of the term “line” which emphasizes the professional end of the dialectic. For instance, in a quote referenced above to demonstrate recurrence, a mentor used the term “line” to indicate the difference between a “mentor” and a “friend” and the need to stay on the professional side of the line. In another joint conversation, a mentor and a fellow use both the terms “professional” and “line” to highlight the presence of the professional pole of the dialectic.

JC18M: Like I told you, I'm so glad that you were here this year too because there are definitely things that I felt last year I had to keep you, I had to keep kind of some of these professional boundaries to where it's like, you know, it's just different this year too, it's just gotten, I just think it's gotten even better to where, not that it wasn't wonderful last year, but I think it's just been enhanced so much now that we're colleagues. Not that I was above you last year, I felt like there was always a bit of constraint, that professional constraint. Well and we had that conversation sometimes, I worried about the professional boundaries. There were some professional boundaries I didn't feel super comfortable with, with fellows last year, and their mentors and I didn't want you

JC18P: Ditto and I'm the same way I just felt like there were certain lines

JC18M: Lines that were crossed and I can't do that

JC18P: and I couldn't do it as a fellow. (JC18, p. 8)

Another term that was used repeatedly by mentors and fellows to emphasize the professional aspect of the relationship was “work” and “getting work done.” One mentor-fellow pair expressed this in the following exchange:

JC15M: And I would say that a lot of our talk is the student talk and teacher talk and things like that, and I think that's kind of the way I operate. I very much view school as getting work done, and try to be here and get stuff done and sometimes we miss that personal, that sharing of personal stories that other people do but that's kind of my style.

JC15P: Yeah, and I'm right there with you. I've been kind of on the same wavelength as far you know when we're here, and you know, what they were saying about going to the Burger Shack and stuff, I was almost glad that like, you said no, because I was kind of on the same wavelength, you know, just get our stuff done. (JC15, p. 2)

In this example, both the mentor and the fellow shared the importance of “getting work done” at the expense of sharing personal stories or spending personal time together. It is just one of a number of examples that illustrate the repeated use of terms such as “getting work done,” “professional,” “personal,” and “friend,” among others. The repeated use of these terms supports the presence of the dialectical theme of personal and professional.

The third criterion that is present in the data demonstrating the presence of the personal and professional dialectical tension is forcefulness. Mentors and fellows expressed the dialectic tension of personal and professional in ways that emphasized these key terms and themes using vocal inflection and changing the volume of their speech in interviews and joint conversations. For instance, one mentor related the sharing of personal information and the greater connection she and her fellow felt, “she has *shared a lot* about her experience growing up which is *really central* to kind of who she is today...that's *helped to break down some barriers* that may have been there otherwise” (II20M, p. 3). In this example, she placed emphasis on the terms that show the personal pole of the tension in addition to how that has helped them grow closer personally. Another fellow articulated this tension by emphasizing both the personal topics they have discussed and the resultant friendship, “we're interested in what's going on with each

other at *home* and you ask *about my family* and we talk about *your husband's job*, and so it's nice because we *have developed a friendship* and *that's a good thing*" (JC1P, p. 4). Similarly, another mentor verbally accentuated personal topics in describing this dialectic stating that they knew "a lot about *each other*...not just *in this little box, room here*" and that they were "able to talk about what's happening in our lives *overall* and *not just in this one arena*" (II8M, p. 5). Another mentor described the pull between the two poles and uses vocal inflection to communicate the tension and articulated the importance of a personal connection:

Time for communicating is *really hard* and we sometimes have to prioritize...is it going to be about *business* or is it going to be a personal connection of *how were you this weekend? What's up?*...And unconsciously, we have decided that *the personal connection is really important*. (II7M, p. 5)

A final example of forcefulness was shared by a mentor-fellow pair who articulated the tension between personal and professional boundaries. The mentor emphasized that there were "*definitely things*" that she felt she needed to keep private and she felt the tension was lessened now that they are out of the formal mentoring relationship, stating, "*it's just different this year too, it's just gotten, I just think it's gotten even better*...it's just been enhanced so much *now that we're colleagues*" (JC18M, p. 8). Additional examples of forcefulness permeate throughout the interview data relating to the personal and professional dialectic, thus providing support for the forcefulness criterion of thematic analysis.

### *Structure and Flexibility*

One final dialectical tension was present in the interview data called structure and flexibility which refers to the degree to which participants in the mentoring relationship

rely on structure versus flexibility. Structure refers mainly to the processes put in place by the mentoring program, and other formal routines aimed at guiding and developing the mentoring process. Examples of structure include regular meetings, rubrics to guide performance, and collaborative reflection logs, which refer to documents completed by both parties to reflect on their relationship. Flexibility was evidenced when mentors and fellows dispensed with formal structures and relied more on their own capabilities. The poles of structure and flexibility and the associated tension recurred throughout the interview data, were articulated with repeated key words and phrases, and mentors and fellows used forcefulness to describe them.

This recurrent theme was expressed by both mentors and fellows in individual interviews and joint conversations. One example that demonstrates the presence of both poles as well as the corresponding tension was shared by a fellow who conveyed a mutual want for the lack of structure as well as a desire to have more.

Sometimes we just haven't talked about things...this unit on conflict, like, most other fellows, I think, got stuff from their mentors, where they got to, like, lesson plans or ways of structuring it and I didn't want it, but yet, it also, there were a couple of times I was like oh, I'm alone. (II13P, p. 4)

Another mentor described the flexibility that was present in her relationship with her fellow, regardless of the structure that was established by the mentoring program.

Specifically, she stated:

[The program] helped because they structure that for you with your weekly conversations. I mean, we talked on the previous interview that they give us a quad sheet that we have to fill out that guides our communication...which we ended up not even needing at all because those conversations just started flowing for us, but [the program] sets you up as to where you are communicating and that's what needs to happen. (II17M, p. 5)

Even though this mentor described the structure that was in place, she discussed that they did not even need it as their conversations flowed without it. Alternatively, a fellow provided an instance of structure that was worthwhile, even though she initially desired greater flexibility. In the quote below, “site-based” refers to a biweekly meeting with all of the program’s mentors and fellows.

At first I was kind of a critic of site-based because I didn’t...I thought that it was more overkill than anything, but now that we've gone through it and we've been at it for a semester I can definitely see the value of it. So, I think that that's something that's been really helpful for me, not only with the site based, but just with critical reflection logs or the CRL logs, just being able to have some time to touch base make sure we're on the same wavelength. (JC15P, p. 3)

A final case that illustrated the recurrence of the theme of structure was shared by a mentor who felt too much flexibility and desired greater structure in the program.

I think the program programmatically struggles with teaching mentors the right way to do things, right in quotation marks, there's no one right way to be a mentor, but here's some things that, when to push, when to pull, when to lay off, it's just a little bit hard sometimes when I think we've had a very good situation set up for us, and I look at what other people have, in terms of me doing this program next year, and people having conflicts or issues and them saying what should I do with this Sally, and the answer is whatever works for you and not really whatever works for me because I don't really know. I don't have a Ph.D. in education. I'm just a teacher, what kinds of things would work here I guess that's been kind of a struggle for me. (JC15M, p. 5)

The tension between the competing desires for structure and flexibility recurred throughout a number of joint conversations and interviews, thus satisfying the first criterion of thematic analysis.

The second criterion of thematic analysis, repetition, was also found in the data. Specifically, mentors and fellows repeatedly used the terms “structure,” “program,” and “plan” to refer to the structure pole of the dialectic. Also, mentors and fellows referenced

the program components such as “collaborative reflection logs,” “site-based meetings,” and “mentor seminar” to highlight structure. To convey flexibility, participants repeatedly conversed using the terms “unstructured,” “natural,” and “experiment.” In one of the quotes referenced above the mentor emphasized both structure and flexibility stating “[The program] helped because they structure that for you with your weekly conversations” (II17M, p. 5). Also, the weekly conversation refers to participants completing their “collaborative reflection log” which was also mentioned by other mentors and fellows similar to this fellow who described the structure that allowed her to address an issue in the relationship:

We just had our CRL time which is our communication time once a week and we were both talking about it and then he's like you need to find what works for you and that felt very supportive because what works for me isn't going to be what works for you so that felt supportive but I was still feeling this kind of oh he doesn't feel like this is going to work and at some point on our CRL I said support from mentor, I was like, I want support about how to bounce ideas about how to do this around because I don't know tons of instances where this has been done, where it's even been tried, and successfully done, and I was like I'd like support and he was like I'll work on that. (II13P, p. 2)

In addition to the terms “structure” and specific program components, such as “CRL,” participants also repeatedly referenced the term “program” to refer to the pull toward structure in the relationship. In an exchange between a mentor and a fellow, they discussed the impact that the program has on their relationship in the classroom and the inability to operate with the flexibility desired.

JC15M: I'm always wanting to try to interject all the time and it's not hard for me to really give up control, but it's hard for me to not be an active participant, which is what we've kind of been told during the mentoring process unless it's something egregious that this is your classroom so it's not hard for me to see you do a lesson because you've done fine you've

done great assessments and you've done that stuff, but it's hard for me not to put in my...

JC15P: Well yeah and I think that it's difficult because when I'm supposed to take a back seat the program pushes that it's actually the co-teacher role and then when you're supposed to take a backseat it's like you've got to get out of here, so I can definitely see that. (JC15, p. 6)

In this reference to program, the mentor and fellow described the structure which limits the flexibility of the mentor to interact in the classroom.

In addition to the references to structure, mentors and fellows also emphasized certain terms to accentuate the presence of flexibility. Specifically, they used the terms “unstructured/not structured,” “natural,” and “experiment” repeatedly to demonstrate flexibility. One mentor described how they approach structured tasks more flexibly than other mentor-fellow pairs:

For us what works is that it's not this big structured day, I get the feeling that some of the people, at least mentor-wise, I've talked to and for fellows that you've talked to, it's structured, it's like a religious event and that this is the CRL, we shall now do box number one, I don't think we've started with the same box ever, it's whatever one we read first or we just happen to start there and we always work our way through it and we put in the details. (JC14M, p. 6)

Another fellow articulated flexibility commenting on the freedom that the unstructured environment allows “it's so unstructured that it means, that Carl gives me, he's like, go for it, like, I can do whatever I want” (II13P, p. 4). Mentors and fellows also used the term “natural” to describe the flexibility present in their communication and their relationship. One fellow articulated the difference between flexible questioning and the structure of a collaborative reflection log repeating the term “natural.”

So for me, it's just a natural kind of process...that wasn't there at the beginning of the year and I feel like our communication, both the structured CRL and this natural questioning, like why did you choose to

do that that or why don't you think that works, or the questions leave space for that. (II13P, p. 5)

In other words, the fellow described the presence of structure and flexibility, and flexibility is demonstrated with the repeated use of the term “natural.” Finally, mentors and fellows used the term “experiment” to indicate the flexibility present in their relationship. In particular, one fellow articulated the relationship between experimenting and flexibility stating:

I'm more comfortable in my own skin as a teacher and I feel more comfortable suggesting, like, I don't really want to do what you have planned, I want to do something else and that flexibility and that ability to experiment with you know, whatever, Will has become more allowing of me to do stuff like that. (II14P, p. 2)

The use and repetition of the terms “experiment,” “natural,” and “un/not-structured” provide support for the presence of the second criterion provided by Owen (1984) for thematic analysis.

The last criterion of forcefulness was also recognized in the data. Fellows and mentors described the presence of structure and flexibility with emphasis through increased volume and vocal inflection. One exemplar of forcefulness was shared by a fellow who appreciated a structural aspect of the program. In discussing a conversation she had with her mentor at a regular biweekly meeting, she described the effect the structure of their performance rubric had on their conversation and vocally emphasized the descriptor really stating “we (pause) had a *really good* conversation about my progress...It *really led* into a good conversation...and the conversation went *really well as usual*” (II14P, p. 1). Another fellow articulated this dialectical tension and her mutual desire for structure and flexibility, vocally emphasizing the structure that other fellows

received, what she wanted, and how the lack of structure made her feel, “most *other fellows... got stuff from their mentors... and I didn't want it*, but...there were a couple of times I was like *oh, I'm alone*” (II13P, p. 4). Finally, a mentor and fellow pair expressed their appreciation of the structure. First, the fellow verbally stressed that although the structure at first, “was more *overkill than anything*” that he can now “*definitely see the value of it*” and it’s “something that's been *really helpful*” (JC15P, p. 3). This fellow’s mentor acknowledged the presence of flexibility and accentuated his desire for more structure in stating that he wanted guidance in how to mentor and “*when to push, when to pull, when to lay off*” (JC15M, p. 5). He forcefully expressed his frustration in response to the program administrator who shares the flexible answer of “whatever works for you” by stating with emphasis, “*Not really whatever works for me*, because I don't really know. *I don't have a Ph.D. in education. I'm just a teacher*” (JC15M, p. 5). Further, he related that this need for more structure has “been *kind of a struggle* for me” (JC15M, p. 5). The exemplary comments above provided significant evidence for the presence of forcefulness in the data, thus satisfying the third requirement for thematic analysis.

### *Summary*

Eight dialectical tensions were found in the data, including three dialectical tensions identified as primary by Baxter and Braithwaite (2007) and five additional dialectics. The three primary tensions identified were expression and nonexpression, stability and change, and separation and integration. The five additional dialectics found were openness-to and closedness-to, individual goals and organizational goals, hierarchy and equality, personal and professional, and structure and flexibility. All of these contradictions were found to recur throughout the data, were articulated with repeated

key terms and were communicated in a forceful way. As such, they effectively met all three criteria of thematic analysis as outlined by Owen (1984). Additional support also exists for the presence of these dialectical tensions due to the use of triangulation in data collection and analysis. Specifically, these dialectical tensions were all found to exist in separate analyses of data collected through joint conversations and individual interviews.

### Research Question 2: Management of Dialectical Tensions

The eight dialectical tensions found were managed by fellows and mentors using specific strategies. Through thematic analysis of the data, the following five management strategies were discovered: spiraling inversion, segmentation, reaffirmation, balance, and denial. The strategy of recalibration was identified, but did not satisfy the criteria of recurrence, and will not be discussed here.

#### *Spiraling inversion*

One of the most common strategies used by mentors and fellows to manage the dialectical tensions in their relationships was spiraling inversion. Baxter and Montgomery (1996) define this praxis pattern as “a spiraling inversion with respect to which pole of a given contradiction is dominant at a given point in time” (p. 62). In other words, spiraling inversion would be evident in this study when mentors or protégés privileged one pole over the other at different points in time. This strategy was described by participants in reference to multiple dialectical tensions, specifically: expression and nonexpression, integration and separation, openness-to and closedness-to, personal and professional, hierarchy and equality, and individual goals and organizational goals. Additionally, this strategy recurred throughout the data, and was described by participants in a forceful manner while also using both repeated key words and phrases.

One example of recurrence in the data was shared by a mentor who articulated her intent in managing openness-to and closedness-to as well as separation and integration.

At the beginning of the year...I'm just a little bit more reserved, because I want her to see me first as a teacher and this is our classroom and this is how it goes rather than always being, from the get go, so relaxed and comfortable. So, I definitely keep things in the beginning, and I don't talk so much about, you know, what I'm doing on the weekends or stuff like that, where ultimately as our friendship grows and that kind of stuff starts to come out. (II9M, p. 2)

Another example that showed how a participant manages the personal and professional dialectic by shifting from one pole to the other over time was shared by a mentor.

Our relationship's very interesting because I feel like during the school day there's a definite mentor-fellow relationship because we're co-teaching but it's very school oriented, and then after school we talk a lot about our weekend or who Meredith's dating now, all those, like, fun things. (II5M, p. 2)

Mentors and fellows also used the strategy of spiraling inversion to manage the expression and nonexpression tension involving situations of conflict. An example was shared by a mentor in both his individual interview and his joint conversation with his fellow. In his joint conversation, he asserts:

If we need to walk away from it, we can walk away from it, we can come back to it I mean we've walked away from some, but I don't think we've ever just like truly walked away and left it, we've always come back and dealt with it. (JC14M, p. 10)

He mirrors this comment in his individual interview stating:

in the mentor group and in the fellow group...there are people who have had kind of knock down, drag out screaming matches or whatever and we just haven't had any of those I guess we see them coming and one of us will back off and let the other one say their piece and then walk away from it a little while, and then say it, or go and teach class a few periods and by the time we come back, everybody is kind of diffused a little bit rather than both of us get really amped up at the same time, I think without

saying it, we've made that decision that hey sometimes you just need to vent. (II14M, p. 1)

The strategy of using time to manage dialectical tensions was evident in this example and clearly recurred throughout the data.

The second criterion that was fulfilled in the data was that of repetition. The key words that were repeatedly used to indicate how this tension was managed temporally were “time,” “going to,” and “figure it out” (on your own). In particular, one fellow commented:

I've been more open and honest with things like that over time...I think time impacts the talking like I think we go in phases at times we're really transparent and open and at times... like there was a period of time when we really wouldn't talk to each other. (II12P, p. 3)

Other mentors and fellows used the term time as well, “when it was time to let go we began to talk” (II19M, p. 2), “don't always have time to talk” (II2M, p. 1), or “there's always the time, we don't have a lot of time to talk” (II7P, p. 2). Another phrase that was used repeatedly to underscore the strategy of spiraling inversion was “going to.” Mentors and fellows continually used this phrase to indicate how they planned to shift to one of the poles of the tension. Specifically, one mentor repeated the term “going to” in describing moving to and from the poles of the expression and nonexpression dialectic:

I think the challenging thing, but I'm going to wait to see if this really happens I think that for her mini leads, she wasn't really prepared well and I'm really well organized I know what I'm doing, everything's lined out, she's kind of a fly by the seat of her pants kind of teacher. I think that's going to hurt her, she's going to fall on her face. So I'm going to wait and see when she does, when she starts doing her full-time lead and has to prepare for all the subjects, I'm going to watch and see if that happens if so, we're going to have a conversation why did you think that would happen, because she may have to fall to learn from her mistakes then we could have that conversation. (II6M, p. 3)

Other mentors used the term “figure it out” repeatedly to emphasize the temporal nature of managing dialectical tension. In discussing his need for separation, one fellow articulated the ability to have personal space given that “we trust each other to kind of figure it out” (II7P, p. 2), whereas another mentor repeated the phrase when describing her pull toward nonexpression:

When she's going to be in charge if she asked me a question I need to sort of be like figure it out, then, you know, reflect on it after it happens because she'll say well, what do I need to teach and I'll say, this, and so I need to stop doing that because she's not always going to have someone telling her what she needs to do for the whole school day. (II6M, p. 3)

The terms “time,” “going to,” and “figure it out” were repeated consistently throughout the interview data to indicate the strategy of spiraling inversion, which thus satisfied this criterion of thematic analysis.

The final criterion of thematic analysis that was met was the use of forcefulness by participants in reference to spiraling inversion. From a previous quote, a mentor articulated the change that occurred in their relationship emphasizing how she managed openness with her fellow over time, stating that her fellow had to “see me first as a *teacher*...rather than *always being*, from the get go, so relaxed and comfortable”. Further, she emphasized shifting from one pole to the other over time stating, “I definitely keep things *in the beginning*...where *ultimately as our friendship grows* and that kind of stuff starts to come out” (II9M, p. 2). She placed emphasis on aspects of time in the relationship through her volume and vocal inflection on terms such as “always being,” “in the beginning,” and “ultimately.” Another mentor used forcefulness in one of the preceding quotes to highlight the spiraling between different poles over the course of a day, expressing that “during the school day there's a *definite mentor-fellow relationship*

because *we're co-teaching but it's very school oriented*, and then after school, we talk a lot about our weekend or...fun things” (II5M, p. 2). In this quote, she described forcefully how three related dialectical tensions are managed over time: hierarchy and equality, openness-with and closedness-with, and personal-professional. A final example of forcefulness was provided by a mentor who described managing the tension between personal and professional over time.

Other student teachers that I mentored, I *found it really challenging* to keep kind of that *mentor*, there's like a *mentor* and a *friend* line that I feel can be really tricky sometimes and I feel like we've found a balance, like we can talk about *personal stuff* and be more on that friend level, but then *during the school day*, I do see you coming to me for advice. It's definitely more of like, okay this is *mentor-fellow time*, and then that after hours time is more of our other relationship, I can definitely see that being a challenge for others. (JC5M, p. 2)

In addition to accentuating the tension, “I found it really challenging,” she also emphasized the relational states: “mentor and a friend line” and the time frames: “during the school day” and “mentor-fellow time.” In these examples above, participants described emphatically the practice of managing dialectical tensions through spiraling inversion. Forcefulness is the third criterion that was met, thus validating the presence of this strategy.

### *Segmentation*

Segmentation was another pattern frequently used by mentors and fellows to handle dialectical tensions in their relationships. Baxter and Montgomery (1996) describe segmentation as a strategy similar to spiraling inversion which “involves and ebb-and-flow pattern, but the basis of inversion is not time but rather topic or activity domain” (p. 63). Moreover, mentors and fellows who employ segmentation would “perceive that

certain topics or activity domains are more appropriately suited to one opposition over the other..." (p. 63). An example would be a mentor privileging the closedness-with pole by not sharing information about a specific topic such as school politics. Mentors and fellows used the strategy of segmentation with the tensions of stability and change, expression and nonexpression, integration and separation, openness-to and closedness-to, as well as hierarchy and equality. The segmentation pattern was recurrent throughout the data, represented repeatedly by key terms, and described forcefully by mentors and fellows.

The recurrence of segmentation was evident in the transcribed data from joint conversations and individual interviews in the mentors' and fellows' description of how they used segmentation to manage the extant dialectical tensions in their relationships. One poignant example of segmentation was seen in a description of a conflict between a mentor and a fellow with respect to the stability and change dialectical tension. The fellow was attempting to initiate change in the activity of classroom management. However, her mentor was trying to maintain stability in the relationship with respect to this activity. Specifically, the fellow received resistance from her mentor when she wanted to initiate a new way to manage classroom behavior. The mentor privileged stability in the relationship in his lack of support for her idea, "I wasn't very sure that I had his support or support in general for trying management in a way that I was interested in trying management, I didn't necessarily feel like I had his backing" (II13P, p. 2). Instead, the mentor shied away from change by conveying to the fellow that she needed to maintain the same classroom management approach that he used:

He was saying something around like I am firm with management, like I'm firm, that kind of stuff can't happen in the classroom... I just got a feeling at that point like that he was thinking that it wouldn't necessarily work...I got the feeling that he was like its not going to work, I need to get firm. (II13P, p. 2)

In other words, with respect to a specific activity, the mentor relied on the management strategy of segmentation with respect to classroom management. Another exemplar of segmentation is the following example which illustrates how the topic of providing feedback to the mentor was off limits for a fellow.

I don't particularly tell students what not to do, I tell them what to do and it comes from being a parent educator and teaching parents to have that with their preschool kids. So, it would always make my skin crawl to hear her say don't speak English, and I would always be saying "in Spanish, we're speaking only in Spanish"...not wanting to correct somebody who's been a professional in her own classroom like under those circumstances that was her teaching style that was who she is in her classroom and I was a voluntary participant in her classroom whereas I didn't feel like that was up for me to tell her how to do something. (II20P, p. 2)

In other words, the fellow privileged the pole of closedness-with specifically related to the topic of giving feedback to her mentor. Conversely, the same fellow privileged the pole of openness-with related to personal topics such as family. She specifically mentioned, "we tend to talk about some family issues she has certain issues with the same undertones as some of the family issues that I have...and it's like we share that anxiety or that difficulty dealing with...a specific family member" (II20P, p. 3-4). The pattern of segmentation was also recurrent with another fellow who privileged topics related to family as opposed to their normal relationship which was mostly professional.

You know I think most of our relationship was very business you know we're here to learn I was here to be mentored by her so a lot of it was very professional. I think when I did share private things it was probably about my family, my sons, my husband that kind of, you know, my mom is sick

or there was a death in my family, so I share that, so those are private conversations. (II19P, p. 2)

In both examples, mentors and fellows relied on segmentation to manage openness-with and closedness-with in their relationships. The theme of segmentation also recurred with participants who used it to manage the hierarchy and equality tension in their relationship. This exact example is related in both an individual interview and a joint conversation. In an individual interview, the fellow asserts:

I would say that our relationship has changed in I think that Kim sees me not as a fellow sometimes I think she sees me as an equal teacher which I think is really cool...the math program is brand-new for her too and I actually did teach math for six weeks in sixth grade when I took over a class so I kind of like to do that too and I also just took the class with a professor that talks about the concepts behind everyday math and she hasn't quite gotten some of that so between the two of us we actually make a good team in that so we swap off a lot on that particular topic. (II6P, p. 4)

The topic of math is also described by the mentor and fellow pair in their joint conversation which is an example of the richness in the data that is available due to triangulation.

JC6P: I keep thinking of math when we really play off of each other so much because we're both learning it at the same time

JC6M: and say I'm not quite learning the program how would you do this, you do this, you do that, how do you do this? I think we do that really well.

JC6P: I do too and I think that's one of our major topics, is the content itself and how do we best present it to the students and we do it in front of them. (JC6, p. 5)

In this example, the mentor and fellow both articulate the movement to the dialectical pole of equality with specific reference to the topic of teaching math. Segmentation also recurred in the data in this instance with the mentor describing her different levels of integration and trust with her fellow.

Our relationship has been getting better I think...we're getting to know each other now we're starting to talk more with each other about things outside of school and the trust factor and things like that, so it's growing just like any relationship...I still don't feel that we are best buds or best friends or anything like that but we're getting to that point where, and, I trust him as a person, whether or not I trust him in the classroom completely yet, are two different things, but I think our communication has gotten better and I feel more relaxed around him and I feel more comfortable with him around. (II11M, p. 3)

In this example, the mentor described how her connection with her fellow is segmented.

As a friend, she felt connected with him, yet as a teacher, she was still unsure that she could trust him with her class. These examples are just a few which provided support that the strategy of segmentation was recurrent in the interview and joint conversation data.

The second criterion of thematic analysis was also present in the interview data in the repetition of key words and phrases used by participants. In particular, mentors and fellows used the terms “sensitive,” “topics,” and “stuff” to articulate how they managed dialectical tensions using segmentation. One specific instance was a mentor who repeated the term “sensitive” in describing her movement toward nonexpression with her fellow:

Chris is very sensitive, he is a very sensitive person, so when I feel that it's going to disturb him that it's going to be too much for him emotionally, then I keep some information from him...Chris is very sensitive, I knew if I would tell Chris he would be affected by that so I didn't tell him. (II10M, p. 3)

Another oft repeated term reflective of segmentation was “topics.” Mentors and fellows used the term “topics” over and over again to discuss how they managed various dialectical tensions. A few examples of this repetition include: “we actually make a good team in that so we swap off a lot in that particular topic” (II6P, p. 4), “I do too and I think that's one of our major topics” (JC6M, p. 5), and “avoiding that topic” (II14M, p. 4). A somewhat mundane term that evidenced repetition in the data, in reference to

segmentation, was the word “stuff.” This was used repeatedly by mentors when using segmentation to manage expression and nonexpression. For instance, one mentor commented “that would be the keeping it from him I guess because it's not making him fully aware of some of the stuff as I think you could get to overload” (II15M, p. 2). Another shared, “seriously I think she needs to just chill out about some stuff, but that's not my place to tell her so that's not the battle I'm willing to pick with her” (II12M, p. 1). Finally, another mentor articulated segmentation using the word stuff in the following: “and I don't know whether it was sheltering her, but this is stuff she'll get enough of when she's teaching” (II18M, p. 3). Although it is a fairly generic word, “stuff” was used specifically when mentors described patterns of segmentation. In addition mentors and fellows used the terms “sensitive” and “topic” repeatedly in reference to this management strategy.

Forcefulness was also evident in the joint conversation and interview data specifically relative to the use of segmentation as a management strategy. One mentor shared a forceful example emphasizing the term “survival mode” when discussing a fellow's need to achieve some separation through segmenting her activities: “But part of it is you're in that *survival mode too* and...*you have to* save some part of *yourself* or your personal life too and *you can't sacrifice it* by going and having lunch” (JC18M, p. 9). Additionally, the mentor emphasized having to save some part of herself, rather than yield completely to the pole of integration. Another example of forcefulness was seen in the management of hierarchy and equality tension by a mentor and fellow. A fellow shared the fluctuations in hierarchy and equality by emphasizing that her mentor sees her “not as *a fellow sometimes* (pause) I think she sees me as an *equal teacher* (pause) which

I think is *really cool*” (II6P, p. 4). Specifically, she emphasizes how the specific activity of teaching math contributes to this fluctuation and is one where they “*swap off a lot*” (II6P, p. 4). Another clear example of segmentation which demonstrates force in its conveyance was shared by a mentor who accentuated this theme stating, “*I trust him as a person, whether or not I trust him in the classroom completely yet, are two different things*” (III11M, p. 3). This mentor is demonstrating forcefulness in her segmentation of the tension of personal and professional. Finally, one mentor clearly articulated segmentation using the analogy of picking battles, stating specifically, “*seriously I think she needs to just chill out about some stuff, but that's not my place to tell her so that's not the battle I'm willing to pick with her*” (II12M, p. 1). Her emphasis on chilling out and her unwillingness to pick that battle provide further evidence for the presence of forcefulness in the data. The use of forcefulness throughout these examples substantiated the presence of segmentation as a management strategy.

### *Reaffirmation*

Mentors and fellows also used the strategy of accepting the reality of both poles of the dialectical tensions, which is labeled reaffirmation by Baxter and Montgomery (1996). This reaffirmation pattern was present in participants’ management of the contradictions of expression and nonexpression, hierarchy and equality, structure and flexibility, as well as integration and separation. Although this strategy was not used as frequently as segmentation or spiraling inversion, it was substantiated in the data by recurrence, repetition, and forcefulness.

The strategy of reaffirmation was recurrent in a number of interviews and joint conversations. One telling example was shared by a mentor who described her

acceptance of the pull between both openness-to/closedness-to and openness-with/closedness-with in the relationship.

We're pretty open and honest, so I think I'm pretty good about eliciting more information when I need it. I think she's gotten much more comfortable asking questions, which at first there was a lot of silence, not silence, but a lot of, I think, just digesting stuff and I was really wishing like ask me something, what do you want to know, let me tell you, but I think I've come to realize there's just that comfort level when you first meet someone and come in to their environment. First, you just kind of get to know them, you're kind of chameleon-like and adjusting. So, I think we've really come to a point where she's comfortable saying what she needs to say and I'm comfortable saying what I need to say as well. (II8M, p. 1)

In this instance, the mentor described her realization that the tension between these dialectical poles is normal, and that helps alleviate some of the pressure to elicit questions from her fellow. This strategy is also evident in the following account from a joint conversation with a mentor and a fellow. In this example, the mentor and fellow discussed their acceptance of the separation and integration tension they felt.

JC19P: I think about my kids and when I go home and I always feel like I need my space after being in the classroom with 28 kids all wanting my attention, all talking, all needing something, and then going home, you know, they don't realize the work of a teacher, so I relate that to, you know, I was there, I was like your shadow, como tu sombra.

JC19M: You're my appendage.

JC19P: yes and just wanting something, needing something, being like one of the other kids except for a grown-up, you're probably like, oh my gosh, you should get it woman, and I didn't get it. So, I think I understand you as a mentor a lot better now, as I have my own kids, my own kids in my class, and I think too that the demands the pressures we were feeling at school with the principal with some of the kids that weren't best behaved and the stress and the classroom and you know, time it feels like we had such limited time and such high demands and now I'm understanding that more, we have that committee and this meeting and that meeting and just goes on and on and on and yeah it comes to a point where it's just like

JC19M: you explode

JC19P: you explode and I think it's normal too in relationships. (JC19, p. 4-5)

The mentor and fellow describe the pull in their relationship toward integration as being extremely demanding, such that the fellow felt like her mentor's shadow or an extra appendage. This tension is so strong that it might lead to an explosion, which is understood as a drastic separation of mentor and fellow. The fellow accepts both tensions, that of being continually pulled together and being drastically pulled apart, as "normal" in relationships. In this example and the previous example, participants were aware of the tension that exists in their relationships, and they choose to accept it in order to manage it. These examples, in addition to others in the data, satisfy the first criterion of recurrence.

The pattern of reaffirmation is also validated by the presence of the repetition of key words and phrases. Specifically, the words "understand" and "comfort(able)" were used repeatedly to highlight the reaffirmation strategy. One fellow, in reference to her management of the tension of hierarchy-equality stated, "I understand what it means to be a mentee and to kind of switch over in language and in terms of power dynamics" (II2P, p. 1), whereas another fellow used the term understand in discussing the tension between structure and flexibility, "I can understand why inside of me and it doesn't need to be talked about" (II13P, p. 3). Mentors and fellows also used the term "comfort" continually to indicate their acceptance of dialectical tensions. In the example above, Mentor 8 refers to "a comfort level" and coming to a point where she and her fellow are "comfortable" with expression and nonexpression. The repetition of "comfort," as well as the repetition of "understand," provides support for the presence of the theme of reaffirmation in the data.

Finally, the participants discussed their acceptance of dialectical tensions forcefully throughout interviews and joint conversations. In one of the examples above, a mentor described her initial desire for more expression in the relationship followed by her own reaffirmation and comfort with both poles of the dialectical tension. At first, she emphasized her initial desire for expression by stressing “*at first there was a lot of silence*” and accentuating her own desire for expression, “*I was really wishing, like ask me something, what do you want to know, let me tell you*” (II8M, p. 1). Ultimately, she acknowledges both tensions, stating “*I think I’ve come to realize there’s just that comfort level*” (II8M, p. 1). In another example above, a mentor and fellow pair discussed the acceptance of integration and separation, and did so using forcefulness. To emphasize the pole of integration, the fellow emphasized the terms “*your shadow, como tu sombra*” (JC19P, p. 4) and the mentor emphasized the phrase “*You’re my appendage*” (JC19M, p. 4). To accentuate separation, both mentor and fellow stressed the words “*you explode*” (JC19M, p. 5, JC19P, p. 5) as a reference to an intense pull toward getting away. Prior to using this phrase, the fellow was articulating the demands of the classroom and the pull toward integration. The use of the term *explode* is a counter to these demands and conveys an intense desire to pull far away from the pole of integration. Additionally, in this exchange, the fellow conveyed the reaffirmation of this tension using forcefulness, stating emphatically, “*I think it’s normal too in relationships*” (JC19P, p. 5). One final example that demonstrated forcefulness with respect to reaffirmation was displayed in a mentor’s comment discussing the tension between personal and professional. In the example, she described how both are necessary and the pull toward the personal end of the tension helps with the professional aspect of their relationship. Specifically, she

highlighted the common ground they were able to achieve in their personal relationship and how that helped her address classroom issues, “I think *finding that common ground really, really helped for both of us* so that way it was easier to have those conversations when they came up” (II17M, p. 1). These examples underscored the presence of forcefulness and validate the presence of reaffirmation.

### *Balance*

The pattern of balance was also present in the interview data in the management of dialectical tensions. Balance, or a strategy of compromising between the two polarities of dialectical tensions, was discussed by mentors and fellows. Particularly, this strategy recurred and was described by two different mentors in managing the hierarchy and equality strategy. In addition to recurrence, this strategy was also validated through the presence of repeated key words and the use of forcefulness.

The balance strategy was recurrent in an interview with a mentor and a joint conversation with a mentor and fellow, both in relation to the hierarchy and equality dialectical tension. The mentor described feeling the need to always be in the classroom when his fellow was teaching a lesson. He was pulled toward the hierarchy end of the tension, but also understood that he needed to share the classroom with the fellow in order to promote equality. He described his compromise to manage this strategy as follows:

I think it was when he first started doing the guided release I think he felt like I was in the class too much and...there was that tension of him wanting to establish his own role and his identity as a teacher and my kind of, maybe narcissism, oh, I can do it better, or you need me in the classroom, and it was probably somewhere in the middle...it was kind of my realization that I needed to step back...It was my stepping back, but it was also I think Matt checking in with me earlier about what he was going

to do like the night before...being able to look and see maybe that's going to take quite a bit more time than you think, just being able to have some idea of what's going on in the classroom when I'm not in the classroom. (II15M, p. 3)

The mentor clearly understood the tension between being in the classroom as the authority that knows more, and allowing his fellow to establish his own equal role as a teacher, and calls it “the middle.” Part of his management is shifting to one pole by “stepping back,” but the compromise strategy is talking with his fellow about what he plans to do in the classroom. In other words, he was able to balance these competing demands by still having input even though he is not present in the classroom. Another mentor described this same tension and management strategy in a joint conversation. Specifically, she shared with her fellow the following:

Something I was telling Paul [Researcher] about earlier, how you and I are very different about classroom management, and how wary I was about turning over the class to you when I had set the bar at a certain height and I have control issues and I still have control issues and you are like okay well I'll try that but that's not my style so maybe we will compromise and see how it goes and I thought well maybe I need to lighten up a little bit. (JC16M, p. 5)

The mentor described her pull towards hierarchy and her reluctance to give up control, which she needed to do in order to allow the fellow equality. The strategy she describes to manage this is agreement with the fellow's idea of trying it the mentor's way but also being willing to “compromise.” These two examples show the recurrence of the strategy of balance with both mentors seeking compromises in the tension between hierarchy and equality.

The repetition of key words was also present in these examples, thus validating the presence of this management strategy. One key phrase that was used by the first

mentor repeatedly to indicate compromise was “pull/step back” whereas the other mentor repeated the term “lighten up.” The first mentor conveyed his compromising between hierarchy and equality stating “the thing that I struggle with is that push-pull of when to pull back,” “it was kind of my realization that I needed to step back,” and “it was my stepping back” (II15M, p. 3). The other mentor repeated the term “lighten up” in the example above as well as in her individual interview, commenting “maybe I need to lighten up a little bit, I think that was the biggest thing that I got out of our relationship” (II16M, p. 4). Through the repetition of these terms, the use of the balance strategy to manage dialectical tensions was supported in the data.

In addition to recurrence and repetition, the criterion of forcefulness also existed in the interview and conversation data. In one example above, the mentor used forcefulness to express both the tension felt between two poles and his need to compromise or find balance between the two. In negotiating between hierarchy and equality the mentor accentuated the phrase “*narcissism, oh, I can do it better, or you need me in the classroom*” to emphasize hierarchy, and accentuated the pull toward equality with vocal inflection and a dramatic pause, stating, “it was probably somewhere in the middle...it was kind of (pause) *my realization* that I needed to step back” (II15M, p. 3). Further, the mentor acknowledged the compromise by stressing the following words in his speech, “just *being able to have some* (pause) *idea of what's going on in the classroom when I'm not in the classroom*” (II15M, p. 3). Another example of forcefulness was shared by a mentor in her management of hierarchy and equality. The mentor emphasized that she and her fellow were “*very different about classroom management*” and how “wary [she] was about *turning over the class to [her fellow]*” (JC16M, p. 7). In

acknowledging the tension between the two, the mentor described the strategy balance emphasizing the nature of compromise, stating, “I have *control issues* and...you are like okay well I'll try that but that's not my style so maybe we will compromise and see how it goes and I thought well maybe I need to lighten up a little bit” (JC16M, p. 7). Both of these examples of forcefulness point to the presence of the balance strategy used to manage dialectical tensions in the data.

### *Denial*

Denial is another management strategy that refers to denying the existence of a single dialectical pole by privileging the other end of the dialectic, and was also evident in the data from interviews and joint conversations. Denial was used to manage the tension present in a number of contradictions, specifically: openness-with and closedness-with, openness-to and closedness-to, hierarchy and equality, separation and integration, individual goals and organizational goals, stability and change, as well as personal and professional. In addition to recurring throughout interviews and joint conversation, the strategy of denial was also described using repeated key terms and with forceful language.

The first criterion of thematic analysis, recurrence, was present for the strategy of denial. Interestingly enough, one mentor actually conveyed employing the strategy of denial with both ends of the dialectical tension. In other words, at one point, she used expression to the exclusion of closedness-with and at another point, she used nonexpression to the exclusion of openness-with. To emphasize the pole of openness-with she articulates her style of communication in reference to her fellow where she spoke without filtering her messages in the following example:

I tend to, what's in my head goes out. I say it sometimes without checking through the filtering process. I just say it and part of it is because part of it I feel is to be so there is no questioning and then of course without the filtering what happens is I don't think about the graces, the social graces such as what are you going to feel about and without that filter it and it's not that I don't care because I don't see myself as somebody who doesn't care what someone else feels but at the moment the passion takes over. (JC19M, p. 1)

In her individual interview, the mentor described how she shifted from the exclusion of closedness-with to the exclusion of openness-with, after her speaking without filters was interpreted as a personal attack.

She came back and she then confronted me and I was done by that time, I was already done, and she, you know, said "I didn't like this" and "I think that you attacked me personally" and she was right...which caused me then to just sort of say whatever walk away and then I went ahead and developed an attitude, like, okay, I'm not going to go there anymore. I'm not going to communicate. I'm just going to be all business and that's it, and that went on for a long, long time. (II19M, p. 2)

In both of these examples, the mentor is relying entirely on one pole while ignoring the existence of the other. In the first example, talking without filtering is indicative of being completely open without a need to hold anything back, whereas in the second example, the mentor shifted to denying the existence of the openness-with pole, stating she was not going to communicate at all. This strategy of denial also recurred in a number of other examples, such as the following example of a fellow who used denial to manage both the openness-with and closedness-with dialectic and the hierarchy and equality dialectic.

There's the natural influence of the power dynamics, which no matter how you set up mentoring, there are power dynamics and everybody recognizes that. I think it just depends on your personality, whether or not, how strongly you're influenced by that because at first I was influenced by that because I'm not the type of person who likes to ask for help. I like to think I know what I'm doing I like to do trial and error on my own, and it completely goes against the idea of mentoring where you're supposed to do all this other stuff, and as I talked about we had, it wasn't really

problems, we just didn't have a productive relationship at first, because I didn't ask questions, and I didn't know if I said anything if she would be offended and whatnot before we started talking she didn't ask me as much either. (III16P, p. 1)

This fellow described being influenced by the power dynamics or the hierarchical nature of the relationship, and to manage it, she completely neglected the poles of openness-with and equality, and completely legitimated the poles of closedness-with and hierarchy. In other words, she denied the possibility of saying “anything” and accepted her inferior role in the mentoring relationship when she was “influenced.” This instance is also validated by the perspective shared by the mentor in the relationship who related, “she was having a hard time communicating to me, she wasn't communicating to me, she wasn't asking questions...and so I was frustrated with her that she wasn't communicating” (III16M, p. 2). This is another example of the recurrence of the management strategy of denial, and lends to the significant support for its existence in the data. Another dialectic in which participants used denial was stability and change. One mentor denied the existence of the change pole of the tension when she conveyed the inability to change her relationship with her fellow into one of total collegiality. Rather, she conveyed the exclusive need for stability with the implicit hierarchy in the relationship. Thus, the management strategy of denial recurred throughout the data with respect to various dialectical tensions.

The second criterion of repetition was also found in the interview and joint conversation data. Mentors and fellows frequently used terms to refer to the extremes of one pole versus another such as “nothing,” “everything,” “all,” and “never.” For instance, one mentor, privileging the openness-with pole stated, “there is nothing hidden, everything is out in the open, there is nothing that I don't say to her” (II9M, p. 1). The term “all” was also used to refer to privileging one extreme to the exclusion of the other.

For instance, one mentor stated that she was “going to be all business” (II19M, p. 2). Another shared the entirely professional nature of his relationship using the word “all” and “never,” saying “our communication has never really gone that direction at all” (II15P, p. 4). “Never” was also used by another mentor in multiple situations to emphasize one dialectical pole to the neglect of another. Specifically, she privileged the openness-to pole when she mentioned “I never worried about her being defensive... it was never an issue, neither one of us was ever defensive” (II16M, p. 1). Another example of a repeated key word was the mentor’s use of the word filter above to refer to her reliance on the openness-with pole of the dynamic to the exclusion of closedness-with. These multiple examples of repetition that reflect the management strategy of denial provided evidence of its presence in the data.

Forcefulness was the third criterion of thematic analysis that was evident throughout the data. In an example used previously to illuminate the presence of the individual goals and organizational goals dialectic, the strategy of denial was also identified. The brief quote will be repeated here to relate its relevance to the strategy of denial.

There's always like a *pull* and like, I need to prepare myself for next year, but then *I'm here right now* and *there are these 15 kids who are like amazing*, and I want to do *the best that I can for them right now*. (JC5P, p. 10)

In this joint conversation, the fellow acknowledged the tension, but her actions indicate the exclusion of the individual goals pole in her forceful description of her attention to the classroom pole. Specifically, her volume and vocal inflection when stating “I’m here right now” and “the best that I can do for them right now” demonstrate a forceful

exclusion of the individual goals pole. An example used above to demonstrate recurrence also suffices to illuminate the presence of forcefulness in the data. In particular, the mentor communicated her use of denial in her description of an extended period of time when she did not communicate with her fellow. She stated that her response to a mediation session with her fellow was to “say *whatever, walk away*...I’m just going to be *all business and that’s it*, and that went on for *a long, long time*” (II19M, p. 2). This quote is forceful in its emphatic use of the words “whatever, walk away”, “all business and that’s it,” and “a long, long time.” Throughout the transcribed data, a number of examples of forcefulness with respect to the strategy of denial were present in the data, and serve to substantiate its presence.

### *Summary*

Mentors and fellows used a variety of strategies to manage the dialectical tensions present in their relationships. Specifically, the tensions of spiraling inversion, segmentation, reaffirmation, balance, and denial were identified in the joint conversations and interview data. Spiraling inversion and segmentation were the most commonly used strategies, although a number of participants also used reaffirmation, balance, and denial. These strategies were all described and used by both mentors and fellows. Additionally, all of these management strategies were found to meet the criteria of recurrence, repetition, and forcefulness.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION

Previous research on mentoring has been for the most part teleologically based and represented only the perspective of either mentors or protégés in the mentoring relationship. Additionally, scant available research has studied mentoring with a solid theoretical base. Another limitation in the vast majority of existing mentoring research is the reliance on only a single method to collect data. The present study sought to address these limitations in previous research on mentoring relationships by using multiple methods to focus on the dynamics within the mentoring relationship as understood through a theoretical lens of relational dialectics. Additionally, it is worthwhile to note that this study focused entirely on a specific teacher training program. Most of the participants in this study were women, which is to be expected given the general demographic profile of the profession of teaching. Although it is understood that these results are not generalizable to all mentoring relationships, through this section, I will provide some likely extrapolations from this data. Through the exploration of mentoring relationships in this teacher training program, the goals of the study included identifying the existing dialectical tensions in mentoring relationships as well as the management strategies participants used to manage those tensions. From the identification of these tensions and strategies, a number of significant findings emerged. Specifically, this chapter presents the utility of the dialectical tensions discovered, a discussion of the

complexity of mentoring relationships, the contribution to relational dialectics theory, as well as a description of management strategies used in mentoring relationships. In addition to a presentation of these findings and theoretical contributions, this chapter will also include limitations of this study and suggestions for future research.

### Summary of Findings

Relationships between mentors and protégés entail a great deal of complexity. Evidence of this complexity is demonstrated in the findings of this study, which indicate a large number of dialectical tensions present. Specifically, eight contradictions were constituted in communication of mentors and fellows. The findings in this study were consistent with previous research in the identification of three primary dialectics (Baxter and Braithwaite, 2007). The three primary dialectics uncovered in this study were expression and nonexpression, integration and separation, and stability and change. The current study is consistent with the vast body of research that includes three main dialectics, and also builds on existing research in articulating the primary tension of expression and nonexpression as comprised of two separate tensions: openness-with and closedness-with as well as openness-to and closedness-to. The other four dialectics found in this study, equality and hierarchy, individual goals and organizational goals, personal and professional, as well as structure and flexibility, have not been specifically identified in previous research. In addition to uncovering a number of dialectical tensions, this study also found evidence that participants used five different strategies to manage the dialectical tensions in their relationships. The following strategies were found to be significant in the data: spiraling inversion, segmentation, reaffirmation, balance, and denial, and all strategies had been previously identified (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996).

The significance of this study comes from three main areas. The first area of importance lies in the contribution of this study to the understanding of mentoring relationships. Results from this study can be used by participants in mentoring relationships to better understand existing tensions in the relationship. Second, the study significantly expands on the current research base of formal mentoring relationships. In addition to identifying a number of dialectical tensions and management strategies in mentoring, the results of the study provide a more holistic explanation of relational phenomena in mentoring. The final major contribution of this study is the contribution to the theoretical development of relational dialectics. The presence of previously identified dialectical tensions, as well as management strategies, reinforces the claims of their existence by previous researchers. Additionally, the discovery of four unique dialectics evinces the argument in existing research of the infinite possibilities of dialectical tensions. Finally, the theory of relational dialectics is illustrated through a description of three underlying assumptions of the theory and their presence in this data: contradiction, change, and totality.

#### Dialectical Tensions in Mentoring Relationships

The identification of dialectical tensions in mentoring relationships is significant in the opportunity it provides for participants in mentoring relationships to better understand relational dynamics. Mentors and protégés can clearly benefit through an awareness of the presence of dialectical tensions. One potential area of benefit is in the perception of conflict by mentors and protégés. Dialectical tensions are often perceived as conflictual which often is perceived negatively by relational participants. For example, mentors and protégés who are in a hierarchical relationship would experience a

dialectical tension between hierarchy and equality as conflictual in that they are needing to negotiate their roles. Dialectical theory draws on research which identifies positive attributions of conflict (Duck & Wood, 1995; Gottman, 1994; Wood, Dendy, Dordek, Germany, & Varallo, 1994; However, protégés and mentors would be much better served to understand that these tensions are intrinsic to mentoring relationships, rather than making the assumption that conflict is personally motivated.

One dialectical tension that is useful to explore related to the awareness yielded for relational participants is openness-with and closedness-with. As with all of the other tensions, mentors and protégés can benefit from knowing that this tension is intrinsic to the relationship, thus normalizing the potential extremes of openness and closedness in their relationship. Given this knowledge, protégés and mentors may be better able to interpret the behavior of their relational partner given their awareness of the tension between openness-with and closedness-with.

The dialectical tension of openness-with and closedness-with as well as the tension of openness-to and closedness-to is also relevant to protégés' and mentors' understanding of relational dynamics. As with all of the dialectical tensions, the awareness of these tensions in mentoring relationships can benefit mentors and protégés in the negotiation of their relationships. In one mentoring pair, a mentor was surprised when she observed her protégé not asking any questions. It was not until she sought feedback from other mentors that she understood that this denial of the openness-to pole of the tension was not functional for their relationship. The finding of this tension could alleviate the same doubt in the future given that mentors and protégés would know that mentoring relationships typically possess a tension between these two poles.

The identification of the individual goals and organizational goals tension also provides a greater understanding of the relational dynamics within mentoring relationships. Although this dialectic was discovered specifically in relation to mentoring that takes place in teacher training, the potential exists to apply it to other mentoring settings. For instance, it would be likely that mentors and protégés in a business environment would still experience competing demands for the long term development of the individual protégé versus the more immediate priorities for the organization.

Similarly, the remaining dialectics would also prove illuminating for the mentors and protégés in understanding their relationships. For example, moments of connection and distance could be normalized for participants in mentoring relationships given the finding of integration and separation. Mentors and protégés can also anticipate that their relationships are likely to contain an ongoing tension between stability and change. Additionally, participants who understand the personal and professional tension could benefit by normalizing the tension between being work associates and being friends. Understanding the tension between structure and flexibility would enable mentors and protégés to value both aspects of this tension. Having an awareness of hierarchy and equality would also prepare mentors and protégés for the need to shift between both extremes.

#### Complexity of mentoring relationships

The current study also yields a number of findings that further explain the complexity inherent in mentoring relationships. In addition to the dialectics identified above, the results of the current study also illuminate existing research by providing greater insight into the complexity immanent in mentoring relationships. These findings

are significant in that previous research on mentoring relied solely on characteristics of individuals in mentoring relationships or outcomes of mentoring relationships. One goal of this study was to explore mentoring more processually. In other words, the significance of the current study lies in its ability to illuminate the process and the dynamics within mentoring relationships. Specifically, these findings shed light from a processual perspective on previous research with respect to mentoring relationship characteristics, relational phenomena, and negative perceptions of mentoring relationships.

#### *Characteristics of mentoring relationships*

Recently, Allen and Eby (2008) studied the level of commitment in formal mentoring relationships and concluded that commitment of mentors is important in mentoring relationships. The current study builds on this finding through the understanding of the integration and separation dialectical tension. Allen and Eby's use of commitment in the relationship is akin to the dialectical pole of integration, and adjusts the expectation of complete commitment. In other words, mentors and protégés can understand that commitment is offset by the tension of separation and the desire for each participant to maintain autonomy in the relationship. The current findings also complement another recent argument shared by Anderson and Shore (2008) who contend that the autonomy of protégés needs to be protected in mentoring relationship. The tension between integration and separation demonstrates protégés' and mentors' desire to protect autonomy and also positions this as a naturally occurring tension. These examples highlight the processual nature of this research and illustrate the presence of dialectical tensions in relationships, rather than solely identifying aspects of individuals. For

example, the commitment of mentors is actually seen as part of a relational phenomenon and not solely an individual characteristic. Finally, this discovery reinforces a recent finding by Baratz Goodman (2006) who identified a dialectic of autonomy and guidance in mentoring relationships.

The findings of this study also complement and advance existing research on mentoring relationships. Kram (1988) suggested that mentors provide two types of functions to their protégés: psychosocial and career functions. Psychosocial functions relate to the interpersonal aspects of the relationship such as building emotional bonds and offering friendship, whereas career functions relate to specific guidance in the workplace or for work performance. These two functions are somewhat analogous to the personal and professional poles of this dialectical tension. Rather than suggest that these are simply two distinct behaviors practiced solely by individuals, data from the current study indicate a tension between these two poles. In other words, a mentor who shifts to psychosocial functions or the personal pole of the behavior does so while simultaneously affecting the career functions or the professional pole of the dialectic. The identification of these behaviors as a dialectic yields a more complex understanding of these relational phenomena.

Another study that can be better understood through the data in this study is Buell's (2004) study of mentoring models based in communication. Buell posited four models of mentoring relationships with varying levels of interpersonal hierarchy and goals, and labeled one model the friendship model. Buell's friendship model was present when mentors and protégés perceived each other as peers and "collaborative, mutual, reciprocal engagement was the norm" (Buell, 2004, p. 67). The friendship model can be

alternatively understood as the personal end of the personal-professional dialectical tension. Additionally, rather than only being seen as a model employed by mentors and protégés, the current study frames this finding as a tension that is inherent in the process of relating. In other words, individuals do not practice a certain model, rather the model is part of a dialectical tension occurring at the level of the relationship.

Young, Alvermann, Kaste, Henderson, and Many (2004) identified the characteristic of interdependency as a dominant feature of mentoring relationship. They defined interdependency as the simultaneous desire for connection and autonomy. Additionally, they uncovered a relationship in which interdependency led to friendships in mentoring relationships. This finding is supported and expanded in the current study through the identification of the integration and separation dialectic as well as the personal and professional dialectic. In fact, the current study frames this concept of interdependency as well as Buell's (2004) mentoring models in a new perspective that incorporates the theoretical framework of relational dialectics.

#### *Redefining relational phenomena in mentoring*

Through this study, relational phenomena are better understood not as individual characteristics, but rather as phenomena that are created in the relationship between parties. The discovery of the dialectical tension of structure and flexibility is one indicative example of this redefinition. In particular, this dialectical tension illuminates previous studies in which mentors described negative aspects of mentoring (Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997; Eby and Lockwood, 2005). Both of these studies found that mentors in formal relationships often perceived themselves as inadequate and doubted the contribution that they were making to their protégé's development. This sense of

inadequacy was mirrored in comments from mentors in the current study. In one specific case, a mentor described his own lack of knowledge of how to mentor appropriately, although in addition to owning his own lack of knowledge of mentoring, he also conveyed a desire for more guidance and more structure from the mentoring program. Given the nature of this study and its theoretical grounding, this sense of inadequacy has an additional meaning in that it is also understood as part of the dialectical tension of structure and flexibility. In this specific example, the mentor shared this desire for more structure in a joint conversation with his protégé. This conversation provides a qualitatively different feel to the expression of inadequacy. Instead of being solely a shortcoming that the mentor “owns” and reports, the dialectical tension of structure and flexibility is co-constructed in communication with the protégé. This is not to say that all inadequacy expressed by mentors in formal mentoring relationships is wholly encapsulated in this tension. Rather, this study provides a potential reframing into other cases of perceived inadequacy. The inclusion of joint conversations between mentors and fellows, in addition to the theoretical grounding of the current study, yields a fundamentally different understanding of this phenomenon in this study as relational: a dialectical tension that is “owned” by the relationship.

This study also contributes to the understanding of mentor relationships with respect to the mentor’s role in providing feedback to the protégé. It expands upon current research by demonstrating a more holistic view of the mentor-protégé relationship. The identification of the tension of hierarchy and equality also serves to support existing research. Obviously hierarchy and equality are aspects of numerous relationships such as mentoring, supervisory, and parenting, yet no research has positioned these aspects

theoretically within relational dialectics as a dialectical tension. This relational phenomenon in mentoring relationships also relates specifically to a study conducted by Siebert, Kilbridge, Clark, and Peterson (2006). Although not framed in dialectical theory, they found that mentor teachers felt a tension between encouraging and critiquing their protégés as well as between guiding and evaluating them. This tension is analogous to the hierarchy-equality dialectic espoused in this study. Mentors clearly expressed the tension between aspects of their hierarchical role, such as critiquing and evaluating, and aspects of their equitable role such as guiding and encouraging. Additionally, protégés also expressed their own experience of this tension between being evaluated and being encouraged. In essence, this current study expands on existing research in two ways. First, this study yields a more complex understanding of mentoring relationships in that the tension between hierarchy and equality is not experienced by just the mentor, but rather is experienced by both mentors and fellows in various ways. Second, as was evident in all dialectic, this tension is not individually held by a mentor, rather it is jointly “owned” by mentors and fellows at the level of the relationship. By framing this study theoretically and with the inclusion of both parties in the mentoring relationship, the results provide a broader, more holistic understanding of how hierarchy and equality are co-constructed in communication within mentoring relationships.

The current study also illuminates another finding of Young et al. (2004) relative to the personal and professional dialectic. They described stark differences between mentorships where friendship and collegiality were the norm versus those dominated by hierarchy. Specifically, they used the metaphor “sharkdom” to describe academic environments that were characterized by hierarchy and competition. Rather than position

these as two distinct oppositions, the current study demonstrates the interplay between hierarchy and equality. Instead of having a mentorship characterized by friendship as the sole desired state, the results from this study identify a natural tension between hierarchy and equality that is experienced by both mentors and protégés.

The individual goals and organizational goals dialectic represents another instance in which the current study further redefines characteristics of mentoring relationships as jointly owned relational phenomena. Siebert et al. (2006), identified a similar tension to individual goals and organizational goals, but again, only as an internal conflict experienced by mentor teachers. In their study, mentor teachers described a tension between “wanting to do what needs to be done to foster the growth of a pre-service teacher and a mentor teacher's responsibilities to her high school students” (Siebert, et al., 2006, p. 420). This directly relates to the finding in this study of the presence of the individual goals and organizational goals dialectical tension. As mentioned above, in the Siebert, et al. (2006) study, this tension is owned by the mentor, as it is described as the “mentor teacher’s responsibilities.” The current study is unique in that the tension was expressed by both mentors and fellows, and was seen as mutually constructed rather than the sole property of the mentor.

#### *Perceived negative behaviors in mentoring*

The current study also relates to previous research which identified negative behaviors in mentoring relationships such as distancing behavior or manipulation. Specifically, the management strategies of dialectical tensions discovered in this study relate directly to previous mentoring research and provide additional context. Two of the five management strategies uncovered in this study relate to previous research findings:

segmentation and spiraling inversion. In a 2002 study involving protégés, Eby and Allen found mentor behaviors perceived by protégés as manipulation and distancing which led to their own job dissatisfaction. The current study provides greater explanation to some of the behaviors that this study would label manipulation or distancing. Examples in this study of mentors or protégés using management strategies of segmentation and spiraling inversion could easily be perceived as either manipulation and/or distancing. In such cases, mentors or protégés may have privileged the poles of separation or nonexpression based on either topics or timing through these management strategies. Broadly, privileging poles of dialectics such as separation or nonexpression could be interpreted as distancing behavior, yet doing so is part of a greater relational dialectic, rather than simply goal oriented behavior. More specifically, a number of mentors employed segmentation as a strategy to avoid topics that they judge will be hard to hear for their protégés. Protégés could clearly interpret this behavior as distancing in that the mentor is avoiding talking to them, however it is understood in these results as a piece of the expression and nonexpression dialectic managed by segmentation.

Mentors' use of spiraling inversion as a strategy also provides a potential explanation for distancing behaviors. For instance, a few mentors described intentionally withholding information in order to see whether their protégé would be successful without their advice. From an outside perspective, this strategy could potentially be perceived as manipulative or distancing. However, given the theoretical grounding of the current study, it is better understood as a management strategy of a dialectical tension. In other words, viewing the mentoring relationship through the lens of relational dialectics yields a more complex understanding, such that the understanding is not limited solely to

perceived behavior. Rather, individual behaviors can be understood as part of a greater whole. This explanation is not meant to address all or even most of the negative behaviors found in the Allen and Eby (2002) study. However, it does provide greater context to the complexity inherent in mentoring relationships.

### Contribution to Relational Dialectics Theory

A final area of import to the current study is its contribution to the theoretical framework of relational dialectics. The results of this study affirm existing theoretical propositions in that primary dialectics were discovered in a relationship not previously examined through relational dialectics. Additionally, four new dialectical tensions were discovered, also supporting this theory. Five management strategies were also identified that had been suggested in the conceptualization of relational dialectics theory. Finally, the data from the current study provide evidence for three of the four conceptual assumptions of relational dialectics.

### *Dialectical Tensions*

The presence of three primary and four unique dialectical tensions provides reinforcement for relational dialectics theory. A discussion of a few tensions is warranted in order to underscore this assertion. Specifically, the two dialectics making up the primary dialectic of expression and nonexpression, openness-with and closedness-with as well as openness-to and closedness-to, are worth exploring.

Mentors and fellows exercised different amounts of openness and closedness with their relational partner, and this tension permeated the data at various points throughout the relationship. Existing research on mentoring depicts a relationship in which communication skills develop so that expression is limited at first and grows with time

(Cherniss, 2007; Kram, 1988). Approaching the mentoring relationship through a dialectical lens suggests that these tensions are present at any point in the relationship. Bullis and Bach (1989) supported this proposition in their turning point analysis of mentoring relationships. The current study also uncovered the presence of the tension between openness-with and closedness-with at various points in the relationship. Participants described instances of complete openness from the very beginning of their relationship, as well as moments of closedness-with long after their relationship was well established, or in some cases, after the formal mentoring relationship was over. The presence of this dialectic not only further develops existing mentoring research, but it also supports the notion that primary dialectics exist in all relationships at different points of the relationships.

Similar to the discussion of openness-with and closedness-with above, the finding of openness-to and closedness-to is also significant in that it was evidenced during all phases of the relationship, and not solely a developmental phenomenon starting from low openness to and evolving into high amounts of openness to the other. Another part of the significance of this finding lies in the relative scarcity or neglect of the dialectical pole of closedness-to in relational dialectics research (Baxter and Montgomery, 1996). The current study not only validates the existence of this pole, but also provides examples for how individuals prevent others from disclosing to them. Specifically, participants described their own behaviors and perceptions of their partners' behaviors in exercising the closedness-to pole. For instance, multiple mentors mentioned their response to an unwanted disclosure as shutting down or avoiding communication for a period of time. A protégé perceived her mentor's closedness-to response as "being short" in response to a

question to which she should know the answer. Another mentor simply placed the behavior of closedness-to on her protégé due to the relational hierarchy. In other words, given that her protégé was entering a foreign environment, she saw it as her responsibility to break down her protégé's natural closedness-to barrier. A mentor regretfully described how he exhibited closedness-to when he forced his opinion on his protégé rather than being open to her classroom management concerns. Finally, a protégé described how she made assumptions in an attempt to avoid conflict in the relationship. A variety of behaviors were used by mentors and protégés to demonstrate closedness-to, and this finding contributes to a greater understanding of the openness-to and closedness-to dialectical tension.

The presence of the stability and change dialectic in this study's data also provides support for relational dialectics, and can be understood somewhat differently given the context of mentoring relationships. In particular, through the mentoring process, a certain level of change is expected given that protégés generally join mentoring relationships to become something better. In this study, program fellows desired to advance their development as teachers. Mentors, on the other hand, are expected to enact this change with protégés through their relationship. They likely seek to grow and learn from their protégés as well. Another factor in this study that relates to stability and change concerns the newness of these relationships. The majority of mentors and protégés had been together for only four to six months, and given this newness, it would be anticipated that change would predominate in the relationship. The presence of change was indeed reflected in frequent comments throughout the data, however, not to the exclusion of stability. Given that the relationship is primarily about change, the desire for

stability may not be expected to occur. However, this was not the case in this study. Although episodes of change were referred to somewhat more frequently in the data, stability was expressed often and easily met the criteria for significance of recurrence, repetition, and forcefulness (Owen, 1984). The presence of both poles of the dialectic and the tension between the two in a relationship so geared toward change provides additional support for the theoretical construction of relational dialectics. In other words, the primary dialectical tension of change and stability, in a relationship that is not expected to have both, yields further proof for the ever present nature of dialectical tensions in relationships.

The third primary dialectical tension is integration and separation. The finding of this dialectic is significant to the development of relational dialectics theory given the duration and the formal structure of the mentoring program. The formal structure and activities of the mentoring program encompassed a ten-month period from the middle of August through the beginning of June. In other interpersonal relationships such as friendships, marriages, and family relationships, one would expect to find the dialectic of integration and separation given the expectation for a continued relationship. In other words, relationships such as close friendships have a greater likelihood of continuing, compared with relationships that do not have this close bond formed. These relationships typically experience more investment of time and energy (Hays, 1989). As such, greater attempts at moving toward closeness would be anticipated. Also given this investment, these close relationships are likely to be perceived as better able to accommodate periods of distance. The relationship under study is a more casual relationship in that it is a time-bound relationship, and the majority of participants were interviewed in the middle of the

ten-month period of the relationship. Given that this relationship was not a close friendship and the knowledge that this relationship was time-limited, the potential existed that this dialectic would not be as prevalent given that participants knew that there was a specific endpoint to the formal relationship. In other words, participants could have decided to privilege the separation pole exclusively rather than move toward integration in a relationship that is not expected to go beyond the ten month duration. However, both dialectical poles of integration and separation were prevalent in the data. Additionally, a number of mentors and protégés were interviewed after their formal relationship had ended and maintained the dialectical tension as they redefined their relationship from a formal mentor-protégé relationship to an informal one of either greater collegiality or continued hierarchy. This finding provides additional support for the theoretical construction of relational dialectics.

In addition to the primary dialectics discovered in this study, the four unique dialectics also provide an illustration of relational dialectics theory. The dialectical tensions of personal and professional, structure and flexibility, hierarchy and equality, as well as individual goals and organizational goals are all newly identified dialectical tensions. The identification of these four tensions supports dialectical theory in the potential that infinite tensions exist in relationships as well as the notion that particular types of relationships are likely to contain unique dialectical tensions.

### *Management Strategies*

In the data from the current study, five distinct management strategies of dialectical tensions were discovered: spiraling inversion, segmentation, reaffirmation, balance, and denial. The mere presence of these five strategies provides support for the

theoretical development of relational dialectics. Consistent with the argument presented by Baxter and Montgomery (1996), the strategies of spiraling inversion and segmentation were the most commonly used by mentors and protégés to manage the dialectical tensions in their relationship. Participants utilized reaffirmation and balance to a somewhat lesser extent. These four strategies are deemed functional by Baxter and Montgomery (1996). Mentors and protégés also employed denial, which Baxter and Montgomery characterize as a strategy that is dysfunctional or of limited functionality. The examples in the data support this characterization. For instance, in one situation where a mentor employed denial, the experience was marked by a conflict that remained unresolved. She denied the pole of openness-with for almost a year in the relationship and the conflict remained unresolved until she stopped subverting this pole. Another mentor-fellow pair described their relationship as not working due to the use of denial by both the mentor and the fellow. In both of these cases, the participants describe the impossibility of change in the relationship given the limited functionality of the denial strategy. In other words, the relationship was stagnant given the use of a dysfunctional management strategy.

This absence of change is an interesting finding that is worth exploring here and in future research. Specifically, it would be useful to identify episodes where relational participants use dysfunctional management strategies to determine if this same pattern exists. This finding illustrates a potential aspect of relational change that supports the nature of change in dialectical theory. In particular, Baxter and Montgomery (1996) contend that relationships are a “process of dynamic flux” (p. 78). Additionally, they argue that the end of a relationship “is marked by dialogic silence—that is, the absence of

contradiction” (p. 73). The results of this study not only supported these propositions, but also provided new evidence of dysfunctional management strategies which exclude the presence of one pole of a contradiction. In fact, relational change was inhibited when participants used dysfunctional management strategies. Additionally, the strategy of denial was impossible to maintain for the participants in this study, which illustrates Baxter and Montgomery’s (1996) conceptualization of both this strategy and relational dialectics. The lack of research on functional and dysfunctional strategies (Baxter & Braithwaite, 2007) is addressed through this study and provided an illustration of relational dialectics.

#### *Central Assumptions of Relational Dialectics*

The previous section explored mentoring relationships and the theory of relational dialectics by identifying and analyzing the dialectical tensions and management strategies exhibited throughout participants’ responses. The ability to identify primary tensions, additional and unique tensions, as well as management strategies yields significant support for the theoretical formulation of relational dialectics. Additionally, it is necessary to discuss the central assumptions laid out by Baxter and Montgomery in their conceptualization of relational dialectics. This theory centers on four shared assumptions: contradiction, change, praxis, and totality (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996). Three of the four assumptions were significantly evidenced in the current study of mentoring relationships: contradiction, change, and totality. Such evidence further substantiates the theoretical development of relational dialectics. A discussion of the results from this study and their fit with these three shared assumptions follows.

*Contradiction.* Relational dialectics places contradiction in a central role where contradiction “refers to the dynamic interplay between unified oppositions” (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996, p. 8). All of the dialectical tensions extant in the mentoring relationships in this study meet these criteria. First, each tension satisfies the criteria suggested by Baxter and Montgomery (1996) of either logical or functional opposites. For the purposes of relating the value of this study, this discussion of contradiction will solely focus on dialectics that are not considered primary, as primary dialectics are already well established as meeting those criteria. The four additional dialectical tensions identified in this study all meet the criteria of functional opposites where each pole consists of “distinct features that function in incompatible ways such that each negates the other” (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996, p. 8). For example, structure and flexibility are distinct, yet the presence of structure negates the possibility of flexibility. The same could be said for the other three additional dialectics: personal and professional, hierarchy and equality, and individual goals and organizational goals.

In addition to the presence of opposition, contradictions also must be unified or interdependent on one another. One way in which dialectics can be unified is when “each oppositional tendency...presupposes the existence of the other for its very meaning” (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996, p. 9). This criterion is exemplified by structure and flexibility, as well as hierarchy and equality. As an illustration, structure is only meaningful because of the meaning of flexibility. Structure on its own would be meaningless without the corresponding opposite of the lack of structure or flexibility. The second way dialectics can be unified is “practically and interactively as interdependent parts of a larger social whole” (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996, p. 9). The dialectical

tensions in this study that meet this criterion are personal and professional, and individual goals and organizational goals. To illustrate this unity of opposites, take the case of the personal and professional dialectic. The desire to have a more personal relationship often negates or precludes professional boundaries, however, a personal connection often leads to a more productive professional relationship. The concept of unity of opposites is supported through the examples of additional dialectical tensions discovered in this study.

The next criterion of contradiction is the need for contradictions to contain dynamic interplay between oppositions. The dynamic interplay between unified opposites results in change according to relational dialectics theory. This tension between opposites was present in all of the dialectical tensions discovered through thematic analysis and was specifically articulated in numerous instances by mentors and fellows. One representative instance of dynamic interplay involves the individual goals and organizational goals dialectic. In one joint conversation, a fellow described this dynamic tension clearly as a “pull” that was always there between preparing herself for next year and the kids in her classroom. In another case the dynamic interplay between hierarchy and equality was conveyed as a “tension” between the two. These and other examples of dynamic interplay mirror and support the theoretical conceptualization elucidated in relational dialectics.

*Change.* The second guiding assumption of relational dialectics is the notion of change in relationships. More specifically, Baxter and Montgomery (1996) refer to dialectical change as “the interplay of stability and flux” (p. 10). Further, they describe change as spiraling in that specific instances of change recur but are never identically replicated, and spiraling change includes both elements of linear and cyclical change.

This characterization of change was discovered in the current study, lending more credence to this theoretical proposition. In addition to the presence of a change and stability dialectical tension, both moments of linear and cyclical change were present. The use of the spiraling inversion management strategy is an excellent example of cyclical change in the data. For instance, the shifting back and forth over time between dialectical poles is identical to the cyclical change described by Baxter and Montgomery (1996). Numerous examples of linear change also existed throughout the data.

Participants talked about change linearly referring to aspects of their relationships that had changed to the point such that the specific change was not likely to recur. One example of linear change occurred with a mentor and protégé who, after what they termed a fight, built a level of trust and commitment that was not present before, nor would it go away. Another mentor and protégé described how they lacked openness in the beginning of their relationship, and once the mentor “opened the door” by asking questions, “it was just that simple” and “she started communicating” II16M, p. 2).

Examples of cyclical change were also present throughout, and one exemplar was seen in the shifting nature of hierarchy and equality. For instance, one fellow articulated that there were times were she repeatedly had “to be reintroduced in the class” and her ownership in the class was cycling from co-ownership to a lack of ownership. These moments exemplify the cyclical change that was present alongside examples of linear change in these mentoring relationships. Such examples abound throughout the interview data in the descriptions of tensions and management strategies, and provide compelling support for the theoretical premise of relational dialectics.

*Totality.* The fourth underlying assumption of relational dialectics is totality, or “the assumption that phenomena can be understood only in relation to other phenomena” (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996, p. 14). Two key points related to totality need discussion pertaining to the concept of totality. First, although the emphasis in understanding dialectics is on the whole, it is important to underscore that dialectical tension is located at the level of the relationship. In other words, dialectical tension is created in relationships, and the resultant “tension is jointly ‘owned’ by relationship parties” (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996, p. 15). Second, totality involves a “knot of contradictions that coexist and that change in relation to one another over time” (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996, p. 16). Countless examples in the data demonstrate the interdependence of dialectical tensions. To illustrate this knot of contradictions, the relationships between the tensions of expression and nonexpression, flexibility and structure, hierarchy and equality, and individual goals and organizational goals can be examined. In one mentoring pair, the mentor described his need to be in the classroom when the protégé was teaching. On the surface, this is a clear example of hierarchy and equality in that by being in the classroom, the protégé is not seen as standing on his own as an equal teacher. The dialectical tension of individual goals and organizational goals also operates here in that the mentor describes being able to teach better, and thus, his desire to be in the classroom would benefit the students more at the expense of the protégé’s development as a teacher. Flexibility and structure also affects this tension in that the mentor is given parameters from the mentoring program directors that his protégé is supposed to be alone in the classroom. This structure, which limits his own flexibility, also affects both the individual goals and organizational goals tension as well as the hierarchy and equality

tension. In order to manage these tensions, the mentor and protégé manage expression and nonexpression such that the mentor has a better idea of what the protégé is planning to do in the classroom. This one tension of hierarchy and equality clearly does not exist alone, rather, it coexists and changes in relation to other dialectical tensions. This exemplar knot of contradictions supports the theoretical proposition of totality in relational dialectics.

### Limitations

The current study contains a few limitations worth mentioning. Specifically, the sample of participants was a specific group of teachers in a formal mentoring program. The study was conducted at a single point in time in the mentors' and protégés' relationships. Also, the influence of the primary researcher needs to be considered. Finally, the methodology employed contains inherent limitations.

The group of participants for this study came from one teacher training program with a highly formalized mentoring component. The characteristics of this specific program and teachers in this program present potential limitations for this study. First, the inclusion of only mentors and protégés in formal relationships is a limitation. One would anticipate that mentors and protégés in informal relationships would experience dialectical tensions in their relationship, however, the character of these dialectics would likely be significantly different. For instance, the presence of the structure and flexibility dialectic may be unique to formal mentoring relationships, given their inherent structure. Another programmatic aspect that may also be a limitation concerns the matching of mentors and protégés. The program contains a thorough matching process that allows protégés and mentors to interview one another and matches participants based upon their

mutual agreement to work with each other. Blake-Beard, O'Neill, and McGowan (2007) contend that such a careful matching process is often not the case in mentoring programs, and other methods of matching are commonly used. Further, they make a case for the importance of the matching process to the success of formal mentoring relationships. Results from this study may differ from other studies of mentoring programs where such close attention is not paid to mentor and protégé matching. An additional limitation concerns the specific focus of this program on teacher training. For instance, research done with mentors and protégés in other professional settings might yield different results. In the current study, the individual goals and organizational goals dialectic is quite specific to teachers and teacher training. Although the same exact dialectic is unlikely to occur in a business setting for example, the potential still exists to discover variants of the same dialectic. In particular, it would be likely that mentors and protégés in a business environment would still experience competing demands for the long term development of the protégé versus their more immediate business priorities. Given the specific group of participants, it is evident that a number of limitations exist related to relationship formality, the matching process, and the focus on teaching.

Another limitation to the current study is its reliance on capturing the experience of participants at a single point in time. Although, in most cases, individual interviews took place after joint conversations, they typically only took place a few days after. It was not the intent of the study to conduct longitudinal research, but a longitudinal design might result in a more complete understanding of how dialectics operate in mentoring relationships. Specifically, a longitudinal design which incorporated results from the first

data collection point into future data collection could be incredibly useful in determining how dialectics change and how individuals manage dialectics over time.

Another limitation to this study concerns the role played by the principal investigator. The initial design of the study called for participants to use a timer during their joint conversation in order to insure that they had enough time for all of the questions. After the first two interviews, it became readily apparent that the timer was unnecessary and was more of a distraction than an aid. Additionally, instructions for the participants changed as the researcher learned more about how they interpreted the questions in the joint conversation protocol. Specifically, a number of pairs interpreted the question “How has mentoring played a part in your development as a teacher?” to apply only to mentors when it was intended to be answered by both mentors and protégés. In subsequent instructions prior to joint conversations, the researcher was able to inform the participants that all questions were intended for both to answer. Although the interviewing process changed from the beginning to the end, these changes did not appear to have significant effects on the final results.

The final limitations of this study involve the methodology used to analyze the data collected. Thematic analysis has a number of inherent weaknesses which may have affected the results of the current study. Like most qualitative methods, thematic analysis is subjective by nature, and thus, a number of threats in using thematic analysis exist, such as projection, sampling, and mood and style (Boyatzis, 1998). One way to minimize this limitation is to achieve saturation in data analysis, which was the case with this study. Another methodological limitation of this study is the inability to present the full story of interviewees. Thematic analysis fractures data through the coding process and in

so doing, can miss the fullness of participants' stories. Charmaz (2003) puts this argument differently, arguing that analytic coding methods "limit entry into subjects' worlds, and thus reduce understanding of their experience" (p. 269). In its aim to be holistic in studying phenomena, the process of thematic analysis actually limits the contribution that can be made by individuals. In seeking to represent the collective experience of individuals in mentoring relationships, the methodological design of this study may have sacrificed a more in-depth understanding of individual experience.

#### Directions for Future Research

A discussion of the directions for future research is merited in order to address the limitations in this study. Additionally, the specific findings of this study also call attention to future areas to be researched. First, the population being studied can be expanded to include mentors and protégés outside of teacher training programs. It would also be worthwhile to include mentors and protégés in informal mentoring relationships to see how dialectical tensions and management strategies might differ with those in formal relationships.

Another area for future research that relates to the limitations in this study is the potential for conducting research longitudinally. A longitudinal design would provide many advantages over the design of the current study. Specifically, protégés and mentors could be followed over periods of time and such a study could determine how dialectics change over time. Additionally, questions for mentors and protégés could be crafted specifically to explore more about their responses during earlier data collection periods.

The successful use of a new methodology in this study provides another area of future research in interpersonal relationships. Future studies pertaining to relational

dialectics could also be conducted using the same methodology employed in this research design. Specifically, providing participants with a list of questions or topics yielded conversations that were more natural than if the discussion would have been directed by a researcher. This methodology could be used effectively in future research that examines relational dialectics in that it yielded significant findings related to how dialectical tensions are jointly created in communication.

Future research could also specifically target the use of functional and dysfunctional strategies to manage dialectical tensions. The goal of this study was to identify tensions and corresponding management strategies and did not seek specifically to investigate the manner in which participants used functional versus dysfunctional strategies or the effects thereof. In addition to the identification of these strategies, a potential relationship between the ways participants used dysfunctional strategies and change became apparent. In examples where participants used denial as a management strategy, the participants described the impossibility of change in the relationship, until they shifted to using a different management strategy. It is likely that relational change is limited when participants enact denial or disorientation strategies given their limited functionality. This absence of change is an interesting finding that would be worth exploring further. According to Baxter and Braithwaite (2007), this area is not well understood and would benefit from specific exploration.

### Summary

This study explored the dialectical tensions and management strategies present in mentoring relationships. Using multiple methods, conversations between mentors and protégés in a formal mentoring program were recorded and follow up interviews were

conducted with individual mentors and protégés. In total, 20 joint conversations were collected and 40 individual interviews were conducted. The data were analyzed thematically and uncovered the presence of three primary dialectical tensions and four additional tensions. One of the primary dialectical tensions was broken down into two separate tensions, yielding eight overall tensions. The three primary tensions were integration and separation, stability and change, and expression and nonexpression, which consisted of openness-with and closedness-with as well as openness-to and closedness-to. The four additional tensions were personal and professional, hierarchy and equality, individual goals and organizational goals, and structure and flexibility. Additionally, five different management strategies were used to negotiate dialectical tensions: spiraling inversion, segmentation, reaffirmation, balance, and denial. The results of this study illuminated previous research on mentoring and relational dialectics, as well as supported the theoretical conceptualization of relational dialectics.

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Appendix A – Individual Interview Protocol

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Mentor/Protégé Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Sex (circle one):                      Female                      Male

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Ethnicity: \_\_\_\_\_

Years of work experience: \_\_\_\_\_

Years of relevant teaching experience: \_\_\_\_\_

Highest level of education completed (circle one):

High School                      Bachelor degree                      Masters degree                      Doctoral  
degree

Is there anything that you would like to add to your comments in your joint conversation with your mentor/protégé?

Play the exchange from the audiotaped joint conversation of “Describe a typical communicative exchange in your relationship” and ask: How similar is this example to your natural communication?

Describe a communicative exchange that you recall when you felt connected to your mentor/protégé?

Describe a communicative exchange that you recall when you felt distant from your mentor/protégé?

Tell me about a time when you shared something private with your mentor/protégé

Tell me about a time when you chose to keep some information from your mentor/protégé

How has your relationship changed?

How has your relationship stabilized?

Describe the challenging aspects of communication with your mentor/protégé  
- Describe a negative communication exchange with your mentor/protégé

Describe the rewarding aspects of communication with your mentor/protégé  
- Describe a positive communication exchange with your mentor/protégé

## Appendix B – Conversation Protocol

### Topics to Build Comfort

What led to your decision to pursue teaching as a career?

How has mentoring played a part in your development as a teacher?

### Topics for Discussion

Describe how you typically communicate with one another.

Subquestions:

- How is communication initiated and who initiates it?
- What are some common topics of conversation?
- When is the time right to reach out to one another?
- What gets in the way of communicating?
- What results from your communication?

Describe a typical communicative exchange in your relationship.

Subquestions:

- What is typical about that event?
- What results from these communicative events?
- Provide an additional example.

Discuss the challenging aspects of communication in your relationship.

Subquestions:

- What is most challenging about your relationship?
- Describe an example of that challenging communication.

Discuss the rewarding aspects of communication in your relationship.

Subquestions:

- What do you enjoy most about your relationship?
- Describe an example of that positive communication.

## Appendix C – Informed Consent Form – Joint Discussion

### **Informed Consent Form for Doctoral Research**

An Exploration of Communication in Mentoring Relationships

You are invited to participate in a study that will explore communication behavior in mentoring relationships. The study is conducted by Paul Kosempel, M.A., a doctoral student at the University of Denver. Results will be used to explain better how communication is used by mentors and protégés and will lead toward a dissertation. Paul Kosempel can be reached at 303.871.3528 or [paul.kosempel@du.edu](mailto:paul.kosempel@du.edu). This project is supervised by his dissertation adviser, Mary Claire Morr Serewicz, Ph.D., Human Communication Studies, University of Denver, Denver, CO 80208, 303.871.4332, [mserewic@du.edu](mailto:mserewic@du.edu).

Participation in this study should take between 60-120 minutes of your time. Participation will involve the recording of a joint conversation about your mentoring relationship with you and your mentoring relationship partner and one individual interview. Participation in this project is strictly voluntary. The risks associated with this project are minimal. If, however, you experience discomfort you may discontinue the interview at any time. We respect your right to choose not to answer any questions that may make you feel uncomfortable. Refusal to participate or withdrawal from participation will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

The inherent risks in participation in this study including feelings of psychological discomfort due to disclosure of private information. Also, a potential risk is inherent in the joint conversation about your mentoring relationship in that your mentor/protégé is not bound to keep that interaction confidential. Potential benefits could include greater relational closeness with your mentoring relationship partner as well as greater personal insight. Potential benefits of the study also include contributing to scholars' understanding of the process within mentoring relationships. Also, the Boettcher Teacher's Program could benefit through a greater understanding of relationships between mentors and fellows. Participants who complete the study will be compensated with \$5 gift cards.

Your responses will be identified by code number only and will be kept separate from information that could identify you. Numbered copies of audiotapes will be kept in a locked file cabinet in a University of Denver office. This is done to protect the confidentiality of your responses. Only the researcher will have access to your individual data. If you have any concerns or complaints about how you were treated during the interview, please contact Dennis Wittmer, Chair, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, at 303-871-2431, or Sylk Sotto-Santiago, Office of Sponsored Programs at 303-871-4052 or write to either at the University of Denver, Office of Sponsored Programs, 2199 S. University Blvd., Denver, CO 80208-2121.

You will be given a copy of this page for your records. Please sign below if you understand and agree to the above. If you do not understand any part of the above statement, please ask the researcher any questions you have.

I have read and understood the foregoing descriptions of the study called An Exploration of Dialectical Tensions in Communication in Mentoring Relationships. I have asked for and received a satisfactory explanation of any language that I did not fully understand. I agree to participate in this study, and I understand that I may withdraw my consent at any time. I have received a copy of this consent form.

I understand that there are two exceptions to the promise of confidentiality. If information is revealed concerning suicide, homicide, or child abuse and neglect, it is required by law that this be reported to the proper authorities. In addition, should any information contained in this study be the subject of a court order or lawful subpoena, the University of Denver might not be able to avoid compliance with the order or subpoena.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to be audiotaped.

I do not agree to audiotaped.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I would like a summary of the results of this study to be mailed to me at the following postal or e-mail address:

## Appendix D – Informed Consent Form – Individual Interview

### **Informed Consent Form for Doctoral Research**

An Exploration of Communication in Mentoring Relationships

You are invited to participate in a study that will explore communication behavior in mentoring relationships. The study is conducted by Paul Kosempel, M.A., a doctoral student at the University of Denver. Results will be used to explain better how communication is used by mentors and protégés and will lead toward a dissertation. Paul Kosempel can be reached at 303.871.3528 or [paul.kosempel@du.edu](mailto:paul.kosempel@du.edu). This project is supervised by his dissertation adviser, Mary Claire Morr Serewicz, Ph.D., Human Communication Studies, University of Denver, Denver, CO 80208, 303.871.4332, [mserewic@du.edu](mailto:mserewic@du.edu).

Participation in this study should take between 60-120 minutes of your time. Participation will involve the recording of a joint conversation about your mentoring relationship with you and your mentoring relationship partner and one individual interview. Participation in this project is strictly voluntary. The risks associated with this project are minimal. If, however, you experience discomfort you may discontinue the interview at any time. We respect your right to choose not to answer any questions that may make you feel uncomfortable. Refusal to participate or withdrawal from participation will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

The inherent risks in participation in this study including feelings of psychological discomfort due to disclosure of private information. Also, a potential risk is inherent in the joint conversation about your mentoring relationship in that your mentor/protégé is not bound to keep that interaction confidential. Potential benefits could include greater relational closeness with your mentoring relationship partner as well as greater personal insight. Potential benefits of the study also include contributing to scholars' understanding of the process within mentoring relationships. Also, the Boettcher Teacher's Program could benefit through a greater understanding of relationships between mentors and fellows. Participants who complete the study will be compensated with \$5 gift cards.

Your responses will be identified by code number only and will be kept separate from information that could identify you. Numbered copies of audiotapes will be kept in a locked file cabinet in a University of Denver office. This is done to protect the confidentiality of your responses. Only the researcher will have access to your individual data. If you have any concerns or complaints about how you were treated during the interview, please contact Dennis Wittmer, Chair, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, at 303-871-2431, or Sylk Sotto-Santiago, Office of Sponsored Programs at 303-871-4052 or write to either at the University of Denver, Office of Sponsored Programs, 2199 S. University Blvd., Denver, CO 80208-2121.

You will be given a copy of this page for your records. Please sign below if you understand and agree to the above. If you do not understand any part of the above statement, please ask the researcher any questions you have.

I have read and understood the foregoing descriptions of the study called An Exploration of Dialectical Tensions in Communication in Mentoring Relationships. I have asked for and received a satisfactory explanation of any language that I did not fully understand. I agree to participate in this study, and I understand that I may withdraw my consent at any time. I have received a copy of this consent form.

I understand that there are two exceptions to the promise of confidentiality. If information is revealed concerning suicide, homicide, or child abuse and neglect, it is required by law that this be reported to the proper authorities. In addition, should any information contained in this study be the subject of a court order or lawful subpoena, the University of Denver might not be able to avoid compliance with the order or subpoena.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to be audiotaped.

I do not agree to audiotaped.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I would like a summary of the results of this study to be mailed to me at the following postal or e-mail address: