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Democracy in the classroom : addressing teacher dispositions during post observation conferences with the Danielson framework for teaching

Jean M. Rowe

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ABSTRACT

DEMOCRACY IN THE CLASSROOM: ADDRESSING TEACHER DISPOSITIONS DURING POST OBSERVATION CONFERENCES WITH THE DANIELSON FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHING

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The purpose of this phenomenological study is to investigate the experiences of a group of high school administrators in assessing teacher dispositions that are reflected in post observation conferences. It is argued that through a better understanding of the techniques used by these administrators and the way the Danielson Framework for Teaching (FFT) contributes to the success of their methods, more informed decisions about using the FFT for teacher evaluation and supervision may be made by policymakers and teacher/leadership preparation programs.

The qualitative nature of this study allows administrators to share what is important about each of their experiences. Analysis of in-depth interviews and recordings of post observation conferences suggests that the FFT can play a crucial role in how post observation conferences are constructed. Certain teacher dispositions are commonly referred to in the study, especially those that are explicit in the FFT such as teacher reflection, respect and rapport, and culture of learning.

Findings include a discussion of the techniques used by administrators during post conferences to influence teacher dispositions. The most prominent implication of this study is that the theme of democracy as a mode of being operates as an implicit moral ethos within the Danielson framework. Given this association, recommendations related to administrator dispositions and strategies are provided.

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DEKALB, IL

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DEMOCRACY IN THE CLASSROOM: ADDRESSING TEACHER DISPOSITIONS
DURING POST OBSERVATION CONFERENCES WITH
THE DANIELSON FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHING

BY

JEAN M. ROWE
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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
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DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Dissertation Director:
Mary Beth Henning

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DEDICATION

This is for my daughters, Gina and Kaitlyn, who inspire me, each in her own way. May this show you that anything is possible with a vision, spirit, and hard work.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Educators and policy-makers have often wondered which factors make the biggest difference in student achievement. Because of the research of several investigators, it is now known that teacher effectiveness is the most important contributor to student performance (Aaronson, Barrow, & Sander, 2007; Chetty, Friedman, & Rockoff, 2014; Darling-Hammond, 2000). To assess teacher effectiveness three domains are often evident in teacher evaluation systems: content knowledge, pedagogy, and dispositions. It is commonly accepted that teachers must possess the right mix of pedagogical skills and content knowledge to teach effectively; however, a third and lesser understood attribute, teacher dispositions, is also required (Sherman, 2006). A full discussion of the definition of teacher dispositions will occur later; but a preview of that discussion offers that dispositions are teachers' intentional actions which are driven by their cognitive habits. For example, the way in which a teacher demonstrates caring to students is a disposition.

Since teacher dispositions are one component of the teacher effectiveness triad, which also includes pedagogy and content knowledge, an analysis of dispositions must be included by administrators in the processes used to continuously improve teaching. Therefore, understanding how educators attend to dispositions is important to teacher improvement efforts. One assumption proposed for this research is that teacher effectiveness is most likely addressed

during the clinical supervision process which will be described later. Utilizing this system can effect change in teacher practice if the supervision is tackled in a formative manner (Range, Young, & Hvidston, 2013). Specifically, administrators who supervise teachers provide descriptive feedback that seeks to influence teacher practice and allows teachers to revise and revisit their teaching practices. School districts in 20 states in the U.S., including Illinois, have adopted the Danielson Framework for Teaching (FFT) as the basis for their evaluation systems (Danielson Group, 2013); therefore, determining how the FFT deals with teacher dispositions is important because the FFT may structure the conversations that occur between administrators and teachers in those states.

In Chapter 1, in addition to a description of the research and methodology of the proposed study, the topics of teacher dispositions and clinical supervision will be explored and defined. Chapter 2 will explore how dispositions and clinical supervision relate to democracy as a mode of being – a basic concept implied throughout the FFT. Democracy in the classroom, or the idea that students participate fully in the creation of the classroom culture, learning experiences, and assessment of learning, plays a central role in determining the effectiveness of a teacher according to the FFT. This idea is not explicitly state by Danielson; however, teachers who are rated in the upper echelons of the FFT are those who most effectively establish democratic practices in their classrooms.

Overview

Although the area of teacher dispositions is not a new focus for educators, it has gained more attention as researchers and policymakers seek to narrow the achievement gap among students. Since 2009, a federal competitive grant called Race to the Top (RT3) directed at reducing the nationwide achievement gap and improving student achievement shifted some of the focus of school improvement initiatives to teacher effectiveness (“Race to the”, n.d.). To obtain the proffered federal grant money, states received points in the grant application based on the amount of legislation they passed relating to any of the four focus areas, one of which was development of effective teachers. Thus, RT3 was able to enact many of the desired state-level changes relating to clinical supervision, such as the use of the FFT, by offering the enticing federal grant money. This legislation denotes the significance that school reformers place upon improving teachers, which in turn means improving dispositions along with pedagogy and content knowledge.

Origins and Definition of Dispositions

The term “disposition” originates from research and theories regarding personality traits studied during the early part of the twentieth century. One specific theory regarding dispositions, called the *frequency concept*, is often cited in literature on dispositions and relies on determining the regularity with which certain behaviors are observed in study subjects. Not only do proponents of the frequency concept count observable behaviors, but they also attempt to

establish their specific causes (Buss & Craik, 1983). Thus, an effort is made to tie precise actions to behavioral theories and genetics. For instance, a person with a dominant personality may be unafraid to send food back at a restaurant and does so more frequently than others.

Two of the first educational theorists to extend the idea of dispositions to teacher characteristics are Katz and Raths (1985), who claim that dispositions are separate entities from personal attributes, traits, or attitudes because dispositions relate to behaviors rather than emotions. This assertion seems to have a basis in the frequency concept because of the focus being on observable behaviors. Katz (1993) further clarifies the definition as “patterns of behavior exhibited frequently” that constitute “a habit of mind” (p. 16). Hence, some early definitions of dispositions revolve around the repetitions of behaviors that are intentional and under an individual’s control. These behaviors, then, would constitute more than habits, which are generally involuntary or performed without conscious thought. For example, a habit would be a teacher automatically responding to students who raise their hands and ask to sharpen their pencils. On the other hand, a teacher must plan in advance how to create a culture of collaboration so that students work effectively in groups. The teacher’s actions that help to establish the collaborative culture are repeated as necessary throughout the year and are, thus, *habits of mind*, which are related to dispositions because they are intentional.

The frequency concept remains the basis for many researchers’ notions of dispositions and can even be deduced from the definition proposed by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), a governing body regarding teacher dispositions. The CAEP glossary (2010) describes dispositions as “The professional values, commitments, and ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities, and that affect

student learning, motivation, and development, as well as the educator's own professional growth" ("Professional Dispositions" in CAEP glossary). In this depiction, CAEP is implying that one can surmise the attitudes, values, and beliefs of a teacher by looking at the teacher's behaviors.

Variety of Definitions for Dispositions

More recently, the definition of dispositions has enjoyed little consensus among researchers and theorists, much to the detriment of both pre-service and in-service teachers (Thornton, 2006; Burant, Chubbuck, & Whipp 2007; Jung & Rhodes, 2008; Rinaldo et al., 2009; Shively & Misco, 2010). Writers have attempted to create categories by which one can make sense of the meaning of dispositions; however, even the way that dispositions definitions are classified is in dispute. One group of theorists (Burant et al., 2007) catalogue disposition definitions as either relating to beliefs, personality traits, or behaviors. Shields and Edens (2009) describe the multiple definitions as those concerned with personality, behavior, and morals. It is interesting that personality traits and behaviors appear in both sets of classifications. Figure 1 shows the hierarchy of the relationship between disposition definition categories, which will be described in a later section.

No matter the classification, dispositions must be observed to be known. A person can make observations about another person, or specifically, a teacher regarding his behavior, which results from the complex mixture of personal background, character, and beliefs. However, behaviors do not simply arise haphazardly. Even with a particular makeup or outlook, a person

must still choose to act in a certain way. According to Sockett (2009), “our actions thus stem from our cognitive appraisals of situations where we act intentionally within which acts our dispositions are manifest” (p. 295).

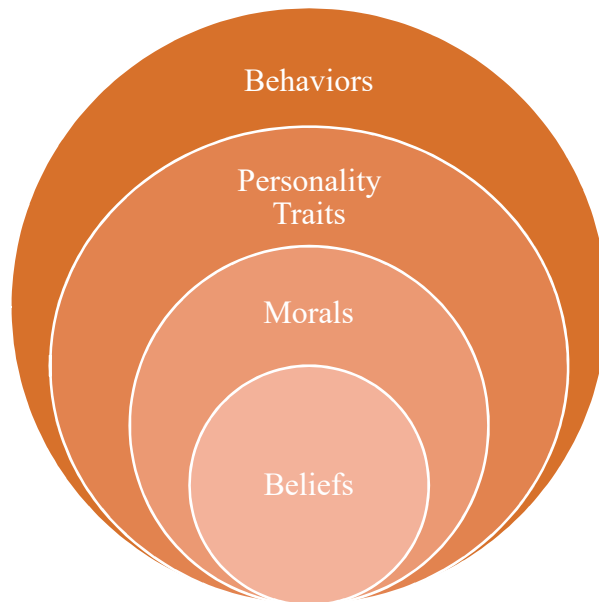


Figure 1 Disposition Definition Categories Hierarchy

For educational researchers, this means that dispositions can be inferred from discernible behaviors. The idea that one must observe dispositions as behaviors is what Sherman (2006) calls *dispositions-in-action*. For this study, dispositions are defined as deliberate tendencies by teachers to act in a particular fashion that manifest as observable behaviors and are based on the teachers' backgrounds and cognitive practices.

Clinical Supervision and the FFT

The variety of ideas presented regarding the definition of dispositions all appear in some form in the Danielson's Framework for Teaching (2007), which is the basis for so many teacher evaluation systems in the U.S. The FFT is divided into four main categories or domains. These domains are numbered one through four and are called Planning and Preparation, The Classroom Culture, Instruction, and Professional Responsibilities, respectively. Each domain consists of several components making the total number twenty-two. Many of the components contain their own sub components bringing the entirety of teacher practice to seventy-six elements.

Some educators find it difficult to separate the ideas of evaluation and clinical supervision; however, Sweeney (1982) states that they are two separate entities. Evaluation is summative and takes place at the end of the school year at which time the teacher is unable to effect change or improvement to practice. Clinical supervision is formative in that teachers are allowed to utilize the feedback provided by administrators to improve their current teaching practices. The goals of the two processes are related but divergent. Evaluation is often used to determine teacher contract renewal, but supervision emphasizes development and growth of teacher practice. The tendency toward progress or improvement is the core of democratic processes in education (Schutz, 2001). Consequently, this study will focus on the formative part of the teacher evaluation process while honoring that a tension exists between evaluation and supervision because they are usually both carried out by the same administrative personnel.

The clinical supervision model is the one most often used in U.S. schools (Oliva & Pawlas, 2001) and includes pre observation conferences, comprehensive observations, and post

observation conferences (Range et al., 2013). The purpose of clinical supervision is to improve teaching practices through collaboration between teachers and supervisors (administrators), which would result in better student achievement (DiPaola & Hoy, 2008). Because the Danielson FFT is used so often as the basis for teacher observation rubrics, it may be the best way administrators can help to improve the instructional practices of teachers. The FFT addresses teacher improvement in terms of defining mastery levels of certain skills in the overarching domains and undergirding components that involve the three aspects of effective teaching: content knowledge, pedagogy, and dispositions.

Contained within the FFT is attention to educators' beliefs, morals, and practices. Dewey (1939/1976) emphasizes the importance of beliefs and morals because he thinks that these entities help to fashion the society in which people operate. In the FFT, dispositions as beliefs, or individual convictions, manifest mainly as the idea that teachers must believe their students can learn by holding them to high standards. Dispositions as morals, or agreed upon sensibilities, appear as appeals for respect and caring in the classroom. Finally, dispositions as behaviors occur throughout the framework and in all four domains. For example, Component 2a refers to teacher behaviors that enhance the classroom culture. Teachers will behave in a respectful manner to all students and will address disrespect when they see it occurring. Evaluation of basic personality traits is omitted from the FFT.

Problem Statement

Ensuring that schools have access to capable teachers is important to school improvement efforts, especially student achievement. The clinical supervision system is a way educators can address all three aspects of effective teaching: content knowledge, pedagogy, and dispositions. One study shows that teachers who are involved in an evaluation program, which occurs at the end of a clinical supervision cycle, demonstrate improvement in their teaching performance during their evaluation year as well as in the years following (Taylor & Tyler, 2011). Utilizing the clinical supervision model can increase the likelihood of student achievement if teacher effectiveness is first improved.

Despite the knowledge that teacher quality affects student achievement and that teacher dispositions partially determine teacher quality, dispositions are an often ignored part of teacher education (Thornton, 2006). And without interventions through, for example, a clinical supervision cycle, teacher dispositions tend to remain static (Wasicsko, Wirtz, & Resor, 2009). Furthermore, few studies exist that examine the way that teachers and administrators negotiate the concept of dispositions in the clinical supervision model. Thus, dispositions need to be studied to illuminate the ways that they manifest in the classroom in addition to the manner in which dispositions are approached as an acceptable topic during the post observation conferences of clinical supervision.

Purpose Statement

Because developing beneficial teacher dispositions is one way to improve teacher effectiveness, this study aims to gain knowledge about current practices used by administrators around the topic of teacher dispositions during clinical supervision. The purpose of this study is to analyze the way in which in-service teachers and the administrators who evaluate them at the high school level address the topic of dispositions in post observation conferences during clinical supervision. In addition, an analysis of the way in which administrators attempt to guide or influence teacher dispositions during post conferences is also sought.

Research Questions

This research study addresses the following questions:

1. How does the Danielson framework help focus post conferences around the topic of dispositions?
2. How do teachers and administrators negotiate the topic of dispositions in post observation conferences?
3. How do administrators attempt to influence teachers to work on developing dispositions during post observation conferences?

Significance of the Study

The results of this study add to the current literature on clinical supervision, the Danielson framework, teacher dispositions, and how these pieces of teacher development are buttressed by democracy as a mode of being. These four topics have not yet been connected in the literature. By learning about how the Danielson FFT helps to support discussion surrounding teacher dispositions, teachers and administrators can understand how dispositions affect many aspects of the classroom, from culture to instruction. Teachers may be able to appreciate rubrics, such as the FFT, for their ability to describe behaviors that help achieve democratic ideals and practices in the classroom, helping teachers achieve distinguished levels of teaching. Educators and policy-makers will recognize the importance of addressing teacher dispositions. Moreover, administrators can help teachers identify and modify their own dispositions-in-action. This aim can be achieved via the FFT that explicitly labels how dispositions might be observed and described in the classroom. When teachers and administrators are aware of how dispositions are manifesting, they can both tackle the task of ensuring that those dispositions result in positive outcomes.

Definitions

Clinical Supervision – a collection of activities, usually involving preconference, observation, and post conference, which are based on a collaborative relationship between teacher and supervisor, and are intended to improve teaching and learning (DiPaola & Hoy, 2008)

Danielson Framework – a “set of components of instruction... grounded in a constructivist view of learning and teaching” (the Danielson Group, 2011)

Democracy as a Mode of Being – the idea that democracy is the usage of certain individual attributes that govern how a person will behave in society (Dewey, 1939/1976)

Dispositions – “The professional values, commitments, and ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities, and that affect student learning, motivation, and development, as well as the educator’s own professional growth” (“Professional Dispositions” in CAEP glossary, 2011).

Dispositions-in-Action – observable behaviors that result from thoughts and feelings that stem from attitudes, values, and beliefs (Thornton, 2006)

Evaluation Cycle – formal documentation of professional teaching performance for the purpose of satisfying mandated requirements, intervening with unsuccessful teachers, and making judgments for contract renewal (DiPaola & Hoy, 2008)

Formative Assessment – a set of practices that assemble evidence used for the purpose of adjusting methods, habits, procedures, or exercises (Chappuis, 2009)

Frequency Concept – The idea that dispositions stem from the regularity with which certain observable behaviors occur (Buss & Craik, 1983)

Habit of Mind – a cognitive process, such as belief in the importance of a task, that affects behavior, resulting in the accomplishment of the task (Katz, 1993)

Methodology

This qualitative research study is framed by a phenomenological perspective, which seeks to understand the conversations occurring between high school teachers and administrators during post observation conferences. A large semi-urban district in Illinois is used as the location for the study, which involves five administrators. Data collection is comprised of administrator interviews, audio recordings of post observation conferences, and examination of evaluation documents and the FFT. To analyze data, the interviews and recordings are transcribed, and all three data features are coded for themes.

Organization

This study is organized into five chapters. The first chapter introduces the topics involved in the study such as teacher dispositions and the Danielson framework for teaching. In Chapter 2, significant research is presented helping to define dispositions, how they are measured, and how they are connected to democracy as a mode of being. In addition, studies regarding the history and current practices surrounding teacher evaluation and post conferences are presented. Chapter 3 outlines the methodological decision-making and structure of the study. Data and themes are displayed in Chapter 4. Finally, Chapter 5 gives the reader an overview of the important conclusions, implications, and areas for future research that emerge from the data.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Dispositions

Even though teacher dispositions may directly affect students' educational experiences, there is ambiguity surrounding their meaning, making them difficult to assess. Often what is considered effective teaching is not well-known or focuses on only one aspect of instruction. For example, legislators bracket "highly qualified" teaching with the completion of certain criteria like passing a content-knowledge exam, rather than emphasizing other facets of teaching such as the ability to understand and address student needs (Sherman, 2006). Despite the challenges, dispositions that are described and measured can be cultivated in teachers for the benefit of students.

Effects of Teacher Quality

In an early study, Wright, Horn, and Sanders (1997) use a state standardized test that is structured to permit appraisal of student academic advancement over several years. Shown by means of thirty analyses, the effect of teachers on student achievement is statistically significant in all thirty cases, and teacher variation has the largest effect size in the majority of

comparisons. In addition, effective teachers are able to help students of all achievement levels succeed despite the amount of heterogeneity of the students in their classes. This influential research reveals that teachers do have an effect on their students' successes and is noteworthy because it involves over 20,000 students. The breadth of the exploration by Wright et al., however, stops short of determining a cause for the differences between teachers or the specific facets of teacher practice that aids students.

In other investigations, researchers' findings support the work of Wright et al (1997). One example occurs when researchers examine the correlation between certain teachers' evaluation scores and the success of these teachers' elementary students (Borman & Kimball, 2005). It is notable that the teacher appraisals involved standards-based evaluation ratings. This fact is important because the teachers' scores can be compared to each other with less risk of an evaluator's bias appearing in the score. Also, many standards-based evaluation rubrics are based on the Danielson Framework for Teaching which includes dispositions.

Borman and Kimball (2005) find that teachers with higher evaluation scores seem to attain greater student achievement over the course of a school year. Teachers with higher evaluation scores had students with achievement scores between one tenth and one fifth of a standard deviation higher than students with teachers with lower scores. Borman and Kimball do include in their study some of the specific criteria that the evaluation scores measure; however, the analyses do not attempt to directly link a specific quality with changes in student achievement.

Another report does attempt to specify effective teacher characteristics. In this analysis, researchers illustrate that unobservable qualities of schools and teachers, such as teacher

motivation, play a bigger role in student test scores than observable ones like per pupil spending (Goldhaber, Brewer, & Anderson, 1999). They find that 21% of the variation they observed in student achievement is due to school, teacher, and class variables; however, only 1% of the 21% is due to observable variables. This study shows that teacher characteristics related to dispositions are important for teacher quality. Similar papers examining teachers' qualification status find that more qualified teachers are able to shrink achievement gaps between socioeconomic groups of students (Heck, 2007; Nye, Konstantopoulos, & Hedges, 2004; Stronge et al., 2007). Accordingly, schools and districts might advance student achievement by centering efforts on improving teacher effectiveness, which includes both pedagogy and dispositions.

Variety of Definitions for Disposition

One source for the different definitions of disposition may have emerged from Collinson's 1999 study on teacher excellence. In the quest to define excellence, Collinson surveys and interviews 81 secondary practitioners who are chosen to participate in the study upon recommendation by their peers. Collinson summarizes the teachers' understandings of their own work into three classifications: professional knowledge, interpersonal knowledge, and intrapersonal knowledge. In particular, the last category, intrapersonal knowledge, which the author defines as "an understanding of how our ethics and dispositions shape our lives" (p. 7), directly influences the current definitions of dispositions in many ways.

Through Collinson's (1999) definition of intrapersonal knowledge, one can see that the author imagines that attitudes and beliefs influence how a person functions. For instance, a

teacher who demonstrates an ethic of caring would behave respectfully toward students, display compassion and empathy, and remain patient in the classroom. Collinson lists other kinds of dispositions such as a work ethic and a disposition toward continuous learning as being equally important. In these descriptions, one can see examples of beliefs, personality traits, morals, and behaviors that could have influenced today's current diverse views displayed in the literature on dispositions.

Dispositions as Beliefs

Several writers mention that beliefs and dispositions are interchangeable (Collinson, 1999; Thornton, 2006; Villegas, 2007; NCATE, 2010). The reasoning behind this idea is that beliefs provide a lens by which people view the world. This world view, in turn, affects how people react to situations and circumstances. However, beliefs cannot be studied directly. People's reactions to situations can be studied in the form of their behaviors. Hence, the final category of disposition definitions, those associated with behaviors, appears to be the most often cited.

Dispositions as Morals

A large portion of writing about teacher dispositions revolves around whether a teacher is a satisfactory person with acceptable morals. This relationship between teaching and morals is due to the fact that teachers are regularly involved with helping children develop as people

(Sockett, 2009). In a sense, some educational theorists believe that without certain morals, a teacher who possesses the correct set of skills and knowledge will still be ineffective (Burant et al., 2007; Sherman, 2006; Wasicsko, 2004). In fact, Wasicsko (2004) states that the majority of ineffective teachers lack the right dispositions and that the way to raise student learning is through assessing teacher attitude. Teachers with appropriate ability still may not be able to reach their students if they lack what Hansen (2001) calls a *moral sensibility* or an “underlying outlook or orientation” (p. 39) of moral behavior. This essential understanding of the role of teaching shapes the way that a teacher acts toward students and circumstances encountered during teaching.

Some authors have suggested specific characteristics that reflect a moral sensibility in teachers. For instance, Collinson (1999) cites compassion, empathy, respect, patience, honesty and curiosity, among others. Other writers mention responsiveness (Sherman, 2006), equity (Villegas, 2007), integrity and caring (Carroll, 2005), and self-reflection (Rinaldo et al., 2009a). In fact, flexibility and responsiveness appear in the Danielson Framework, which is used across the United States to evaluate the performance of in-service teachers (Danielson, 2007).

Dispositions as Personality Traits

Some of the characteristics that Collinson (1999) describes are linked to personality, such as being patient, optimistic, or responsible (p. 7). Despite Collinson’s attempt to treat these as dispositionally definitive traits, this kind of definition seems to be used in the older literature stemming from the 1950s and earlier (Buss & Craik, 1983) and has generally been discounted

due to the inability of several studies to substantially link personality traits to teacher effectiveness (Burant et al., 2007). One writer (Damon, 2007) argues that dispositions are so fundamental to personality, that NCATE should not encourage their measurement at all.

Sockett (2009) argues that dispositions cannot be personality traits because dispositions prompt someone to act, not to “be.” The act itself is required rather than the simple existence that personality traits possess. Also, dispositions require consciousness by a person of how he or she is behaving along with the determination to act in a specific way. This means that a characteristic, such as sociability, is not a disposition because sociable people just “are” sociable without trying.

Dispositions as Behaviors

Grounded in the personality theory described previously, the idea that dispositions manifest as observable behaviors is now called *dispositions-in-action* (Thornton, 2006, Thornton, 2013). In her 2006 study, Thornton attempts to link the nonphysical attributes of teachers to discernible ones by determining if students experience differences in teaching when other factors such as curriculum are held constant. Teachers were chosen to participate in Thornton’s research via their involvement in a summer academy in which the teachers employed common curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment procedures. Although Thornton’s study lacked quantitative data, which would have bolstered her findings, results indicate that students did experience variations from teacher to teacher despite the fact that curricular and pedagogical

characteristics remained consistent. The most likely factor responsible for the deviations is teacher dispositions.

From the study, Thornton (2006) defines dispositions as “habits of mind including both cognitive and affective attributes that filter one’s knowledge, skills, and beliefs and impact the action one takes in classroom or professional setting” (p. 62). This definition establishes dispositions in a different way by calling them *habits of mind* that affect other aspects of a person such as beliefs or behaviors. Since personal beliefs cannot be observed but behaviors can, researchers must focus on dispositions-in-action in their studies. The distinction between beliefs and behaviors is illustrated by Nixon, Packard, and Dam (2016) as competence-based versus character-related dispositions. According to the authors, competence-based dispositions are easy to observe and influence since they are actions.

Thornton’s (2006) definition of dispositions mirrors those espoused by other writers on the topic. For example, McKnight (2004) questions the validity of the determination by NCATE to require that teacher education programs consider the dispositions of teacher candidates as part of the accreditation process. During his essay, McKnight meanders through the historical background involving the way teachers are valued and assessed. Originally, teacher preparation programs evaluated whether candidates possessed the skills and knowledge necessary for effective teaching. As McKnight explains, these programs were later accountable for whether a candidate’s “internal existence aligns with acceptable professional virtues and dispositions” (p. 213). McKnight’s argument against assessing dispositions emanates from his objection to measuring the inner workings of a person.

The idea of virtues-as-dispositions derives from Aristotle, who described how dispositions are particular ethical ways of thinking that determine whether an individual acts nobly or wickedly (McKnight, 2004). A person with the proper morals will behave in ways that are helpful rather than harmful. This notion is similar to Thornton's (2006) conception because both ideas suggest that the observable behaviors of others manifest as a result of fundamental principles that a person values. The difference between their philosophies is that McKnight attributes dispositions to morals while Thornton ascribes them to beliefs.

Other researchers and writers propose similar explanations for the meaning of dispositions. The Thornton (2006) study is not the first of its kind, as a comparable research question is also posed by three investigators in a 2005 study. Thompson, Randsell, and Rousseau ask if similar characteristics are held by teachers who are deemed effective by their principals. The authors posit that dispositions, which they maintain are perceptions or beliefs, may play a factor in determining teacher efficacy. It is noteworthy that although the authors describe dispositions as beliefs, the research design again concentrates on observations. Similar to the Thornton research, this study centers on dispositions-in-action. The findings indicate that the teachers in the study do possess similar traits that could be the result of similar dispositions. A surprising outcome is that the attributes observed repeatedly during the study revolve around a teacher-centered classroom, which is contrary to the widely held belief that a constructivist classroom is more effective. This anomaly may be attributable to the metric used for evaluation, namely, a standardized test. Perhaps the skills taught for success on these types of tests stem from a less student-centered pedagogy. Even so, the research of Thompson et al. and Thornton suggest that dispositions exist and effect the way that students learn.

Table 1 shows the numerous and varied definitions of dispositions. Tracing the path of this collection together allows one to see that dispositions are first understood as patterns of behavior. Next, researchers shift their efforts to understanding the underlying morals, values, and beliefs of the teacher. Finally, dispositions are understood to be intentional and observable behaviors that stem from underlying habits of mind.

Defining dispositions has been so controversial, that some writers have advocated for abandoning the mention of them altogether in lieu of other, more specific and less provocative terms (Burant, et al., 2007). Sockett (2009) claims that the attempt to produce consensus on a definition of dispositions is erroneous because it shifts focus away from the process of examining and deliberating other important considerations. Instead, the author claims that conversation should revolve around professional norms of behavior, which could be agreed upon by educators and researchers. Some researchers, like Sockett and Wasicsko (2009), subscribe to the idea that any debate about dispositions is positive for the educational community and will eventually lead to consensus about which norms of behavior are desirable for the profession of teaching.

Rationale For or Against Assessing Dispositions

Not only is defining dispositions contentious, but discussion about assessing dispositions is offensive to some academics due to the shadowy nature of the definition debate. Nevertheless, several advocates for the assessment of dispositions cite their importance to education. Katz (1993) says that simply possessing skills and knowledge about content or pedagogy does not

Table 1
Summary of Disposition Definitions in Chronological Order

Author(s)	Publication Year	Description of Dispositions
Buss, D.M., & Craik, K.H.	1983	Summaries of act frequencies
Katz, L.G., & Raths, J.D.	1985	Intentional tendencies in behavior
Katz, L.G.	1993	Typical responses to similar situations
Wenzlaff, T.L.	1998	Typical responses to similar situations
Collinson, V.	1999	Beliefs or attitudes that affect how a person behaves
McKnight, D.	2004	Repeating, patterns of behavior
Carroll, C.	2005	Intentional and learned patterns of behavior
Thompson, S., Ransdell, M., & Rousseau, C.	2005	Innate or learned qualities, conventions of thinking, manners of behaving, values, beliefs, and attitudes
NCATE (as cited by Burant et al., 2007)	2006	Values, commitments, and ethics that influence behaviors
Sherman, S.	2006	Moral aspects not related to skills
Thornton, H.	2006	Values, beliefs, attitudes, professional behaviors, and ethics
Burant, T.J., Chubbuck, S.M., & Whipp, J.L.	2007	Moral sensibility and code of ethics
Villegas, A.M.	2007	Behavioral inclinations grounded in beliefs
Schussler, D.L., Bercaw, L.A. & Stooksberry, L.M.	2008	Personal filter that affects the way a teacher is likely to behave and reason
NCATE	2009	Attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through verbal and nonverbal behaviors

(Continued on next page)

Table 1 (Continued)

Author(s)	Publication Year	Description of Dispositions
Rinaldo, V., et al.	2009b	The way in which values, commitments, and professional ethics manifest themselves in professional practice
Sockett, H.	2009	Tendency to act with consciousness and purpose
Wasicsko, M.M., Wirtz, P., & Resor, C.	2009	Not related to skills or knowledge; attitudes, values, beliefs, or perceptions
Dale, C.	2010	Intentional behaviors that stem from character
Nixon, A., Dam, M., & Packard, A.	2010	Tendencies in behavior resulting from values and beliefs
Thornton, H.	2013	Dispositions in action, tendency to be responsive in the classroom
Nixon, A., Dam, M., & Packard, A.	2016	Competence-based actions which are easily observable

indicate that these abilities will be used by a person. In other words, teachers must also have the dispositions to use their talents for the benefit of students. Because teacher dispositions are continually being fashioned (Carroll, 2005), some academics implore the administrators of teacher education programs to ensure the consideration of dispositions so that students in classrooms are not impacted by ineffective or even detrimental teachers (Kargas-Bone & Griffin, 2009; Ritchhart, 2001). If teacher candidates who possess dispositions that would render them ineffective could be steered to another career path, students in classrooms would benefit and the attrition rate of new teachers might decrease.

Other researchers cite more temporal reasons for assessing dispositions. For example, teacher education programs that use disposition assessment for admission requirements could then maximize their resources by using them on the candidates most likely to become successful teachers (Dale, 2010). Disposition assessment could also be related to contract renewal of experienced teachers. In a 2010 study by Nixon, Packard, and Douvanis, researchers found that the school principals whom they surveyed stated that undesirable dispositions were the reason for contract nonrenewal in 53% of cases (as cited by Nixon, Dam, & Packard 2010). Districts who mentor and induct new teachers inevitably invest time and money that eventually is wasted if teachers leave or are dismissed. Assessing dispositions of in-service teachers during the interview process for teaching positions could be important (Wasicsko, 2004).

Those theorists who do advocate for or against the assessment of dispositions during teacher candidacy usually mention teacher or candidate beliefs in their arguments. This focus is most likely due to the previously stated NCATE definition of dispositions shown in Table 1 that implies that a person's beliefs are evident in their actions. Hence, several writers (Thompson, 2005; Villegas, 2007; Wenzlaff, 1998) emphasize that knowledge of teacher beliefs by teacher educators and candidates themselves is essential during student teaching. According to Villegas, "unexamined beliefs, especially those that are contraindicated by new ideas about teaching... resurface once [teachers] are placed in the classroom" (p. 374). Villegas is saying that student teachers arrive in their programs with preconceived ideas about teaching that are difficult for teacher educators to address, especially if those beliefs remain unexplored. Undoubtedly, this consequence has occurred before, which makes one wonder what happens to the teachers in this position.

Alternatively, there are writers who feel that due to the nature of beliefs, in that they are internal, they are impossible to measure. McKnight (2004) feels that dispositions cannot be assessed because they do not have universal traits that can be identified in any setting. He believes that teacher educators can only create the awareness of dispositions in teacher candidates. This strategy seems to lack attention to outcomes. It appears that McKnight advocates a hope-for-the-best approach, which does not target teacher behaviors. Other theorists agree with McKnight, however. For example, Burant et al. (2007) assert that the measurement of “each person’s interiority may in itself be an immoral, unethical action” (p. 16). Here the authors are saying that examining beliefs is unethical because people do not always act on their beliefs, so it is nearly impossible to infer beliefs from behaviors. Instead, the authors promote the use of formative assessments of behaviors using exemplars that reveal ethical values and are more or less easy for people to follow.

According to Damon (2007), it is possible to measure beliefs and personal characteristics. Yet, he deems certain traits acceptable to measure while others are not. Beliefs associated with the ability of a teacher to motivate and teach students are appropriate for measurement in addition to personal traits that are necessary to the job of teaching. Off limits are attitudes concerned with a teacher’s political or religious beliefs. Also, Damon cautions that some personality traits may not really correlate with a person’s capacity to teach. For example, shyness, may not hinder teaching ability, and may be more related to an evaluator’s personal preference.

One might wonder why Damon feels the need to specify that political and religious beliefs should not be targeted for assessment as it seems common sense that these items are out

of bounds. The discussion regarding beliefs and the controversy surrounding them might stem from the topic of social justice, which is promoted by some writers (e.g., Villegas, 2007) as a desirable disposition. But even Sockett (2009), who advocates for the assessment of dispositions, cautions against using social justice as a point of judgment because it is not strictly an individual characteristic. According to Sockett, “a line has to be drawn between distinguishing social goals for education and the dispositions required of the professional” (p. 297). This is the same individual who, as stated previously, campaigns for a strict notion of professional norms of behavior. Even so, school districts and teacher education programs would need to assess these behaviors (ie. norms) to ensure that teachers were performing to the best of their abilities.

Assessment of Dispositions

In consideration of all the points of view discussed thus far, a final determination about whether teacher dispositions should be assessed must be made for this study. Gauging the personal beliefs of another individual is problematic mainly because it is nearly impossible to ascertain what those beliefs are. Many researchers (Harrison, Smithey, McAfee, & Weiner, 2006; Wenzlaff, 1998) agree that self-reflection can be an effective way to encourage teachers to examine their own beliefs about teaching. In one study, a link is made between principals’ ability to encourage self-reflection and the teachers’ belief that they are receiving effective coaching (Mette, Range, Anderson, Hvidston, & Nieuwenhuizen, 2015). According to Bucalos and Price (2005), “perhaps this is the essence of dispositional assessment – that it be a

progression of increasingly refined attitudes and behaviors” (p. 40). This idea may be why reflection as a professional practice appears in Domain 4 of the FFT. Teacher evaluators’ actions, which can act as mirrors to teachers and teacher candidates, help those candidates inch closer to the dispositions that make effective teachers good at their crafts. Some research supports the idea that novice teachers can get some understanding of dispositions and their effects on teacher practice through a targeted teacher education program (Cummins & Asempapa, 2013).

As an alternative to appraising beliefs, teacher educators and teacher evaluators might concentrate on observable behaviors instead, as these are the only pieces of evidence that can be presented in regard to effective teaching. Self-reflection by teachers on their practices seems to be a popular suggestion for measuring dispositions; however, even with the involvement of self-reflection, teachers must still have an outside observer assess their dispositions. The need for a second observer occurs because teachers may not give an accurate self-assessment, especially early in their careers. In one study (Bucalos & Price, 2005), researchers compare the significance of correlation between teacher candidates’ self-assessments and those provided by professors. The findings reveal that novice teacher candidates are only able to evaluate themselves successfully on one topic out of four. This topic is content knowledge, which is certainly an obvious one to evaluate. The study would have been more revealing if the authors had provided more demographic details and information regarding the structure of the analysis, such as the number of participants. Without this information, it is difficult to determine if the findings could be universal. Nevertheless, the results are intriguing as they point to the inability of teachers to consider their own dispositions realistically.

The results of the Bucalos and Price (2005) study have bearing on the suggestion for teacher self-reflection. Since the teacher candidates in the study are unable to effectively self-assess, the implication is that schools cannot simply rely on teachers to determine their own efficacy. One reason may be a failure of internal beliefs to strongly affect the disposition to act. In case studies conducted by Johnson and Reiman (2007), researchers find that the teachers' actions do not always match their views about a subject. Although the sample size is very small, as is the norm in case studies, one can suppose that the phenomenon of behavior inconsistent with beliefs occurs at least occasionally in other situations.

In a separate study (Schussler et al., 2008), researchers ask teacher candidates to examine their own dispositions through self-reflection about a case study involving a teacher in her classroom. Candidates consider the way they analyzed the case by answering questions that are intended to reveal how they would use judgment in a teaching situation. A strength in the data collection is that dispositions are never discussed with the candidates, so their answers are perhaps more honest rather than them trying to give what they think is the desired answer. Another interesting piece of the study involves the case study itself, which depicts a teacher making assumptions about her students with different backgrounds. Findings show that on a limited basis, teacher candidates become cognizant of the case study teacher's assumptions, but are unable to relate them to their own assumptions. This study shows that teachers might have a difficult time self-assessing where their own biases and previous notions exist. This again depicts the difficulty of self-reflection and how it cannot be the only means of disposition assessment.

Conceptual Framework

The two conceptual components for this study are based on the Danielson Framework for Teaching and democracy as a mode of being. These two concepts are interrelated as democratic ideals appear within the FFT, especially at the higher levels of teacher practice. Although the FFT does not specifically mention democracy as a principle, it will be shown that democracy as a mode of being does appear implicitly in the FFT as the framework references standards such as caring for others, common good, student choice, involvement, and shared decision-making as important components of an effective teacher's classroom. An analysis of how administrators model, assess, and influence teachers' dispositions in light of these democratic ideals is imperative to ensuring highly effective teaching.

Danielson Framework

The majority of Danielson's (2007) writings center around behaviors that are either directly observable in the classroom or can be seen via other evidence such as documents created by the teacher. These observable behaviors are ones that Danielson believes are linked to effective teaching. The idea that an observer can infer teachers' beliefs by scrutinizing behaviors is also evident in Danielson's work. For example, Danielson says that teachers should be adept at making "highly efficient use of time" and "establishing routines" (p. 70). To manage time effectively, one would have to think about time in a specific way. Namely, teachers with this attribute would think it necessary to move the class along through instructional tasks and

activities. This element is an example of what Thornton (2006) calls a habit of mind. The way teachers think affects the way they behave resulting in observable dispositions. Table 2 summarizes the alignment between the Danielson framework and teacher dispositions. Danielson does not use the terms habit of mind or disposition-in-action herself, but those terms are shown here to demonstrate how the FFT embodies these terms implicitly.

Dispositions and the FFT

In Table 2, the first three columns refer to the domain, component, and title of the FFT, respectively. The last two columns are interpretations made by the researcher linking habits of mind and dispositions-in-action to the FFT. For example, in the first row of the table, the reader can see that the habit of mind, believing that learning about students' backgrounds is important, results in the behavior or disposition-in-action of the teacher's use of students' prior knowledge when planning for lessons.

Danielson's continued emphasis on assessing observable behaviors aligns with the idea of dispositions-in-action. For example, in Domain 4 named Professional Practice, one component describes teachers' willingness to be reflective. Reflecting is the disposition-in-action, which would originate from a habit of mind, striving to improve. By describing dispositions-in-action, the FFT is a document that helps administrators assess all aspects necessary for effective teaching.

Table 2

Examples of Danielson Framework Alignment with Dispositions

FFT Domain	FFT Component	Component Description	Habit of Mind	Disposition-in-Action
1 Planning and Preparation	b	Demonstrating Knowledge of Students	Believing that awareness of students' background knowledge is important	Relating to students' prior knowledge Utilizing constructivist techniques
1 Planning and Preparation	d	Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources	Empathizing with students; understanding learner differences	Using variety of resources from school, district, community, professional organizations, universities, Internet
2 Classroom Environment	a	Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport	Valuing every student as an individual	Acting with friendliness, openness, humor, caring
2 Classroom Environment	b	Establishing a Culture for Learning	Having high expectations for students; valuing the pursuit of learning	Designing challenging activities; insisting on students' efforts
3 Instruction	c	Engaging Students in Learning	Willingness to take self out of central role	Engaging students cognitively in activities
3 Instruction	e	Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness	Realizing that student interests are valuable; empathizing with students	Using natural opportunities for learning; persisting in seeking learning
4 Professional Responsibilities	a	Reflecting on Teaching	Striving to continuously improve; Not idealizing past	Looking back to judge effectiveness of lesson

(Continued on next page)

Table 2 (Continued)

FFT Domain	FFT Component	Component Description	Habit of Mind	Disposition-in-Action
4 Professional Responsibilities	e	Growing and Developing Professionally	Striving to continuously improve; respecting contributions of others	Developing professional relationships; Participating in projects/workshops

Framing Democracy as a Mode of Being

Democracy, although so basic an American ideal, seems to be a commonly misunderstood concept by the citizens who seem to most frequently declare its importance. A common dictionary definition such as the one afforded by Merriam-Webster (“Democracy,” 2013) states that the meaning of democracy is a government in which power is situated with common people either via direct participation or through representation of an elected governing body. Others expand the definition of democracy to comprise not only standards for elected government, but also the assurance of civil liberties and human rights (Huber-Warring & Huber, 2006; Misco & Shiveley, 2007; Patrick, 2003).

However, educational thinkers such as John Dewey argue that the individual rather than the state is the central locus of democracy (Burch, 2012). As Dewey states:

...democracy is a personal way of individual life; that it signifies the possession and continual use of certain attitudes, forming personal character and determining desire and purpose in all the relations of life. Instead of thinking of our own dispositions and habits as accommodated to certain institutions we have to learn to think of the latter as

expressions, projections and extensions of habitually dominant personal attitudes.
(Dewey, 1939/1976, p. 226)

According to this view, democracy, then, represents the incarnation of certain “spiritual and moral ideals” (Burch, 2012, p. 148) which are important so that citizens care about their societies and communities. Unfortunately, there is a lack of awareness by educators of these spiritual and moral dimensions of a democratic society. This deficiency is problematic because as Trent, Cho, Rios, and Mayfield (2010) purport, education should attempt to “close the gap between democratic ideals and social reality” (p. 185) because the classroom is a “microcosm of larger societal systems that exist, and school is the place wherein youth develop their position within ‘the system’” (Toth & Morrison, 2011, p. 349). These authors believe that the classroom represents greater society and is a place where students can learn to navigate the difference between paradigm and actuality.

In the FFT, Danielson (2007) also seems to support the idea that the classroom should mirror society at large in that democratic ideals are important. The significance placed on democracy as a mode of being is seen in the fact that for teachers to reach the highest rating in the FFT rubric, their classrooms must embody democratic ideals. Table 3 shows a few examples of the alignment between democracy as a mode of being and the FFT (Danielson, 2007). The components are summarized for clarity. Note that the driving force in the classroom in the “Distinguished” category is that students take the lead in making decisions about their learning environments and monitoring or adjusting as needed. This ideal aligns with Dewey’s belief that one should have “faith in the capacity of human beings for intelligent judgment and action if proper conditions are furnished” (Dewey, 1939/1976, p. 227). It is in teachers’ dispositions that

one might find the opportunity for proper conditions conducive for democracy to be enhanced in the classroom.

The first three columns in Table 3 are identified directly from the FFT. Next, the researcher interprets the FFT using the concept of democracy as a mode of being (column 4). Finally, the last column shows the alignment to the “Distinguished” descriptors of the FFT. This process is shown to demonstrate that although Danielson never mentions democracy, the FFT contains many implicit examples. In the second row of the table, the reader can see that working for the common good of society is a core feature of democracy as a mode of being. This ideal is demonstrated in the FFT as the Distinguished descriptor of Component 2a Respect and Rapport because it is illustrated as students demonstrating respectful behavior toward each other, even when monitoring the behavior of those members of the society (the classroom).

Educating teachers about the characteristics and importance of democracy is not enough to change teacher practice because teacher skills are inadequate without certain dispositions (Misco & Shiveley, 2007). Although the definition of dispositions varies among educators and theorists, most descriptions revolve around the idea that dispositions can be predictors of how a person will act in a certain instance based on that person’s values, attitudes, and beliefs (Huber-Warring & Warring, 2006; Jacobowitz, Michelli, & Marulli, 2010). To ensure that teachers educate democratically, they must understand their own ideals in relation to democracy and democratic practices.

Table 3
Danielson Framework Alignment with Democracy as a Mode of Being

FFT Domain	FFT Component	Component Description	Democracy as a Mode of Being	“Distinguished” Level of FFT
1 Planning	f	Designing Student Assessments	Working collaboratively	Teachers include student input when creating assessments
2 Classroom Environment	a	Respect and Rapport	Common good	Classroom is respectful, and students help to monitor each other’s civility
2 Classroom Environment	b	Culture of Learning	Shared beliefs	Members of the classroom share a belief in the importance of learning
2 Classroom Environment	c	Managing Procedures	Self-governance	Students help with creation and management of procedures
2 Classroom Environment	d	Managing Student Behavior	Caring about the functioning of society	Students monitor each other’s classroom behavior in a respectful manner
2 Classroom Environment	e	Organizing Physical Space	Ensuring the individual rights of others	Students adjust the environment to accommodate students with special needs
3 Instruction	a	Communicating with Students	Valuing everyone’s contribution	Students contribute to the explanation of concepts
3 Instruction	b	Using Questioning and Discussion	Valuing everyone’s opinion	Students request their classmates’ opinions during a discussion
3 Instruction	c	Engaging Students in Learning	Working collaboratively toward a common goal	Students function as sources of knowledge for one another
3 Instruction	d	Using Assessment in Instruction	Democratic potential lives within each person	Students self-monitor their learning against criteria

(Continued on next page)

Table 3 (Continued)

FFT Domain	FFT Component	Component Description	Democracy as a Mode of Being	“Distinguished” Level of FFT
3 Instruction	e	Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness	Ensuring individual rights	Learning is tailored to individual needs and interests
4 Professional Responsibilities	a	Reflecting on Teaching	Revision and growth	Teacher accurately self reflects and uses analysis for future teaching

Chapter 2 Conclusion

Thus far, this literature review has shown that teacher quality is a factor in student achievement and is certainly one that is within the control of the teacher to improve. This information provides a point of focus for schools and districts that wish to increase the achievement levels of their students. The pieces that make up a teacher’s efficacy are content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and dispositions. Although knowledge and pedagogy are easy to define, dispositions have been difficult to describe. Theorists have centered on several different meanings: those related to personality, morals, beliefs, or behaviors. Since behaviors are the only observable occurrences, this is where researchers must concentrate their attention. In the past, studies looked at the ability of teacher candidates to self-reflect on their own dispositions. However, findings indicate that candidates might be unable to effectively self-evaluate, so having an outside observer corroborate or refute the candidate’s own assessment is important. These results might extend to in-service teachers also, that could have implications for teacher appraisal programs.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The development of beneficial teacher dispositions is important to improving teaching; therefore, this study seeks to gain knowledge about how teacher dispositions are addressed during post observation conferences that occur between teachers and administrators. A phenomenological perspective frames this qualitative research study, which includes a linguistic approach through analysis of conversations between administrators and teachers. This chapter is organized into seven sections. The research questions appear immediately after this segment followed by sections on research design, participants, data collection, data analysis, limitations, and summary.

Research Questions

This research study is guided by the following questions:

1. How does the Danielson framework help focus post conferences around the topic of dispositions?
2. How do teachers and administrators negotiate the topic of dispositions in post observation conferences?

3. How do administrators attempt to influence teachers to work on developing dispositions during post observation conferences?

Research Design

A study that is designed to analyze the way administrators and teachers interact during post observation conferences seems to lend itself to qualitative research because this type of research can involve participant observation and detailed interviewing. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2011), there are several characteristics that distinguish qualitative research. First, it occurs in the actual setting where the data are being sourced, which is important so that the researcher can understand the context of each situation. Also, the data are illustrative in nature, which allow researchers to focus on other aspects of the study instead of attempting to identify a specific outcome. This concentration on description enables researchers to determine “how different people make sense of their lives” (p. 7).

In contrast to quantitative research where investigators use data to support or reject a hypothesis, this study uses a phenomenological approach in which the researcher tries to understand the meaning ordinary people assign to post observation conferences (Bogdan & Biklen, 2011). This particular tactic aligns with the idea that the data should be collected under natural rather than experimental conditions. In this methodology researchers must bracket their own experiences by putting aside all prejudgments (Creswell, 1998). In this study the researcher uses inductive reasoning to analyze data because there is no attempt to disprove a hypothesis. The researcher, instead, allows the data to lead to conclusions. These traits of qualitative

research, including natural data collection, description, and inductive analysis, are the essence of what kind of study could be completed to determine how administrators address teacher dispositions during observation post conferences.

Because this study looks at conversations between teachers and administrators, the method of conversational analysis (CA) is also important. The methodology and methods of CA involve understanding the verbal interactions or *devices* that occur during conversations (Have, 1986). For example, a verbal device might include the discussion surrounding which parts of the Danielson framework will be selected for review during a post conference. A study situated in CA methodology has its basis in *talk-in-interaction*. In other words, a grasp of the normal dialogue occurring during regular interactions leads to understanding the culture of conversation. The analysis of conversational devices requires that transcriptions of interactions be carefully examined and thoroughly described in a way that is inductive rather than deductive. It is for these reasons that a qualitative, phenomenological study using conversational analysis is used.

Participating Location

The participants in this study were selected from the single high school in district 799 (a pseudonym) in its own semi-urban area outside of Chicago. The district is an old and historic one centered within the community it serves. Once considered a manufacturing mecca within a rural area, during the 1960s and early 1970s the community experienced tremendous growth with the building of many new homes and businesses. The 1980s saw the population shift toward

more Hispanic and Latino residents. A second surge in population during the 2000s occurred, and the transition from a small suburban area to a sprawling semi-urban region was complete.

The district and school were chosen because of convenience. They were accessible to the researcher due to a professional relationship with the district. In addition, district 799 also offered a community with many challenges making an investigation there more interesting. Participants were those administrators who evaluated teachers as part of their regular practice and who agreed to be part of the study. Participants were division chairs and an assistant principal who supervised the chairs. All participants clinically supervised 25-35 teachers and other educators. In addition to the administrators agreeing to the study, their corresponding teacher coaching subjects also had to agree to participate. Teachers who were supervised by the researcher were excluded even if they were also coached by another administrator. A discussion of the sampling procedure and total numbers of participants appears below.

Background

District 799 is a large semi-urban district with over 15 total schools that serve more than 14,000 students who all live within the limits of one particular municipality. There is a single high school within the district. All administrators in the high school were eligible to participate in the study provided they observed and evaluated teachers. Information gathered from the 2016-2017 State Report Card from the Illinois State Board of Education shows that the student body consisted of one main population and a few smaller groups. The majority of the district, over 80%, was Hispanic during the two years the study takes place. The remainder of students

were listed as either Black, White, or multi-racial, in order of percentage. The high school mirrored the district demographically.

The district has higher truancy and mobility rates and lower attendance rates than the state averages, and these rates were even higher at the high school than they were districtwide. In addition, the district's low-income population, which started at over 60% during the 2015-2016 school year, increased by 15% by the next school year. This change was due to a district drive in 2016 to have families complete the application for free and reduced lunch. The numbers of students considered low-income was a bit lower at the high school than the district. The rates of students with special needs related to disabilities (IEP) and English language limitations remained nearly constant between the 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years. At the district level, there were over 35% English language learners, while at the high school that number dropped to just over 15%. Percentages of students with IEPs were nearly identical at the district and school level, and only drop slightly from the 2015-16 to 2016-17 school year.

Over 75% of the teachers in District 799 were White during the study years. This percentage was lower than the state average of 83%. The difference was made up with an increase in the number of Hispanic teachers in the district, over 17% compared to the state average of around 5.6%. Individual school data was not available. On average, teachers in the district had two years less of experience than the state average. The teacher retention rate, over 90% in 2016-17, was higher than at both the district and state levels. The teacher attendance rate was also higher than district and state averages. This may have been due to the strong sense of history and community that exists within the district. The only information available for administrators was related to their salaries and the ratio of students to administrators. This ratio

was much higher than the state average indicating that administrators in District 799 probably had a greater caseload of teachers to supervise, coach, and evaluate.

Academically, the district and high school performed below the state average in all reporting categories. The lowest academic performance on state testing occurred in reading on the ACT, which was three percentage points lower than the state average. Although this score was reported in 2017, it was obtained from data from the previous school year. Only around 19-20% of students were deemed ready for college coursework compared to a 46-50% average college readiness at the state level over the same time period. Likewise, the percentage of students meeting ACT benchmarks was half of that of the state level. Accordingly, the school's graduation rate was nearly twenty percentage points lower than the state average of 87%.

Sampling Procedure

According to Creswell (1998), the only requirement for participants in a phenomenological study is that they have experienced the phenomenon being investigated. Therefore, the participant pool includes administrators who evaluate teachers and who use the clinical supervision model and the Danielson Framework for Teaching (FFT). According to the labor group, AFL-CIO, (2010), 20.5% of all school administrators nationwide are minorities. There were 10.7% African-American, 2.6% Asian, and 7.2% Hispanic administrators in 2009. In addition, 62.6% were female. Seidman (1991) states that if the goal of research is to broaden the findings, then the sample selected should reflect the wider population as much as possible. There were no minorities represented in the administrative body in the high school of District

799 although a deliberate effort was made to mirror the average representative makeup of the administrative staff of American school districts.

Participant Selection

The five participants, four female and one male, were selected based on their positions in the school of study and their familiarity with the phenomenon being studied (Creswell, 1998). Each of the participants in this study was given a first name pseudonym (Bogdan & Biklen, 2011). All five of the participants were part of an administrative team of division chairs and one supervising assistant principal. Two of the team members were excluded for this study. One division chair was new to the process of teacher observation and post conferences. Another division chair excluded herself based on the needs of the teachers she was observing that school year. Table 4 displays the demographics of the participants of the study.

Each administrator in the study clinically supervised between 25 and 35 teachers over the course of the school year. This supervision involved the administrator as the coach and evaluator, although in this district evaluation did not take place until the end of the school year. Instead, according to the district evaluation documents, which do not appear in references for reasons of confidentiality, the observation cycle is meant to “improve instruction and learning” and is considered formative until the end of the year.

Table 4
Demographics of Administrator Participants

Name	Years in Education	Years in Administration	Years in District	Subject Area	Highest Degree
Nancy	23	10	5	Curriculum & Instruction	M.A. Educational Leadership
Brad	12	5	6	Special Education	M.A. Social Work M.A. Leadership
Breanna	13	6	6	Math	M.A. Curriculum & Instruction M.A. Educational Administration
Erin	15	5	15	Social Studies	M.A. Educational Leadership
Donna	29	14	6	Science	M.A. Curriculum & Instruction M.A. Educational Administration

A complete observation cycle includes several steps, some of which occur individually and some that are completed in face-to-face meetings between the administrator and teacher.

The steps are listed below:

1. Teacher completes the lesson plan and the pre-conference form.
2. Teacher and administrator conduct a pre-conference meeting to discuss the lesson.
3. Teacher executes the lesson while administrator watches and writes observations.
4. Administrator shares observation notes with teacher, and teacher completes the post conference form.
5. Teacher and administrator conduct a post conference meeting to discuss the observations.

Some teachers also voluntarily became participants in the study by agreeing to have their post observation conferences audio-recorded and transcribed (step 5 above). No other additional information regarding the teachers was solicited or recorded as administrators are considered the focus of study. Each teacher participated only one time; however, administrators participated multiple times in recordings with different teachers. The data presented came from transcriptions of these recording in addition to interview responses from administrators. Table 5 summarizes the post conference recordings.

Table 5
Summary of Post Conference Recordings

Administrator	Nancy	Brad	Erin	Donna	Breanna
Number of Post Conference Recordings	6	3	2	2	1

Sample Size

To determine the sample size, the researcher looks at two meaningful studies on post observation conferences. The first is performed by Vasquez and Reppen (2007). In their study involving university teacher evaluators, Vasquez and Reppen examine two evaluator participants. An additional study by Copland (2012) is conducted with four evaluator participants. The precedence for investigating post conferences indicates that a small sample size is appropriate. Creswell (1998) states that because the process of in-depth interviewing is

laborious and is used most often in phenomenological studies, a maximum of 10 participants is acceptable. Even though the more frequently cited paper by Vasquez and Reppen involves two participants, the researcher feels that this number is too small to allow for transferability, so for this study a sample size of five is used. That way, if one participant had dropped out of the study, there would still be a large enough sample size to continue.

Although the number of teachers participating is unimportant because they are not the focus of study, the researcher hoped that the total number of teachers would range from five to ten. This would account for approximately one to two teachers per administrator. In reality, some administrators participated in the study more often than others, so the total number of teachers involved was 14. This was not the total number of teachers for whom the administrator was responsible. Most administrators had between 25 and 35 teachers who they evaluated. The teachers who participated were those who agreed to have their post observation conferences recorded.

Recruitment

Recruitment was carried out in two phases. In the fall of 2015, an e-mail explaining the purpose of the study and what would be required of participants was sent to all of the high school administrators who evaluated teachers (Appendix A). Administrators who were interested in participating in the study were asked to respond to the e-mail. Because the researcher correctly anticipated a low response rate due to administrators being extremely busy people, a follow-up phone call (Appendix B) was made to attempt to elicit participation in the study. During this

conversation, potential participants were able to ask clarifying questions while the researcher explained that the benefits of participation in the study related to both the participants and to the field of education in general. This protocol is an adaptation of Mertens' (2005) suggested method for recruitment of sending a letter and holding an introductory meeting. The most common questions involved how post conferences would be recorded (explained in a later section).

Although it was desired that participants be selected for the study based on the necessity of matching the demographics described earlier, the researcher instead chose participants based on their willingness. Other factors such as their demographics and areas of study were not considered.

The second phase of the recruitment process included finding teachers who agreed to be part of the study. Because the study involved post-observation conferences, the participation of teachers enmeshed in those conferences was also required, although teachers were not the focus of study. Teachers were identified after the administrators were selected for the study because administrators were assigned specific teachers to evaluate. All the teachers under each participant administrator were eligible to participate in the study. After each administrator's agreement was obtained, administrators shared their schedules of upcoming observations. Next, the researcher contacted the corresponding teachers via an e-mail in both the fall of 2015 and 2016 (Appendix C). This timing was important as the district had a specific window by which observations and post conferences had to be completed. Respondents were contacted by phone (Appendix D) to have the opportunity to ask questions and for the researcher to obtain their

agreement to participate. Since only five conferences were recorded in 2015-2016, the research was extended to the following school year.

Consent and Confidentiality

When potential participants (teachers and administrators) were identified, they were notified of their right to consent to the study. An informed consent form shown in Appendix E was used. Approval from the review board was reapplied in 2016 using the same documents. Participants were assured that the data would be kept confidential (Mertens, 2005) by using pseudonyms. For example, the researcher took precautions to make the background information in this document general and non-identifiable. In addition, the data were kept in secure areas either physically or electronically. Additional signatures of the participants showed that they agreed both be part of the study and to be audio recorded.

Transcription of interviews and audio recordings of post conferences were completed by a professional transcribing company. The transcriber was asked to keep all information from the recordings confidential. In addition, once the raw transcripts were received, the researcher ensured they contained only initials for proper nouns, and the researcher reserved one copy of raw transcription in a locked file. The subsequent transcription copies and excerpts contained in the study used only pseudonyms.

Data Collection

In this section, the techniques of interviewing, audio recording, and reviewing documents will be described. Table 6 shows the alignment between the research questions and the tools used for data collection.

Table 6
Research Questions and Data Collection Tools

Research Questions	Collection Tool	Participants
How does the Danielson framework help focus post conferences around the topic of dispositions?	Audio Recordings of Post Observation Conferences, Document Review of Evaluation Rubric	Teachers/Administrators
How do teachers and administrators negotiate the topic of dispositions in post observation conferences?	Audio Recordings of Post Observation Conferences	Teachers/Administrators
How do administrators attempt to influence teachers to work on developing dispositions during post observation conferences?	Audio Recordings of Interviews	Administrators

Interviews

This study employs “in-depth phenomenologically based interviewing” with the goal of having “the participant reconstruct his or her experience within the topic under study” (Seidman, 1991, p. 9). To fully understand how administrators attempt to use methods to influence teacher dispositions, the researcher endeavored to collect the experiences of each administrator. By

interviewing each administrator individually, the researcher hoped to obtain honest and authentic perspectives.

The timing of interviews was aimed at obtaining fresh perspectives about administrators' practices and intentions; however, pinning administrators down proved to be more difficult than anticipated. The intention was to hold interviews with each administrator during the 2015-2016 school year, and to conduct them using the semi-structured, three-interview series; however, the timing did not hold true. According to Seidman (1991), using three interviews provides a context for participant behavior because the interviewer strives to understand the phenomenon within the life experiences of the participants. Originally, the series of the first two of three 30-45 interviews was to be spaced 1-3 weeks apart. Instead, the interviews end up being spaced much farther apart.

Given these challenges, the bulk of the interviews took place over the course of one year and were conducted and audio recorded from the beginning of the 2015-16 school year to the beginning of the 2016-17 school year. This timing allowed the interviews to mainly take place when administrators were not busy conducting their required observations and post conferences.

The timing of the third interview occurred because the researcher was required to listen to the recorded post conferences and devise a set of questions based on what was revealed during those meetings. Since the purpose of the third interview was for administrators to reflect upon what they intended to achieve and what actually took place during their post observation conferences, these occurred after the majority of the post conferences were recorded. Hence, Interview 3 took place during the winter of the 2016-17 school year. By that time, Brad had moved on and did not participate in the third interview. In addition, due to professional

demands, Donna was unavailable for Interview 3. Table 7 shows the synopsis of interviews, timing, and participants.

Table 7: Synopsis of Data Collection

Data Piece	Timing	Participants
Interview 1	Summer 2015	Brad, Nancy
	Fall 2015	Breanna, Donna, Erin
Post Conference Recordings	Fall-Winter 2015	Brad, Nancy
Interview 2	Winter 2015-16	Brad, Breanna
	Fall 2016	Nancy, Donna, Erin
Post Conference Recordings	Fall-Winter 2016	Breanna, Donna, Erin, Nancy
Interview 3	Winter 2016-17	Breanna, Erin, Nancy

To fully capture the participants' experiences, the three interviews followed a particular format. In the first interview (Appendix F), questions were designed to place the participants' responses in terms of their life experiences. In addition, the questions were geared toward answering the first two research questions. The second interview (Appendix G) focused on obtaining details of the participants' current involvement in post conferences and a reflection on what their previous responses meant. The last two research questions were also the focus of the second interview. Finally, the third interview (Appendix H) helped the administrator and researcher focus on the conversations that occurred during the post-conferences. This interview took place within the context of what the administrator and researcher learned during the first two interviews.

Audio Recordings of Conferences

The purpose of using audio recordings was to collect data in the least obtrusive manner possible. The researcher felt that the act of passively conducting observations of post conferences might unduly influence the behavior of participants. This choice to audio record conferences instead of observing them directly aligns with the idea of the researcher as a non-participant (Mertens, 2005). Through this process, the researcher aimed to gain an understanding of the usual experiences that occur during typical post conferences.

In order to try to capture the most authentic experiences possible, the researcher was aware that other possible data would be sacrificed. For example, the observation of body language and nonverbal communications was not possible. Nevertheless, the researcher believed that by forgoing this piece of data, more valuable data regarding conversations was obtained.

Logistically, post conferences could be conducted before, during, or after school at dates and times that were usually mutually agreed upon by both the teacher and administrator. All recorded post conferences took place during the first semesters of both the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years using a digital voice recorder that was provided to each administrator. There were two occasions when administrators asked to use their own mobile device to complete the recording. The researcher agreed with the caveat that the administrator deleted the recording once it was sent to the researcher to ensure privacy. Administrators typically tried to complete a post conference within one 50-minute class period of the school day, so the recordings were usually between 20-40 minutes in duration. The goal was to collect a total of fifteen post observation conferences, three from each administrator. Although the total number of recordings

was reached, they were not evenly distributed by administrator as some record more conferences than others.

Document Review

According to Milanowski (2011), wide variety exists in the extent to which school districts in the U.S. have modified the FFT for their own uses. Since the FFT contains several examples of dispositions-in-action, a careful analysis of District 799's evaluation documents was carried out with a comparison to the language originally used by Danielson. These district documents included the rubric and descriptors used by the district to coach and evaluate teachers. Although the district's rubrics were based on the FFT, the verbiage was sometimes different than what was written in the FFT. These alterations are common among district evaluation documents. Reviewing these documents is necessary to appreciate the background of the phenomenon and how the phenomenon fits into normal school routines (Mertens, 2005).

Permission to review these documents was attained via the Associate Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction who asked to review a copy of the research proposal. A copy of the documents is not provided to retain confidentiality; however, an analysis and some excerpts appear in Chapter 4.

Data Analysis

In this section, data analysis techniques will be discussed. To analyze the data gathered in interviews, audio recordings, and document review the techniques of verbatim transcription, open, axial, and selective coding, and conversational analysis were used. In the phenomenological approach, the researcher begins data analysis with a full description of what is experienced. After analyzing respondent data, the researcher reflects on the personal description while seeking to understand all the differing points of view presented by the participants (Creswell, 1998). All data was assembled using NVivo software.

Transcriptions

Audio recordings of both the administrator interviews and the post observation conferences were transcribed by a professional service and took the form of computerized Microsoft Word documents. Transcription is necessary for two reasons. First, the interviews are lengthy, so relying on field notes completed after-the-fact is unwise (Bogdan & Biklen, 2011). Second, the researcher was not present for the post observation conferences, so field notes were impossible.

Other researchers suggest using headings on the first page of transcripts to help organize large amounts of data and make them accessible when needed (Bogdan & Biklen, 2011; Creswell, 1998). The headings include basic information such as the initials of the participant, the date, time, and location of the event, and the kind of event. This information is stored in

NVivo. The transcriptions are done verbatim and without editing other than the assignment of pseudonyms (Mertens, 2005). The reason for verbatim copying is so that the participants' exact words could be used for data analysis (Creswell, 1998). Copies of the transcripts were uploaded into NVivo and were used to annotations and coding. A sample transcription is shown in Appendix I.

Coding Procedures

The process of coding was used to organize and analyze all three pieces of data: interview transcripts, audio recording transcripts, and evaluation documents. Bogdan and Biklen (2011) suggest starting the coding process by allowing patterns in the data to emerge or stand out. These patterns represent the first coding categories that are used. This idea of letting the patterns arise from the data is similar to what Creswell (1998) calls "meaning units" (p. 150). Mertens (2005) specifically calls this step open coding and describes it as the process of breaking down data into individual parts that can be labeled. This process of open coding is used in the first phase of data analysis by coding. The researcher followed a model provided by Gallicano (2013) to describe codes, properties of the codes, and examples of the participants words that were related to each code. This model helped to process which codes were important and how they were manifested in the transcripts because the researcher tied these codes to each research question.

In the second phase of coding, called axial coding, the researcher attempted to make connections between the various portions of data that were coded in the previous step (Mertens,

2005). The goal of axial coding was to build a model of the phenomenon being studied by creating themes and focusing on the relationships among the coding categories. Finally, selective coding was used to develop a theory surrounding the phenomenon. This was done by identifying one of the categories created in axial coding as the core category and relating it to the other categories. Creswell (1998) says that in this step, the researcher is attempting to describe the *essence* of the experience. A summary of the initial coding interpretations appears in Appendix J.

Conversational Analysis

The analytical methods used in conversational analysis (CA) entail transcribing the devices occurring within conversations and providing detailed discussions of them. Several methodological constraints usually exist in CA research. First, procedures for a specific investigation are commonly developed individually for a specific situation rather than existing as a set of investigational norms. For this study's specific situation, the researcher prepared an interview guide (Appendices C & D) with questions to serve as a basis for the interviewer-participant interactions.

In addition, CA studies typically include a general purpose for the study and some documentation of the interactions of participants. The documentation for CA includes the transcripts of the post conference audio recordings. An important point to note is that CA studies never utilize experimental interactions; CA researchers instead strive to record interactions from their usual sources. This process of transcribing and coding compels the researcher to pay

attention to details while representing what took place during an interaction. The coding used for other analyses can also be useful in CA. Unlike open coding, CA requires a focus on the details of what participants are saying rather than an overarching thematic perspective. The original intention was to recode the data for devices after utilizing the open coding process described above. This process only somewhat occurred as new nodes evolved while the researcher was coding related to techniques used by administrators; however, a full diagnostic of all the devices seemed unnecessary after the initial coding. Nevertheless, several specific devices were noted and are described in the last section of Chapter 4 relating to Research Question #3.

Credibility

Traditionally, phenomenologists have only been concerned with verification of their own interpretations of the data; however, Creswell (1998) states that some researchers have moved toward the use of an outside reviewer to validate the researcher's recognized patterns and themes. According to Mertens (2005), credibility is as important to qualitative research as internal validity is to quantitative. This study was scrutinized by member checking and peer debriefing (Mertens, 2005) to demonstrate credibility.

Member Checking

The "most important criterion in establishing credibility" is member checking, which can be conducted formally or informally (Mertens, 2005, p. 255). The researcher correctly suspected

that the busy schedules of administrators would make formal member-checking unpalatable for them. As an alternative, the researcher summarized the interview at the end of the meeting and asked if the administrator agreed with what was interpreted. Administrators were also given the option of checking formally by having access to the report if they chose. At the end of each meeting, the researcher asked administrators if they wished to see the transcript of the interview. Administrators who answered affirmatively were to be sent a written copy of the transcript via email within two weeks of the request. None of the administrators requested copies of their interviews.

Since the researcher was not present for the post conferences between teachers and administrators, the only way to allow member checking was to allow the participants access to the transcripts. Once the conferences were transcribed, teachers and administrators were asked if they would like copies of the transcriptions. Later, the participants were asked via e-mail to respond to the researcher with any feedback regarding data analysis. Two of the five administrators requested copies of their transcripts and none disagreed with what was recorded. The researcher also followed up in person within a week regardless of whether a request for transcripts was made to receive any feedback from the administrator. No administrators had feedback to share at that point. The researcher also asked for feedback as a follow up question in subsequent interviews. Most of that feedback took the form of the administrator reflecting upon his or her practice as an evaluator. Those results are included in the coding and analysis since they are part of the interview transcripts.

Peer Debriefing

Another way to make qualitative data more meaningful is through peer debriefing, which is a discussion of the methods, findings, and analysis used in a study (Creswell, 1998; Mertens, 2005). For this study, a former colleague who recently completed his doctoral work was asked to participate in the debriefing. This education professional is familiar with qualitative approaches has been in the education field for over 14 years. In addition, the peer is a mentor in his school, which means he is required to observe novice teachers by utilizing the FFT. This peer was asked to review the transcripts and comment on whether he agreed with the coding and themes. After a review of the documents and a discussion, he confirmed the researcher's interpretation of the data.

Delimitations

Factors limiting the extent of transferability exist in this study. The first delimitation is the small sample size and the use of a single school location. This choice makes it difficult to predict if other administrators with different evaluation documents would generate parallel results. Also, the decision to investigate the strategies employed by administrators without addressing whether those strategies are effective is beyond the scope of this study. Direct participation in the post conference recordings by the researcher was too problematic, so a decision was made to record conferences instead. This constrained the data collected during post conferences to a strictly auditory format.

Limitations

According to some participants, some aspects of the study caused them to behave reservedly or in a different manner than usual. For example, during the interview process, administrators were introduced to topics related to teacher dispositions. The researcher needed to provide participants with a definition and example of teacher dispositions. As a result, some administrators became cognizant of some of the topics and techniques that occurred during their post conferences. Because the researcher used the disposition of caring as an example, it may have caused participants to respond to queries about dispositions with other related examples such as respect and rapport. These topics are found within the same component of the FFT. Some participants also reported that the audio recordings caused them to become somewhat self-conscious, although most administrators reported that the effect wore off after a short amount of time.

Other factors may have contributed to limitations on transferability. For example, the entire participant pool consisted of people who are White, and four of the five administrators were female. This group does not entirely represent the general population of school administrators nationally. In addition, the length of time required for data collection may have altered participants' views about the topic. During that time, administrators may have reflected on their practices or received training regarding specific strategies. In fact, one administrator changed positions in the organization during the study.

Chapter 3 Summary

A qualitative, phenomenological approach is used for this study in which administrators are interviewed, documents scrutinized, and post conferences recorded. This study aims to examine the way that teachers and administrators negotiate the topic of teacher dispositions during post observation conferences. In the next chapter, the researcher will share the lived experiences of participants by describing the themes and core ideas that emerge from the data.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study is to understand the ways that teacher dispositions are approached during post observation conferences between administrators and teachers, and how the Danielson Framework for Teaching (FFT) may have influenced or structured those conversations. It is proposed that the development of teacher dispositions is beneficial in improving teaching, thus making the topic an important one. A phenomenological perspective is used to undertake this qualitative research study. This chapter begins with a description of the participants and an overview of the observation/post conference process. Next, the findings of the study are presented and include a synopsis of the data in narrative and table formats with relevant explanation. The findings are organized around each research question.

Based on knowledge and understanding gained from the literature review, the researcher begins reviewing the data with a set of basic themes in mind. For example, knowing that ideas from the Framework for Teaching (FFT) would be prevalent in the data, codes related to a variety of dispositions such as caring, respect and rapport, and culture of learning are created. As other ideas emerge from the data, they are also coded and tracked. The most important of these new codes is teacher reflection. Next, themes are identified and related to the research questions with the purpose of answering each question. The last steps involve extending the impressions that arise from the data with literature related to teacher evaluation

and feedback, teacher reflection, administrator/evaluator effectiveness, democracy in the classroom, and teacher growth. A summary of data analysis appears in Appendix J.

Research Questions

This research study addresses the following questions:

1. How does the Danielson framework help focus post conferences around the topic of dispositions?
2. How do teachers and administrators negotiate the topic of dispositions in post observation conferences?
3. How do administrators attempt to influence teachers to work on developing dispositions during post observation conferences?

The district observation and evaluation documents are also reviewed and analyzed for this study and will be described below. The documents that District 799 first implemented in the 2014-15 school year are based on the 2007 FFT and are centered around teacher reflection and action steps. In the 2013-14 school year, a joint committee of teachers and administrators convened to learn about the FFT and create the documents with the assistance of a private consulting firm. Administrators and a select group of teachers were trained by that same firm to understand the meaning of the components and their applications to the classroom environment and instruction.

The District 799 evaluation documents cover all four of the original domains and 22 components of the FFT without any changes; however, some of the rubric descriptors have

been adapted to fit the needs of the district. Table 8 provides descriptions of select components.

Table 8
Comparison of FFT and District 799 Document

Sample Component	2007 Danielson FFT Descriptor	District 799 Descriptor
2a Respect and Rapport	Teacher-student interactions are friendly and demonstrate general caring and respect. Such interactions are appropriate to the ages, developmental levels, and cultures of the students. Students exhibit respect for the teacher. Interactions among students are generally polite.	Talk between the teacher and students and among students is uniformly respectful. • The teacher successfully responds to disrespectful behavior among students. • Students participate willingly, but may be somewhat hesitant to offer their ideas in front of classmates. • The teacher makes general connections with individual students. • Students exhibit respect for the teacher.
2b Culture of Learning	The classroom culture is a cognitively busy place where learning is valued by all. Students understand their role as learner and consistently expend effort to learn by engaging in the task at hand. Instructional outcomes, activities, and assignments convey high expectations for most students. Classroom interactions support learning.	The teacher communicates the importance of the content and the conviction that with hard work all students can master the material. • The teacher demonstrates a high regard for students' abilities. • The teacher conveys an expectation of high levels of student effort. • Students expend good effort to complete work of high quality. • The teacher insists on precise use of language by students.
4a Reflecting on Teaching	The teacher provides an accurate and objective description of the lesson, citing specific evidence. The teacher makes some specific suggestions as to how the lesson might be improved	Teacher's reflection provides an accurate and objective description of practice, citing specific positive and negative characteristics. Teacher makes some specific suggestions as to how the support program might be improved.

Research Question #1

How does the Danielson framework help focus post conferences around the topic of dispositions?

Both the administrator interviews and recorded post conferences provide data relevant to Research Question #1. There are two themes that originate from the data that related to focus and the FFT. One theme is related to the purposes of observations and post conferences, and the other is called using the FFT components. Both arise because of the way administrators talk about the structure of the FFT and the value it holds for observations and post conferences. Two subthemes also emerge from data relating to each of the themes. One sub theme is providing focus because administrators speak positively about how the FFT helps center observations and conferences. Another subtheme is eliminating bias, which surfaces from administrators' descriptions linking the FFT components to impartiality. In Table 9, a summary of the themes and sub themes related to how the FFT helps provide focus is shown with references to the number of each theme's appearances in the data.

Table 9
FFT Focus Themes and Subthemes

Theme/Sub Theme	References in Data
Purpose of Observation/Post Conference	40
Using FFT components	87
Providing Focus	53
Eliminating bias	10

Purpose of Observation/Post Conference

According to administrators, there are multiple purposes for the structure of the observation and post conference cycle. Although research of this topic is not originally intended, purpose of the observation and conference is mentioned often enough that describing it became compulsory. The purpose of the observation/post conference is important because it relates to teacher reflection, a prominent disposition that will be discussed later. Also, the way the FFT rubric is designed speaks to the rationale for observations and post conferences. And as the findings on Research Question #3 will show, the purpose of the conference is connected to how administrators attempt to influence dispositions in post conferences.

One reason expressed for conducting observations is described by Erin (Interview 2). She relates the goal of reflection to sharing a picture of the classroom with the teacher, "...when you have all of that information for you as a teacher, they can look at it and say, 'Oh, I did do that,' or, 'Oh, I didn't do this, but I should have.'" Breanna (Interview 2) talks about the power of the observation being in the script, a rich and written description of what is observed, that the teacher would review and reflect upon:

...being able to show a teacher what they said, what the kids said, what they did, what the kids did for a whole class period because they often don't even realize how much they're talking or the kids are not talking and things like that.

The above statement is also tied to a later theme, perception of teaching, because the administrator talks about teachers being able to recognize something about their instruction.

Donna (Interview 2) discusses how she tries to tie the observation to FFT components, another

theme that will be described in this section, “So when I'm in an observation, I'll recognize some of those components, where they need more growth on...”

This idea of understanding where teachers needed improvement is echoed by Nancy (Interview 2) who feels that teachers also see her as a source of knowledge for improvement:

...then interjecting. I'm supposed to be the person who has the toolbox of instructional strategies and environmental suggestions and stuff. So I am supposed to be able to also pop in with a “Well, you know what you could try?”

Brad shares Nancy’s sentiment that the role of an administrator should be about coaching, “...be in that coaching conversation and guiding them through that process, is really what I feel like our responsibility” (Interview 2). Donna (Interview 2) states that having an idea of a teacher’s growth areas is important when meeting with the teacher, “Sometimes you have a goal real quick in mind if that classroom had some major issues, right away, you gotta try and get to that.”

Administrators also speak directly of influencing the growth of teachers. This is something intentional that they do. For example, Erin said she wants to help teachers see how they can improve:

I'm trying to lead them in a certain direction... Maybe I don't even wanna say lead them in a certain direction, but if there's something I wanna focus on, and I want to maybe help them see how to get there, not just, "Okay. Well, here's this list of this, this, this."

Breanna speaks of a similar sentiment with teacher growth following reflection. Breanna uses the word valuable to describe the desired kind of reflection she would like to see, meaning the teacher needs to think about where to apply this new insight:

I think the goal is to have the teachers make a valuable reflection on the lesson and the script and just the overall effectiveness of their objective, and just did they get through to the kids and get them where they needed them to be. So I think giving them an opportunity to talk and analyze where it went well and where it didn't go well.

According to administrators, the purpose of the observation and post conference seems to be involving teachers in the observation cycle by providing a lens by which teachers can consider the effectiveness of their teaching and make appropriate adjustments.

Providing Focus

In all cases, when administrator participants are asked about the Danielson framework, there are favorable responses. The administrators believe that the FFT helps them to navigate the many aspects of a teacher's practice in a logical and methodical way. Some administrators had used a different observation/evaluation tool prior to using the FFT and note a difference between before adopting the FFT and after. Erin describes the previous observation tool in Interview #1. She feels it was unmatched to classroom practice:

...it didn't go along with what you did or didn't see in the classroom. 'Cause you would mark if you observed this, or didn't observe it. And, you could, you could always add an asterisk and type something in the bottom of the category. But why were we using that tool to evaluate a lesson if we weren't seeing everything that was in there?

In Interview #1 Nancy states that the previous tool lacked the focus that led to effective post conferences, "What we had in this district before I got here was very, very bad. It didn't really spur good conversation in the post, it was just a bunch of check boxes." Brad has a different reason for struggling with a prior, non-FFT observation tool. As a practitioner of related services (ie. Social work), he grapples with providing feedback to teachers in a meaningful way as he describes in his first interview:

I thought it was extremely difficult when I ran into a teacher or a staff member that felt I couldn't help them improve. "I'm an excellent teacher. What are you gonna help me

do?” The conversation would come up quite a bit, “You’ve never been in the classroom, so how can you help me?”

While previously used tools did not help administrators during the observation cycle, as they learned to use the FFT as observers in practice, they began to see the FFT as a helpful replacement. Nancy, who was the second most experienced administrator participant, describes in Interview #1 how the FFT is able to help administrators pinpoint the exact behaviors that are deemed either more or less effective in the classroom:

...it’s helpful for us, too, as raters. So again, you’re getting away from that sort of gut instinct, “It seemed good, it felt good. I don’t know, something seemed a little off, didn’t quite...” “It helps you to put really concrete ideas around that and then help the teacher in turn see that. Say, “Okay, this was not the best it could be, because you were or your children were saying and doing this. If we took it and we worked it this way, that would push it to that next level.”

Donna agrees that the FFT can help guide administrators’ conversations with teachers. She uses the term targets to describe how the framework can show areas of need for the teacher:

I think Danielson... Lets the teachers know what those targets are that they gotta reach. Plus it also gives you a framework on how to have these conversations. You can really see where their work needs to be done, at what areas they wanna focus on, and they can see that. They can recognize, well, certain areas that they need. So I think Danielson has really helped in that area.

Using the FFT Components

Not only does the FFT guide the conversations between administrators and teachers, but it also helps direct the observation process in the classroom. According to Nancy in Interview #1, the components are at the forefront of her thoughts during observations:

I've definitely got it in my mind so I'm definitely, although I'm not physically doing it I am thinking in terms of components when I watch and the more apt I get with it, the more I train myself to look for specific things.

Nancy emphasizes this same point later in the interview:

...what are the physical concrete things I am seeing or hearing or that are displayed or whatever that prove that instinct?" I can't either really praise somebody or say you have a problem with something that I can't put evidence to. So I'm definitely thinking of that in the back of my mind like, "2A, what should I be saying about 2A, good bad or otherwise?"

Erin finds the components useful in the same way, "this categorizes it so it makes so much more sense for everybody involved. As an evaluator, it's so easy to go in and you're looking at these things. Here's [Domain] two, here's three." Nancy finds the components comprehensively described in the FFT, "I've never come across a situation, or a thing, or a quote, or an instance of something that happened in a classroom where I couldn't find it on that rubric somewhere..." (Interview 1).

During observation post conferences, administrators often reference specific components that they wish to discuss with teachers. They start out by using the observation script. For example, Nancy tells a teacher reading the script, "you'll see the components attached at the end of each statement or each block of statements.". During a post conference, Nancy tells Teacher 3 how the form is completed by citing the component and the specific action that the teacher performs:

I marked a lot of 2A, that "Respect/Rapport." Again, just the really nice job you did of talking directly to Mom, and just before the meeting, starting making sure there were chairs and Kleenex, and everything was set up and ready to go.

Another administrator, Brad, mentions a different component while addressing a teacher in a post conference. He also is able to specify which teacher actions lead to the assignment of that component:

...3d, also Using Assessment and Instruction. You're able to reference prior learning to engage and assess student knowledge. You explain particular questions and how they're designed to assist the student on a summative assessment.

In the following example, administrator, Erin, does not refer to a specific component, but the entire domain as she feels the teacher would be able to understand. She is also able to describe the behaviors that lead to her analysis of the teacher's practice:

I think that you've always been strong in domain two, and I know we've had that conversation year in and year out. But something, especially, I definitely noticed that because with the kids working in groups, they were more working with each other this time as opposed to some of the other times I've been in your classroom. Even the respect they have with each other and for each other.

Administrator, Breanna, does not give the number/letter designation of component in this next example; however, she does name the component and describe which behaviors make this a strength for that teacher:

I think this is a strength of yours that has come out in the last couple years as well, is to see just the way, and to see is the managing customs procedures. So just the way you handle the management of your groups and the way that the class flowed...

Thus, the components of the FFT spotlight the behaviors in the classroom during the observation that administrators can then mention later during the post conference.

Eliminating Bias

Administrators have opined that the FFT is helpful in their practices as observers because the rubric is divided into specific domains and components that spotlight desirable behaviors while it also describes undesirable ones. Furthermore, administrators feel that the third-party nature of the FFT steers post conferences in an unbiased way. In Interview 1, Brad discusses what he observes other administrators doing in a previous district while observing and evaluating without the FFT:

Traditionally, without a rubric, it was very subjective. And if we had a relationship or if I felt like you were okay, then that was fine. There wasn't a whole lot of time and effort put into a lot of it. So now, not only the teacher, but also the evaluator was held to a standard.

Erin agrees in Interview 1 that not having a rubric makes it easier to become biased. And although her training around the FFT has mostly focused on pedagogical issues, it also includes learning to prevent observer bias:

I think it's more focused on the pedagogy. I mean, I would say the only thing that might be close is if you're identifying, is something an interpretation, or a bias, or an opinion? You know what I mean? I think that's something we lack here, or have lacked.

Administrators say that the structure of the FFT rubric helps remove bias by providing descriptors by which teachers could be measured. Nancy states, "But it's also, I think, made me more aware of our biases of what is the disposition that works" (Interview 2). Nancy is describing how the FFT also frees her up to think that there may be more than one kind of successful teacher, the FFT itself providing the awareness.

Brad (Interview 1) feels that the FFT also helps teachers feel more confident that administrator bias is removed. He talks about the FFT in terms of its nature as a blueprint. By

thinking in terms of its design, teachers can compare themselves to the rubric descriptors rather than to other teachers:

I think that the way that I tell the staff is that, “Here’s the blueprint. Here’s the rubric. Take me out of it, and now what does that look like for you?” One of the things that, maybe we had some conversation about, was the teachers have always said, “Well, I feel like I’m here. And the person teaching next to me, they may be doing this, this and this. How can you compare us?” And the conversation really led to, “This is my rubric, and this is where I fall, versus this is their rubric, and this is where they fall.” So that’s how I think Danielson has helped remove some of that opinion, remove some of that bias, and really just have that person focus on their blueprint.

Overall the FFT is viewed as something positive by administrators for its ability to focus observations and conversations around articulated descriptions of behaviors. In addition, the FFT allows administrators to feel more confident about the removal of bias from their post conferences. The next section will look at recorded post conferences and how dispositions are discussed, if at all.

Research Question #2

How do teachers and administrators negotiate the topic of dispositions in post observation conferences?

Post conference recordings and interviews with administrators are used to collect data surrounding Research Question #2. There are two themes that are derived from the data. The first theme encompasses all the different dispositions that are mentioned specifically or are alluded to during interviews or conferences. This section will contain a list of all the relevant dispositions. Another theme, perception of teaching, also arises when discussing teacher dispositions. Two sub themes, reflection and difficult conversations, appear during discussions

with administrators and post conferences between administrators and teachers. In Table 10, a summary of the themes and sub themes appears with references to the number of appearances in the data.

Table 10

Negotiating Dispositions Themes and Sub Themes

Theme/Sub Theme	References in Data
Appearance of Dispositions	288
Reflection	104
Perception of Teaching	41
Difficult Conversations	26

Appearance of Dispositions

Prior to being interviewed for this research, administrators had no knowledge of any formal terminology relating to dispositions. Therefore, the researcher is compelled to provide a definition and examples for each administrator to ponder (Appendix K). The handout in Appendix K was given to each administrator along with a verbal explanation. The following researcher quote from the first interview with Erin is an example of how dispositions are explained to administrators:

Dispositions are actions by the teacher, and it has to be actions, because we can observe actions. We can't observe what they're thinking. But it's definitely related to what teachers are thinking. But the way to define a disposition from something else is it's not related to content or pedagogy. It's not related to social studies, or how you teach social studies. It's 'other' in the classroom, all the other stuff. So, for example, caring would be a disposition. And you don't have to be caring specifically to teach social studies. It

doesn't have anything to do with the content, but it's one of those things that's part of being a teacher.

Once administrators are provided with a definition, they are able to supply other dispositions and relate them to the FFT. For example, in Interview 1 Brad speculates, “The respect piece comes out for me because a teacher doesn't have to be respectful to teach algebra if they just have the teaching skills in the content.” He later goes on to say, “I think respect and rapport, that's right there. It's kind of clear in Domain 2...” A similar connection to Domain 2 is made by Nancy in Interview 1 when she discusses dispositions, “we gotta meet kids where they are, but we've also gotta figure out how to get the most out of them. So I think that that belief in the kids that they are capable and as capable.” During Interview 1, Erin is also able to make the association with Domain 2, “I think 2A, it's the little things, like getting to know your kids and calling them by name, knowing that Johnny's involved in this, and Suzy does this, and remembering that stuff, and making those connections.”

While reviewing the transcripts of interviews and post conferences, each time a disposition is mentioned, it becomes a new child node under the parent node, “Dispositions.” There are a total of 20 different dispositions mentioned. In Table 11, the indicated dispositions are charted along with the number of occurrences for each. The most prevalent dispositions will be discussed in more depth after the chart.

Table 11

Summary of Stated Dispositions

Disposition	Number of Occurrences	Disposition	Number of Occurrences
Being Reflective	104	Having Empathy	2
Creating Respect & Rapport	65	Showing Growth	2
Developing Culture of Learning	40	Valuing Honesty	2
Implementing Changes	17	Being Prepared	2
Caring	14	Using Sarcasm	2
Letting Go/ Student-Centered/Democracy	14	Displaying a Sense of Humor	2
Establishing a Smoothly Running Classroom	6	Needing Positive Reinforcement	1
Enjoy Teaching	5	Not Asking for Help	1
Advancing Students' Best Interests	5	Making Strategic Decisions	1
Giving Up	3	Being Committed	1

Reflection

By far the most often referenced disposition is teacher reflection which is cited over one hundred times, directly and indirectly. One instance of a direct mention occurs during the post conference between Nancy and Teacher 4, “It sounds like you've done some reflecting on how freshmen need things organized for them in order to be most successful.” Another direct example occurs between Brad and Teacher 2, “And then 4A of that Domain Four is that reflection piece. How is what you're seeing, maybe the same as what I'm seeing?” Indirect occurrences of reflection happen mostly when the teacher is in the act of reflecting during the

post conference, such as the reflection that arises from Teacher 1 during her post conference with Nancy:

...you mentioned in there when I was... "Wait for them," and they actually were quiet, and it actually does work 'cause I do it all the time, and I'm trying to do it more often. And it actually works 'cause they know each other, they wanna talk, they're excited about everything, and so I have to wait and so I don't wanna talk over them, and I know there was a couple of instances...

In their interviews, administrators deem reflection to be an important disposition and one that they emphasize during post conferences. During Nancy's Interview 2, she notes that not only is reflection part of the FFT, but it is there for a reason. Nancy believes that the FFT is designed to allow dialogue about the way to improve performance on components:

...reflection is on the Danielson Framework, so teacher reflection is a part of that. I think it helps guide the conversation a little bit because you've got that rubric in front of you. And so you're saying, "Okay, you were here on the rubric. If you wanted to get to that next column to the right, from proficient to excellent, or from needs improvement to proficient, what could you do?", or "Why do you think... Where would you rate yourself?"

Brad also describes the importance of teacher reflection, "This is as much a 50/50 conversation than it is a one-sided conversation about me helping [teachers] that reflect the practice." In a later interview (2), Brad goes on to say that reflection is something he looks for from teachers:

And then in that post-conference, I guess what I look at most is that teacher's reflection of what the process has been. So are they accurately reflecting? Are they seeing what I'm seeing? Are we targeting the same things?

Erin concurs in Interview 2 about the importance of reflection, "I think that's what's most important. Recognize what we want to change or tweak, but how?" In Interview 3, Erin goes on to say that reflection is not just important, it is an expectation, "I want teachers to take the lead, I do. Because I feel like they should be doing most of the talking and the reflecting."

Breanna has a similar desire, “the goal is to have the teachers make a valuable reflection on the lesson” (Interview 2).

During the post conferences, teachers are found very often to be reflecting upon their practices. This reflection takes the form of the teacher noting what happened during class, thinking about the class at a later time, or even providing evidence of learning from an assessment. In the post conference between Donna and Teacher 11, the teacher notes that she had done some anticipation of what would occur in class followed by reflection comparing her prediction to what actually transpires, “I was really prepared for them to like, ‘What do I do? What am I supposed to do?’ But I think giving it to them early to read helped, ‘cause I gave it to them the day before.” When Erin asks Teacher 1 if he is able to accomplish his learning goals during the observed class, he says, “I think we need more work. It's probably the first time I've tried modeling in the class, but I'm glad it went over well. But I think we still need more work on identifying good evidence.” With Brad, Teacher 3 reflects on her relationships, “I feel like I'm making an impact with the kids, I think I'm making an impact with staff, and I feel like overall, contributing well to a positive learning environment to the school climate.” Breanna asks Teacher 1 how she knows students had learned during the lesson. Teacher 1 replies, “Through the conversations that I was hearing in the classroom when I was walking around and listening to partners explain to each other, and also through collecting the student work at the end of the class.”

Teachers, too, talk about reflecting, “I think my strongest is reflecting on teaching. I reflect on everything I do every period. I get six minutes to do it in between every period every day. And then I go home and I reflect more on it.” (Brad & T8). Teacher 7 speaks with Brad

about reflecting on being a first-year teacher. In this case, the teacher reflects collaboratively with her mentor, another teacher:

I was talking to [another teacher] about the second, this is my biggest area for growth, to be perfectly honest. I think as we both reflected on it... [She]'s my mentor. Sorry. I think we both reflected on it and I think we both came to the agreement that as a first year, it's darn near impossible to be excellent in classroom management...

While conferencing with Erin, Teacher 10 describes how her entire instructional team reflected together and used the results to make changes:

We like to try some things out, see how they go, and then we wanna reflect on them, and that will change our focus for the next, either if we're doing the similar activity for the next unit or for the next year, whatever it may be, we'll change off of that.

Most of the references occur during post conferences indirectly as teachers are in the process of reflecting. When teachers reflect they start statements with “I think,” “I feel,” or “I learned.” This method of stating reflections is probably unconscious and is used to get permission or approval from the listener. Table 12 contains examples of the various kinds of statements teachers made with the post conference identified so that the reader can compare the structure of the various statements.

Both teachers and administrators speak of reflection resulting in it being the most often suggested disposition. Administrators mention it during interviews and in post conferences. Teachers talk about reflecting, the processes they use, and actually are recorded performing reflection during post conferences.

Table 12

Sampling of Teacher Reflection Statements

Post Conference	Reflection Example
T1 with Nancy	I feel like some of them came that way. I think they were a lot quieter in the beginning, but I think because some of them grew up with each other, went to school with each other... I have a bunch of band kids, so they know each other.
T5 with Nancy	I think that a lot of the students were engaged and understood, and got what I was trying to do. There were a few students who didn't maybe... I think they understood, knew what was going on and what was happening, and either through kind of boredom with the project or just not liking or understanding, there were a few handful of students who maybe didn't do as much as I would have liked them to do.
T6 with Brad	...you go to Resource and I'm still trying to figure out how to get the kids to buy in to do their homework. I feel like it's totally different in that sense, so it's really hard for me. I've been trying to figure that out for six years now, "How do I get these kids to buy into this part of the learning process?"
T12 with Breanna	But specifically for this period, I think I'm gonna start differentiating and stepping it up for them, just because that's what they need.
T11 with Erin	I was gonna start this study in my class and see how that goes. And then based on that, figure out a way for next year, to implement that more into the class. I've already been thinking about restructuring the class to make it more writing intensive...

Respect and Rapport

The second most popular disposition is creating an atmosphere of respect and rapport, a component directly stated in the FFT (2a). Overwhelmingly, administrators feel that it is essential for teachers to create a respectful classroom and to develop a positive rapport with students. In interviews, administrators speak of 2a often. Table 13 summarizes the times that

administrators mention respect and/or rapport during an interview. Most of the examples of respect and rapport describe the importance of it as a disposition. Each instance is tied with an additional disposition that shows how often dispositions are interrelated.

Table 13

Summary of Respect/Rapport Mentions

Administrator	Interview	Statement	Related Disposition
Nancy	2	And relationships, I would put as the strong second. Kids have to feel that they... That you are invested in them.	Caring about students
Brad	1	...respect comes down to the planning aspect. Are they accounting for all learners in their classroom, all makes and models kind of thing?	Responsive planning
Brad	2	That respect and rapport piece, I think is hard for teachers to see, or understand how they teach it, 'cause they feel like these kids walk in with a set of values or a set of skills...	Teaching behaviors
Erin	2	...in the hallway greeting the kids, and they're talking to them about real life things, and the way they interact with them in the classroom...	Caring about students
Erin	3	...their biggest thing with the kids is respect, like, "We're here, we're working together, you respect me, I respect you, we're all people. ...because the teachers show that respect, I think the kids give it right back to them. ...if you don't have some sort of relationship and show that you care about the people that you work with and work for you, whatever that looks like, who's gonna wanna do stuff for you?	Culture of Learning

(Continued on next page)

Table 13 (Continued)

Administrator	Interview	Statement	Related Disposition
Breanna	2	I have probably one or two teachers that I really am working hard on helping them improve their relationships with students...	Lack of disposition
Breanna	3	...if you're asking students to talk to each other, and you're asking them to talk about math, then you need to give them an opportunity to get to know each other. They won't want to talk about math unless they feel comfortable with you... And, I'm like, "Well, do you know them?" That's where you have the conversation of kids work harder for people that they like.	Collaborative grouping

Much of the conversation around respect and rapport has to do with administrators' beliefs that students will work harder for teachers who they like and admire. A few talk about the rapport piece being essential for collaborative learning. And some mention other topics like the actions teachers can take to establish rapport, for example.

Respect and rapport is also mentioned during post conferences. Nancy mentions it with all five teachers she meets with. Many times, Nancy cites respect and rapport as she is mirroring. An example occurs when at one point Nancy says to Teacher 1, "that class is chatty, that you struggle with that with them, and we both agreed it's really obvious it's not from a place of disrespect..." The teacher mentions that the class developed that rapport, "I think they became friends overall. And I'm really happy 'cause sometimes you don't see that in classes where they don't know each other's names."

Brad also talks about respect and rapport with all three of the teachers he conferences with. To Teacher 7, Brad says:

2A, Respect and Rapport, and 2B, Culture for Learning. Again, you have the good rapport with kids, you've good respect, students interacting positive and friendly, genuine enthusiasm for the content that you're working through.

In the above example, respect and rapport appears in concurrence with culture of learning.

This is a fairly common combination that will be discussed in the next section. Referring to her students, Teacher 6 tells Brad, "I want their respect and I respect them." Erin speaking to

Teacher 11 says in regard to collaborative grouping:

I definitely noticed that because with the kids working in groups, they were more working with each other this time as opposed to some of the other times I've been in your classroom. Even the respect they have with each other and for each other.

Donna also discusses respect and rapport during her two recorded post conferences. With Teacher 9 she says, "You have a great rapport with them," and "you have created a respectful classroom environment."

As a whole, the administrators cite respect and rapport often during their interviews and with teachers. In turn, teachers also are able to point out times when they feel that respect and rapport is displayed positively in the classroom.

Culture of Learning

Culture of learning, 2b, is something challenging for administrators to pinpoint. Nancy talks about this struggle (Interview 1):

2b is sometimes very difficult to put your finger on, it's more abstract sometimes and you're trying to find the concrete things that justify that gut feeling you have, "I feel like this is a good culture for learning.

For Nancy, culture of learning is the teacher's "belief in the children in terms of what kind of assignments, the level of the assignments they're giving the children..." In a later interview (2), Nancy explains further, "If you're not at least striving at 2b, then nothing in C [instruction] is gonna work. Because 2b is all about your belief in your kids' abilities, and helping your kids believe in their abilities, and having high expectations for them..." Brad talks about using culture of learning to, "hook the kids" (Interview 2). Erin speaks of culture of learning in terms of the reason for the learning activity and a trust in the teacher, "They're doing the group work and they're working in pairs, or if they need to do an individual assignment, 'Oh well. [my teacher] wouldn't have me do this if there wasn't a reason, so I'm going to do it for [my teacher].'"

For Breanna, defining culture of learning is easier, "I feel like 2b [culture of learning] is pretty concrete of, you need to set the stage and let them know what they'll be learning and why. And why it's important, in the grand scheme of things where it falls" (Interview 3). It is notable that four of the five administrators discuss culture of learning in their interviews, and most have variations of the definition.

There are other times that culture of learning is examined during post conferences.

Donna reviewed Teacher 9's performance:

You have high expectations as established in the classroom and as a norm. Every time I've been in your classroom, high expectations is the norm. The students know it, they expect it of themselves. I've seen that a lot. Now you need to start releasing them.

In the above example, Donna aligns her definition of culture of learning to Nancy's in that the teacher should have high expectations for students. Donna also alludes to the gradual release model so that she is connecting a teacher's high expectations with the disposition of letting go,

which is the process of allowing students control over the environment. In an example of Nancy's culture related talk, she says to Teacher 2, "[students] had a vested interest in doing well and in watching their classmates, having their classmates do well and be successful." This example again shows how Nancy defines culture of learning as high expectations.

Although administrators sometimes look for different attributes during post conferences for evidence of culture of learning, almost all talk about the topic with the teachers they observe. And four out of five administrators mention culture of learning during their interviews.

Perception of Teaching

The way teachers perceive the effectiveness of their teaching is related to self-reflection, but it is also related to difficult conversations, which will be discussed below. When teachers have inaccurate views of their teaching, administrators might feel the need to have a difficult conversation. Most administrators begin their post conferences by asking the teacher about how they think the lesson went. If what teachers report does not match what the administrators observed, the administrator may begin to wonder if teacher self-reflection is an issue.

Some administrators talk about the signs that a teacher is not accurately recognizing the results of their teaching practice. Nancy imagines a conversation taking place between her and a teacher:

How do you think it went?" "Fine." "Why?" "'Cause it did." That's not very good. So either that person's not particularly reflective, and/or I'm not asking the right questions in the right way to elicit, or in the worst case scenario, force that level of response.

Brad describes a similar situation that may have transpired in the past:

I guess the hardest part for me to continue to learn through in the observation process is working with that teacher that says, "I did everything right. There's nothing you can tell me I would have done differently. I'm an excellent teacher."

Erin ponders whether some teachers truly are unable to see their practices in a real way, "Cause I don't know if it's a matter of people feeling like really, 'Wow, everything is great', or feeling like they would have to get on the defensive..." (Interview 3).

The approaches administrators take for teachers who are not able to reflect accurately are similar. They would start off by asking probing questions or referring to the FFT. Breanna says she would refer to evidence of student learning:

And I think it's baby steps with the people that aren't super self-reflective. If they're not getting there on their own then I think my first step is to say, "Okay, did your students reach this objective?" And then see what they say.

In all the post conferences that are recorded for this study, there is no evidence of the administrator needing to have a difficult conversation.

Reflection, respect and rapport, and culture of learning are the most often cited dispositions that appear during interviews and post conferences. Due to reflection materializing as the most commonly referenced disposition, other topics relating to reflection also emerge. For non-reflective teachers or those who reflect inaccurately, administrators talk of having difficult conversations and the ways that those conversations might transpire. In the next section, administrators' tactics for influencing dispositions will be reviewed.

Difficult Conversations

Another aspect of post conferences centers around difficult conversations. In a later section, examples of how administrators attempted to influence teacher dispositions will be addressed. This section will discuss the thoughts that administrators had regarding difficult conversations.

Some administrators speak about past experiences that result in a difficult conversation.

Nancy (Interview 1) knows she had to have a difficult conversation with a teacher whose students perceived him as uncaring:

“What you are showing the children, is that you do not care about them, that you do not like them, that you are sad that you are spending your time with them.” I had a conversation last year with a teacher around intent versus perception. It doesn't really matter what you thought you were projecting, if the kids were taking it a different way, then that is what it was.

In the case above, the disposition, caring, is not being displayed and the administrator feels the need to address it.

Sometimes, to introduce the topic of a disposition that is not executed effectively, the administrator would use a non-threatening slant. Erin, during Interview 2, talks about what she would say to lower a teacher's defensiveness, “I'll bring it up. And what I might say is something like, ‘I think overall, this is something that I would normally call a strength of yours, but this happened.’”

Administrators also spoke of how the FFT could be helpful with difficult conversations because it provides focus around specific descriptors. For example, in Interview 2, Donna talks about using the FFT rubric to examine Domains 2 and 3. She explains that she would have teachers read the descriptors for the component or domain and then come up with their own

ratings of their practices:

[Domains] two and three, I have out, and I say, and sometimes we go through and we look at 'em, and I says, "Well... " And we say, "Where do you think you are at, say in the engagement piece?" or whatever... "Were you proficient? Just by rating?"

Nancy (Interview 2) speaks in a similar way about how the FFT assisted with difficult conversations:

...you go back to that rubric, you go back to those examples, and you say, "See, right here, in *Managing Student Behavior*? It says, 'this should not...' " There is something, so with that example, with 2[D] there...

In both cases, the administrators say they would have copies of the FFT out in front of them to refer to during the post conference. By referring to the FFT, administrators feel that the difficult conversations become easier as the descriptions and evidence provide the focus for conversation. For example, Nancy again in Interview 2 states, "I've had people be straight-up combative with me about it, and again, I always bring it back to the evidence. I say, 'Well, right here, you're not arguing this fact that...'"

The classroom evidence, in the form of a script, is used by Nancy (Interview 2) to center post conference conversations around FFT components and specific descriptions:

...they wanna be excellent, and were not, and so, you end up saying, "Okay, so that's where you wanted to be. Let's talk about what you did do, what's really good here, and what would be that next step to get it to where you're comfortable and where you're happy."

Brad agrees (Interview 2) that the FFT is at the heart of the discussion, "That's when I refer back to that Danielson rubric. 'Show me what this looks like for you. Explain to me kind of what's going on, what are you thinking?'"

Even though there are times that administrators have to have difficult conversations with teachers, the administrators say they attempt to diffuse tensions by noting positive

attributes of the teacher. Administrators also state that the FFT is helpful in refocusing the conversation on descriptions rather than anything the teacher might take personally.

Research Question #3

How do administrators attempt to influence teachers to work on developing dispositions during post observation conferences?

As mentioned previously, the stated purpose of the observation cycle in the district under study is to help improve teaching and learning. From a philosophical perspective, this idea of continuous improvement means that administrators and teachers should view the observation cycle as formative until it is time for the final summary of teaching practice called the evaluation. Administrators often talk about the way that they attempt to influence teacher dispositions during the observation cycle. These methods of influence become the themes in this section. The first theme, observer acts as a mirror, emerges from the way the administrators (observers) allow teachers to see their practices from the eyes of observers. Next is a theme about the questions administrators ask teachers in order to obtain reflection. Last, direct suggestions, is theme related to how administrators give explicit feedback. In Table 14, the themes related to influencing teacher dispositions are summarized.

Table 14

Developing Dispositions Themes

Theme	References in Data
Observer Acts as Mirror	18
Questions to Reflect	70
Direct Suggestions	62

Acting as a Mirror

There are times during post conferences when administrators act as mirrors for teachers in order to display to teachers their own practices. As Nancy states, providing a mirror helps the teacher think about, “all the parts of [the observation] that were good, why were they good, what did I as the teacher do to make them good” (Interview #2). It is notable that the data from post conferences aligns with Nancy’s statement. For example, with Teacher 1, Nancy uses comments like, “I remember you went over those a couple times” and “I thought the culture for learning was really, really high.” These statements provide the teacher with feedback on effective strategies.

During the process of mirroring, administrators tend to simply describe what they were observing in the classroom. Often the mirroring is paired with a brief appraisal of what is occurring, referred to in Table 14 as “Positive.” Nancy provides some of the positive mirroring as exemplified in this excerpt because she describes what she observes and combines it with a “good job”:

I did get a lot of correct answers when I was talking to the students and I did notice that, and you did a real good job of going from group to group and “What do you see? Why do you see it? Why do you think that’s happening?”

There are no examples of negative mirroring, which would have been describing what was observed with a “bad job” comment.

Besides positive mirroring, there are also examples of “Neutral-Positive” and “Neutral-Negative” mirroring. In both types of mirroring, the administrator provides a description of the observation without a specific appraisal. These feedback types are described as neutral because there is no judgment involved; however, they can be classified as either positive or negative depending on the position of the descriptor on the FFT rubric.

In the Neutral-Positive type of feedback, the observation is generally aligned with an FFT descriptor that appears higher on the rubric (proficient or distinguished). For example, Nancy states, “And they all seem, obviously, to get along very well” (Nancy & T1). This description is on the proficient level for 2a, respect and rapport. On rarer occasions, the administrator performs mirroring and the observation is aligned to something lower on the FFT rubric (Needs Improvement). An example of this occurs with Nancy and Teacher 2, “They were playing with their dice and not listening.” The noted student behavior and lack of response by the teacher appears on the unsatisfactory level of component 2d, managing behavior. The occurrences or mirroring during post conferences are summarized in Table 15.

Table 15

Occurrences of Mirroring

Type of Feedback to Teacher	Number of Occurrences
Positive: using terms like “good job”	25
Neutral-Positive: pointing out a positive without saying good job	19
Neutral-Negative: pointing out a negative without saying it was bad	5

According to the administrators in the study, in terms of providing focus, the FFT is able to afford in the observation reflection process that which was not previously supplied by other tools. For one, the FFT matches in description the attributes that are generally seen in a classroom. The FFT also describes teaching in a way that non-teachers are able to use it to provide feedback to teachers. And the FFT helps to focus conversation with teachers around specific behaviors that are desirable in the classroom.

Questions to Reflect

To assist teachers with the self-reflection process, administrators use reflective questioning during post conferences. Nancy (Interview 2) affirms that she uses reflective questioning purposely to get teachers to think about their methods:

...leading some conversations toward that, especially when I have seen things that work well in classrooms, or it looks like teachers are connecting well to their kids. Why do you think that is? When they say, "Oh, this is a really great class. They're such nice kids. What do you think it is that's created that atmosphere in your room?" To see what they come up with.

Breanna (Interview 3) believes that the way she phrases questions to teachers could lead to better reflection on the part of the teachers, "Like that's how I tend to phrase things. Making it seem more just open. Not as [if] there's one right answer or that there's something I'm expecting. Leaving it more up to 'What do you think?'"

In Table 16, a summary of representative administrator reflective questions appears. The questions are all open-ended and are classified as either convergent or divergent type. A convergent question points toward a specific topic while a divergent question is completely

open-ended and can go in any direction (Ebert, Ebert, & Bentley, 2011).

Table 16

Representative Administrator Reflective Questions

Post Conference	Questioning Example	Type of Question
Nancy & T1	Did they come that way or did you do something to make them all so nice?	Convergent
Nancy & T13	So what do you do at the beginning to get to that place?	Convergent
Nancy & T4	Do you think that has something to do with the lab you were doing then, or the instruction before or after, or have you been able to isolate that?	Convergent
Nancy & T3	What did you learn about the student and the stakeholders?	Divergent
Nancy & T5	Is there anything you would want to set maybe as a goal for yourself?	Divergent
Brad & T6	How can you be excellent in designing coherent instruction and knowledge of resources?	Convergent
Brad & T7	Tell me more about that. Why do you say challenging?	Divergent
Brad & T8	If you could have a blank slate, a clean slate, going forward into next year, what would that look like? Would you keep things the way that they are or would you change things? What would you do in your current situation?	Divergent
Erin & T11	Are there other things that you would like to do, as a result of this lesson?	Divergent
Erin & T10	How did their group work during those two work days or the one-and-a-half work days?	Convergent
Donna & T14	What else could you do that you didn't have to direct 'em so much?	Convergent

At times, administrators ask teachers to reflect upon the effectiveness of the lesson.

This process allows teachers to determine if their lesson have the desired effects on teachers.

Teacher 5 replies to Nancy's question about the effectiveness of the lesson, "I think that a lot of

the students were engaged and understood, and got what I was trying to do. There were a few students who didn't maybe..." With Breanna, Teacher 12 is able to articulate student learning when asked about the lesson:

the Algebra Part 1 students were able to bring back some prior knowledge of exponents, since it may have been a while since they did it. And the Algebra I students were able to practice using their notes and the rules that they learned in their other class

In many cases, the administrator asks the question for reflection and the teacher volunteers further insight into the thought process behind the method. For instance, Teacher 4's response to a reflection question expands the conversation to follow a path to improvement of instruction, "Okay, so I thought it went rather well for my first time with an enzyme lab. I did not like the write-up though." In the previous quote and the following quote, the teacher is unsatisfied about some aspect of the lesson that then comes out during the post conference.

Teacher 5 tells Nancy about his thoughts on the lesson:

I think that a lot of the students were engaged and understood, and got what I was trying to do. There were a few students who didn't maybe... I think they understood, knew what was going on and what was happening, and either through kind of boredom with the project or just not liking or understanding, there were a few handful of students who maybe didn't do as much as I would have liked them to do.

Other times the administrator asks the teacher to predict how they would make changes for the future. As Donna and Teacher 14 discuss how the teacher could apply her learning to the future, the teacher comments, "...especially after talking to you, trying to get them to do things on their own a little bit more." Teacher 10 tells Erin that as a result of what he sees during the lesson he would like, "...far more practice in writing. Just from what I've seen of students' writing, it's not the greatest, and it's more and more colleges want essays written for entrances..."

Questions for reflection are the most commonly used ones by administrators during post conferences. These questions are used to encourage teachers to think about how the lesson influenced students, what aspects of the lesson needed revision, and what future plans the teacher has for student learning and lesson planning.

Direct Instructions

Almost as common as questions for reflection are direct instructions from administrators to teachers. There are four distinct ways that administrators attempt to influence teachers for change: empowerment, using humor, telling them, and making it sound like a recommendation. Table 17 summarizes the methods and sub-methods used by administrators for direct instructions.

Table 17
Summary of Administrators' Direct Instructions Techniques

Direct Instructions Technique	Sub Technique
Humor	
Empowerment	
Telling Teacher	Modeling
Making It Sound Like a Suggestion	Phrasing as Question
	Using If/Maybe
	Giving Examples from Own Experience

The least common type of direct instruction involves humor. One example of using humor occurs between Nancy and Teacher 1 when they are discussing what Nancy saw during

the observation. Nancy recalls how the teacher was talking without getting students' attention first, "...you were like, 'Well, I'll get louder,' and I'm like 'Nooooo!'" The way that Nancy speaks is humorous and is her way of relieving tension with the teacher.

In that same conversation, Nancy also uses the empowerment type of direct instruction when she says, "...you've already got a fix, you just have to train yourself to use it every time." This is an empowering statement because Nancy believes the teacher already has the skills necessary to be effective with the class and just needs to employ them more consistently. Nancy also uses empowerment with Teacher 4 via students as surrogates, "So the first step's that whole safety maneuvering around. That second step is that ability to follow steps, which again I think for the most part it looked like your kids can do if you give them something..." Embedded in Nancy's statement, is empowerment of the teacher through empowerment of students.

There are also times during post conferences that administrators attempt to influence teachers by telling them directly what they want the teachers to do. For instance, Nancy tells Teacher 1, "The couple of times when you realized you need to address the whole class and you're like, "Attention up here," you only have to say that once." This is the same teacher who receives the humor and empowerment comments, so Nancy uses all three techniques for the same topic. With Teacher 5, Nancy also uses the direct instruction technique:

And I think sometimes what you can do in that instance, if there are a couple of things you are sort of anticipating kids should have asked, you could then, "So does everyone understand the instructions?" "Sure, mister." Say, "Great. So, why don't you tell me what's the first thing we're doing today?"

Nancy is not the only one to use direct instruction. Brad gives Teacher 6 a direct instruction about creating classroom culture:

But I think being cognizant of it, and then bringing the kids into that conversation of, "Hey, guys, this is something we never tried before, and we feel like you can do it, and we're gonna challenge you as much as we challenge ourself," and just having them own that piece, I think, is gonna continue to drive that culture and make it stronger

It is interesting to note that in the previous two examples, both Nancy and Brad include modeling. They both give examples of what the teacher could say to students. The rest of the administrators also use direct instruction. Erin tells Teacher 11, "And then the other thing I would say, is just making sure that... Like identifying an amount of time for kids to work on things."

The most common way for administrators to try to effect teacher change is by making their direct instructions sound like recommendations. There are several modes that administrators use to attempt their direct instructions. The first way is to use "we" instead of "you." Donna uses the we technique the most often. For example, as she talks with Teacher 14 about lab procedures, she states, "what we would do is we'd give 'em it the night before, or you could do it the day of, whatever, but they need to read it." The we used in this instruction is symbolic because the administrator really is not going to be part of that procedure. In the next example, Brad is speaking with Teacher 6, "That's where we're gonna try and challenge what Danielson really intended..." This case is slightly different as Brad does intend for the teacher and him to complete the task together.

Sometimes, to make their direct instructions sound like recommendations, administrators phrase them as questions. For example, Erin asks Teacher 11, "Could that be something that may be incorporating in a bell ringer, instead of a question that pertains or it could be a reading...?" In reality, this question is not a recommendation, but a direct instruction. Brad uses a question and we statement in the same directive with Teacher 6, "But

if you see some of those same kids in the English classes owning it, can we pull that culture in, when they're in that Resource class?"

Another technique administrators employ is using past personal experience as a direct instruction meant to sound like a suggestion. Donna shares her experience with Teacher 14, "I used to always say, 'Three before me. You read it, you ask your partner, and then ask another group or someone, and then you come and bother me.' Because they have to learn to trust one another."

Administrators also make their directives sound like recommendations by using terms such as maybe and if. This method is the most universal one used by administrators. With Teacher 11, Erin uses if to explain her directive about including students, "I don't know if that would detract from the modeling, but I put, 'Involve more students in this part of the lesson and then having you interject when need be.'" With Teacher 10, Erin uses maybe, if, and we all together with questioning, "I'm just thinking so then maybe that's something like if... So maybe we could see depending on what students choose like, "Do you have them assume specific roles and duties or something like that?" Brad also employs a maybe/if combination with Teacher 7:

Now maybe even that how question is not that higher-level question that you need. But if the students start to understand, then I'm gonna ask you the question. Then I'm gonna ask you the how, then I'm gonna ask you, "What happens if I change the numbers?" Or "What does this look like in this particular situation?"

Although administrators use directives with the teachers they are observing, they use a variety of techniques such as asking a question or using humor to make those directives seem like suggestions.

Summary of Chapter 4

In Chapter 4 the research findings of the qualitative data collected via interviews and post conferences in this study are presented. To better organize the responses of the participants, narratives with descriptions and embedded tables are given. Themes and sub themes related to each research question are summarized, and several themes are pertinent to more than one research question.

The first research question deals with how the FFT helps administrators focus the post conference around the topic of dispositions. The themes relating to this topic are purpose of the observation/post conference, using the FFT components, providing focus, and eliminating bias. It is discovered that the FFT does help to emphasize dispositions during post observation conferences because of the way some FFT components are structured to include dispositions.

For Research Question #2, the themes are appearance of dispositions, reflection, difficult conversation, and perception of teaching. These themes develop because the second research question focuses on the way that dispositions are negotiated during post conferences. Reflection is at the top of the list of twenty different dispositions that are mentioned. A teacher's ability to accurately reflect is the impetus for topics related to difficult conversations and perception of teaching.

Finally, the third research question about the methods administrators use to influence teacher dispositions leads to the final three themes: observer acts as mirror, questions to reflect, and direct suggestions. These are all tactics used by administrators to shape teacher dispositions.

Overall, administrators find the Danielson FFT to be helpful in focusing observations and post observation conferences around specific descriptions of effective attributes. The most frequently cited dispositions during interviews and post conferences are reflection, respect and rapport, and culture of learning. There are no instances in the data of administrators needing to have a difficult conversation with a teacher. Instead, administrator attempts to influence dispositions took less direct forms such as asking questions or posing directives as recommendations. In Chapter 5, the implications of the study will be discussed after treatment of the connection between research questions and emergent themes.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss how the findings that emerge during data collection relate to the conceptual framework and current literature. Themes and sub themes are discussed in relation to each other and the underpinnings of the research. Conclusions and implications are derived from analysis of the three research questions and are arranged in the chapter accordingly.

This following research questions are addressed in this study:

1. How does the Danielson Framework for Teaching help focus post conferences around the topic of dispositions?
2. How do teachers and administrators negotiate the topic of dispositions in post observation conferences?
3. How do administrators attempt to influence teachers to work on developing dispositions during post observation conferences?

Although there is much research on school and district evaluation and supervision practices, little, if any, literature exists examining the role that the FFT plays in the observation or evaluation processes that buttress teacher evaluation systems. The reason this lack of research matters is because of the link between teacher effectiveness and student achievement. With other factors accounted for, several studies demonstrate that teachers can have a prodigious effect on student achievement (Chetty, Friedman, & Rockoff, 2014; Nye,

Konstantopoulos, & Hedges, 2004; Wright, Horn, & Sanders, 1997). Therefore, investigating the methods that administrators may use to influence teacher growth and effectiveness is an important factor in school improvement.

The research described in this study adds to the scant literature linking the Danielson FFT, teacher dispositions, and the routines that are used by administrators during observation and evaluation activities to stimulate improvement in teacher practice. These administrator practices may include modeling of democratic ideals such as cooperation between administrator and teacher. In the passage below, Dewey highlights how the democratic disposition can be educative:

For what is the faith of democracy in the role of consultation, of conference, of persuasion, of discussion, in formation of public opinion, which in the long run is self-corrective, except faith in the capacity of the intelligence of the common man to respond with commonsense to the free play of facts and ideas which are secured by effective guarantees of free inquiry, free assembly and free communication? (Dewey, 1939/1976, p. 227)

Here, Dewey proposes that people use cooperation and discourse to solve problems. Dewey believes that by engaging in democratic processes, the formation of a broader common sense will ultimately emerge, and will result in a healthier society. Some of these democratic ideals can be modeled by administrators so that teachers can learn to use them effectively and apply them to classroom situations.

In this phenomenological study, the reader may gain insight into the way that the FFT is used during observations, teacher reflections, and post observation conferences between administrators and teachers. The topic of dispositions appears frequently although none of the participants were aware of the terminology prior to being introduced to it during the study. Nevertheless, dispositions are recurrent in the FFT, administrator interviews, and post

observation conferences. The relationships between these elements will be investigated in this chapter.

The strength of this study lies in the transferability of the findings to other milieux. The frequent use of various kinds of rubrics or guidelines for teacher observation in the education world is apparent. Large city districts have adopted the Danielson FFT as a major component of their evaluation systems. For example, in New York City, 60% of a teacher's evaluation is based on an FFT rubric (Singer, 2013). The FFT is also used exclusively or is approved for use in New Jersey, Illinois, Arkansas, Delaware, Idaho, South Dakota, Florida, and Washington ("Charlotte", 2011). The Danielson FFT is one example of a common evaluation rubric, but there are others such as those based on National Board Certification. There are noted similarities between the Danielson FFT and National Board Certification (Viviano, 2012); thus, the findings described here may be of importance to administrators and policy makers using either framework for teaching as an observation tool in various settings.

Discussion of Research Question #1

How does the Danielson framework help focus post conferences around the topic of dispositions?

In this section, the researcher will discuss how the FFT helps to shape the purpose and structure of the observation and post conference cycle while assisting with the removal of bias from the feedback and evaluation provided to teachers. The potential effects of using the FFT to address teacher dispositions will also be discussed.

Discussion of Purpose of Observation/Post Conference

A finding from this study is that administrators feel that the purpose of the observation and post conference cycle is to achieve more and higher quality teacher reflection, an important disposition. Administrators were asked directly what their goals were for the observation and post conferences. In most cases, administrators expected that teachers conduct a self-reflection or a self-evaluation of the classroom or planning practices that occurred during the observation or any factors that influenced the decisions made by the teacher. This reflective part of the post conference is what Downey, Steffy, English, Frase, and Poston (2004) refer to as the indirect phase where teachers are invited to think about what happened during the lesson and what the implications of the teaching might be.

To encourage reflection, administrators in the study provided teachers with an observation script and felt that the evidence provided should be enough to entice teachers to reflect. Later, administrators and teachers would meet to discuss the effectiveness of the lesson. This process is what Fink and Markholt (2011) call the first benchmark of feedback effectiveness. Benchmark one requires the use of reflection notes taken by the administrator and a debriefing conversation. Using data for teachers to reflect upon is a recommendation by some researchers who conclude that empirical data makes feedback more effective (Salas & Mercado, 2010).

Lieberman and Miller (2001) suggest that the experiences provided to teachers during the observation/post conference cycle must inspire self-reflection so that they can be part of a continuing method to increase teachers' professional growth. The authors explain that these

experiences should include both opportunities for practice and reflection. Viewing the post conference as a professional development opportunity can help administrators leverage the prospects for change. Since the development of teacher reflection and initiative is correlated with high performing schools and student achievement (Mette et al., 2017), administrators who take the time to value and encourage reflection may see an improvement in school performance.

The second purpose of the observation/post conference cycle is for administrators to collaborate with teachers to determine areas of need so that appropriate professional development can be provided. Identifying professional development needs is important because according to Blase and Blase (2000), when instructional leadership is effective, it is because administrators are able to develop reflection in teachers and inform their professional growth. The cycle of professional development based in observation and reflection leads to true growth and evolution and is what Fink and Markholt (2011) call the second benchmark of effective feedback. Reflection without professional development is pointless as teachers need resources to become more successful. Access to resources is a key factor that determines whether teachers view feedback as useful (Cherasaro et al., 2016). Therefore, connecting the post conference feedback to future professional development can increase the likelihood of its effectiveness.

Finally, the idea of the observation/post conference cycle being a cooperative effort is evident in the interviews with administrators and the methods they use during post conferences. This collaboration is significant because it models for teachers the kind of democratic problem solving that would be desired from students. For example, in Table 2 found in Chapter 1, the

reader can see that working cooperatively for the greater good is a democratic mode of being, which is also embedded in the FFT. This idea comes from the notion that democratic procedures are not democratic in and of themselves, but the consideration of what is moral and good along with mechanisms of democracy are what make a thing democratic (Burch, 2012). Teachers and administrators working together to construct a more effective classroom environment for the benefit of students is an example of a democratic process.

The combination of the three characteristics described above is evident in the constructs around observations and post conferences. Administrators say they hope to develop self-reflection in teachers and to determine professional development needs. Since this is to occur through collaboration, it could show teachers how they can work with students to identify their learning needs and to determine appropriate courses of action. It is important to administrators that teachers participate in the process rather than it be something done to them. This collaborative ideal is aligned with Mezirow's (1985) description of self-directed learning as being dialogic or derived through collective understanding. A practice proposed for administrators is to "talk openly and frequently with teachers about instruction. Specifically, make suggestions, give feedback, and solicit teachers' advice and opinions about classroom instruction in an inquiry-oriented approach" (Blase & Blase, 2002, p. 262). This kind of open and collaborative attitude can lead to a trusting relationship between administrator and teacher. Fink and Markholt (2011) call this openness the third benchmark of feedback effectiveness where a real partnership has developed between teachers and administrators. The goal of administrators in this study to aspire to a model of evaluation like the one described in the third benchmark means that these democratic ideals of collaboration, problem solving, and doing

what is good or moral are also valued by these administrators.

Discussion of Using FFT Components

The next theme, using the FFT components, and its subthemes, providing focus and eliminating bias, are associated with each other in an interdependent manner. The ability of the FFT to provide focus for post observation conferences occurs because the FFT components describe so well the many aspects of teaching effectively and remove administrators' predispositions to certain practices or characteristics. Likewise, administrators are able to use the FFT components during observations and post conferences because of the focus furnished to the discussion. Having this ability to concentrate the conversation around components, especially those that include dispositions, can help administrators be more successful in trying to influence disposition development.

Because of the FFT's ability to focus, the administrators all speak favorably about the FFT and its capacity to guide their post conferences with teachers, a feature that was missing from their previous observation tools. All administrators feel that the FFT is an improvement from their previous observation tools in its structure and descriptive qualities. The research of Sartain, Stoelinga, & Brown (2011) also discovers the value of the FFT and its enhancement over previously used systems in Chicago Public Schools.

The power of the FFT to scaffold conversations was developed intentionally. According to Danielson (2007), the FFT is designed to provide several supports for teachers and administrators:

1. The ability for teachers new to the profession to perform self-monitoring in relation to the established descriptions of best practices.
2. The capacity to develop employment interview questions surrounding the components of the FFT.
3. A means of standardizing the characteristics and actions that effective teachers display.
4. A method of assisting with school improvement by focusing on teacher development.
5. A way for non-teachers to understand the attributes of effective teaching.

Items 1, 3, and 4 above have relevance to this study and will be described further. In this section, the third element will be discussed, and the first one will be examined in a later section. The fourth element relates to the topic of overall improvement depicted in the introduction to Chapter 5.

During their interviews, administrators speak about the FFT's efficiency of description and its ability to help them determine areas of need for teachers' professional development (PD) that builds their pedagogical and content knowledge and increases their feelings of efficacy about meeting students' needs, which are characteristics crucial to effective PD (Guskey, 2002). Much like students' learning needs, teachers' professional development needs should be met through an individualized program as much as possible. Using the FFT to address teachers' needs can help schools and districts align to the new Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requirements. According to the ESSA, job-embedded PD is the most desirable format for PD, with each teachers' needs being ascertained from observations (Rosen & Parise, 2017). This requirement means that using observations to determine teachers' need is important, but also using observations to provide on-the-job training is equally crucial. This

kind of training may resemble a model in which administrators coach teachers by asking them to problem-solve a real life situation. As examples during this study, Nancy asks Teacher 4 to think about how to improve the lab by giving better directions, and Donna works with Teacher 14 to problem solve a gradual release model for students.

In addition to being job-embedded, the PD must also be regularly evaluated to determine if it is having the desired effect (Rosen & Parise, 2017). Suggested by this study is the idea that the required evaluation could take the form of an increase in ratings via the FFT. Teachers who are improving their teaching practices should see an increase in their ratings from Basic to Proficient to Distinguished since the ratings from classroom observation using the FFT are found to be reliable measures of teacher effectiveness (Sartain et al., 2011). Thus, the FFT can provide administrators with data on the success of their teacher development efforts.

Eliminating Bias and Providing Focus

The subtheme of eliminating bias is important to the way that administrators viewed the usefulness of the FFT. Bias can occur during observations and post conferences when administrators show preference for certain kinds of classroom practices because of their own former teaching experiences, favorite lessons, or content areas (Spencer & Mercado, 2010). Personal biases can also arise, such as partiality toward particular people, kinds of speech, or appearance. Part of the value of the FFT is due to the removal of bias in its descriptors. Administrators can use the FFT descriptions as the measure of effective teaching instead of

their own past practices. In interviews, administrators explained how the FFT assists them with their observations of teachers. They talk about having the FFT components in mind while observing. Using the descriptions as guides, administrators are able to look for critical attributes while in the classroom (Danielson, 2011). Administrators feel they are less likely to display partiality toward practices not described by the FFT. This impartiality might take the form of a reduction or elimination in administrators using their own former teaching styles as lenses for observing their teachers.

The credibility of the feedback given by administrators to teachers is important to teacher improvement and consequently school reform efforts. A 2016 study on administrator feedback discovered that how much teachers believe that their evaluator is trustworthy is strongly correlated with how accurate they believe the feedback to be (Cherasaro, Brodersen, Reale, & Yanoski). If accuracy can be thought of in terms of preciseness and correctness, then accurate feedback is precise in its description and correct in its ability to provide a mirror. Hence, the accuracy of the feedback and the removal of bias are interdependent. By using the descriptions from the FFT, administrators can remove themselves from the feedback and provide a picture of teaching that is fair and accurate.

Conclusion of Research Question #1

The data collected in this study show that the Danielson FFT does help to focus post conference discussions around the topic of dispositions because dispositions are included in the framework itself. Furthermore, the FFT is designed to help provide purpose and structure to

the observation and post conference cycle while simultaneously removing bias. Administrators recall the ways that they use the FFT as a checklist in their heads while they are observing; thus, the components of the FFT give administrators a point of focus during both observations and the post conferences. This emphasis on components reveals the purpose of the observation and post conference cycle to be teacher self-reflection, the most commonly mentioned disposition in this study.

Accordingly, a conclusion of this study is that using the Danielson FFT has a positive effect on the way administrators conduct both observations and post conferences. Since teachers are more likely to utilize feedback they see as credible (Cherasaro, Brodersen, Reale, & Yanoski, 2016) the removal of bias via the FFT could help teachers interpret the feedback provided during post conferences as helpful. A future area of research might be related to the amount and quality of teacher reflection that occurs as a result of using the FFT. If administrators perceive the FFT to be instrumental in gaining teacher reflection, further research could determine if that is actually the case.

Implications of Research Question #1

Since administrators identify the FFT as beneficial to the observation and post conference process, more states or districts might consider adopting or continuing usage of the FFT for teacher supervision and evaluation. When selecting teacher evaluation rubrics, policymakers should contemplate the purpose and goals of teacher supervision and evaluation for various education groups. These goals could include prompting teacher reflection and

increasing the legitimacy of the feedback by reducing observer bias. The FFT may offer structures to increase the amount or quality of these items; however, more research surrounding these topics is merited.

The idea of eliciting teacher reflection appeared so often in the findings that a closer look at this topic is warranted. For example, at the district and school level, leaders might evaluate the amount and kind of training that observers/evaluators receive. Familiarity with the components of the FFT and their critical attributes may help lead administrators to a deeper and more profound level of eliciting reflection. These subjects merit further study to determine if administrator training would indeed result in teacher reflection. Administrators who employ deep discussions with teachers would also be those who are able to refer to the FFT descriptions with ease and apply them to classroom situations. It may be helpful if administrators are able to discuss which components of the FFT relate to teacher reflection. The results of this kind of training could improve administrators' efficacy with the rubric and the observation/evaluation process (Nixon et al., 2016). Thus, research linking the amount and nature of administrator training with their ability to elicit teacher reflection is justified in the future.

A corresponding area of research could establish whether the kind of reflection the FFT elicits is helpful or changes teaching practice in any way. Additionally, more investigations into the topic of bias are also warranted to resolve how teachers feel about administrator bias. To decide whether administrator feedback is perceived as helpful, it might also be advantageous to define if teachers feel the same way about the FFT surrounding bias as administrators do. Finally, it would be interesting to determine if there are similar effects from

using other teacher evaluation rubrics, such as National Board certification, with regard to the inclusion of dispositions in the rubric and a rubric's ability to remove bias.

Besides prompting teacher reflection, the kind of expertise required of administrators surrounding FFT knowledge could provide a positive model for teachers. For example, findings show that administrators use the FFT for talking points during post observation conferences. These conversations can become richer and more effective when both parties possess a deep understanding of the components. Teachers who also become experts in the understanding and application of the FFT to classroom practice might produce more reflection. A study linking teacher reflection to their knowledge of the FFT might shed light on this topic. The idea of teachers possessing FFT knowledge has implications for teacher professional development and novice teacher training. A quick run-through of the FFT during a one-day workshop might not be enough to reach a deep grasp of the 22 components and 76 subcomponents of the FFT. Instead, focusing on the long-term application of the FFT over the course of the observation/evaluation cycle might be sounder. Future research in this area could focus on evaluating the effects of training on teacher perception of the FFT and the ability of that training to influence the quality of teacher self-reflection during post observation conferences.

Discussion of Research Question #2

How do teachers and administrators negotiate the topic of dispositions in post observation conferences?

Many different dispositions were mentioned during both post conferences and interviews. Although the term dispositions, itself, emerges as a theme, the most universally discussed dispositions, self-reflection, respect and rapport, and culture of learning surface as sub themes. These three dispositions are all explicitly mentioned in the FFT as each are identified as their own FFT component. These dispositions are known as 4a Reflection on Teaching, 2a Respect and Rapport, and 2b Culture of Learning. Domain 4 relates to a teacher's professional practice, and Domain 2 is all about the classroom environment.

During conversations with administrators about dispositions, the topic of difficult conversations arises. The discussion of dispositions leads to the topic of difficult conversations because they are events that sometimes occur simultaneously with each other. For example, if respect and rapport is missing for a teacher, the administrator may need to have a difficult conversation with the teacher around the subject of generating rapport with students. The dialogue about difficult conversations reveals another sub theme: perception of teaching. Perception of teaching is important to administrators as they discuss it in tandem with difficult conversations and reflection. In this study, administrators feel that the teachers they work with are able to perceive their own teaching accurately.

Appearance of Important Dispositions

Although administrators have no prior knowledge related to the term dispositions, once prompted, they are able to identify several dispositions and link them to the FFT. Dispositions such as respect, building rapport, and belief in students' abilities are mentioned. All of these

dispositions appear in Domain 2 of the FFT. The frequency of Domain 2 references may be due to the researcher giving “caring” as an example of a disposition, which appears in component 2a Respect and Rapport. Administrators may have been automatically drawn to Domain 2 for further examples. Hence, two of the three most commonly mentioned dispositions during interviews are respect/rapport and culture of learning, components 2a and 2b in Domain 2, respectively.

It is interesting to note that administrators do not identify teacher reflection explicitly as a disposition, but it repeatedly arises during both interviews and post conferences. Regardless of whether administrators realize that teacher reflection is a disposition, the fact that it is the most often referenced disposition makes it an important topic.

Discussion of Reflection

The most frequently appearing disposition is teacher reflection, which is found in Domain 4 of the FFT. According to Nixon et al. (2016), reflection would be described as a competence-based disposition, which is an important distinction from character-based dispositions such as honesty, integrity, and dependability because dispositions such as those are not as readily influenced by outside forces such as suggestions by an administrator. The reason for character-based dispositions being less malleable is because they are somewhat invisible. It is more difficult to see a person’s honesty unless, of course, there is proof of dishonesty. Conversely, competence-based dispositions are more easily observable and are thus unfixed. For example, a teacher can write a reflection or participate in a reflective conversation. These

kinds of activities make the teacher's reflection visible.

The argument about competence-based dispositions being more visible can be bolstered by combining the ideas of Katz and Thornton. According to Katz (1993), teachers possess habits of mind that are repeated thoughts or beliefs that influence their behaviors. The issue with this conception is that what is in the mind is difficult for others to see or measure. Thornton (2006) takes Katz' habits of mind a step further by describing the actions that stem from them as dispositions-in-action. Thus, dispositions such as reflection are not only observable, but easier to describe and influence as actions carried out by the teacher.

In interviews, administrators remarked on their desire to have self-reflective teachers. Some mentioned that the ability to reflect is the most important attribute of a teacher and one that they looked for specifically during post conferences. Administrators knew when teachers were being reflective because those teachers did most of the talking during post conferences. This is an example of how a disposition-in-action manifests during a conference. The reason administrators found self-reflection to be so desirable may be linked to democratic ideals. Concepts such as critical thought and freedom from existing paradigms underscore democratic processes (Atkinson, 2017). Teachers who engage in reflection may also be critical thinkers and problem solvers. According to Baldacchino (2008), Dewey is a modeler of this democratic mode of being as he continues to clarify and redefine his ideas over time. Thus, Dewey can provide an example of what educators might strive to achieve.

During post conferences, teachers were found to be reflecting frequently and even reflecting on their reflection process. Administrators asked for reflection often and mentioned their intentions to do so during interviews, showing that administrator practice regarding

reflection matched their intention. In a later section, an examination of how administrators attempt to influence dispositions will be discussed. However, one example occurred of an administrator being intentional about influencing teacher reflection when he asked the teacher to describe the difference between a proficient reflection and a distinguished reflection based on descriptions in the FFT.

Improvement of teaching practice is linked to teacher reflection, so the topic of improving self-reflection is an important one; however, eliciting reflection in new teachers is difficult. According to Toth and Morrision (2011), teacher education students “find it tremendously difficult to think critically about the system that has socialized them not to think” (p. 357). In a recent study, authors found that the adeptness of the principal to build teachers’ faculty for self-reflection about their teaching accounted for sixty-five percent of the variability in principals’ effectiveness as coaches (Mette et al., 2015). Thus, evidence from that study and from the data discussed in this dissertation supports the emphasis on improvement of teacher reflection practices.

When teachers are reflective and responsive, it leads to better management of classroom procedures and student behavior. According to Thornton (2013), effective and desirable classroom management has at its core the empowerment of students to become responsible and democratic problem solvers. If administrators wish to extend this kind of environment in the classroom, modeling democracy mode of being is important (Atkinson, 2017) even throughout the observation and evaluation cycle. This modeling means administrators would empower teachers to become critical thinkers and problem solvers. Thornton’s (2013) research found that teachers who are more responsive tend to expand student voice in the classroom; thus,

administrators modeling responsiveness for teachers might increase the use of democratic classroom processes that in turn result in better classroom management, an area of possible further study.

Since the lack of classroom management is a leading cause of teacher dismissal (Neill, Bland, Church, Clayburn, & Shimeall, 2011), when administrators examine their own practices surrounding teacher observations and post conferences, they might determine more decisive ways to influence positive practices such as democratic methods, self-reflection, and responsiveness. Table 3 in Chapter 2 of this dissertation shows many examples of how the FFT is aligned to democratic practices. Many of these FFT descriptors at the distinguished level show that teachers should include students when planning and making decisions. The inclusion of democracy as a mode of being in distinguished ratings raises the incentive for teachers to pursue them. For example, component 2a describes how students should contribute to the success of the classroom environment by participating in the establishment of norms. Another example occurs in component 3a, which asks for students to contribute to the understanding of concepts being taught and even use analogies to explain them to other students in the class.

For administrators to model democratic behavior, they should likewise include teachers when creating plans for professional development, classroom observation, and solving school issues. “It is, therefore, vital that students, educators, and society seek to conceptualize how we do democracy, how we experience it, conceptualize it, and connect it critically to education” (Carr & Thésée, 2017). As the authors believe, one must learn democracy through experience rather than just through theory.

With new federal changes to education requirements, reflection may become an even

more valuable teacher practice. Since ESSA has removed the requirement that teacher supervision/evaluation must occur (Meibaum, 2016), teacher improvement may fall more squarely on the shoulders of teachers and less on administrators. Supposing that some districts may cut teacher supervision or evaluation programs to redistribute funds to other requirements of ESSA, being able to identify reflective teachers may be of the utmost importance to those who oversee school and teacher improvement efforts.

Discussion of Respect/Rapport

Respect and rapport is the second most frequently mentioned disposition, both during administrator interviews and post observation conferences. Administrators hold the belief that their teachers need to create rapport to entice the students to work for them. This idea somewhat conflicts with the third most common disposition, culture of learning, which will be discussed later. The conflict arises from the idea that in classrooms with a strong culture of learning, students will want to work because they believe in the importance of the learning. Nevertheless, respect and rapport occurring between teachers and students is very commonly pointed out by administrators when they are employing positive mirroring statements. Based on the more modern dispositions-in-action definition of dispositions (Thornton 2006), the frequency of the 2a respect and rapport component being mentioned is understandable. Respect and rapport, a competence-based disposition, may be the easiest one to identify with mirroring during observations. Furthermore, administrators tend to point out positive attributes most often during mirroring in their attempt to reinforce desirable teacher behaviors.

Reinforcing positives is not just a confidence booster, and administrators might have also been attempting to building the trust relationship between teachers and themselves.

The teacher's ability to contribute to the overall respect and rapport in the classroom at a student-to-student level is also significant and frequently mentioned. For both administrators and teachers, the belief that positive interactions between students would lead to better collaborative learning and more effective discussions is present. This idea is supported by a study that showed that teachers who earned above average evaluation scores for questioning and discussion also had high scores for respect and rapport and culture of learning (Robitaille & Maldonado, 2015). Both the questioning/discussion component and the collaborative component appear in Domain 3, which focuses on instruction: 3b Questioning and Discussion and 3c Engaging Students, respectively. It is noteworthy that many administrators in the study feel that Domain 2, classroom environment, is the basis for effective Domain 3 areas. The connection teachers and administrators make between the two domains provides an example of how dispositions are linked to instruction. This may be the reason a 2011 study by Neill et al. finds that problems with establishing respect and rapport are the most frequently cited reasons for teacher non-renewal. Without a positive classroom culture, administrators in the current study believe that teachers have difficulty with implementing effective instruction.

Discussion of Culture of Learning

Rounding out the top three dispositions recurring in the study is culture of learning, component 2b in the FFT. Administrators, during their interviews, feel that describing culture

of learning is a little more challenging than some of the other dispositions due to its somewhat nebulous composition. They feel that the FFT helps to illustrate culture of learning for administrators and teachers by making it more concrete. Some administrators speak about culture of learning in terms of having a belief in students' abilities. Others express how culture of learning is the way teachers get students interested in what they are required to learn, and still others said it has to do with students understanding the expectations for learning.

Danielson (2013) describes component, 2b, the Culture for Learning in the FFT as all three of the pieces mentioned above by administrators plus more:

The classroom is characterized by high cognitive energy, by a sense that what is happening there is important, and by a shared belief that it is essential, and rewarding, to get it right. There are high expectations for all students; the classroom is a place where the teacher and students value learning and hard work. (p. 37)

The hard work sub-component of 2b is not remarked on by administrators during interviews although the other sub-components were. Just like the administrators in the current study, teachers in a study on the link between dispositions and instructional efficacy note that culture of learning is a requirement before teachers could employ positive instructional strategies such as cognitive engagement and high-level discourse about content concepts (Robitaille & Maldonado, 2015).

Culture of learning is often paired with respect and rapport in interviews and during post conferences. Danielson also pairs these two components together in the FFT and in the new clusters, which are described as a method of gathering the 22 components into six concept clusters. The dispositions of respect and rapport (2a) and culture of learning (2b) are combined to make up Cluster 2: Safe, Respectful, Supportive, and Challenging Learning Environment ("Framework Clusters," 2017). With these changes, the new Cluster 2 places 2a and 2b in their

own category, lending them increased importance, rather than them being part of Domain 2 with three other components.

A new sub-component mentioned in Cluster 2 that is not found in Domain 2 is risk-taking which can be thought of as students' confidence in their learning communities ("Framework Clusters," 2017). The idea can be linked to democracy as a mode of being. If students have collectively created a community in which the ideas of others are valued, then risk-taking becomes commonplace. Students suggesting ideas, being willing to solve problems, and collaborate for a better community are some of the hallmarks of democracy as a mode of being. In the FFT, risk-taking can be traced back to 2a, respect and rapport, and 2b, culture of learning. For example, in classrooms where respect is practiced, students would feel comfortable speaking and collaborating with others. Some administrators speak of the phenomenon during the study. Breanna mentions 2a and 2b in conjunction with student collaboration and discussion while Erin talks about risk-taking in terms of teachers trying new techniques.

With the two components being tied together so closely, it is no surprise that the administrators use the same technique with 2b as they did with 2a. Positive mirroring statements are used the most often with teachers during post conferences. This is due to the administrators' desire to reinforce positive teacher behaviors. Two administrators declare that neither 2a nor 2b were a concern with any of their teachers' practices. Thus, when practices are considered appropriate or effective by administrators, they use positive statements to strengthen them.

Discussion of Difficult Conversations

Although administrators and teachers do not engage in any difficult conversations during the study, there are times that the administrators steer the conversation to a disposition that is not fulfilled. Nevertheless, most of the discussion surrounding difficult conversations take place during interviews as more of a theoretical approach to difficult topics or a retelling of previous experiences with difficult conversations. An area of future research might delve into how and when difficult conversations take place and what results occur from these discussions.

During the study, administrators express how they use the FFT and observation evidence for structure around difficult conversations. These resources could organize the discussion in meaningful ways around specific components and descriptors. The removal of the administrator from the center of the discussion helped with teacher perception of fairness in a similar way that was discussed with bias in an earlier section.

Discussion of Perception of Teaching

A subtheme of difficult conversations is perception of teaching because teachers who are unable to view their practices in an accurate light might need to be challenged by administrators. During their interviews some administrators propose that teachers get defensive when asked about how the lesson went. Administrators are able to point to scenarios from their pasts where they had to deal with defensive teachers. In their experiences, this defensiveness

takes the form of the teacher saying everything went well. Teachers reacting negatively to post conferences may be due to them feeling threatened. According to a study by Myung and Martinez (2013), teachers see post conferences as prospects for growth only when they feel sure that their central skills are safe and respected.

Various reasons are provided by teachers for why they feel intimidated during post conferences (Myung & Martinez, 2013):

1. Teachers feel threatened when their evaluations are based on a small segment of their regular practice.
2. Teachers are fearful when they do not know the expectations.
3. Teachers feel nervous when they are not in control.
4. Teachers feel anxious when the feedback they receive is not helpful.

Knowing these causes of teacher anxiety can help administrators understand and alleviate teachers' fears. However, addressing those fears by way of the democratic tenet of plasticity or *revisability* can be a proactive step toward improvement of teacher attitudes. According to Dewey (1966), the essence of a democratic mode of being is learning from experience:

...the ability to learn from experience, the power to retain from one experience something which is of avail in coping with the difficulties of a later situation. This means the power to modify actions on the basis of the results of prior experiences, the power to develop dispositions... (p. 44)

Rather than teachers feeling attached or challenged by feedback, administrators can help them understand that revision is a democratic mode of being because learning to adapt results in a stronger society. If teachers feel more comfortable with the evaluation/supervision process, they might be more reflective and have better attitudes about the feedback they receive.

Conclusions of Research Question #2

Interview and post conference data for the second research question support the conclusion that the FFT domains and components help administrators and teachers negotiate the topic of dispositions. Often when administrators refer to a disposition, such as respect and rapport, it is in conjunction with its respective FFT component label (eg. 2a). Although twenty different components are mentioned, several are cited more frequently than others. Respect and rapport, culture of learning, and self-reflection are the most common dispositions to appear. Administrators are aware of respect and rapport and culture of learning being dispositions, but they may not have thought of reflection as a disposition since it is never described as such by an administrator during interviews.

Teacher self-reflection, in particular, is the most often referred to disposition in this study. This statistic is not surprising given that administrators believed the purpose of the observation and post conference cycle was to draw out teacher reflection. High quality teacher reflection is linked to responsiveness and improved instructional practices. Specifically, teachers who are more responsive tend to have more democratic classrooms that help to promote critical thinking in students. When students work together to overcome challenges, a better classroom environment results, which could lead to improved teacher retention.

All three of the top dispositions are thought to be essential to effective classroom instruction by administrators. Those considerations are supported in the literature by several studies that show that the lack of these dispositions could lead to teacher non-renewal (Neill et al., 2011, Nixon et al., 2010; Nixon et al., 2016); thus, determining ways for administrators to

effectively intervene when dispositions are missing or underdeveloped could help with retention of teachers and an increase in their professional growth. Furthermore, if administrators are able to effectively influence teacher dispositions, then instructional strategies such as questioning and discussion techniques might also improve.

Implications of Research Question #2

The three dispositions that are mentioned above are simply the ones that are revealed the most often. Since effective instruction seems to hinge on teachers having particular, positive dispositions, it is essential to fully understand which dispositions are the most crucial and which underpin certain instructional practices. Administrators may use this information to determine the most efficient ways to teacher improvement. One approach might be to study the FFT clusters to understand the relationships between components. It may be possible to figure out which components sustain others and address the supporting dispositions embedded in them.

To make the most growth opportunities available for teachers, administrators should make efforts to see that teachers feel comfortable, know what to expect, and are part of the observation and post conference practices especially since teacher self-reflection was such a common expectation among the administrators in this study. Administrators expect teachers to reflect and most include teachers' thoughts and observations in the post conferences. Teachers' comfort levels with the entire evaluation/observation process is an area of further study, especially related to the democratic mode of being. It would be informative to investigate how

to incorporate more teacher voice and critical thinking into the evaluation cycle. Teacher preparation programs might be instrumental in this process by helping new teachers understand the evaluation process that takes place in school districts. Myung and Martinez (2013) recommend that teachers' capacity for understanding how to judge their own practices be developed and that observation and evaluation elements such as teachers' next steps be created collaboratively between teachers and administrators. These habits will assist teachers with seeing post conferences as opportunities for improvement rather than as possible confrontations.

With teacher self-reflection being a contributor to professional growth, it is important for policymakers, teacher education programs, and school district administrators to focus on evaluation as a growth process while helping teachers, novice and veteran, cultivate their ability to self-reflect. In a synthesis study, authors suggest that professional learning communities may be the best structures to influence both teacher thinking and instructional practices (Timperley, Wilson, Barrar, & Fung, 2007). This research implies that teacher education programs may consider including training on professional learning communities (PLCs) while districts focus on increasing the efficacy of those groups. Future research in this area may consider the influence of collegial groups, such as PLCs, on the skill development of novice and veteran teachers. An especially important factor to explore would be the effect of PLCs on the amount and quality of teacher reflection, and how that reflection might result in student learning.

Another area of further research might involve difficult conversations since these interactions were not observed during this study. It is possible that administrators think they

are engaging in difficult conversations when they are not on a regular basis. It should be determined whether difficult conversations are necessary by way of being effective. This topic relates to the discussion in the next section about administrators influencing teachers' dispositions.

Discussion of Research Question #3

How do administrators attempt to influence teachers to work on developing dispositions during post observation conferences?

Three major themes emerge from the data that are collected for Research Question #3. First to surface is an understanding of the purpose of the observation and post conference, which turned out to be multi-faceted. Administrators discuss the various goals they had for teachers. Next, two themes appear related to the way that administrators attempt to influence teacher dispositions: questions to reflect and direct instructions. These themes represent the ways that administrators attempt to influence teachers and their dispositions.

Discussion of Mirroring

In practice, the absence of bias and the use of the FFT components are seen concurrently as the administrator providing a mirror of teacher practices. Specifically, the administrator provides either verbatim transcription of teacher and student talk or supplies a rich description of what is being observed in the classroom. The most common form of this

type of feedback is the *positive statement*: describing what was observed and attaching a positive comment. For instance, an administrator might say, “you did a good job of...” During interviews, administrators talked about how their post conference goals included helping teachers see what worked so that they could repeat effective practices. By using positive statements, administrators are providing a mirror of effective habits that the teachers were using, and that administrators believe they should continue to employ. Mirroring may be correlated with best practices surrounding feedback to teachers. If administrators who mirror are simply stating what they see, teachers may perceive the feedback as more accurate which would increase the likelihood that they see their administrators as credible, resulting in the increased probability that teachers accept suggestions from the administrator (Cherasaro et al., 2016).

The second most common type of mirroring feedback is the *neutral-positive statement*. This feedback is characterized by a descriptive statement of observation made by the administrator without the positive statement. It is called neutral-positive because the element being described is considered something positive in the FFT; the statement is simply missing the “good job” component. Administrators use neutral-positive statements in the same way they used positive statements. This type of feedback helps administrators reach their goal of pointing out effective practices because this method indicates an element of the teacher’s practice that can be found in the higher levels (distinguished or proficient) of the FFT rubric. These levels of the FFT contain more descriptors related to democracy as a mode of being; thus, democratic ideals were also reinforced by administrators who used mirroring. Table 3 in Chapter 2 shows several democratic ideals found in the FFT, such as self-governance, working

together, and providing for individual rights. Since these principles are found in the “distinguished” level, administrators who promote these are likewise promoting democracy as a mode of being, whether they are aware of it consciously or not. It may be that administrators are encouraging self-reflection and critical thinking in teachers, making this process a democratic one.

Very infrequently, administrators use *neutral-negative statements* in their mirroring feedback. This type of feedback is similar to the other two types of mirroring feedback in that descriptive elements are given; however, the components being described are found on the basic or unsatisfactory sections of the FFT rubric. Clearly, administrators do not feel that neutral-negative statements are helpful as they tended to shy away from using them in favor of the more positive statements. The choice to leave out the neutral-negative comments is most likely due to the administrators’ desire to avoid defensiveness on the part of the teacher. According to Myung and Martinez (2013), teachers are more likely to see post conferences as constructive if they do not feel that their core abilities are being challenged.

Mirroring feedback is one method used by administrators that centers around the FFT rubric. Studying the usefulness of evaluation rubrics is important as some researchers question the legitimacy of using rubrics for teacher evaluation at all (Nixon et al., 2016). Since evidence of removing bias and administrators’ awareness of that bias contributes to the validity of the rubric, emphasis should be allotted to understanding and alleviating bias in evaluation rubrics. Given the high stakes nature of teacher observation and evaluation, whether it leads to higher student achievement or even teacher employment renewal, having an unbiased and beneficial method of providing feedback is essential.

Discussion of Questions to Reflect

Downey et al. (2004) refer to the reflective questioning part of the post conference as the collegial phase. Reflection questions are the most common technique used by administrators in this study. Administrators use them purposefully, and some develop questions based on the observation prior to the post conference taking place. The reflective questions are almost equally split between the divergent and convergent types. Both types of questions are open-ended with divergent questions being completely unrestricted, and convergent questions leading to a specific topic (Ebert, Ebert, & Bentley, 2011). In most cases, the reflective questioning by the administrator leads to more self-reflection on the part of the teacher. The likelihood of teachers perceiving feedback to be useful is directly related to how accurate they believe the feedback to be (Cherasaro et al., 2016). By using reflective questioning, administrators could be increasing the perceived accuracy of the feedback by having it originate directly from the teachers' thoughts about their own teaching practices.

Reflective questions sometimes focus on teachers' plans for the future of instruction. Administrators ask teachers to think about how they would use knowledge gained from reflection on the lesson in future iterations of the specific lesson or in different instructional settings. The concentration on the future is part of the collegial phase of teacher feedback (Downey et al., 2004). Meizrow (1985) calls this future application of self-directed learning self-reflective because it results in an understanding of how teachers will change their practices due to their critical thinking. In democratic terms, administrators asking questions to elicit teacher reflection relates to the valuing of ideas and the practice of critical thinking. Working

collaboratively to solve problems is a democratic mode of being, and administrators uphold that ideal when they ask teachers to self-reflect. Carr and Thésée (2017) describe “thick” democracy as having several characteristics such as being open-ended, engaged, and critical. By allowing teachers to participate in self-reflection, administrators are encouraging them to be analytical, to diagnose the challenges they face and to determine appropriate solutions, which the teachers then feel empowered to try. This model of self-reflection encouraged by administrators instructs teachers in a thick democracy.

Discussion of Direct Instructions

There are many times in post conferences that administrators use direct instruction, and this activity is the second most frequent type of feedback provided to teachers. This feedback, in fact, is referred to as the direct phase of feedback (Downey et al., 2004). Without the benefit of self-directed learning, administrators run the risk of the feedback being discarded by teachers. As mentioned previously, several factors can help to ameliorate the effects of the feedback’s directness: the usefulness of the feedback, the accuracy of the feedback, the credibility of their evaluator, and their access to resources (Cherasaro et al., 2016).

In this study, administrators use four basic methods to provide teachers with direct instructions. Three of these methods are meant to alleviate tension and increase the likelihood that teachers would use the feedback to improve their teaching. Administrators apply humor and empowerment to make their directness sound less direct. At times, they also attempt to make their direct instructions sound like suggestions instead. The closeted direct instruction by

way of suggestion is the most common type of directness used. Finally, there are a few times when administrators simply tell their teachers what they would like to see happen.

The variety of techniques used suggests that administrators tailor their feedback based on their relationship with the teacher and what the administrator perceives the teacher needs. This kind of practice, individualizing the approach, is aligned with high-functioning administrators who reach higher student achievement (Mette et al., 2017). Therefore, one of the six macrostrategies recommended by Salas and Mercado (2010) is that administrators get to know their teachers as individuals. Paralleling this technique is component 1b, knowledge of students. Considering individual needs is a democratic ideal that is modeled by administrators for teachers when they adopt the individualized style to teacher coaching.

Conclusion of Research Question #3

From this study, it can be gleaned that the purpose for the observation and post conference cycle is threefold: for teachers to self-reflect, for teachers and administrators to determine future areas of professional development, and for teachers to feel that they are part of their own growth processes. These steps are related to the three benchmarks of effective feedback that lead to genuine teacher growth (Fink & Markholt, 2011).

Administrators do attempt to influence teacher dispositions, especially self-reflection; however, they are purposeful in their attempts to maintain the collaborative model while still trying to effect those changes. The most common way that administrators attempt to influence teacher dispositions is by soliciting teacher reflection, which is a disposition itself. The reason

for making use of reflection is to increase teachers' senses of self-direction and empowerment. Administrators use two main techniques to increase teachers' self-reflection. The most common method is to ask divergent or convergent open-ended questions, both of which lead to teacher reflection. The second technique is for administrators to be more directive. Even with the direct approach, administrators attempt to disguise the directness to imply that teachers still have some control over their own growth. Humor, empowerment, and masking as a suggestion are all means of covering the directness of the administrators' speech.

Implications of Research Question #3

To become more effective, administrators should bolster the teacher observation and post conference cycle with effective feedback and associated professional development opportunities (Accomplished, 2015). Because feedback is deemed effective by teachers when it is considered useful and delivered by someone who teachers believe is credible (Cherasaro et al., 2016), administrators might attempt to use some of the strategies employed by the ones who participated in this study, such as questions for reflection and masking directness. These techniques may help to keep teachers feeling empowered and in control of their own learning. Such outcomes may be the reason that the two techniques are used so often. It would seem that an administrator disposition that is important to the success of the teacher is that the administrator believes in the collaborative approach and uses it consistently. Future research could investigate administrator dispositions as they relate to effective coaching.

In turn, school districts should consider focusing professional development (PD) for

administrators on teaching effective questioning and discussion techniques for post observation conferences. This PD emphasis could have implications for educational leadership programs as well. For example, aspiring administrators could be taught how to engage in effective questioning techniques with an emphasis of turning theory into practice.

Areas for future research should respond to two areas of development. One should answer the question of whether the administrators' techniques produced the intended results. Are mirroring, questions for reflection, and masking directness the most effective methods for producing teacher reflection and empowerment, or are there other more valuable techniques? In one study, results established that most of the teachers analyzed were reflecting only enough to confirm that they were doing their jobs properly and not to improve their teaching practices or increase student learning (Choy & Oo, 2012). The kinds of reflection elicited by administrators' techniques would also be critical to investigate. The second area of future research may focus on administrators' intentionality surrounding the modeling of democratic practices and their results. Can administrators purposefully model democracy as a mode of being, and can the model provide enough drive to increase the use of those practices in the classroom by teachers?

Chapter 5 Conclusion

An underpinning belief of this study is that improving teacher dispositions would lead to more effective instructional practices and better outcomes for students. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to understand how teacher dispositions are handled during post

observation conferences between administrators and teachers. An interpretation surrounding dispositions and the use of the Danielson FFT in these conferences is also sought. Results show that the topic of dispositions is addressed frequently and that the Danielson FFT plays a role in which dispositions are discussed and how they are addressed. Commonly, self-reflection, respect and rapport, and culture of learning are discussed by both administrators and teachers. The FFT helps both parties negotiate these topics by providing a scaffold and areas of focus for the discussion.

An important finding of this study is that administrators feel the FFT is more helpful than previous observation tools and that by using it, the FFT reduces possible bias on the part of the administrator via the components and rubric descriptors. By reducing bias, the FFT may make it more likely that teachers view their observation as accurate and that they would, in turn, be more likely to follow the feedback provided by administrators.

Another finding demonstrates that dispositions are embedded in the FFT and that there are certain ones that are more valued by administrators. The most often referenced dispositions are teacher self-reflection, respect and rapport, and culture of learning. Administrators feel that teacher self-reflection is the most important disposition. They also see (2a) respect and rapport and (2b) culture of learning as dispositions essential to effective classroom management and those that result in more effective instruction. These ideas are linked to the notion that self-reflective teachers are more responsive to students' interests and needs and have more democratic classrooms.

Since certain dispositions are associated with better instructional practices, administrators in the study seek to influence teacher dispositions and use several techniques to

do so. With mirroring, administrators describe what is observed during the observation and associate those observations with FFT components. Often the mirroring is combined with positive or neutral-positive comments, which are designed to reinforce positive teacher behaviors. Frequently, positive mirroring is used to describe the respect and rapport disposition.

Sometimes administrators use direct instructions to influence dispositions; however, the directness is usually masked to make the teachers feel less threatened. The most common technique used by administrators is questioning for reflection. This result is not surprising given that teacher self-reflection was the most often mentioned disposition in the study. It is important to note that without intervention, teacher dispositions tend to remain stagnant (Thornton, 2013); thus, the use of these techniques may lead to improved dispositions and overall teacher effectiveness.

To enhance administrator practice, districts and leadership programs would need to focus on administrator professional development that supports the use of the techniques mentioned here such as knowledge and understanding of the Danielson FFT, being cognizant and attempting to mitigate bias, promoting democracy as a mode of being, and using techniques like mirroring and reflective questioning. Teacher education programs should help new teachers understand the process of teacher evaluation and focus on teachers' critical thinking skills via self-reflection and responsiveness.

In the future, researchers may want to embark on a more detailed investigation of dispositions other than the ones included in this study. The new FFT clusters might provide a means of determining which dispositions bolster effective instructional practices. In addition,

since teacher self-reflection received much emphasis in this study, understanding how self-reflection can be enhanced via the strategies used by administrators during post conferences and how these techniques are perceived by teachers may be important to recognizing effective leadership techniques. For example, do the practices used by administrators in this study result in an increase in the amount and quality of teacher reflection? If so, does that reflection produce improved instruction and a corresponding positive result for student learning? What role, if any, do difficult conversations play in improving teacher dispositions? Perhaps having difficult conversations can lead to improved dispositions or maybe difficult conversations simply lead to more teacher anxiety. And finally, are post conferences the best and only means of affecting teacher dispositions such as reflection, or are there other avenues by which those changes can be addressed?

It is this researcher's belief that effective instruction occurs when students know themselves as learners and become partners in their own education through democracy as a mode of being. As stated by Burch (2012), "we could safely conjecture that democracy as a mode of being is also dependent on individuals finding if not creating anew their own voice as a prerequisite for achieving the higher reaches of democratic selfhood." (p. 171) This partnership between teachers and students develops through classroom practices. Specifically, teachers who cultivate democracy as a mode of being in their classrooms benefit their students by nurturing critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving in them. Thus, this dissertation is a call to action. Democratic thinking can be taught through modeling during post conferences, so administrators must model democratic practices for teachers who, in turn, must model them for students. It is proposed that the topics of self-reflection, responsiveness,

respect and rapport, and culture of learning all fall under the heading of democracy as a mode of being. Hence, the call to action is for those in education to prioritize democratic practices in teacher education and leadership programs, district policies and professional development, and the policies created by educational government bodies.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
INTRODUCTORY EMAIL

Appendix A
Introductory Administrator Email

Dear Colleagues:

I am a doctoral candidate in the Curriculum Leadership program at Northern Illinois University. I am currently writing my doctoral dissertation and am collecting data for that purpose. For my study, I am interested in exploring the way in which administrators and teachers communicate during post observation conferences.

The purpose of this email is to ask for your participation in this study. As a result of participating, you may obtain a deeper understanding of your own practice as an observer and evaluator. The results of this study will add to the current literature on clinical supervision, the Danielson framework, and teacher dispositions. These three topics have not yet been connected in the literature.

If you agree to participate in the study, you will be interviewed three times for approximately forty-five minutes each. In addition, several of your post observation conferences will be audio recorded. Several procedures known to produce strict confidentiality will be used during this study to ensure participant safety, and teacher consent will be obtained.

Please ask any questions you may have about participating in this study. I look forward to working with you in the future.

Kind Regards,

Jean Rowe

APPENDIX B
FOLLOW UP ADMINISTRATOR PHONE CALL

Appendix B
Follow Up Administrator Phone Call

Hello _____. This is Jean. How are you today? I'm calling to see if you had any questions regarding the request to participate in my research study on post observation conferences. I understand how busy you are being a divisional myself. I think that if you agree to participate in the study, you'll discover something about yourself and your own practice as an instructional leader. What questions can I answer for you now?

APPENDIX C
INTRODUCTORY TEACHER EMAIL

Appendix C
Introductory Teacher Email

Dear Colleagues:

I am a doctoral candidate in the Curriculum Leadership program at Northern Illinois University. I am currently writing my doctoral dissertation and am collecting data for that purpose. For my study, I am interested in exploring the way in which administrators and teachers communicate during post observation conferences.

The purpose of this email is to ask for your participation in this study. As a result of participating, you will be helping to increase the knowledge surrounding post observation conferences that occur between teachers and administrators in high schools. The results of this study will add to the current literature on clinical supervision, the Danielson framework, and teacher dispositions. These three topics have not yet been connected in the literature.

If you agree to participate in the study, between one and three of your post observation conferences will be audio recorded. I will not be in the room during these recordings. Every attempt will be made to ensure confidentiality by using several procedures known as best practices. Some of these procedures are the use of pseudonyms for individuals, school, and district; removing other identifying information; and keeping files locked and private.

Please ask any questions you may have about participating in this study. I thank you in advance and I look forward to working with you in the future.

Kind Regards,

Jean Rowe

APPENDIX D
FOLLOW UP TEACHER PHONE CALL

Appendix D
Follow Up Teacher Phone Call

Hello _____. This is Jean Rowe. How are you today? I'm calling to see if you had any questions regarding the request to participate in my research study on post observation conferences. I understand how you may be wary of participating, and I can assure you that your participation will be confidential. If you agree to participate in this study, you'll be helping the profession by shedding light on the processes involved in clinical supervision. What questions can I answer for you now?

APPENDIX E
CONSENT FORM

Appendix E
Informed Consent Form

I agree to participate in the research project “Disposition Negotiation during Post Observation Conferences” being conducted by Jean Jolley Laurance, a doctoral student at Northern Illinois University. I have been informed that the purpose of the study is to analyze the way in which high school teachers and the administrators who evaluate them address the topic of dispositions in post observation conferences during clinical supervision.

I understand that if I agree to participate in this study, I will be asked to do the following:

1. Administrator: A series of two interviews lasting approximately 45 minutes each spaced approximately 3 weeks apart in addition to the making of audio recordings of three post observation conferences.
2. Teacher: The making of audio recordings of 1-2 post observation conferences.

I am aware that my participation is voluntary and may be withdrawn at any time without penalty or prejudice, and that if I have any additional questions concerning this study, I may contact Jean Jolley Laurance at 815-404-7128 or Mary Beth Henning (dissertation advisor) at 815-753-8591. I understand that if I wish further information regarding my rights as a research subject, I may contact the Office of Research Compliance at Northern Illinois University at 815-753-8588.

I understand that the intended benefits of this study include my ability to reflect upon my own practices and to add to the current literature on clinical supervision, the Danielson framework, and teacher dispositions.

I understand that all information gathered during this study will be kept confidential in the following manner:

1. By taking precautions to make the background information in this document general and non-identifiable.
2. Keeping the data in secure areas either physically or electronically (on a password protected flash drive)
3. Professional transcriber will be asked to keep all information from the recordings confidential.
4. The raw transcript will contain only initials for proper nouns, and the researcher will reserve one copy of raw transcription in a locked file. The subsequent transcription copies will contain only pseudonyms.

I understand that my consent to participate in this project does not constitute a waiver of any legal rights or redress I might have as a result of my participation, and I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this consent form.

Signature of Subject

Date

Signature to agree to audio recording.

APPENDIX F
INTERVIEW GUIDE 1

Appendix F

Interview Guide 1

“When I’m conducting the interview I’m going to nod or say “hmm” to indicate I’m listening, but I’m going to try not to agree or disagree with anything you’re saying.

This is the first in a series of three interviews. We’ll do another one in a few weeks and the idea is for you to think about your past in education first and then think about where you are now and what your goals might be.”

1. Do you remember being observed as a teacher? Were there any particular administrators or experiences that stand out?
2. What do you think was the biggest influence on observation practices back then?
3. Can you describe yourself when you first became an administrator? What were your goals and values back then?
4. What influenced your observation practices when you first became an administrator?
5. What did you think when you first started learning about the Danielson framework?
6. Did you receive any training on Danielson? What was the training like? Did you find it helpful?
7. How did the Danielson framework change your observation practices?
8. What are your current feelings or perceptions about the Danielson framework?
9. What do you find the most valuable aspect of the Danielson framework?

“My research focuses on dispositions, which are actions by a teacher that are not related to content or pedagogy. For instance, caring is one example of a disposition. You don’t have to be caring to specifically teach algebra, so it’s not related to content or pedagogy.”

10. Can you think of any other examples of dispositions that might be necessary for teachers?
11. Do you look for dispositions when you observe the teachers you evaluate?
12. Can you identify where dispositions appear in the Danielson framework?
13. Did any of your Danielson training focus on dispositions rather than pedagogy?

“That is the end of our first series of questions. Is there anything you’d like to add that I didn’t ask you about?”

Thank you for your time and participation. Can we set up a time for the next interview?”

APPENDIX G
INTERVIEW GUIDE 2

Appendix G

Interview Guide 2

1. Is there anything from the last time we talked that's been on your mind since then?
2. What do you feel are your responsibilities as an observer aside from other admin responsibilities?
3. What do you hope to achieve during a post conference?
4. How do you feel the Danielson framework plays a role in achieving those goals?
5. What does it look like when the conference is going well? In other words, how do you know that your goals are being met?
6. What do you do then if someone argues or gets defensive or gets upset about where things are going?
7. Are there any specific domains or components that are must haves for you?
8. I'm going to throw out some terms related to dispositions: respect, caring, relationships, classroom culture. Which of those do you think you address the most often during post conferences?
9. What would you do if you observed something that you thought was not conducive to positive culture? How would you tackle that in the post conference?
10. How often do you reference the FFT?
11. What have you learned through the process of teacher observation?
12. Is there anything I haven't asked about that you'd like to add?

APPENDIX H
INTERVIEW GUIDE 3

Appendix H

Interview Guide 3

This interview guide is less structured as the questions asked will depend on the results of the post-observation conferences. A sampling of questions is below:

1. Was this a typical post conference?
2. How do you think the post conference went?
3. During interview 2, you said that _____. I noticed that during the post conference you did/did not adhere to that. Why did you choose that strategy?
4. During the post conference, you asked the teacher _____. What was your goal with that question?
5. During the post conference, the teacher seemed to get defensive when you asked about _____. Can you comment on that?
6. What was your purpose for saying/asking _____?
7. If you could repeat the same post conference, what would you do differently?

APPENDIX I
SAMPLE TRANSCRIPTION

Appendix I
Sample Transcription

00:06 Speaker 1: Okay. So, and I have your thing here and you have yours there. So I wanted to ask you, how do you think it went?

00:12 Speaker 2: I think overall it went well. That group... I mean, I guess all the kids I have are pretty self-starter, independent workers, but I was really prepared for them to like, "What do I do? What am I supposed to do?" But I think giving it to to them early to read helped, 'cause I gave it to them the day before.

00:33 S1: And they were supposed to read it for homework?

00:34 S2: Yeah. Their job was to read it and then make their data table and answer the four little blurb questions that were in there. And they actually got it probably halfway through the period the day before, so I could, the ones that were totally at a loss on how to make your own table, I could guide them. They did surprisingly well on that. They started off griping about it, but then... [chuckle]

00:56 S1: They seemed to have it all done that day.

00:57 S2: They know how to do it.

[laughter]

00:58 S1: There was one group that you thought the data table was too large and you're like, "But where are you gonna put everything?"

01:02 S2: [chuckle] Yes. Yeah, there was a few of those that had lots and lots of boxes. They heard me say that there were a lot of things to record and so a lot of them just willy-nilly boxed, instead of writing down things that... "Okay, what do I need to record? How many spaces do I need? How do I organize that?"

01:16 S1: Ah, okay.

01:17 S2: But overall, most of them did pretty well, and we just kind of adjusted as we needed.

01:21 S1: And they're all working individually but they talked a lot with each other about that. How did you like their interactions with one another?

01:27 S2: I found that I liked the way it worked that they could work independently, or had to work independently, but needed to rely on people around them.

01:38 S1: Yeah.

APPENDIX J
INITIAL CODING INTERPRETATIONS

Appendix J
Initial Coding Interpretations

Table 17
Summary of Coding Interpretations

How do teachers and administrators negotiate the topic of dispositions in post observation conferences?		
Open Code	Properties	Examples of Participants' Words
Danielson Use	Helps focus conversation Grounds observations in specific description	"...what are the physical concrete things I am seeing or hearing or that are displayed or whatever that prove that instinct?" I can't either really praise somebody or say you have a problem with something that I can't put evidence to. So I'm definitely thinking of that in the back of my mind like, '2A, what should I be saying about 2A, good bad or otherwise?' Nancy Int 1
Purpose of Post	Admin holds a mirror Teacher reflects Admin clarifies	"...in that post-conference, I guess what I look at most is that teacher's reflection of what the process has been. So are they accurately reflecting? Are they seeing what I'm seeing? Are we targeting the same things? And really just identifying a couple of things to kind of pinpoint, and that's where the growth has to happen." Brad Int 2
Questions to Reflect	Teacher reflects on dispositions Makes effective things repeatable	"All the parts of it that were good, why were they good, what did I as the teacher do to make them good..." Nancy Int 2 'So what do you think? Are all your classes that tightly-knit? Or is that class special? Or are there things you did the beginning of the year or the beginning of the semester to get them to that?' Nancy & T2

(Continued on next page)

Table 17 (Continued)

Open Code	Properties	Examples of Participants' Words
Structure of Obs Reflection	Admin holds a mirror Point out effective things	<p>“I thought the culture for learning was really, really high. It was really evident what the goal of the lesson was and how it attached to that larger unit, and I think some of the things that you and I have already mentioned that your kids were saying really prove that they've bought into the class, bought into you, and want to learn, want to do well.” Nancy & T1</p> <p>“It sounds like you've done some reflecting on how freshmen need things organized for them in order to be most successful.” Nancy & T4</p> <p>“I marked a lot of 2A, that ‘Respect/Rapport.’ Again, just the really nice job you did of talking directly to Mom, and just before the meeting, starting making sure there were chairs and Kleenex, and everything was set up and ready to go.” Nancy & T3</p> <p>“...knowledge of students, I felt was a strength for you...” Brad & T6</p> <p>“You were able to direct students without a power struggle and focus them on the learning task.” Brad & T8</p> <p>“But the classroom environment, it's safe, it's appropriate. You're very clear in your directions, your procedures, expectations. You monitored all of them by circulating around the room, you were encouraging them.” Donna & T14</p>

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Table 17 (Continued)

How does the Danielson framework help focus post conferences around the topic of dispositions?		
Open Code	Properties	Examples of Participants' Words
Danielson Use	Guides conversation	<p>"...I am thinking in terms of components when I watch and the more apt I get with it, the more I train myself to look for specific things. So like 2B is sometimes very difficult to put your finger on, it's more abstract sometimes and you're trying to find the concrete things that justify that gut feeling you have..." Nancy Int 1</p> <p>"...reflection is on the Danielson Framework, so teacher reflection is a part of that. I think it helps guide the conversation a little bit because you've got that rubric in front of you." Nancy Int 2</p>
Difficult Conversations	<p>Focuses conversation on descriptions</p> <p>Makes unbiased</p>	<p>"That's when I refer back to that Danielson rubric. 'Show me what this looks like for you. Explain to me kind of what's going on, what are you thinking? If you were to take me out of the room, and someone were to walk in, what does this look like to that person?'" Brad Int 2</p>
Domains	<p>Global picture</p> <p>Removes bias</p>	<p>"I've never come across a situation, or a thing, or a quote, or an instance, of something that happened in a classroom where I couldn't find it on that rubric somewhere..." Nancy Int 2</p> <p>"I think it allows us to be less subjective, have more interrater reliability, and have a blueprint for the teacher..." Brad Int 1</p>
Purpose of Observation	Focus during observation	<p>"What I don't like people saying is that they have a good culture, or a good respect and rapport, and you walk in there, and not necessarily off-task behavior, but the kids are really condescending towards one another." Brad Int 2</p> <p>"I am thinking in terms of components when I watch and the more apt I get with it, the more I train myself to look for specific things." Nancy Int 1</p>

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Table 17 (Continued)

Open Code	Properties	Examples of Participants' Words
Structure of Obs Reflect	Language and talking points	"with the strengths in the areas for focus. I always attach a component. And I even say, "This is this" and I use the exact language from the rubric, and then I normally give the example as to what it was that led me to type that and what evidence that I see or not see, as the case may be" Erin Int 3
How do administrators attempt to influence teachers to work on developing dispositions during post observation conferences?		
Open Code	Properties	Examples of Participants' Words
Danielson Use	Provides direction	"you go back to that rubric, you go back to those examples, and you say, "See, right here, in Managing Student Behavior? It says, 'this should not...' " Nancy Int 2
Domains	Pointing out what is good	"Strengths 2A, Respect and Rapport, 2B, Culture for Learning." Brad & T8
Purpose of Observation	Pointing out what is good	"...when you were looking for volunteers you actually had way more kids to choose from than you needed, so that was great. They were all like, 'Pick me!'" Nancy & T1 "...then interjecting. I'm supposed to be the person who has the toolbox of instructional strategies and environmental suggestions and stuff. So I am supposed to be able to also pop in with a 'Well, you know what you could try?'"
Questions to Reflect	Influencing reflection, itself, as a disposition Admin feel they're supposed to influence	"Domain One, what do you feel like your strengths are? What do you feel like you still have areas to grow?" Brad & T8 "...is there anything you would want to set maybe as a goal for yourself?" Nancy & T5 "...if you had a clean canvas, and you could make it whatever you want for next year, what would you do to that Resource classroom?" Brad & T6 "Like I said, if that's something you feel they're struggling with, how do we make them better?" Erin & T11 "...what are your next steps?" Donna & T14

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Table 17 (Continued)

Open Code	Properties	Examples of Participants' Words
Direct	Using humor	“...you were like, ‘Well, I’ll get louder,’ and I’m like ‘No,’” Nancy & T1
Suggestion	Empowering Just telling them Making it sound like a suggestion Using “we”	<p>“...you’ve already got a fix, you just have to train yourself to use it every time.”</p> <p>“The couple of times when you realized you need to address the whole class and you’re like, ‘Attention up here,’ you only have to say that once.” Nancy & T4</p> <p>“Continue to reach out to those people in the department, to those English teachers, those ELA teachers, those are the ones that are gonna be your biggest resource.” Brad & T7</p> <p>“...what we would do is we’d give ‘em it the night before, or you could do it the day of, whatever, but they need to read it.” Donna & T14</p> <p>“...so I think if you wanted to put a few more structures in there.” Nancy & T4</p> <p>“But I think being cognizant of it, and then bringing the kids into that conversation of, ‘Hey, guys, this is something we never tried before, and we feel like you can do it, and we’re gonna challenge you as much as we challenge ourselves,’” Brad & T6</p> <p>“Could that be something that may be incorporating in a bell ringers, instead of a question that pertains or it could be a reading...” Erin & T11</p> <p>“Even as they’re entering the room, they’re in the hallway, and they don’t say anything. I’m like, ‘Why?’ ‘Oh, I don’t think about it.’ Especially teachers who feel... I’ve had a few who feel like their kids push against them, don’t want to do what they’re asking them to do. And, I’m like, ‘Well, do you know them?’ That’s where you have the conversation of kids work harder for people that they like.” Breanna Int 3</p>

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Table 17 (Continued)

Open Code	Axial & Selective Coding	Examples of Participants' Words
Danielson Domains, Question to Reflect, Reflective, Perception of Teaching, Implementing Changes, Letting Go-Student Centered, Domain 4	Reflection being a focus	Wanting to improve self-reflection of teachers
Danielson knowledge, Danielson Use, Difficult Conversations, Structure of Obs Reflection, Purpose of Observation, Purpose of Post, Teacher Led Conference, Questions to Clarify	Using framework to remove bias	
Domain 1, Domain 2, Domain 3, Disposition, Caring, Culture of Learning, Empathy, Enjoy Teaching, Giving Up, Growth, Honesty, Democracy, Preparedness, Purposeful, Respect & Rapport, Sarcasm, Sense of Humor, Smoothly Running, Not Asking for Help	Discussing dispositions	
Needs Pos Reinforce, Defensive, Students' Best Interest, Intention, Direct Suggestion, Provide a mirror, Questions to Reflect	Influencing Dispositions	

APPENDIX K
DEFINITION OF DISPOSITIONS

Appendix K Definition of Dispositions

What dispositions are:

- Observable
- Actions by the teacher
- Separate from content knowledge
- Separate from pedagogy
- Stemming from teacher's beliefs