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# Supportive Alignments & Teams in Group Supervision for School Counselors-in-Training

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## Abstract

*This thesis focuses on the formation of supportive alignments and interactional teams through particular linguistic strategies within the group supervision classroom, especially as participants provide one another with feedback on their professional behaviors. Through discourse analysis of transcripts of a video-recorded group supervision meeting, I illustrate how graduate level school counselors-in-training use language to construct alignments and teams. Discursive features that are identified and explicated include positive assessments of others, repetition, co-narration, constructed dialogue, and matching. In investigating these particular linguistic strategies, I emphasize how some of the major goals of group supervision (including feedback and reflection) are discursively expressed and reinforced amongst the school counselors-in-training.*

SUPPORTIVE ALIGNMENTS & TEAMS IN GROUP SUPERVISION FOR SCHOOL  
COUNSELORS-IN-TRAINING

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THESIS

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--Christopher S. Perrello

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

This thesis considers the discursive strategies performed and presented in a group supervision classroom and how the discursive strategies employed facilitate the pedagogical practices of group supervision and potentially improve professional growth among the classroom students. The data for this analysis consist of a video recording taken of a spring 2011 Syracuse University graduate group supervision course comprised of students who were completing a school counseling field experience. The field experience for graduate students within the school counseling course provides counselors-in-training opportunities to practice counseling in local (Syracuse City) secondary schools. Students utilize the group supervision classroom setting as an environment to reflect on and discuss their experiences in-depth. This particular classroom setting is an atmosphere in which the instructor leads the group supervision process by posing questions regarding the students' field experiences, and encouraging the students to interact with one another. She also answers questions and addresses student problems. One major purpose of group supervision is to foster communication amongst counseling students and expose them to a wide variety of client issues. Group supervision also provides other avenues for professional growth:

Rather than being limited to the supervisor's perspectives, group members have the opportunity to exchange a broader range of viewpoints and more diverse input. In addition, group supervision offers participants an environment of support and safety in which they are able to ask questions, express common concerns, explore their thoughts and feelings about clients, and discuss positive and negative outcomes. Sharing case material in a group setting can produce a sense of validation. Group members may receive affirmation that their conceptualizations and interventions are reasonable. They may use each other as sounding boards for clinical decision-making (Rutter, 2006, p.3).

Thus, in addition to providing students with support, group supervision allows students to identify questions, discuss their observations, explain roles and perspectives, and to view their field experiences from different theoretical standpoints. Peers also give feedback to their peers, keeping in mind the goals and questions that were specified by the instructor. While group supervision activities are accomplished largely through using language, to date, to my knowledge, discourse analysis has not been used to investigate this setting. In this thesis, I use linguistic discourse analysis to investigate the video recorded group supervision data, which I transcribed in detail.

Peer feedback is a major activity within supervision and the focus of the data I analyze. According to Bernard and Goodyear (2004), within the realm of group supervision, receiving feedback from peers and hearing the feedback given to others “has a positive impact on group members” (2). It is important to analyze the discourse of group supervision because communication about and acknowledgement of students’ experiences within their field sites are paramount in students’ growth as school counselors-in-training. The group supervision setting is also beneficial because “group members have the opportunity to exchange a broader range of viewpoints and more diverse input” (Li, Eckstein, Serres & Lin, 2008, p. 1). Students within this particular classroom setting are expressing their emotions, feelings, and attitudes regarding their experiences while working, for the first time and on a “practice” basis, within the trenches in the public school district. Thus, supervision is a primary site for learning and for professional identity development (e.g., Luke & Gordon, 2012).

In this thesis, I explore the discourse of graduate students who are studying to become school counselors within the group supervision setting by using these data to conduct a case-study analysis. Drawing on the notions of footing (Goffman, 1981; see also Goodwin, 2007),



interactional teams (Kangasharju, 1996; see also Gordon, 2003), and reported speech or what Tannen (2007) calls “constructed dialogue,” I will show how alignments, and especially supportive alignments, are discursively constructed within the group supervision classroom environment. Footing and related concepts, such as alignment and teams, are potentially useful for understanding the discourse of group supervision of graduate students who are school counselors-in-training. While it has been demonstrated that these concepts lend insights into various kinds of discourse such as family interactions (e.g., Gordon 2003), pretend play (e.g., Hoyle, 1993), and medical encounters (e.g., Tannen & Wallat, 1993), to my knowledge they have yet to be applied to group supervision of school counselors specifically. My analysis thus helps fill a knowledge gap.

In doing so, this study will help illuminate the structures and functions of the discourse of group supervision and will help us comprehend issues such as how teams form within this context, and how students facilitate social support to one another through their discourse. The group supervision classroom environment should be a place where support and collaboration is fundamental in helping supervision members address “issues of professional isolation, accountability, debriefing after difficult cases or situations, personal and professional development, and issues of client welfare” (Linton & Deuschle, 2006, p. 4). Another purpose behind this study is to exemplify student interaction of school counselors-in-training and to possibly help educators comprehend more clearly the verbal behaviors of students who are training to become school counselors. This may enhance the classroom setting and supervisors’ pedagogical techniques.

The organization of the following thesis is as follows: first, I introduce the theoretical underpinnings of my study. Discursive elements presented within the theoretical background

chapter include notions of footing, framing, constructed dialogue (also known as “reported speech” but for the purpose of this study, “constructed dialogue” will be used), involvement, interactional teams, and supportive alignments. I also discuss prior research that uses discourse analysis to analyze supervisory discourse. The third chapter gives an overview of the data and methodology used within my study. Chapter four will be the main analysis chapter in which I will analyze transcripts of the video recorded data from the group supervision session and investigate the multiple discursive strategies employed by participants to create the supportive environment that tends to characterize group supervision. A conclusion will summarize the study and present any further opportunities for more areas of study regarding the discursive practices within group supervision.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Theoretical Background**

In this chapter I introduce and review concepts that are essential to my analysis. The closely-related concepts of footing and framing, drawn from the theorizing of Goffman (1981), offer a fundamental view on how people together construct social interaction. Goffman's notions of footing and framing have been widely and productively utilized by discourse analysts to consider how language can socially construct different interactions; I will use them to explore the dynamics of the group supervision classroom. Tannen and Wallat (1993), for example, bring Goffman's notions to an exploration of linguistic features and provide vivid illustrations to help reinforce how these notions can be academically extended within the context of group supervision. In addition, Hoyle (1993) contributes to how I use these concepts in her case study illustrating participation frameworks involving children at play and the footing shifts occurring within their role playing; these shifts occur while the children take on the characteristics of sports broadcasters and athletes. Tannen (2007) also contributes to the discussion with her presentation of "reported speech," or as she calls it, "constructed dialogue," in her work on repetition in discourse. The concept of constructed dialogue is incorporated into this study to showcase how group supervision students reconstruct field placement site scenarios and situations within their classroom discussions as presented in the video recorded data; it is also a means of creating alignments in interaction.

### *Footing & Framing*

The notion of footing was developed by sociologist Erving Goffman who created a framework for the theory of alignment and the creation of social experiences. Goffman (1981) defines footing as “the alignment we take up to ourselves and the others present as expressed in the way we manage the production or reception of an utterance” (128). In other words, footing is the position we take up through the verbal utterances we speak or how we respond to an utterance. Footings become obvious in interaction when they change. We can think of a shift in footing as a modification in our alignment; indeed the terms are also used interchangeably.

For example, in his book *Forms of Talk* (1981), Goffman illustrates footing and shifts in footing when he discusses the teasing of former White House journalist, Helen Thomas by President Nixon in 1973 after a bill signing ceremony, as the event was described in a newspaper article; Goffman (1981, pp. 124 – 125) quotes the article in its entirety, as shown below:

WASHINGTON [UPI]—President Nixon, a gentleman of the old school, teased a newspaper woman yesterday about wearing slacks to the White House and made it clear that he prefers dresses on women.

After a bill-signing ceremony in the Oval Office, the President stood up from his desk and in a teasing voice said to UPI’s Helen Thomas: “Helen, are you still wearing slacks? Do you prefer them actually? Everytime I see girls in slacks it reminds me of China.”

Miss Thomas, somewhat hesitated, told the President that Chinese women were moving toward Western dress.

“This is not said in an uncomplimentary way, but slacks can do something for some people and some it can’t.” He hastened to add, “but I think you do very well. Turn around.”

As Nixon, Attorney General Elliott L. Richardson, FBI Director Clarence Kelley and other high-ranking officials smiling, Miss Thomas did a pirouette for the President. She was wearing white pants, a navy blue jersey shirt, long white beads and navy blue patent leather shoes with red trim.

Nixon asked Miss Thomas how her husband, Douglas Cornell, liked her wearing pants outfits.

“He doesn’t mind,” she replied.

“Do they cost less than gowns?”

“No,” said Miss. Thomas

“Then change,” commanded the President with a wide grin as other reporters and cameramen roared with laughter. [*The Evening Bulletin* (Philadelphia), 1973]

It is important to emphasize that Goffman uses this event as an artifact to illustrate his theory; he did not witness the exchange himself. He cites the example of then President Nixon commenting on the dress style of the only female reporter in the room. Goffman believed that this break was intended by President Nixon to be a brief time-out from the formal ceremonial duties of the bill signing, a moment in which he could show himself as an ordinary, witty man who was protected by the traditional characteristics of the president. Nixon went as far as encouraging Thomas to twirl around to show the audience full of journalists what she was wearing—pants instead of a dress. Nixon teased Thomas for having her husband allow her to go out of the house in a pair of slacks. Goffman seems to suggest that President Nixon attempted to shift the focus away from the normalcy of a bill signing ceremony to that of a gendered spectacle in which Helen Thomas was being appreciated like an object in front of her colleagues. While gendered aspects of the interaction are very interesting, most important for my purposes is how language and other communicative means were used to transform the alignments between participants: Nixon took up a playful, teasing alignment to Thomas, who in turn cooperatively “pirouetted” for the president.

Goffman also incorporates other concepts into his analysis of social interaction when he discusses the notions of “principal,” “author,” and “animator.” He implements these terms to make our understanding of “speaker” more explicit and detailed, as people accomplish the management of turn-taking, back channeling (providing listener feedback), paralinguistic cues (such as pitch and tone of voice), eye contact/shift, and facial expression. The concepts of “principal,” “author,” and “animator” are best looked at through Goffman’s metaphoric

observation that conversations, as Charles Goodwin (2007, p. 5) words it, “encompass an entire theater.” By this, Goodwin is expressing that there is a dramatic atmospheric element that occurs between interlocutors and there is a purpose behind each “actor” involved. These roles constitute the “production format” of an utterance, with the emphasis on the speaker and the specific activity and substance of speech. The animator is the dynamic of the speaker in action, along with an emphasis on the delivery and performance of speaking. Goffman calls the animator, the “talking machine, a body engaged in acoustic activity, or if you will, an individual active in the role of utterance production” (2007, p. 144). The author is the originator of the words that are encoded. The principal purports to believe and stand behind the message the words convey. Overall, “production format” reveals the complexity of the speaker role; for example, a speaker may animate words for which she or he is neither the principal or author (as when quoting another person or creating constructed dialogue).

Tannen and Wallat (1993) extend and elucidate Goffman’s notions of footing. They demonstrate how footing shifts occur within the institutional setting of a medical facility and the process of pediatric interaction. The authors show interconnections between “knowledge schemas” and the “interactive frames” that constitute the encounter. Tannen and Wallat use Goffman’s notion of footing “to describe how, at the same time that participants frame events, they negotiate the interpersonal relationships, or ‘alignments,’ that constitute those events” (Tannen & Wallat, 1993, p.60). Thus, when there is a change in footing, there is a shift in frame. The frame is the particular social situation within which an utterance’s meaning is created and recognized. The authors discuss the concept of “interactive frames” (akin to what Goffman describes as “frame”), which they refer to as “a sense of what activity is being engaged in, how speakers mean what they say” (Tannen & Wallat, 1993, p. 60). Interactive frames are established

by both verbal and nonverbal means. A variety of linguistic and nonverbal interactive cues can help formulate a frame, including lexical choice, turn-taking, intonation, pitch, gaze, and body positioning. Their analysis shows how use of high pitch by the pediatrician helps create a teasing frame in her interaction with the child, for example.

Tannen and Wallat align the term “frame” with other related terms such as “script,” “schema,” and “template” (59). It is important to emphasize that the authors also differentiate “schema” as a certain knowledge structure that may impact how frames are negotiated in discourse. Tannen and Wallat use the term “knowledge schema” to refer “to participants’ expectations about people, objects, events and settings in the world, as distinguished from alignments being negotiated in a particular interaction” (60). In the institutional setting, such as a group supervision classroom environment, knowledge schemas are presented in a variety of ways. Tannen and Wallat present the notion of knowledge schema through the lens of an institutional setting of a different kind—a medical setting. They investigate clashing knowledge schemas between the doctor and the pediatric patient’s mother, and demonstrate how that gap in knowledge can negatively impact the communicative process and lead the doctor to rapidly shift between different frames in the interaction, such as between examining the child and consulting with the mother. Thus the authors point to the interaction of frames and schemas as having a dynamic and close relationship that influence the discursive process between speakers.

Hoyle (1993) extends the notion of footing when she discusses participation frameworks in a sportscasting play between eight and nine year old children and how they imitate the roles of sportscasters while they play a competitive game. In other words, they narrate their actions, speaking as broadcasters. “Participation frameworks” refer to the interaction of interlocutors and how the interaction is framed by the discourse presented. According to Smith (1993),

“‘Participation framework,’ a term introduced by Goffman (1981), refers to the participation statuses of speakers and hearer in relation to the production and reception of an utterance, respectively” (150).

Hoyle, too, emphasizes the importance of framing as it relates to footing or alignment shifts. She explains, “Play games provide a good locus for the study of framing, the way in which interactants jointly construct and signal their definition of a situation” (114). Hoyle seems to have two major goals within her study: (1) to show how children are “skillful language users” and (2) to demonstrate how speakers take on the roles of sportscasters to showcase both literal and imaginary shifts in footing. The author here focuses on sportscasting because it is a verbal scenario in which a speaker is reporting the relationship between what is being said and what is done. Hoyle metaphorically understands sportscasting play as a means of storytelling and within storytelling; there are changes in tenses which can serve as a means for managing footing (115). As she explains, “the sportscaster’s task is to describe for an audience the action of a game as it unfolds, giving a play-by-play account, with the report of each action as simultaneous as possible with the action itself, or at least immediately afterward” (117). Sportscasting is spontaneous, unscripted, and occurs in live action which implies that the utterances reported are just as spontaneous and immediate.

The idea of framing is also presented within Hoyle’s argument, as it is closely related to footing. She demonstrates how framing occurs in sportscasting play. Hoyle cites the sportscasting register as well as other paralinguistic cues (volume, tempo, extension of syllables, pitch modifications, expressive intonation) to show how the children are participating in distinctive footings and thereby constructing different frames. For example, Hoyle discusses how footing is facilitated by “using names and pronouns to refer to themselves and each other” (119).



The boys use the names of such familiar athletes (at the time) as “Larry Bird” and “Doctor J” to denote the actions of the children playing. Hoyle discusses how the usage of the third person is overtly prevalent within the sportscasting activity. These elements coalesce to provide the imaginary audience of the sportscasters to contribute to the framing of the activity (Hoyle, 1993, p. 118).

Hoyle also observes that, “during the course of a sportscasting episode, the boys shift in and out of the role of sportscaster, and they signal their shifts by the ways in which they use names and pronouns to refer to themselves and each other” (124). This example is illustrated when one of the boys argues in his own voice and in a non-play frame about another’s call of action. The verbal genre of sportscasting play allows the children to, essentially, take part in code switching. Goffman (1981, p. 126) also defines code switching as a shift in language and dialect, and work in interactional sociolinguistics by Gumperz (1982) links shifts in code to shifts in frame or what he calls the “speech activity.” Hoyle presents a variety of discourse extracts in which she analyzes the switches between sportscasting of the imaginary players and talk in their natural voices commenting on the status of the game outside of the vocal standards of sportscaster. The boys thus use language to shift footings and define and re-define the situation in which they engage.

While Hoyle’s research focused on play interactions, people shift footings in all kinds of situations. For instance, Charles Goodwin (2007) explores interactive modifications in alignment and how they are influenced by “reported speech,” or taking-on another’s voice and quoting another during interaction. He uses V. N. Volosinov’s (1973) theorizing as a spring board in order to explicate how the notions of reported speech and other interactive spoken voices coalesce to provide a framework within multiparty conversation. Goodwin’s analysis

focuses on interactive participation and refers back to Goffman in arguing that alignment is central to the dialogic organization of human language. He emphasizes Goffman's basic framework of speakers and their linguistic positioning, such as "principal," "author," and "animator" and how these positions change throughout interaction.

### ***Reported Speech & Constructed Dialogue***

Related to this work is research on quotation or "reported speech." Tannen (2007) analyzes the notion of reported speech, or as she labels it, "constructed dialogue." This refers to "a situation in which a speaker repeats another's words at a later time" (98). While a speaker "verbally embodies" or "reports" the speech of others (resulting in the commonly used term "reported speech"), speakers can use both direct and indirect quotations. Direct quotation means that another's utterance is framed as dialogue in the other's voice, while indirect quotation tends to indicate a paraphrase with the current speaker's voice. An example of direct quotation would be "David said, 'I'll be there'" while an example of indirect quotation would be "David said he would be there." Tannen (2007) also uses Bakhtin's concept of intertextuality to illustrate how we use past experiences to enact the reported speech of others. As Bakhtin (1986) states, "Each utterance is filled with the echoes and reverberations of other utterances to which it is related by the communality of the sphere of speech communication" (99). This means that every utterance in a sense is composed of multiple "voices."

While Tannen (2007) suggests that constructed dialogue is basically a synonym for reported speech, she argues that when speech uttered in one frame is then repeated in another, it is fundamentally modified even if "reported" precisely, thus her shift to the term "constructed dialogue." Tannen (2007) also discusses the inner speech of others. This is necessarily, of

course, constructed. She thus offers a more nuanced understanding of the phenomenon while still emphasizing that quotation is a means of shifting footings or alignments. For the purposes of this thesis, I use the term “constructed dialogue,” to emphasize that prior utterances are always constructed, and cannot be neutrally conveyed.

Tannen suggests that constructed dialogue helps create “dramatic scenes” in conversation, and emphasizes how we utilize reported speech to enact a theme of “drama” (117). In other words, when we tell narratives and report the speech of others, we are essentially attempting to dramatize the narrative we are speaking. We are also shifting our footing toward what we are saying, and toward our audience. Thus constructed dialogue serves as a means of negotiating alignments with co-present participants in the interaction. Tannen’s emphasis on the dramatics often displayed through constructed dialogue can easily link to Goffman’s perception that language is spoken by the “actor” and often provides a form of dramatic narration—especially when reporting the speech of others.

Constructed dialogue, along with repetition and other linguistic strategies, help create “conversational involvement,” as Tannen (2007) shows. She cites John Gumperz (1982) as the inspiration for her understanding of involvement:

[U]nderstanding presupposes conversational involvement. A general theory of discourse strategies [such as introduced by Gumperz] must therefore begin by specifying the linguistic and socio-cultural knowledge that needs to be shared if conversational involvement is about the nature of conversational inference that makes for cultural, subcultural and situational specificity of interpretation (Tannen, 2007, p.25).

By this, Tannen is expressing Gumperz’s assertion that “conversational involvement...is the basis of all linguistic understanding” (Tannen, 2007, p. 25). Tannen also discusses Gumperz’s views that conversation is not a passive action. She further notes the cultural implications that involvement has on influencing conversation. Following Chafe (1985), Tannen (2007) notes

three types of involvement in conversation: “self-involvement of the speaker, interpersonal involvement between speaker and hearer, and involvement of the speaker with what is being talked about” (Tannen, 2007, p. 27).

Although Tannen writes of Gumperz as being the original scholar behind involvement, she furthers her argument by suggesting that it is a form of interaction that has “traces” and “elements” of the other during conversation. Thus, listening is considered an active role in the process of conversation, “requiring interpretation comparable to that required in speaking, and speaking entails simultaneously projecting the act of listening: In Bakhtin’s sense, all language use is dialogic” (27). It is through the engaging process of speaking and listening that combines to make an involved conversation an “achievement” in interaction. Tannen also believes there are certain forms and functions of involvement within conversation including rhythm, repetition patterns, phonemes (sounds that distinguish one word from another), indirectness, imagery/detail, as well as others. Goodwin (1981) also refers to involvement in discussing what he calls “conversational discourse suggest that interacting, which involves shifting alignments, also entails a sense of connection or cooperation.

In summary, footing, production format, constructed dialogue, involvement and related notions are useful for understanding the structure of interaction and how people align toward utterances, topics of talk, and one another. I believe they will lend insight into the discourse of group supervision of counselors-in-training, a context to which they have yet to be applied.

### ***Interactional Teams & Supportive Alignment***

The scholarship reviewed thus far suggests that a variety of linguistic strategies can be used to create alignments in discourse. In this section, I review research on a particular kind of

alignment: a team. There are a variety of synonyms for the term “team” which could include “alliance,” “coalition,” “association,” or “ensemble” (Kangasharju, 1996). These terms illustrate a certain type of social grouping that occurs through language and social interaction.

Kangasharju explores how linguistic practices help formulate a team or an alliance among multiparty interlocutors. She specifically targets team support within an institutional setting, a meeting in which conflict arises between a Finnish municipality’s two committees—social services and health services. The data from her article are extremely applicable to my study, because she is focused on discourse within an institutional setting. Although it is not a group supervision setting, her analysis is still exemplary of how footing and alignment can change in institutional types of environments such as medical, family, or business.

The necessary feature of a team is that a “collective unit of two or more participants—either as speakers or as recipients—is made available to the participants in the course of interaction” (Kangasharju, 1996, p. 293). Kangasharju focuses on how subgroups form within larger groups. She defines team as “characterized by the fact that the participants explicitly act as an association making this association visible to the other participants” (292). She incorporates Lerner’s (1987) original concept of “interactional teams” as “establishing the relevance of an association in a conversation is always an interactional achievement: it is something that is jointly created by the participants” (292). In other words, members of interactional teams create a conjoined (combined) relationship by the linguistic utterances and sequences they speak.

Interactional teams also tend to form when narratives are being constructed and in collaborative story-telling, an argument also made by Mandelbaum (1987) who analyzes how members of couples co-narrate, and Gordon (2009) who analyzes family interaction. The true essence of interactional team building occurs through collaborative environments—a place

where speech and dialogue are an essential part of institutional and cultural practice. As Kangasharju explains, “There are also situations in which a group of people can act as a collectivity, for example, an audience that responds with applause or laughter or a class of students who respond in chorus” (293). As particular members act as individual units, speakers can align themselves with others based on the interaction that is taking place. A team can emerge spontaneously or can be relatively fixed based on previous relationship, familiarity, or status within a hierarchy.

Kangasharju approaches her thesis with a comparative analysis on casual conversation in opposition to institutional conversation. Her analysis of collaborative teams within this institutional setting identifies several linguistic devices that characterize how teams interact including collaborative turn sequences and upgrading assertions of agreement, repetition and reformulation of previous speaker utterances (i.e., reported speech or constructed dialogue), demonstratives as markers of disaffiliation (closeness or spatial difference), eye and body movements, smiling and laughter. Repetition is noted as a key indicator in helping associate interlocutors with interactive teams because it is one way of indicating agreement, as well as other purposes (293). For example, within her analysis, Kangasharju illustrates this with two female colleagues at the meeting in which one speaker repeats the other by saying, “well after all we’ve got through...” and acknowledges a certain kind of connection within the alignment of a team. Essentially, this small example displays a form of agreement, signaling support. The concept of repetition is also important because it highlights that a speaker has carefully listened to the previous turn, an idea also discussed by Tannen (2007).

In addition, Kangasharju’s asserts that turn-taking is a prominent discursive feature that one could examine when analyzing the “conjoint” accomplishments of participants. When

discussing turn-taking, Kangasharju illustrates that certain participants may hold particular power in deciding what the topic of talk is, or even the order of the length at which an utterance occurs. More than anything, there is a form of mutual agreement among speakers which helps aid in the overall process of functioning as a member of a team.

Gordon (2003) demonstrates how teams are created through participation in stepfamily interaction. Building on the work of Goffman (1981), Lerner (1987), and Kangasharju (1996), through analysis of the discourse of members of her own family, she shows that individuals do not always interact as complete individuals during talk and instead, can act as an interactional team. Gordon elected to pursue the discourse analysis of stepfamily interaction—a complex social scenario that is useful for observing shifts in supportive alignment. She defines “supportive alignment” as “an alignment in which one participant ratifies and supports another’s turns at talk and what he or she has to say, creating ties of cooperation, collaboration, and agreement” (397). The conversational modes that illustrate supportive alignment include shared smiles and laughter (Kangasharju, 1996; Gordon, 2003), repetition of another’s words (Kangasharju, 1996; Gordon, 2003), supportive back channeling (Gordon 2003), and collaborative sentence building (Kangasharju 1996; Gordon, 2003). These conversational features can better help us understand supportive alignment and the formations of teams.

Supportive alignment and teams can form as a product of speech “when associations are recognized by interlocutors, where extra-interactional relationships exist and become relevant, or when mutual knowledge becomes relevant in conversation” (Gordon, 2003, p. 400). Although Kangasharju’s analysis focuses on the formation of a team as occurring through *conflict*, Gordon takes team formation and applies it to stepfamily interaction that is not conflictual in nature. She discusses the importance of shared prior experience and how it can instigate a team formation,

more specifically, the shared knowledge between her and her father, while other step family members (stepmother Anna, and half-sister Emily) might be considered “out of the loop.” Gordon also shows that shared “knowledge schemas” (Tannen & Wallat, 1993), when made manifest in conversation, are a means of creating teams in interaction. This means that participants have shared expectations and understandings and make them apparent in conversation. For example, the father and daughter (Gordon) echo stepmother Anna’s previously stated expectations about how teenage dating (for Emily) should work. Making this knowledge schema known is part of how they present themselves aligned in a team with Anna.

In addition, Gordon (2003) discusses the importance of other linguistic features within a conversation that have an impact on the formation of teams. Conferring, or shared discussion through deliberation, is another way in which interactional teams form, following Lerner (1993). Through conferring, speakers essentially establish their shared alignments. Thus, Gordon shows how the parents in her data confer about the behavior of teenager Emily (the husband’s daughter and the wife’s step-daughter), creating a team. This also highlights how teams form and re-form throughout interaction.

Summarizing prior research demonstrates that a range of linguistic features can be used to create supportive alignments and metaphorical “teams” in conversation, including in conversations in institutional contexts. These concepts are relevant to my data because group supervision, which has been rarely studied (if at all) by discourse analysts, requires a certain level of student-centered support through discussion-based exchanges. My analysis will aim to explore how, by sharing their field placement and client-related experiences, supportive alignments and interactive teams emerge as a way of reinforcing positive learning and professional development outside of their field experience.



### *Discourse Analysis of Supervision*

While alignment and footing have not been applied to the group supervision classroom setting, there is a small amount of research that uses discourse analysis to explore supervisory communication. Gordon and Luke (2012) provide a basic framework for interpreting and analyzing professional identity development in school counseling through their analysis of individual supervision that occurs through email communication. Their analysis of mandatory weekly emails sent from Master's-level school counselors-in-training to their supervisor (and the supervisor's responses) shows several micro-discursive elements that are worth discussing including politeness strategies (face-mitigating and face-threatening acts), the use of first person plural pronouns, the discourse marker "that being said," repetition, and constructed dialogue. The emails were a way for student interns to express their experiences, emotions, and feelings regarding their placements within their school field experiences. The exchange was also a way for student interns to openly communicate their internship activities with their supervisor, and for the supervisor to track their development through their professional performance. According to Gordon and Luke, there is only a small amount of research looking at email communication between supervisors and their students, especially at the micro-level.

The authors take an interactional sociolinguistic approach to discourse analysis, and utilize many of the ideas from Gumperz (2001) and Tannen (2007) in order to approach this highly unstudied form of communicative exchange. Gordon and Luke highlight student interns' use of constructed dialogue to demonstrate how students use it to demonstrate "their competence in the field of school counseling, and often their goodness as a person and professional who is being evaluated" (116). In other words, the authors suggest that constructed dialogue serves as a

means for interns to demonstrate their “positive face” (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Gordon and Luke found that supervisees “report” the speech of others that helps increase their positive face, generally bolstering “their competence in the field, and their connectedness to others” (116). By using constructed dialogue, students were exemplifying their “connectedness” in reflecting on their own experiences through positive facework.

When looking at facework and professional identity construction, in another paper, Luke and Gordon (2012) propose to analyze several other linguistic features that help explicate why the expert-novice email process is so important in the process of professional identity and competence development. Other than constructed dialogue and its relation to positive facework, they also discuss the supervisors’ use of first person plural pronouns such as “we,” “us,” and “our,” which they also claim seems to help elevate positive face for the supervisees. In one case, Gordon and Luke (2012) found that the supervisor used the plural pronouns to “create a shared alignment of professional need” (118). Shared alignment is enriching to illustrate within the email interactions because it shows support throughout this professional learning process. Shared alignment is a paramount concept within my study, as I apply it to the group supervision classroom setting, as opposed to email exchanges.

Other discursive elements sent in the emails include the statement, “That being said,” written by supervisors as a so-called “discourse marker.” Gordon and Luke (2012) explain that Schiffrin’s (1987) notion of a discourse marker refers to words and phrases that serve to “structure ideas, meanings, participation, and interactional effects” (118). In addition, they found that the discourse marker, “That being said,” has other important connections with the email data: “It links discourse validating supervisees’ experiences with discourse that challenges supervisees to consider alternate perspectives or interpretations, thereby simultaneously working

to enhance positive face (competence, approval) and minimize damage to negative face, or the imposition that speech act like ‘criticism’ might entail” (118). As Gordon and Luke (2012) focus on how face is enhanced through constructed dialogue, first person plural pronouns, and discourse markers, they argue that these discursive strategies strengthen the image of the intern’s professional competence in interaction with the supervisor.

Luke and Gordon’s (2012) analysis of expert-novice email interaction also found that there is often repeated use of professional jargon. Repetition is an important feature in the data because it is a discursive phenomenon that has been heavily studied by discourse analysts and has been shown to have many functions (I previously mentioned this feature in summarizing research on teams). Gordon and Luke (2012) integrate Tannen’s (2007) conceptualization of how repetition contributes to the communicative process. Through repetition, participants develop certain “conversational worlds” together—such as the broader community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Gordon and Luke found that the consistent use of professional jargon within the emails constructed an identity that was professionally relevant to the student interns. The repetition of professional jargon additionally reinforced a parallel knowledge schema between the supervisor and supervisee, which elevates the personal and professional stature of a supervisee. This also shows shared understandings and professional perceptions in their identity development. Gordon and Luke’s studies suggest that discourse analysis is a productive way to approach supervisory communication.

Luke and Goodrich (2013) use a broadly discourse analytic approach to consider group supervisory communication. They analyze data from fellow school counselors-in-training in a group supervision video recording and that were paired up at a field experience assisting in counseling with GSA’s (Gay-Straight Alliances). The data was applied to what the authors

referred to as the “LGBTQ Responsive Model which instructs supervisors of group work to be cognizant of the group system level as the first point of entry for supervisory intervention” (Luke & Goodrich, 2013, p. 125). It is a formulaic way of determining level of assistance and intervention regarding the counseling needs of the LGBTQ community. The specific Responsive Model is examined in this study because the societal disadvantages that the LGBTQ community endures and the special counseling needs. This suggests that discourse analysis can be a useful tool, not only within analyzing the group supervision classroom setting; however it can be used to analyze *any* classroom setting.

In this chapter I introduced and reviewed theories and applications that are essential to my analysis. Notions of footing and framing were explored through Goffman (1981), Tannen and Wallat (1993), including footing shifts (Hoyle 1993). Other concepts covered in this chapter included interactional team formations through language (Kangasharju, 1996) and through step-family interaction (Gordon, 2003) as well as Tannen’s (2007) illustration of constructed dialogue. Discourse analysis of group supervision practices was examined using Gordon and Luke (2012) and Luke and Gordon (2012), also incorporating Luke and Goodrich (2013) to help support the need for the detailed study of language in supervision.

### Chapter 3

#### **Data & Methods: Investigating the Discourse of Group Supervision**

The data I am utilizing for this study were collected from a video recording of a 2011 graduate school counseling classroom at a northeastern American university's counselor education program. The video recorded transcripts provide a solid amount of classroom discourse to help illustrate the discursive strategies of the group supervision classroom setting. The video recording was done with informed consent and is a common practice within this particular university's School of Education. There are 11 female students and 1 male student present in the data. It is not uncommon to find a skewed ratio of women to men within the school counseling field, which is heavily comprised of women. Scholars estimate that almost 80 – 85% of the field is comprised of women. Although the camera recorded some of the students, some of them are hidden by the camera angle, thus you cannot always make out student or instructor facial expressions or nonverbal activities. My analysis focuses on the verbal elements of the interaction.

The students shown in the data take part in a weekly “field placement experience,” which is an on-site learning experience at a local (Syracuse) public high school where graduate students go into a classroom to help gain insight directly within a high school environment working with “clients” (high school students). One of the major goals of the group supervision class is to learn more about client issues through journaling and discussing their field experiences together as a class and collectively engaging in how their experiences have helped shape their professional identities. I will use discourse analysis to investigate video recorded data from the group

supervision graduate course that I transcribed using conventions derived from Hutchby and Woofitt (2008).

Throughout the data, it is clear that the instructor helps facilitate a dialogic conversation between the students in the course, herself, and the teaching assistant for the course. As the instructor (who also acts as students' primary supervisor), it is naturally her job to help lead the classroom in the discussion-based process. The instructor is female. At the time of recording she had 10 years of supervising experience and had been a practicing school counselor for 15 years. Also present is the male teaching assistant who was at the time in his fifth year of the counseling PhD program. He had 15 years of experience as a school counselor, but had only one prior experience as an instructor of group supervision. Chronologically speaking, this is the third consecutive meeting for the semester (out of three). In the discussion, which lasted approximately an hour and twenty minutes, the participants reflect back on specific experiences but also the semester as a whole (such as miniature group counseling sessions and college/career readiness counseling). It thus provides rich data for analysis.

Within the context of data and methods used within this study, I should address the purpose of group supervision and the importance of the notion of "feedback." Along with feedback, there also comes the concept of "identification" within group supervision amongst counselors-in-training. Identification presented in this context is between classmates, field experience partners, and students—all through conversation and narrative in group supervision. Bernard and Goodyear (2004) characterize group supervision as a:

...a regular meeting of a group of supervisees with a designated supervisor, for the purpose of furthering their understanding of themselves as clinicians, of the clients with whom they work, and/or of service delivery in general, and who are aided in this endeavor by their interaction with each other in the context of group process (111).

Group supervision meetings are designed primarily for the purpose of discussing cases and developing skills (Linton & Deuschle, 2007). Bernard and Goodyear also emphasize the importance of the involvement of the group process—and this can be connected to “feedback.” By “feedback,” I am referring to how one participant (or supervisor) highlights positive and/or negative behaviors of another in the field experience. Feedback within the group supervision classroom because it is a conversational tool that helps propel forward the verbal suggestions of others who are also in a similar field placement scenario. There is a learning component to feedback as well. Feedback is ideal in the group supervision classroom because members can learn from valuable student-instructor opinions, suggestions, and recommendations. “When compared to individual supervision, supervisees in group supervision receive considerably more feedback due to the presence of several practitioners, not just one supervisor. This allows supervisees to maximize the amount of benefit they may receive from supervision meetings” (Linton & Deuschle, 2007, p.6). Other benefits from group supervision feedback could include increased confidence, a greater sense of independence, decreased anxiety, and benefit through learning by observing others both during group supervision and at their field experience sites. Yet we know little of how different features of discourse are used to provide feedback in this context; I explore how in feedback language is used to create supportive alignments.

Identification is also a concept involved in group supervision that can also be explored linguistically. Identification in group supervision can also be thought of as having a sense of empathy towards a fellow group supervisee and commonalities, when in which field experience stories are being spoken, students can *identify* with one-another, therefore, express meaningful feedback through dialogue and discussion. As supervisees (or the students) talk of their field placement experiences, identification seems to serve as a meaningful element that occurs within

the group supervision data. Tannen (2007) refers to a similar phenomenon in noting the presence of “emotional identification” in conversation; by this, she is referring to “total engagement...this is an emotional source of persuasion...” (Tannen, 2007, p.185). Tannen also ties emotional identification to involvement strategies within conversation. Emotional identification occurs within group supervision and is arguably expressed through a number of specific strategies I identify in the transcribed data.

Group supervision members who are training to be school counselors are also training to be part of a team at the school; they must work collaboratively with others (parents, students, principals, teachers, etc.). They must professionally interact and deal with the many crises and problems faced within the field experience site. My analysis of the data identifies particular linguistic patterns that show support and suggest positive growth within the graduate students. A positive and supportive classroom model is worthy of preparing these students for a real-world professional career as a school counselor; they support and collaborate with their peers and colleagues during group supervision; in the profession they will do so with a range of others in the “community of practice” (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Thus, the data collection site is linked to other sites of professional practice.



## Chapter 4

### Analysis: Alignments & Teams

In this chapter, I show how the concept of alignment (or footing) enriches our understanding of the group supervision classroom. Supportive alignments and footings are created in my data through students' use of various forms of language that give positive feedback and perform explicit evaluation. My analysis outlines how these alignments are linguistically accomplished. It also identifies the group supervision classroom as an exemplar institutional setting for observing and analyzing these linguistic features; my analysis of these data show how supportive alignments and team formation occurs in naturally-occurring communication that is reflected in this particular environment.

As mentioned, the group supervision classroom is designed to act in large part as a professional support group where school counselors-in-training can deliberate and discuss issues of importance that are occurring emotionally and professionally within their field experience sites. Positive and supportive alignments that are created in discourse is likely to assist students in processing their experiences within their field placement sites because such alignments suggest that they have fellow peers and colleagues to recognize the tribulations of real-world school counseling field experiences. This type of conversational alignment, I suggest, aids in confidence, self-reflexing, and identification in the graduate students.

My analysis identifies numerous linguistic strategies through which the graduate student participants construct supportive alignments and interact as members of a team. Positive assessments of others, such as "I liked that," function this way. In addition, back channeling terms such as, "Yeah," and "Right," were incorporated to show active listening and reinforce a

positive listening stance. The use of the pronoun “we” is also helpful in creating supportive alignments. By using the term, “we,” students verbally take a supportive alignment because they are positioning their language as two or more people working together to some capacity in the data; this helps portray participants as members of a team. There is also laughter and chuckling present among the students’ conversation which could help create supportive alignments. Some students also partake in the co-telling of stories where they will often speak on behalf of another participant when they share the same shared knowledge of a particular narrative or story within the data. Repetition, too, is a particular venue of exploration in this chapter, as it has been demonstrated in past research to verbally create supportive alignments, and occurs in my data.

In what follows, I analyze the first fourteen minutes of the final group supervision session, during which time the participants communicate about their direction of discussion for their final group supervision meeting and where they felt they needed to grow (and might be able to help others to do so too). I use the aforementioned linguistic strategies to create supportive alignments. In addition, the practice of feedback is central to the group supervision classroom and their in-class reflections help facilitate the feedback between students and instructor we see in the data. The analysis, which largely considers data extracts in sequence, seeks to illustrate how supportive and shared alignments occur in the group supervision classroom setting; I argue that these alignments represent a positive learning environment in which field placement students benefit from discussion and reflection. At the end of this chapter, I revisit the concepts presented through the data extracts and summarize my study as it relates the communicative practices within the group supervision classroom.

I first examine instances where supportive alignments are created rather explicitly. Then, I explore how issues of repetition, co-narration and (especially) how critique--one important

element of supervision and of feedback—are also used to create supportive alignments. I will explore several discursive strategies that were illustrated through the group supervision classroom data including positive assessments of others, repetition, co-narration, reflective critiques, sameness and identification all contribute to supportive alignment.

### **Positive Assessments of Others in Group Supervision**

Extract 1 is presented to provide context for the extracts which are the focus of my analysis. It also demonstrates supportive alignments being created through several strategies, notably positive assessments of another's behaviors.

In the extract, the instructor is asking students how they would like to use their supervision time. One student, Sara, offers that she would like to practice feedback. Feedback is a particular kind of responsive activity within group supervision and is paramount to the reflexive nature of the goals of the classroom (Gurzynski-Weiss & Revesz, 2012). The feedback provided in group supervision by the Instructor and peers are way to help process professional and personal issues which aids in growth and professionalism. While Sara introduces the activity of feedback, she actually declines to offer feedback to another student right away. The Instructor thus attempts to invite students to “meet” or help Sara, a student who metaphorically has “crept out on a limb.”

#### **EXTRACT 1:**

Instructor: So you've had a couple group supervisions before,  
um (.5) so at this point, (.)  
I think you have a sense of what (.) what (.) how that has been experienced here,

and you've ↑also done a little bit of planning,  
 which is different (.) than (.) in the past.  
 You've each written in a journal,  
 some thoughts or ideas about what might(.) might be (.) helpful.  
 So this is it! for us.  
 And what is it- how do you want to use the next hour and a half?  
 what's going to be mea:ningful .. for you?  
 (7.0)

Sara: I think to try to give more feedback,  
 even though (.) we have tended to be like a little hesitant to do that?

Instructor: Okay.

Sara: So,

Instructor: So you would like to be able to (.) perhaps practice some of that?  
 Take a little bit more risk,  
 <quickly> (you seem) hesitant.>

Sara: Yeah.

Instructor: Yeah.

Would you like to pick someone and give a piece of feedback?  
 Or (.) ask someone for a piece of feedback?

Sara: Um (.5) I'd want to think about it first.

Instructor: Okay.

Sara: I'd want it to be thoughtful.

Instructor: Okay.  
 Is there anyone who (.) um (.) can meet Sara,  
 you know when I said the last class of- that I felt like I had crept out on a limb,  
 and I felt all alone,  
 is there anyone that can (.) respond to Sara,  
 while she's- before she's thinking,  
 <quickly> (or) we're gonna move on,  
 (because) Emma raised her hand.>  
 Go ahead.

Extract 1 is a good backdrop to establish the environment in which verbal supportive alignments are created in the group supervision classroom. Extract 1 is also helpful because it sets the stage for the beginning of this group supervision meeting. This particular extract is occurring immediately after the instructor has asks the group supervision students what they would like to discuss for the beginning of their meeting. The instructor suggests Sara might be feeling alone. Although the next student to speak, Allison, is not commenting on Sara, she decides to comment on her field experience site partner in which they worked together. She thus engages in the

feedback activity that Sara has requested, and the Instructor has supported. Extract 2 illustrates how Allison constructs a supportive alignment vis-à-vis her field placement site partner, Fatima, as well as Sara.

### **EXTRACT 2:**

1 Allison: Um .. I'll make my comment to Fatima since we worked together.  
 2 Um (.) I think that, (.)  
 3 in my opinion,  
 4 that she seemed to grow throughout the process.  
 5 Um (.) at first you seemed a little bit afraid to interact with the people,  
 6 not knowing exactly what we were doing,  
 7 and then towards the end you were startin' to make those connections =  
 8 =with the students that needed to be made,  
 9 and actually helping them out more.

In line 1, Allison acknowledges and offers a supportive comment to Fatima, whom she was partners with at their field experience site and “worked together,” at the very end of line 1. In line 4, Allison positively supports Fatima’s professional growth “throughout the process.” This is seen as a blatant compliment which vividly helps support Fatima’s professional growth while actively engaged in her field placement experience. Allison further justifies Fatima’s growth as a counselor-in-training by taking her class peers on a journey of her partner’s accomplishments: “...at first you seemed a little bit afraid to interact with the people, not knowing exactly what we were doing,” In the previous statement mentioned from lines 5 – 6, Allison is somewhat critiquing Fatima, (which is common, and indeed required, part of giving constructive feedback), but offers a polite response with a positive framework as she touts her growth at making connections with the students “and actually helping them out more.” By critiquing Fatima, Allison is indirectly supporting her since she is providing a basis for continued room for professional growth. Clearly, making connections or a close rapport with students is paramount

in developing a comfort level where students can approach that particular counselor in order to discuss the most personal of information and possible personal crises. Thus, Allison suggests that Fatima has the tenacity to make these connections with a bit more confidence and perseverance.

It is also notable that in Extract 2, line 1, there is an instance of the pronoun “we” being mentioned. The pronoun “we” illustrates a linguistic form of supportive alignment because it is tying the two students together professionally and symbolically. The term, “we” also sets the frame of her comments, almost as if Allison is obligated to discuss Fatima’s professional growth—critiquing her at one point, and then bringing it back to her positive connections with students. The term, “we” can also signify the identifying root of forming a team as previously mentioned by Gordon (2003) and Kangasharju (1996). Thus, in this extract, Allison uses the pronoun, “we,” and positive assessments of her partner as she creates a collective partnership through her story.

Further, Allison is aligning supportively with Sara by stepping up and providing feedback, which is the activity that Sara suggested. This is true especially in regards to the expressed metaphor of being willing to “creep out on a limb” with Sara. As previously mentioned feedback is essential in the reflexivity aspect of group supervision and is one of the learning objectives of that particular classroom setting. Allison supportively aligns with Sara through the feedback activity while also creating a supportive alignment with her field experience partner.

## Repetition in the Group Supervision Classroom

In the next Extract 3, Sara, responds to the “open floor” for feedback and reflection regarding the students’ experiences at their field practice sites. This extract shows supportive alignment occurring as Sara openly discusses her field experience partner’s professional activity at their placement site. It highlights the role of repetition in the creation of supportive alignments. The bold font emphasizes the relevant repetition.

### EXTRACT 3:

- 1 Sara: I think I’d like to go off of that um to Kim because **we worked together**.  
 2 Um I always found you to be really up for a **challenge**,  
 3 and wanting <chuckling> a **challenge**,>  
 4 um (.) which (.) I don’t think surprises me about you,  
 5 but I liked that.  
 6 Um,  
 7 and you were really willing,  
 8 like with the students,  
 9 to like put yourself out there,  
 10 especially with arguments and stuff,  
 11 (I’m) thinking back to (.3) your whole agree to disagree thing.  
 12 Kim: [hnhmhmhmhm]  
 13 Sara: Um (.) so I liked **working with you**.  
 14 Kim: Thank you Sara.

In extract 3, we can see more supportive alignment occurring as Sara discusses her professional working partnership with Kim at their field experience site. Similar to how Allison positively evaluated Fatima’s growth, Sara discusses Kim’s handling of certain situations at their site, creating a supportive alignment. For instance, in lines 2 – 11, Sara tells a brief narrative describing how Kim performed a level of competency that was worth noting and sharing within the group supervision classroom. In lines 2 – 3, Sara mentions that Kim was always up for a challenge, and essentially *wanted* challenges at the field experience site. Here, Sara is holding

Kim in high regard by using a lexical item as powerful as “challenge,” which she does twice. In the counseling field, a counselor has to be prepared for every sort of challenge and unexpected challenges at that, especially interacting with a vulnerable population such as urban youth (i.e., students at public city schools).

In lines 7 – 11, Sara is illustrating how Kim confronted certain professional scenarios and essentially handled herself beyond a level of mere competency. Statements made by Sara in Extract 3 include: “...and you were really willing, like with the students, to like put yourself out there- especially with arguments and stuff, (I’m) thinking back to (.3) your whole agree to disagree thing.” Sara is expressing support and aligning with Kim as she backs up her partner’s talents through a specific event that took place (“whole agree to disagree thing”) which seems to refer to a confrontational event that occurred at Sara and Kim’s field experience site. It appears that a partnership was involved in “solving” this apparent crisis between students who were quarreling (this crisis is discussed later in the supervision, as will be shown). When the statement “agree to disagree” is uttered, it is also assumed that a confrontation had to be settled between parties who could not align on equal footing in resolving the disagreement. “Agree to disagree” is also a phrase to signify a form of peer mediation that is common practice in the school setting in order to teach students that you will not always come to compromise or agree on a problem.

We also see repetition in lines 1 and 13 of the idea that Sara and Kim “worked together.” According to Tannen (2007), repetition can serve as a verbal means of connection which can truly translate into support and rapport-building through conversation. Tannen notes that repetition “serves as a referential and tying function...Repetition of sentences, phrases, and words shows how new utterances are linked to earlier discourse, and how ideas presented in the discourse are related to each other” (60). Through the repetition presented by Sara in regards to



Kim, there is cohesion created between the two students. The repetition of the idea of working together forms a team between Kim and Sara; it indicates that these students functioned together professionally at their school site and acted in concert to ensure the success of their student clientele (see Gordon 2009 for a related example in family interaction). When the notion of “working” together, and although the pronouns uttered in lines 1 and 13 are different, the repetition of “working” insinuates that a relationship, a bond of some sort, (again—a team, if you will), was built throughout their partnership at their field experience site. This paints a vivid portrait of supportive alignments because “working” (with “you”) signal positive verbal attention to duties that go into their professional work at their field placement site.

This repetition also relates to the interactional phenomenon Tannen (2007, p. 61) describes as “accomplishing social goals, or simply managing business of conversation,” which I believe is integral in reporting feedback, and in supporting another student’s performance or competency. Thus Tannen’s argument that repetition helps in the “business of conversation” is illustrated through this extract because of the “business” of supportive rapport-building that is being developed behind the repetition uttered. After all, the “business of conversation” in group supervision is to reflect and offer feedback to peers to develop professional growth in the adolescent counseling arena.

Also following Tannen (2007), repetition can be used to “bound” conversational episodes in theme and topic, as well as to “form a kind of coda” (77). Tannen discusses how theme-setting can occur in the beginning of an episode and then terminates the episode at the end. In Extract 3, we can see how the theme of supportive feedback through “self-repetition” is expressed, such as the term “challenge” being uttered by Sara. Tannen distinguishes between self-repetition and the repetition of other(s), which is known as “allo-repetition.” As the concepts being uttered by Sara

on “working together” and being ready to confront “challenges,” sets the tone of repetition within the extract. The repetition occurring throughout Extract 3 helps illustrate how teams are formed by students in the group supervision classroom, again, reinforcing the idea that positive verbal support is needed for a successful completion of the objectives within the group supervision atmosphere. Also, working collaboratively and providing feedback through this particular professional process is an essential component of the group supervision. In this case, “we worked together” uttered by Sara echoes Allison’s earlier remarks regarding her own partner, Fatima, and Sara thus uses her comments to tie her comments to Allison’s (and perhaps herself to Allison). Essentially there are two main points expressed here: (1) Sara’s self-repetition bounds her conversational turn, wraps up her supportive comments about her partner in a way that emphasizes that they were a “team” at their field placement. (2) Sara’s line “we worked together” echoes (is an allo-repetition of) Allison’s line 1 in Extract 2, which ultimately creates a supportive alignment between Sara and Allison—ties their separate activities together.

There are other verbal cues present in the extract that support my contention that positive alignments and, more in particular, shared and supportive alignments, are being created. In Extract 3, Sara praises her partnership with Kim, as we have seen (regarding the “whole agree to disagree thing”; line 11). Kim backchannels in line 12 with “[hmmhmmhmmhmmhmm]” signifying that she is accepting Sara’s positive assessment and filtering it as group supervision graduate students *should*. The backchanneling cue in line 12 was quite emphatic in tone giving the utterance a positive ambiance in an agreement with Sara. This is followed by Sara’s positive remark in line 13 when she states “...I liked working with you.” Sara demonstrates the positive and professional rapport she has developed with Kim as a counselor-in-training. This comment indirectly implies that perhaps Sara learned a lot from working with Kim at their assigned field

experience site. This is an example of team work at its best. Kim further acknowledges and accepts Sara's praise when she answers in line 4 with "Thank you Sara." This reinforces the supportive alignment between the two women.

### **Co-Narration in the Group Supervision Classroom**

The co-telling of stories is also a discursive feature we can analyze to see how supportive alignment are created. When co-narratives take place within this particular group supervision classroom, interlocutors verbally assist each other in narrating stories from their field experiences. When students co-narrate stories, they verbally work together to express the emotional and professional struggles encountered within their field experience site. In Gordon's (2009) study of co-narratives occurring within the context of family, she explains how co-narratives can signal instances of solidarity (see also Gordon, 2003). Furthermore, Gordon contextualizes the linguistic functions of co-narratives as constructing a team-like verbal occurrence in doing what Mandelbaum (1987) calls "sharing stories" in which interlocutors are "characters," which in this case, serves as the formation of shared positive alignment. Gordon's themes of co-narratives are focused around collaboration of detail, repeated prompts, and shared experiences. Here, I focus on collaboration as expressed by the group supervision members and show how the pronoun "we" helps better illustrate how supportive alignments are formed by co-narration.

Extract 4 illustrates how co-narration occurs and furthermore helps illuminate the verbal formation of supportive alignment. Here, Allison describes a scenario at her field experience site while working with another classmate, Kim. Allison is volunteering to share her story seemingly

as a response to a previous story told by Sara in which she was describing how her partner dealt with a conflict (referring back to “the whole agree to disagree” story shown in the previous Extract 3).

#### EXTRACT 4:

1 Allison: That’s funny because we ha-  
 2 we actually had an argument that we were trying to solve together,  
 3 and come to find out the girls were sisters?  
 4 (???): Right.  
 5 ((*general chuckling*))  
 6 Instructor: Oh, I didn’t even hear that part of the update.  
 7 Allison: They were like, “shut the eff up!” ((*general laughter, simultaneous talk*))  
 8 Like every back and forth,  
 9 back and forth,  
 10 back and for—  
 11 And we’re both trying our hardest to like get them to stop fighting,  
 12 I’m like, “okay, let’s move on to this,”  
 13 and she was like, “can we agree to disagree,”  
 14 and they’re like, “no!” <*laughs*>  
 15 <*laughing*> You know, like so . >  
 16 I- I think that we like tried our best to handle that situation as it came up,  
 17 but it was pretty difficult.  
 18 (???) Yeah.  
 19 Kim: I mean it’s surprising wh- how different it was knowing =  
 20 =afterwards that they were sisters?  
 21 (???): (Yeah!)  
 22 Kim: There was no indication,  
 (I’m like,) “wow, how come these two are just-” ((*gestures throat choking*))

In Extract 4, Allison and Kim co-tell a scenario that occurred within their field experience site as they engaged with the adolescent students. Their collaborative telling allows them to act as a team in the classroom. Both of these counselors-in-training are co-telling and building up a narrative to help express their vivid experiences within their field placements. In addition, in the story, the narrators depict themselves as a team. In line 2, there is an obvious statement of alignment statement uttered by Alexis when she states, “we actually had an argument that we

were trying to solve together.” The pronoun “we” is one significant pronoun (used twice within the statement) pointing to shared experience and alignment. In addition, Alexis discusses that they were trying to solve a problem “together.” And, in fact, counselors must depend on a collaborative spirit to effectively solve emotional problems with clients. As Alexis declares the fact that she and Kim worked in tandem to solve a problem is truly a remarkable professional development vocalized by these counselors-in-training.

In line 11, Allison mentions “we” again insinuating that she and Kim had to work in concert to help settle an apparent conflict. This highly suggests that a verbal and behavioral team effort took place on the part of Allison and Kim while at their field experience site when Allison utters, “And we’re both trying our hardest to like get them to stop fighting.” Again, this co-narration of this story of a conflict amongst the student clientele and the addition of the term, “we’re” illustrates the supportive and positive alignment that takes place in this type of classroom setting, reflecting on how each speaking party had a role in attempting to solve a problem while performing their identity as a professional counselor-in-training. In line 16, the pronoun, “we” is employed again (repeating from previously mentioned line 11 when “we’re” was used), as Allison continues to explicitly give a detailed narrative, bringing Kim back into the scenario at hand. In lines 16 – 17, the narrative comes to a close as Allison evaluates their handling of the situation between the students. Kim comments towards her as well when she mentions how surprised she was to find out the two girls who were having the conflict were sisters. She thus contributes to the narrative, while also contributing to the construction of the supportive alignment between herself and Allison. Similar to how family members in Gordon (2009) co-narrated and depicted themselves as a team in the story, Allison and Kim co-narrate their site experience, especially in a spirit of a “shared” experience.

## Constructed Dialogue in the Group Supervision Classroom

What Goodwin (2007) and many other scholars in communication and linguistics refer to as “reported speech,” Tannen (2007) and others call “constructed dialogue.” Constructed dialogue occurs throughout the group supervision data, including in the extract just shown. Not only do the group supervision students often report the speech of their clients, they also re-construct their own speech, usually while telling a narrative. Constructed dialogue is an important linguistic feature in that it is an expressive speech process in which a speaker is trying to reconstruct for an audience one or more utterances that purportedly took place in an experience. Narratives are typical within the group supervision data because as the students reflect on their experiences, they often report the speech of their clients, or reconstruct stories in which they quote themselves (or even other counselors-in-training).

Extract 5 is illustrative of constructed dialogue in that Allison, a student in the class, is narrating a story where a conflict arose in her field experience setting. In lines 1-3, Allison introduces the story by framing the context of the argument, especially when she mentions that the two girls arguing were sisters in line 3:

### EXTRACT 5:

- 1 Allison: That’s funny because we ha-  
 2 we actually had an argument that we were trying to solve together,  
 3 and come to find out the girls were sisters?  
 4 (???): Right.  
 5 ((*general chuckling*))  
 6 Instructor: Oh, I didn’t even hear that part of the update.  
 7 Allison: They were like, “shut the eff up!” ((*general laughter, simultaneous talk*))

8            Like every back and forth,  
9            back and forth

The constructed dialogue occurs in line 7 when Allison reports the speech of her high school clients by quoting, “shut the eff up!” By implementing constructed dialogue, Allison is building up the hype of the scenario—the argument and potential classroom chaos that is occurring.

While it is not known from the data whether or not the students quoted really used the expletive, it is interesting to emphasize that Allison used the term “eff” instead of the actual “F-word.” This could be due to the professional nature that the group supervision, and school counselor-in-training is supposed to reflect.

The term, “like” is often uttered prior to the presentation of constructed dialogue. Tannen believes that the term “‘like’ is frequently used to introduce dialogue that, in a sense, is just what it says: not what the person actually said but rather what the persona appeared to have felt like” (115). This notion reinforces that constructed dialogue is a “dramatic” approach in quoting—and furthermore—“acting-out” the speech of others. Although the term “like” is often presented throughout some of the data with the presentation of constructed dialogue, it is also used by some of the students, in other ways, which is common in language use, especially for younger people. For instance, “I was, *like*, surprised that she loaned me her shirt.” In the previous statement, the term, “like,” is not being used to pre-emptively report the speech of others, however, it is being used more as a cultural expression common within American vernacular.

In Extract 6, Allison continues narrating the conflict between the clients. Throughout the extract, there are three separate occasions when Allison utilizes the term, “like” before reporting the speech of her students. The term “like” has been bolded for emphasis (in line 3, “she” refers to Kim, with whom Allison worked at the site):

**EXTRACT 6:**

1 Allison: And we're both trying our hardest to like get them to stop fighting,  
 2 I'm **like**, "okay, let's move on to this,"  
 3 and she was **like**, "can we agree to disagree,"  
 4 and they're **like**, "no!" <hehhheheehhe>

In line 2, Allison reports her own speech and self-quotes by phrasing, "okay, let's move on to this," as she is trying to describe her attempt at quelling the argument between the two girls. In line 3, Allison shifts to reporting the speech of Kim by saying, "can we agree to disagree," and then moves into reporting *both* student clients in tandem, by uttering the plural pronoun "they're" in line 4. At the end of line 4, when Allison has completed her narration, she laughs which adds an element of comedic relief to the storyline. The laugh can reflect an indirect way of informing others that the conflict had eventually been resolved and the situation ended fine, regardless of how the story was originally presented. Thus Kim and Allison did together, it seems, solve the problem through the laughter used also highlight Allison's uncertainty regarding the intervention.

Constructed dialogue is furthermore presented in the group supervision setting in the next Extract 7 as Kim self-reports her experience in line 5, building on Allison's narration. Lines 1-4 are provided to give context to Kim's narrative:

**EXTRACT 7:**

1 Kim: I mean it's surprising wh- how different it was knowing =  
 2 =afterwards that they were sisters?  
 3 (???): (Yeah!)  
 4 Kim: There was no indication,  
 5 (I'm like,) "wow, how come these two are just-" ((*gestures throat choking*))



While Kim is explaining a story in which she finds out that two of her student clients are having an argument are sisters (line 2), she quotes herself—or more likely, what she was thinking—as she was acting in her field experience setting, again, using the term, “like” before saying, “wow, how come these two are just-.” Kim is also gesturing a throat choking motion which is a physical illustration that accompanied the narrative. This bodily posturing is a performative way of enhancing the dramatization of the story that Kim is portraying of the students involved in the conflict—it demonstrates how she felt. It additionally could help emphasize the notion of shock that Kim endured when discovering that the two girls were sisters and arguing. It also echoes and reinforces Allison’s telling of the events—the two counselors-in-training have, in effect, created a narrative together.

In the next extract (Extract 8), the same student, Kim, continues to reflect upon her experience within the field placement site. While she explains a feeling of experiencing shock in the field experience setting, the instructor acknowledges her and confirms in her narrative in line 5, and then again in line 9 with the back channeling, “Mhm.” While it is important to emphasize the natural obligation for the instructor to show acknowledgement, the use of back channeling could also show reinforcement that it is okay for Kim to continue in her storytelling. The constructed dialogue occurs in lines 7 – 8:

**EXTRACT 8:**

1 Kim: I mean,  
 2 I (.) I tried to think about this,  
 3 and I don’t know if you (have) thought about anything,  
 4 but . I wouldn’t have (.) had the initial SHOCK that I had,  
 5 Instructor: Mhm.  
 6 Kim: because I mean honestly afterwards,  
 7 I was like “oh man if that was my sister,

8 I don't think anybody could've done anything anyway."  
9 Instructor: Mhm.

It is worth again noting the importance of the term, “like” which can be used to introduce previous speech or also internal thought. By Kim introducing the term “like” before she self-reports “oh man if that was my sister,” she is introducing an internal thought, because it appears that she did not actually quote that phrase during the story. The constructed dialogue presented in excerpt 8 is an example of Kim showing identification with one of her clients. As she reports, “oh man if that was my sister, I don't think anybody could've done anything anyway,” Kim creates a moment of self-identification by making evident her knowledge schema—in this case her understanding of how sisters interact. As Kim frames the constructed dialogue as saying “my sister,” she is comparing the scenario's clients with her own family members. This shared knowledge schema could possibly lead Kim to encompassing emotional forms of empathy in that she was attaching the situation with her sister.

Constructed dialogue helps build supportive alignments throughout the group supervision data, especially in the sharing of stories. In particular, it contributes to the creation of detailed scenes with dramatic effects of what occurred at the students' field experience sites. Making constructed dialogue part of the shared experiences contributes to students' discussions; it provides vocal representation and gives dramatic emphases to express their experiences. Since group supervision is a reflective classroom practice for school counselors-in-training, the constructed dialogue spoken enhances the seriousness of the shared experiences whether it is to voice frustration or other practices occurring with student clientele. It also creates connection or what Tannen (2007) calls involvement, between all present: The narrators and the audience (other students, the instructor, the teaching assistant).

## Reflective Critique as Supportive Alignment in Group Supervision

My analysis of the previous extracts resulted in the identification of various discursive strategies that create supportive alignments and teams, notably in repetition and co-narration. We saw feedback being given and supportive alignments created. Some of the extracts involved a bit of critique as well in which we specifically see in Extract 9. An analysis of Extract 9 shows that even feedback that has a more critical flavor can also be used to construct supportive alignments. In the next Extract 9, we see Emma's talk about her field experience partner, Kira in the field placement setting. Emma provides feedback regarding Kira in a way that exemplifies criticism to some degree. Following Extract 9, I will describe and explain how this is connected to the construction of supportive alignments.

### EXTRACT 9:

1 Emma: Kira was my partner.  
 2 A::nd um,  
 3 I saw you grow a lot in the time that we were there,  
 4 I think we were both really nervous the first time we went,  
 5 and every time I could see you were more comfortable,  
 6 and by the end we were um (.) working more one on one with students,  
 7 kind of like the people that were um (.) at (.) Corcoran were doing more,  
 8 and I could see that you had some really good connections with the students.  
 9 Um (.) but a- I would just say,  
 10 don't be afraid to like ask for respect,  
 11 or like own the authority,  
 12 'cause I noticed that like when you'd be in front of the classroom sometimes,  
 13 you'd be like, <high pitched, quiet> "okay,  
 14 quiet down,">  
 15 but you're so ni::ce,  
 16 Kira: [(Yeah.)]

17 Emma: [that] I don't think the kids like heard it or respond to it,  
 18 so,  
 19 just don't be afraid to kind of ((*makes hand motion*)) you know.  
 20 Kira: And I'm glad you like say that,  
 21 thank you.

Extract 9 offers insight into Emma's constructive critique of her partner, Kira, in lines 4 – 14, in which Emma is discussing to her peers that Kira seemed to struggle for authority in the classroom. This is shown more explicitly in lines 12 – 14 when Emma evaluates Kira's lack of authority in front of students within her field experience classroom: "Don't be afraid to like ask for respect, or like own the authority, 'cause I noticed that like when you'd be in front of the classroom (sometimes, you'd be like, <*high pitched, quiet*> "okay, quiet down,">)." The previous statement uttered by Emma towards Kira represents Emma trying to offer helpful feedback, in essence, positively aligning herself with Kira as she constructively criticizes her. While the criticism here is well-developed, it is also worth noting that Emma immediately follows up with "but you're so ni::ce" insinuating that Kira is worthy of gaining attention of the student clientele, and that her lack of authority is based on a generally positive personality trait (niceness).

Emma is also more explicitly aligning herself in support of Kira in Line 4 when she talks about sharing the same "nervous" feeling that they encountered when they began the field experience process at their given high school sites. This shared emotion is considered by Tannen (1990) as "matching" in building rapport. "For most women, the language of conversation is primarily a language of rapport: a way of establishing connections and negotiating relationships. Emphasis is placed on displaying similarities and matching experiences" (Tannen, 1990, p. 77). Although this study does not seek to focus on issues of gendered communication, it is interesting to note that these are two female students who are "sharing" an emotion of nervousness.

Kira then goes on to talk about her own experiences of struggling to manage the classroom. She thus validates Emma's evaluation of her; at the end of Kira's talk. Emma provides support through comments such as "You ↑did get a lot better at it though," suggesting professional growth (one purpose of experiences in the field placement). Thus, while Emma criticizes Kira (and criticism is an appropriate part of feedback), Emma also does interactional work to support her partner and show that they are similar.

### **Sameness & Identification as Supportive Alignment in Group Supervision**

Above, we see matching at the end of the dialogue presented. In this section, I pursue matching as a means of creating supportive alignments. In the next Extract 10-A, we can see a whole other side of supportive alignment occurring. There are several important instances of verbal support and the formation of positive alignment. At times there are explicit examples of support, while at junctures, there are some less obvious, more indirect linguistic means of supportive alignments. Extract 10-A illustrates different facets of agreement, identification and the expression of "sameness." By identification, I mean feelings of empathy, commonly held beliefs, and shared emotional connections between group supervision members. Here the Instructor is following up on the group supervision students' journal reflections based on their field experiences.

#### **EXTRACT 10-A:**

1 Instructor: Having the privilege to re::ad everybody's journals  
 2 and of ↑course you can ↑share your journals with one another,

3 but I have no sense that you ↓have,  
 4 ↑I'm aware that Kira's not the on:ly one  
 5 that's had that tentative dance around classroom management.  
 6 ↑Does anyone else have anything else=  
 7 =to say about that or to say to Kira about that?  
 8 Alexis: Well, I felt the same way.  
 9 With us (.)  
 10 I think we had an individual experience =  
 11 =where you guys had more of a classroom.  
 12 So (.) I didn't have to deal with it  
 13 as much but that's definitely a fear of mine as well=  
 14 =so I understand.

The instructor, in this extract, in fact invites other students to supportively align with Kira. We can see a form of indirect agreement occur in Extract 10-A when Alexis speaks in lines 8 – 10 as she aligns herself positively almost as if she aligns herself positively and strongly indicates support. Gender again may be at play in this extract if we refer to Tannen's (1990) notion of verbal matching amongst women in conversation. Verbal matching seems to occur throughout Extract 10-A as in line 8, when Alexis expresses that she “felt the same way” as well as telling a story to “match” or mirror Kira's experience within her field experience site. Although in line 10, Alexis admits to having a more “individual experience,” she is still discussing her identification with Kira.

As Alexis comments in response to the instructor, “I felt the same way,” identifying with the fact that the Instructor discusses Kira's “tentative dance around classroom management.” This form of agreement is a strong example of supportive and positive alignment because Alexis is emotionally (and professionally) identifying with the other student—Kira. Furthermore, in lines 9 – 10, Alexis verbally latches herself to Kira as she uses pronouns such as “us” and “we” in discussing her experiences at her field placement site. She continues to say, “I think we had an individual experience...” Again, this reinforces that Alexis is aligning herself with other students

in the class with the comparison of an individual experiences versus a classroom environment.

The “we” used in the Extract reflects the efforts of Kira and Alexis.

The Instructor plays an important role in facilitating this interaction, and the creation of supportive alignments. In lines 1 – 7 she opens the floor for positive feedback in response to students’ journal entries and expresses how they felt in comparison to Kira’s “tentative dance around classroom management.” More explicitly, the Instructor poignantly opens the floor in lines 6 – 7 “↑Does anyone else have anything else= to say about that or to say to Kira about that?” It is almost immediately when Alexis “jumps in” and takes the floor at expressing how she felt “the same way” as Kira. As Alexis expresses how she “felt the same way” at her field experience in reference to Kira having a “tentative dance around classroom management,” she is directly aligning herself with Kira following the invitation to share from the Instructor. Here, we also see an instance in which the Instructor is performing her assigned identity as “head master” in leading and facilitating the group supervision conversation in reflecting and offering feedback. The instructor continues probing Alexis, and Alexis continues talking.

#### **EXTRACT 10-B:**

15 Instructor: How did it come up  
 16 in the individual experience,  
 17 because it did come ↑up for you?  
 18 Alexis: Yeah, well, it was more just like (.)  
 19 they wouldn’t do what they were supposed to do  
 20 or I mean (.) it wasn’t like controlling the wh::ole class,  
 21 which I think is harder,  
 22 but I think just individual,=  
 23 =and then how many times can you tell them to do it without, (.)  
 24 like if they’re not going to do it (.)  
 25 I don’t know,  
 26 I just felt defeated, a little, sometimes.

It is important to note that in line 19, that when Alexis mentions “they,” she is referring to student clientele within the field experience classroom site. Later on in Extract 10-B, in lines 13 – 14, Alexis states “that’s definitely a fear of mine as well...so I understand.” As Alexis verbally shares her fears quite obviously, she is also aligning herself with another fellow peer in the conversation. This not only expresses the emotional appeal of identification but also the notion of “sameness” offered by Tannen (1990). In addition, Alexis confirms that she understands: “so I understand” (line 14). This is illustrative of explicit support previously discussed. When Alexis states “so I understand,” she is agreeing and aligning herself linguistically with Kira’s fear of classroom management. She thus constructs a supportive alignment vis-à-vis her classmate.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter I have analyzed verbal interactions that occurred in a group supervision classroom with graduate level students preparing for their certification and profession in secondary school counseling. The classroom discussion provided great examples of supportive alignment and the formation of teams. The group supervision classroom is highly understudied and needs more analysis for improvement in the field. Discourse strategies that might be most applicable in this improvement include repetition, co-narration, and constructed dialogue. This particular institutional setting is quite different from the “average” university classroom. The open and personal nature of the class provided through dialogue is a form of professional expression and an opportunity for growth and progress.



Discursive elements that contributed to the practice of group supervision presented within this chapter have included positive assessments, the pronoun “we,” repetition, co-narration, and constructed dialogue, and expressing sameness. These particulars coalesce to produce a learning environment of vivid support and positive linguistic collaboration amongst the school counselors-in-training. As spoken collaboration occurs throughout the data presented, supportive alignments and teams form and the school counselors-in-training receive a shared experience that will help them grow both personally and professionally. In the concluding chapter, I discuss in more detail how these findings contribute to knowledge, and their possible practical implications. I also note some limitations for the study, as well as suggest directions for future research.

## Chapter 5

### Conclusion

The group supervision classroom data provided a conversation that included feedback, active reflecting, and evaluative discussions that are supposed to provide professional growth for school counselors-in-training. At various points of the fourteen minutes of the data that I considered in detail, there were certain linguistic features worth examining to provide a new perspective within the group supervision classroom. We have explored several discursive strategies that were illustrated within the group supervision classroom data including positive assessments of others, the use of the pronoun “we,” repetition, co-narration, reflective critiques, matching; all contribute to supportive alignment. Group supervision members are part of a team and must work collaboratively in order to show support for professional growth. My analysis of the extracts drawn from this classroom data identified linguistic patterns that show support and may facilitate positive growth within the graduate students. A positive and supportive classroom model is worthy of preparing these students for the “real world,” as is being able to deliver challenges while also maintaining a connection.

Through explicit forms of alignment in the form of positive assessments, students (with clientele students) are clearly demonstrating support for each other within the data. Also, by use of the pronoun, “we,” students are insinuating a partnership, an alignment of some sort. Repetition was also illustrated within the data both thematically and literally through the repetition of actual lexical terms. In a thematic and lexical sense, repetition occurred when the term, “challenge” arose as one student was complimenting her field experience site partner. By emphasizing the term “challenge” through repetition, she was focusing on a lexical item that

represents overcoming obstacles and growing professionally. In addition, the terms “working together” were uttered repetitively which shows partnership and togetherness. Co-narratives are constructed through the group supervision classroom discussions as the graduate students tell of their stories from their field experience sites. As the students share stories, they are aligning themselves through narration. The students also share narratives as they vent their challenges and experiences at their field experience sites. Reflective critique was also explored showing supportive alignment through constructive criticism that is evaluative but not offensive. It was also a way to provide feedback for growth and professional stance. Also, sameness and identification were verbally expressed in the data which exemplified a sharing and aligning spirit. Students uttering, “I felt the same way,” and the use of “us” and “we” were spoken.

This study uncovered discursive strategies and linguistic patterns of school counselors-in-training within the context of the group supervision classroom setting. More specifically, by interpreting, analyzing, and synthesizing the concepts of supportive alignments, interactional teams, and constructed dialogue in students’ conversations, I hope to elucidate the structure of this discourse and the functions accomplished. By looking at the language of the group supervision setting, I hope to contribute to the field of counseling and how the classroom environment can be maintained, or even improved. It is important to analyze the discourse of group supervision because communication and acknowledgement of students’ experiences within their field sites are essential in their growth as future school counselors. Although there is a small growing amount of scholarship on the group supervision classroom, this is an area that clearly needs more academic attention. My case study, while limited to one portion of one group supervision session, aims to contribute to this lack. My work also makes contributions to the

body of discourse analytic scholarship on supportive alignments and teams by considering this new context. It further highlights the ongoing relevance of the notions of footing and alignment.

Future research within the context of group supervision might consider a focus on various specificities in interaction between the Instructor and students, as well as analyzing the particulars of student/instructor narratives. Other group supervision classrooms, and at different universities, should be explored. By looking at the sociolinguistic nature of the group supervision classroom, we can better understand support and interactional teams as discursive processes, contributing perhaps to the overall success of professional growth within school counselors-in-training.

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## Appendix

### Transcript Conventions (adapted from Hutchby & Wooffitt [2010])

(0.5)	The number in brackets indicates a time gap in tenths of a second.
(.)	A dot enclosed in a bracket indicates a pause in the talk of less than two-tenths of a second.
=	The 'equals' sign indicates 'latching' between utterances.
(( ))	A description enclosed in a double bracket indicates a non-verbal activity.
Soun-	A dash indicates a sharp cut-off of the prior word or sound
Sou:::nd	Colons indicate that the speaker has stretched the preceding sound or letter. The more colons the greater the extent of stretching.
hhh	An 'h' indicates an out-breath. The more h's the longer the breath.
!	Exclamation marks are used to indicate an animated or emphatic tone.
(guess)	The words within a single bracket indicate the transcriber's best guess at an unclear utterance.
↓↑	Pointed arrows indicate a marked falling or rising intonational shift. They are placed immediately before the onset of the shift.
<u>Under</u>	Underlined fragments indicate speaker emphasis.
< >	Outward chevrons indicate that the talk they encompass was produced noticeably slower than the surrounding talk.

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### Data/Transcript:

Instructor: You'll do that after (.) we'll have a little break and then we'll do that after (.) and then you'll do that after- after the group supervision.

((0:13)) Okay,

So you've had a couple group supervisions before,

um (.5) so at this point, (.)

I think you have a sense of what (.) what (.) how that has been experienced here, and you've ↑also done a little bit of planning,

which is different (.) than (.) in the past.

You've each written in a journal,

some thoughts or ideas about what might(.) might be (.) helpful.

So this is it! for us.

And what is it- how do you want to use the next hour and a half?

what's going to be mea:ningful .. for you?

(7.0)

Sara: I think to try to give more feedback,  
even though (.) we have tended to be like a little hesitant to do that?

Instructor: Okay.

Sara: So,

Instructor: So you would like to be able to (.) perhaps practice some of that?

Take a little bit more risk,

<*quickly*> (you seem) hesitant.>

Sara: Yeah.

Instructor: Yeah.

Would you like to pick someone and give a piece of feedback?

Or (.) ask someone for a piece of feedback?

Sara: Um (.5) I'd want to think about it first.

Instructor: Okay.

Sara: I'd want it to be thoughtful.

Instructor: Okay.

Is there anyone who (.) um (.) can meet Sara,

you know when I said the last class of- that I felt like I had crept out on a limb,  
and I felt all alone,

is there anyone that can (.) respond to Sara,

while she's- before she's thinking,

<*quickly*> (or) we're gonna move on,

(because) Emma raised her hand.>

Go ahead.

Allison: Um .. I'll make my comment to Fatima since we worked together.

Um (.) I think that, (.)

in my opinion,

that she seemed to grow throughout the process.

Um (.) at first you seemed a little bit afraid to interact with the people,

not knowing exactly what we were doing,

and then towards the end you were startin' to make those connections =



=with the students that needed to be made,  
and actually helping them out more.

Instructor: ↑Thank you.

Allison: (No problem.)

Fatima: It's true.

(???): Yeah.

Instructor: Thank you Allison.

(7.0)

Sara: I think I'd like to go off of that um to Kim because we worked together.

Um I always found you to be really up for a challenge,

and wanting <chuckling> a challenge,>

um (.) which (.) I don't think surprises me about you,

but I liked that.

Um,

and you were really willing,

like with the students,

to like put yourself out there,

especially with arguments and stuff,

(I'm) thinking back to (.3) your whole agree to disagree thing.

Kim: [hmmhmmhmm]

Sara: Um (.) so I liked working with you.

Kim: Thank you Sara.

Allison: That's funny because we ha-

we actually had an argument that we were trying to solve together,

and come to find out the girls were sisters?

(???): Right.

((general chuckling))

Instructor: Oh, I didn't even hear that part of the update.

Allison: They were like, "shut the eff up!" ((general laughter, simultaneous talk))

Like every back and forth,

back and forth,

back and for—

And we're both trying our hardest to like get them to stop fighting,

I'm like, "okay, let's move on to this,"

and she was like, "can we agree to disagree,"

and they're like, "no!" <laughs>

<laughing> You know, like so . >

I- I think that we like tried our best to handle that situation as it came up,

but it was pretty difficult.

(???) Yeah.

Kim: I mean it's surprising wh- how different it was knowing =  
=afterwards that they were sisters?

(???): (Yeah!)

Kim: There was no indication,  
(I'm like,) "wow, how come these two are just-" ((gestures throat choking))

Instructor: So what might have been done differently,  
because they were sisters,  
because I can imagine that would change . how you understood the intensity,  
perhaps.

Kim: I mean,  
I (.) I tried to think about this,  
and I don't know if you (have) thought about anything,  
but . I wouldn't have (.) had the initial SHOCK that I had,

Instructor: Mhm.

Kim: because I mean honestly afterwards,  
I was like "oh man if that was my sister,  
I don't think anybody could've done anything anyway."

Instructor: Mhm.

Kim: But [um] it would've been at least--

Instructor: [mhm]

So you might not have felt quite as threatened.

Kim: ((shakes head))

Allison: Luckily it happened towards the end (though),  
because the one girl was like, “well I’m gonna take the bus home.”  
But, if it happened like maybe in the middle,  
I think we would’ve had to have a better plan than trying solve the argument,  
Maybe like, “why don’t you move over here  
and just stop talking to each other all together.”

Instructor: Mhm, mhm.  
(6.0)

Emma: Kira was my partner.  
A::nd um,  
I saw you grow a lot in the time that we were there,  
I think we were both really nervous the first time we went,  
and every time I could see you were more comfortable,  
and by the end we were um (.) working more one on one with students,  
kind of like the people that were um (.) at (.) Corcoran were doing more,  
and I could see that you had some really good connections with the students.  
Um (.) but a- I would just say,  
don’t be afraid to like ask for respect,  
or like own the authority,  
,’cause I noticed that like when you’d be in front of the classroom sometimes,  
you’d be like, <high pitched, quiet> “okay,  
quiet down,”>  
but you’re so ni::ce,

Kira: [(Yeah.)]

Emma: [that] I don’t think the kids like heard it or respond to it,  
so,  
just don’t be afraid to kind of ((*makes hand motion*)) you know.

Kira: And I’m glad you like say that,  
thank you.  
U::m because at first I was definitely nervous,  
,’cause I never really had that experience,

And I really envied (.) how much control  
 you could have because I liked how you interacted with the kids  
 ‘cause they could listen to you a lot more  
 than I did (.) because I was a lot quieter.  
 But I really, I think you’re going to do really well  
 because you have classroom management type of thing (.)  
 cause you did really well.

And I could see=  
 =I liked how you interacted with the kids too  
 you’d get them to kind of laugh  
 and joke around and I really liked that.

(16.0)

Peter: So, do you think that’s more (.) being about wanting  
 to be “the <sup>↑</sup>nice counselor”  
 or not wanting to yell at people,  
 I mean what (.) because I have to say that’s something  
 that I’ve struggled with.

I don’t want to be the heavy or bad guy.

Kira: I think I’m afraid of what (.) they might say back.  
 I have no problem telling them to be quiet, (.)  
 but then I’m afraid if they’re going to mouth off to me  
 or like (.) do something and then it’s going to get out of control=  
 =and then I’m not going to know what to do. (.)  
 I think that’s one thing that I will probably struggle with.

Emma: You <sup>↑</sup>did get a lot better at it though,  
 even just the four times we were there.  
 So (.) I think it is something=  
 =I mean, you might struggle with it,  
but I think it’s something you can definitely achieve.  
 Even four times=  
 =that’s not long at all.

And I can definitely see a change from the beginning to the end.

Kira: Hhhmmm.

(3.0)

Instructor: Having the privilege to re::ad everybody's journals  
and of ↑course you can ↑share your journals with one another,  
but I have no sense that you ↓have,  
↑I'm aware that Kira's not the on:ly one  
that's had that tentative dance around classroom management.  
↑Does anyone else have anything else=  
=to say about that or to say to Kira about that?

Alexis: Well, I felt the same way.  
With us (.)  
I think we had an individual experience =  
=where you guys had more of a classroom.  
So (.) I didn't have to deal with it  
as much but that's definitely a fear of mine as well=  
=so I understand.

Instructor: How did it come up  
in the individual experience,  
because it did come ↑up for you?

Alexis: Yeah, well, it was more just like (.)  
they wouldn't do what they were supposed to do  
or I mean (.) it wasn't like controlling the wh::ole class,  
which I think is harder,  
but I think just individual,=  
=and then how many times can you tell them to do it without, (.)  
like if they're not going to do it (.)  
I don't know,  
I just felt defeated, a little, sometimes.

Instructor: Kind of like what Kira was saying. The "then what?"

Alexis: And I was never me:an,  
cause I don't want to be me::an  
but like you can only ask someone nicely=  
=so many times (.) and I don't know

Kira: To go with that,  
I found it easier to do it individually,  
like talk with them, because I was able to reflect more to them.

I got them to communicate more.

I feel like with a bigger class,

I feel like it's hard to do that.

You really can't single people out as much.

But when you're able to walk around=

= I feel it's easier for tracking students.

Alexis:

Yeah we were lucky.

We always had a lot of us=

=so we could have a couple students each.

### **Vita**

Christopher S. Perrello is a Master's of Science candidate in the Department of Communication and Rhetorical Studies, College of Visual and Performing Arts, Syracuse University. He has presented academic papers at a number of prestigious Communication Studies-related conferences including Columbia University Teachers College – Language and Social Interaction working group, Northeast Modern Language Association, Eastern Communication Association, and the “New Voices, New Perspectives” conference at the University of North Texas, and is an active participant in Syracuse University’s Mellon Corridor working group on language, identity, and power. Perrello serves as an Adjunct Instructor for Syracuse University’s Department of Communication and Rhetorical Studies teaching Interviewing, Concepts and Perspectives in Communication Studies, and Oral Communication for Engineers. His areas of academic interests include language and social interaction, rhetorical criticism, classroom communication, queer discourse/public address, and political communication. In the past, Perrello has taught high school Social Studies, acted as a liaison for Syracuse City school students on behalf of NYGEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness & Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) and Syracuse University, and has a life-long passion for education at both the secondary and post-secondary levels.