**PLACE IN RETURN BOX** to remove this checkout from your record.
**TO AVOID FINES** return on or before date due.
**MAY BE RECALLED** with earlier due date if requested.

| DATE DUE | DATE DUE | DATE DUE |
|----------|----------|----------|
| SEP 2 1 2001<br>070201 | | |
| FEB 0 3 2002<br>J2 13 03 | | |
| APR 2 4 200 | | |
| | | |
| | | |

PREPARING PROSPECTIVE GENERAL EDUCATION TEACHERS FOR THE
INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: A STUDY OF CHANGES IN
EFFICACY

Volume I

By

Cindy S. Marble

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Teacher Education

1999

ABSTRACT

PREPARING PROSPECTIVE GENERAL EDUCATION TEACHERS FOR THE
INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:  A STUDY OF CHANGES IN
EFFICACY

By

Cindy S. Marble


This study examined the efficacy of prospective elementary

teachers as they prepared for their work in inclusive classrooms.

Prospective teachers were studied before and after an instructional

intervention designed to impact their efficacy.  Five of these prospective

teachers were followed into their internship experiences to determine

what factors in the field impacted their developing efficacy.  Data sources

for the study included surveys, interviews, classroom observations, and

documents.

This study supported the findings of past studies regarding the

need for teacher preparation programs to provide teacher candidates with

a combination of course and field experience.  Based on the data

gathered, I found that I could not say with confidence that the

instructional intervention was or was not effective.  However, it was

apparent, based on the data gathered from five interns, that the nature

of the field experience can have an impact on the efficacy of interns. Those interns who were supported and encouraged in their inclusive teaching practices demonstrated the ability to implement strategies that were helpful for the students with disabilities included in their classrooms.

I also found that the special education teachers in all five of the field placements rarely interacted with the regular education students. This lack of interaction has important ramifications for teacher preparation programs. Special educators could provide interns with a great deal of support and guidance as they work to improve their inclusive practice. But teacher educators seem to be doing little to facilitate relationships between general education interns and special education teachers.

For Turansky and Max,
Gertrude and Harry

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I have had the good fortune throughout my life to have the support of exquisite and extraordinary people.  Many of these people came into my life when I entered my doctoral program.  Others made a significant impact earlier in my life and continued to support me as I worked toward this goal.  Although I feel unable to adequately express my gratitude, I would like to acknowledge all of these individuals at this time.

I will start with Diane Holt-Reynolds, my dissertation chair and advisor whose unwavering support over these many years made all of this possible.  I know I have caused Diane more than a few headaches, but she stood firmly beside me, through all the doubts and fears I had about the choices I made.  Her tireless advocacy of me has been astounding.  I hope to be at least half the advisor for my students that she has been for me.

Tom Bird served on my guidance and dissertation committees, mentored me through my first experience as a university-level instructor, and led Team Two during four of the five years I worked as a field instructor.  I have felt fortunate to be associated with Tom in all of these endeavors.  He has helped me to learn to consider the multitude of possible approaches that exist for solving any problem.  I have also appreciated his humor and friendship.  There have been countless days when I felt better just knowing he was there.

Linda Anderson, who also served on my guidance and dissertation committees, has been another steadfast source of

support for me throughout my program. I have appreciated her thoughtful advice on this dissertation and my future scholarship. Linda is evidence that you really can do it all well.

Susan Peters, who served on my dissertation committee, helped me to understand that my past experiences are not something to think around but a lens through which to see things in a unique way. I have only worked with Susan since I began my dissertation and regret that I have not had the opportunity to collaborate more on the integration of special education. I believe there is so much more I could have learned from her.

Steve Barbus, Susie Emond, and Ellen Curtis-Pierce were members of the Saginaw Valley State University faculty who allowed me see that integrating special and general education teacher preparation curricula is really possible. I am genuinely grateful to them for allowing me to play a part in their pilot program.

Stephanie Kenney, who has been a dear friend for seventeen years, supported me with lots of good advice and laughter. I believe that I will never stop learning from her gracious example.

Naomi and Nicole, my two nieces, were kind enough to provide me with occasional mental vacations. I can imagine nothing that better represents pure joy than two little girls.

Among all the others who supported me were:

- James Lozer, who has the patience of a saint.
- Mary Hill, Beth Nykamp, Mary Pyper, Sally Ruth, Lori Trutsch, and Sharon Weaver, my cheerleading squad. (The uniforms have been back-ordered, ladies.)

- Pat, Kathy, Bill, and the Kaelbers – my deepest thanks for everything.
- Trudy Sykes, Nicky Findley, Philippa Webb, Lucy Byers, Sue York, and Cheryl Rosaen with their listening ears and laughter.
- The members of the board and conference committee of the Michigan Association of Teachers of Emotionally Disturbed Children who provided me with opportunities to grow professionally and supported me personally over the past twelve years.
- And all of my students, who have allowed me the honor to learn from them for the past sixteen years.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# LIST OF TABLES

# LIST OF FIGURES

# LIST OF GRAPHS

# Chapter One

# Introduction

Educators have been struggling with the issue of including students with disabilities in general education classrooms for at least two decades. The movement for placing students with disabilities in general education classrooms has been called "inclusion." This is different from the earlier integration movement known as "mainstreaming." According to Landers and Weaver (1997), when a student was mainstreamed, the expectation was that the student would either adjust to the new environment or be placed back in the segregated special education classroom. There were minimal expectations for the general education teacher to adapt the classroom environment to be more conducive to the needs of the student with disabilities.

The general and special education teachers, administrators, as well as the students have different expectations for the student's success in the current inclusion movement. Skrtic (1991) sees this change as a move from seeing the system as functional and the student as dysfunctional to thinking instead about what can be done to create an environment for all learners. Yet general education teachers, especially,

are finding that inclusion has placed increased demands on them that they feel unprepared to meet.

A study conducted by Goodlad and Field in the early 1990's provides evidence of this lack of preparedness general education teachers seem to feel about working in inclusive environments (Goodlad & Lovitt, 1993). The Goodlad and Field study examined the self-efficacy of teachers around twelve teaching competencies. One of the competencies was the ability to teach students with disabilities in their classrooms. The general education teachers, who rated themselves on a scale of one to seven, averaged 3.7 in this area. This score was far lower than the self-ratings given in the other eleven areas. These experienced teachers felt the least able to work with students with disabilities in their classrooms of those twelve competencies examined.

Vaughn, Schumm, Jallad, Slusher, and Saumell (1996) studied fifty practicing general education teachers and their experiences including students with disabilities. Teachers in various positions and grade levels were asked questions about their background regarding inclusion, facilitators and barriers of inclusion, their perception of the ideal inclusive model, and areas where further research is needed. The researchers

found that the teachers overwhelmingly felt that their lack of suitable preparation was the main barrier to success.  As one teacher commented:

> "My first year, I had a very low LD student [student with learning disabilities] and I did not know what to do with him.  I cheated him that year, his fifth grade year, and I felt terrible about it.  I still feel terrible about it and it's been a long time and I don't think this should happen.  Teachers need to be trained before they get students like this." (Vaughn, et al., 1996, p. 103)

Vaughn, et al. (1996) also found that when teachers feel unprepared to meet the needs of some students placed in their classrooms, they question their overall teaching effectiveness.  Teachers in the study expressed feelings of discouragement and futility about teaching in inclusive environments.  They questioned their efficacy as teachers.

Teacher efficacy has been described as "beliefs teachers hold about the effectiveness of teaching with particular types of students and about their own competence to teach those students" (Miller, 1991).  The efficacy of general education teachers in inclusive classrooms depends on their belief that students with disabilities can learn in a general education environment and that they, as teachers, are capable of helping them learn.

This concept of efficacy is particularly relevant when it comes to teachers and the results of the Vaughn, et al. (1996) study described

earlier. These teachers began to feel that teaching in inclusive environments was futile. They also felt that their own efforts to do this were not meeting the needs of the students.

Sachs (1988), in his review of previous studies on efficacy, consistently found a strong correlation between a person's feelings of efficacy about doing something and the resulting success experienced when doing it. He concluded his paper by suggesting that teacher educators should be concerned about this phenomenon and its implications for preparing general education teachers for the inclusion of students with disabilities in their classrooms.

This dissertation is a study of teacher preparation for inclusive environments and the effects of that preparation on teacher efficacy; it attempts to answer the following questions:

> How do interns' knowledge, efficacy, and beliefs about the inclusion of students with disabilities change during preparation for teaching? To what extent can these changes be accounted for as the interaction of a) their particular responses to an integrated instructional approach in a teacher education program and b) particular features of their internship experience?

In this study, I examine how beliefs and knowledge contribute to teacher candidate self-perceived and demonstrated efficacy in inclusive environments. I will consider beliefs to be "psychologically held

understandings, premises, or propositions that are held to be true"
(Richardson, 1996). Knowledge is connected to efficacy in this study in
that training and information play a role in an individual's perception of his
or her potential for doing what is seen as possible (Woolfolk & Hoy,
1990). This study begins by examining how these two parts of efficacy
are impacted by an instructional intervention. The second part of the
study then considers how factors in the context of the field experience
further impacted on efficacy.

Theoretically, I am considering the way beliefs and knowledge play a
part in the teacher candidates' development of efficacy as an inclusive
educator. I am also examining what factors in the field influence this
development and will hypothesize why the impact occurs (See Figure
1.1).

Figure 1.1

Beliefs + Knowledge = Efficacy

Beliefs ⇒ Teacher Efficacy ⇐ Knowledge

Context:
Students
Collaborating
Teachers
Field Instructors
Environment
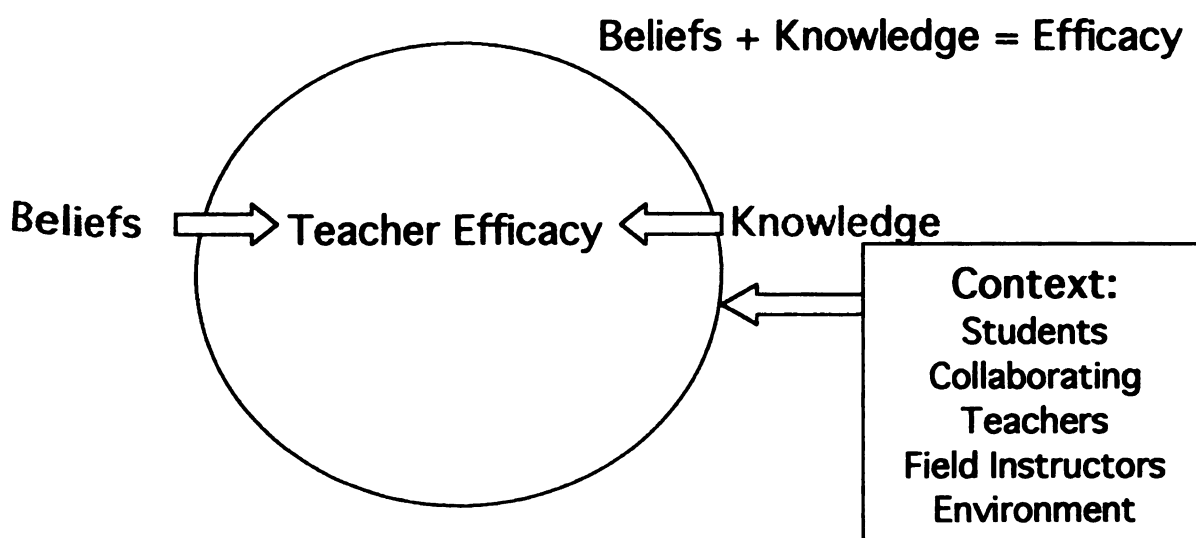
To guide my work in this study, I first identified eight specific beliefs and the knowledge/abilities that coincide with those beliefs to create eight indicators of efficacy teachers need to successfully include students with disabilities in general education classrooms. I have used these throughout the study (See Table 1.1). These eight efficacy indicators are a compilation of the knowledge and beliefs needed for the successful inclusion of students with disabilities into general education classrooms. These indicators, therefore, are a reflection of recommendations from numerous studies (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1992; Brown, Gable, Hendrickson, & Algozzine, 1991; Cannon, Idol, & West, 1992; Carin & Sund, 1980; Gersten, 1990, Gersten & Woodward, 1990; Jordan, Kircaali-Iftar, & Diamond, 1993; Lilly, 1988; Reed & Monda-Amaya, 1995; Stone & Brown, 1986-87; Swartz, Hidalgo, & Hays, 1992; Yates, 1996;), student texts (Giangreco, 1997; Landers and Weaver, 1997; Putnam, 1995; Waldron, 1996), and reviews and compilations of the literature (Fairbairn & Fairbairn, 1992; Gartner & Lipsky, 1987; Goodlad & Lovitt, 1993; Grossman, 1995; Paul, Berger, Osnes, Martinez, & Morse, 1997; Stainback & Stainback, 1996; Villa, Thousand, Stainback, & Stainback, 1993; York & Reynolds, 1996).

Table 1.1    Efficacy Indicators

| Inclusive Beliefs | Inclusive Knowledge/Abilities |
|---|---|
| 1. Students with disabilities can learn in a general education setting. | • "I can help students with disabilities learn in a general education setting." |
| 2. Students with disabilities can be efficiently managed in a general education setting. | • "I can efficiently manage students with disabilities in a general education setting." |
| 3. Reflection is useful for the improvement of teaching. | • "I can use reflection to improve my teaching." |
| 4. Collaboration with colleagues and parents/guardians is a useful strategy for working with students with disabilities. | • "I can collaborate with colleagues and parents/guardians to improve my work with students with disabilities." |
| 5. Teacher expectations should be high for all students. | • "I can help all students meet my high expectations." |
| 6. Learning can be demonstrated and assessed in a variety of ways. | • "I can assess learning in a variety of ways." |
| 7. A basic knowledge of the special education system and processes makes it possible to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities. | • "I understand the special education system and processes enough to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities." |
| 8. The responsibility for a student's success is shared between the student and the teachers. | • "I can recognize and accept my responsibilities for the success of students with disabilities included in my classroom." |

These efficacy indicators, used as the initial focus of the study and to organize the integrated instructional intervention, incorporate the beliefs the teacher candidates have about the potential of students with disabilities. The efficacy indicators also include items regarding what the

teacher candidates believe about the way learning happens, how it should be measured, and the role of the teacher in the inclusive classroom.

The second chapter of this dissertation provides a review of the literature regarding teacher beliefs and programmatic attempts to influence those beliefs, including field experiences. I will also examine what knowledge a teacher needs to successfully support inclusive environments, and the construct of efficacy as a combination of beliefs and knowledge.

The third chapter explains the methodology of the study. I start by briefly describing the study and why it is unique. That is followed by an explanation of the study design, including a description of the site and the participants. Next, I provide an overview of the data collection, description of the sources of data, and chronology of the four phases of data collection (See Table 1.2). The data analysis is organized by the four phases of data collection. This chapter also includes a thorough description of the instructional intervention, a discussion of my beliefs regarding inclusion and my feelings of efficacy around preparing teachers for inclusive environments.

The fourth chapter is divided into sections. These two sections coincide with the structure of the question driving this study. The first

section presents the results of the data regarding the pre and post instructional intervention portion of the study. The second section is an examination of the data collected in the subjects' internship placements.

The fifth chapter provides an interpretation of the results. Particular attention is paid to a powerful anomaly found among the five field subjects. This anomaly demonstrates the importance of collaboration as a means of nurturing inclusive efforts. My conclusions, based on the interpretation of results, finish this chapter.

The final chapter is a discussion of the implications of the results of this study for teacher preparation programs. I point out the limitations found in this study and make recommendations for further research.

Table 1.2 Study Sections and Chronology

| Study Section (Research Question) | Data Collection | Site /Time Period |
|---|---|---|
| Section One (To what extent can changes in efficacy be accounted for as responses to an instructional intervention?) | Phase One: Pre Instructional Intervention | TE 401 Spring Session, 1998 |
| | Phase Two: Post Instructional Intervention | TE 402 Post Summer Session, 1998 |
| Section Two (What factors in the internship experience impact on efficacy?) | Phase Three: Fall Internship | Internship Placements Fall 1998 |
| | Phase Four: Spring Internship | Internship Placements Spring 1999 |

# Chapter Two

# Literature Review

## Research Question

The question driving this study asks how interns' knowledge, efficacy, and beliefs about the inclusion of students with disabilities change during their preparation for teaching. It goes on to ask to what extent these changes are a result of an instructional intervention and factors in the interns' field placements.

Efficacy, the power to produce a desired result, consists of two parts (Miller, 1991):

➢ Outcome Expectations – the belief that something is possible

➢ Self- Efficacy – the belief that you have the knowledge/abilities of making something happen

Therefore, efficacy for general education teacher candidates working with students with disabilities would require that they believe these students can learn in the general education classroom and that they, as teacher candidates, can make that happen.

An examination of teacher candidate efficacy addressed the question driving this study by following the changes in the beliefs and knowledge/abilities of individuals who are preparing to teach. The

specific beliefs and knowledge/abilities that will be followed are those necessary for successfully teaching in inclusive environments.

## Organization of Chapter

This review of the literature will examine the efficacy of teacher candidates by first exploring how the beliefs of teacher candidates interact with teacher preparation programs, including field experiences. It will go on to describe the knowledge and beliefs that teacher candidates need in order to be competent to teach in inclusive environments (York & Reynolds, 1996). Finally, it will return to the construct of teacher candidate efficacy as a combination of beliefs and knowledge and how this is typically addressed in teacher education programs.

## Teacher Candidate Beliefs and Teacher Preparation Programs

Teacher candidates enter their programs with clusters of beliefs based on their experiences as students, values, and other background determinants that make each of us unique. These life experiences influence how teacher candidates approach their programs and their developing perceptions of what it means to be a teacher (Richardson, 1996).

## Eliciting and Mediating Beliefs

The practice of eliciting and mediating teacher candidates' beliefs is challenging for teacher educators. Bird, Anderson, Sullivan, and Swidler (1993) found this to be true when they studied the effects of an introductory teacher education course. Teacher candidates were encouraged to speak frankly about their beliefs and did when they felt comfortable. However, attempts to mediate those beliefs seemed to lead them to feel less comfortable, leaving them reluctant to continue to share their beliefs.

In spite of the challenges, eliciting and mediating the beliefs of teacher candidates is important. Feiman-Nemser, McDiarmid, Melnick, and Parker (1989) also examined the effects of an introductory education course on beliefs, and found that teacher candidates, upon entering the course, felt they already knew all they needed to know about being teachers. This belief interacted with what they encountered in their teacher preparation program and often distorted what was learned. The instructors in this study worked to develop a course that would challenge this belief.

Four sections of the course were studied. Some of the sections included a field component while others were limited to coursework, which

left time for more discussion.  The data collected consisted of essays written by the students at the beginning and end of the course.

Their efforts met with modest success but they had doubts about long-lasting effects.  They found that more than half of the students acknowledged that they needed to learn more about teaching at the end of the course.  The teacher candidates were able to write about the general learning needs of teachers, but the researchers suspected their understanding of those needs was limited.  These researchers wondered if underlying beliefs about learning and children were elicited and addressed, not just beliefs about the "doing" part of teaching, then perhaps a course could be designed to be more effective.

McDiarmid (1989) examined the entering beliefs teacher candidates had about students and learning.  He found that "typical" (based on the demographics of his student population) teacher candidates believed that teaching subject matter was largely a matter of telling or showing.  Learning, then, was a matter of committing this presented information to memory through repetition.  As far as the balance of the responsibility for the students' success was concerned, half or more of the teacher candidates felt the students are primarily responsible.  These beliefs,

McDiarmid argued, are usually subconscious. Teacher candidates are not explicitly aware of the assumptions that drive their behavior.

McDiarmid and Price (1990) conducted a study of a programmatic intervention designed to impact the beliefs of teacher candidates. The intervention was a three-day training designed to influence teacher candidates' beliefs about diverse students. Based on pre and post program interviews and questionnaires, these researchers concluded that the program had been ineffective in impacting the beliefs of the teacher candidates. The researchers wondered if a program designed around data gathered about existing beliefs of the teacher candidates would have more of an impact.

McDiarmid (1990) conducted a study designed to examine how teacher candidates' beliefs about teaching and learning might be impacted by observing a teacher effectively teach a mathematics lesson in an unconventional manner. He found that while some teacher candidates' beliefs seemed to be affected, others felt the learning of the students was due to the astonishing giftedness of the teacher, not the teaching method used.

The experience of teacher candidates observing an effective yet unconventional teacher seemed to create dissonance between what they

thought they knew about teaching and what they saw. Beach and Pearson (1997) examined how the creation of dissonance affects teacher candidates' beliefs and actions. Their study examined how this dissonance refined the beliefs of the teacher candidates over a two-year period with an emphasis on field experiences. Teacher candidates who demonstrated the greatest change were those who moved from pointing to outside causes for the conflicts that created the dissonance to reflecting on themselves and how their beliefs were contributing to the conflicts.

It would seem, then, that knowledge of themselves as teacher candidates and how their beliefs affect the environment could move teacher candidates to refine their beliefs and possibly improve their teaching. Hollingsworth (1989) designed a study that included this dynamic with the examination of the entering underlying beliefs of teacher candidates. This study examined a program designed to teach reading methods that centered on challenging those entering beliefs. Supervision of the teacher candidates and university course design focused on taking those entering beliefs, helping teacher candidates reflect on how what they encountered conflicted with those beliefs, their reactions to the dissonance created, to then facilitate cognitive change.

Those teacher candidates who actively participated in this process were able to change their beliefs about teaching reading and carry this change of beliefs and practice into the classroom.

Brousseau and Freeman (1988) studied how teacher educators uncovered and worked to shape the beliefs of teacher candidates. They found that although the teacher educators stated that dealing with teacher candidates' beliefs was extremely important, most spent little if any time helping the teacher candidates become more cognizant of their own beliefs. They also found there was a lack of consensus on the part of the faculty as to ways beliefs should be shaped and failure on the part of most of the faculty to challenge inappropriate prevailing beliefs or to encourage students to form their own position regarding educational issues faculty classified as open-ended. These researchers wondered if some of the lack of effectiveness in the programmatic attempts to change beliefs were due to these factors. They recommended a more explicit approach to addressing the identification of entering beliefs than currently exists.

Holt-Reynolds (1992) suggests the use of personal histories as a method of identifying entering beliefs. After identifying the beliefs, she provides support to the students as they question their beliefs, then

helps them to consider possible alternative explanations for the events that shaped their beliefs. In a teacher education program that values the process of helping teacher candidates to construct their own meanings, this type of approach would only be possible if progress is judged less by the production of "desirable" behavior and more by their ability to justify and defend selected beliefs. Holt-Reynolds agrees that explicit attention needs to be given to helping teacher candidates discover their personal theories.

All told, these studies acknowledge that dealing with the beliefs of teacher candidates is necessary and difficult. However, some programs have experienced limited success. As the Hollingsworth (1989) study indicates, using entering beliefs to make decisions in course and fieldwork design can have an effect on changing beliefs. These changes in beliefs can help teacher candidates to be receptive to methods of teaching they didn't experience as students.

## Inclusive Beliefs

Teacher candidates' entering beliefs about students and learning will be challenged when they encounter students with disabilities in the general education classroom. The beliefs, as McDiarmid (1989) found, that teaching is a matter of telling or showing and learning is committing

information to memory will come into question since many students with disabilities have difficulties with this kind of teaching practice.

These beliefs about teaching and learning make it difficult for teacher educators to help teacher candidates understand instruction about accommodating students with disabilities. Anderson and Bird (1995) point out that teacher candidates learn by drawing upon their beliefs and prior experiences to understand new ideas. Based on their beliefs about teaching and learning and lack of exposure to inclusive practices, teacher candidates may have difficulties assimilating instruction about accommodating students with disabilities into their current understandings of teaching and learning. Mediating these beliefs is especially critical for facilitating the progress of inclusive efforts in schools. Left unchallenged, these beliefs may result in actions that only serve to reproduce the inequalities currently found in schools (Landers & Weaver, 1997).

Teacher candidates will be less likely to reproduce the inequities in schools if they believe that all students are capable of learning. As Adler (1984) points out, students should be placed in the same track (thus supporting the contention that all students can learn) with the knowledge that it will take some longer than others to learn the required material.

Lowering expectations for students with disabilities can result in an education that focuses only on an "apprentice model" as described by Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, and Tipton (1992). In other words, the focus is off of academics and on vocational training. Teacher candidates need to believe students with disabilities can strive for the same goals as non-disabled students, given the needed accommodations.

Teacher candidates need to believe in the importance of holding these high expectations for students with disabilities. Kohl and Witty (1996) wrote that there is a clear connection between teacher expectations, student self-expectations, and student performance. Students hold higher expectations for themselves when the teacher expects good work. The interesting part of that connection is that the students usually deliver that expected quality of work.

Stressing the need for teacher candidates to hold high expectations for students with disabilities is particularly important given the processes for identifying these students. Currently, the special education system identifies and labels students according to a deficit model. Students are assessed to find weaknesses in their ability and achievement (Waldron, 1996). Teachers who maintain lowered expectations of these students based on the perception that there is a "deficit" in their ability are likely

to engage the students less (Kohl & Witty, 1996). When making accommodations and adaptations, teachers may lessen the difficulty of assignments unnecessarily rather than adjust methods of teaching or demonstrating learning.

Thomas Armstrong (1993) suggests that teachers can avoid this focus on the student's "deficits" by viewing the student as an intact person who happens to have a special need. He contends that teachers need to believe in the importance of spending at least as much time helping a student with disabilities to develop his/her strengths as they do helping the student to improve weaker areas of achievement. Therefore, teacher candidates who strive to meet the needs of students with disabilities in the general education classroom need to see the student before they see the disability (Grossman, 1995).

Teacher candidates also need to believe that students with a specific disability, like those who are identified as emotionally impaired, are as different from each other as their non-disabled peers are from each other. Assuming all students of a specific disability are characteristically the same leads to actions that include the implementation of the same strategies for all the students and the potential separation of these

students from their general education peers because the teacher candidate believes they all need these special strategies.

It is clearly important to acknowledge the role beliefs play in the way teacher candidates learn about including students with disabilities in general education classrooms. Studies show some potential methods for facilitating changes of teacher candidates' beliefs but, overwhelmingly, remind teacher educators that setting out to change these beliefs is a daunting endeavor. In spite of the difficulties presented by this endeavor, examining and challenging the beliefs of teacher candidates about students with disabilities is necessary to help them be more effective with this population of learners (York & Reynolds, 1996).

### Teacher Candidate Knowledge for Inclusion

It is not enough for teacher candidates to have those beliefs that are important for teaching successfully in inclusive environments. Efficacy also depends on the knowledge/abilities teacher candidates possess for implementing those practices found to be effective in inclusive environments.

Teacher candidates who work with students with disabilities need knowledge of the nature of these disabilities (York & Reynolds, 1996). This is especially important when it comes to the process of lesson

analysis and accommodation. The teacher candidate needs to know, for example, that if a student has a learning disability in written expression this may require different kinds of accommodations than a learning disability in basic reading skills. A general knowledge of disabilities, coupled with an understanding of the diversity within each disability, can lead to more effective individual accommodations.

Often the accommodation of students with disabilities comes down to the basic question: "What do you want your students to learn?" When teacher candidates are able to clearly answer that question for themselves, they can then think of a variety of ways to teach the concept and ways for the students to demonstrate their learning. The process of answering this question and thinking of various teaching and assessment methods can be accomplished through lesson analysis (Waldron, 1996).

Teacher candidates need to develop their ability to collaborate with other professionals and staff (Stainback & Stainback, 1996). When questions and concerns arise about a student, the ability to articulate the problem clearly and problem solve with other staff can result in effective solutions.

Behavior management, as distinguished from classroom management, is important for a teacher candidate working with a student with a disability. Teacher candidates need to know how to implement a plan for behavior for an individual student that does not somehow bring disruption to the class (Waldron, 1996). Yet being able to intervene effectively with a student having behavioral problems can be the difference between success and failure in inclusion.

Teaching lessons that include the use of active learning strategies (Carin & Sund, 1980) can also make the difference between success and failure in inclusion. Students with problems reading or writing, for example, may be very adept at building and drawing. The use of manipulatives allows these students to make better use of their strengths. Teacher candidates need to know how to implement these strategies.

The special education system, with all the assessment procedures, Individualized Education Planning Committees (IEPC's), prereferral procedures, etc., can seem overwhelming for those working outside of that system (Stainback & Stainback, 1996). Yet knowledge of the general purposes of the system, along with how the processes and players can be used as resources, can be very useful to the general

education teacher candidate. Getting the most from an Individualized Education Planning Committee meeting can help the teacher candidate to work effectively with a student from the first day the student is included in the general education setting. Teacher candidates need knowledge of the special education system to advocate for support for their continued learning and their students' needs.

<div align="center">

Teacher Candidate Efficacy
</div>

Efficacy is an important concept to consider as teacher educators preparing teacher candidates for inclusive environments. Stone and Brown's (1986-87) study examining practicing teachers' efficacy working with students having disabilities demonstrated a correlation between the individual teacher's feelings of efficacy and the success of the inclusive efforts. Further examination showed that teachers who felt more capable had prior training and experience in working with students having disabilities. The most successful teachers had come from training environments where both skill [knowledge/ability] and attitude [belief] development were the focus of their educative experiences.

Preparation Programs for Inclusive Environments

Teacher educators have attempted numerous designs to train teacher candidates specifically for effective inclusive practices. These

designs have ranged from one-time training events to separate courses, to infusion of special education content into the general education curriculum (Bradley, et al., 1997).  A survey of thirty-five general education teacher preparation programs that offered a separate course in Illinois showed that sixty-seven percent addressed the state's three credit certification requirement through a survey course that emphasized characteristics of students with disabilities (Reed & Monda-Amaya, 1995). Sixty percent of the programs required an average of thirteen hours of field contact.  None of the programs were designed to elicit and mediate the beliefs of the teacher candidates and only one program used a text that addressed teaching methods.  The results of this survey seemed to indicate that none of these programs were specifically designed to impact the efficacy of the teacher candidates.

Taylor,  Richards, Goldstein, and Schilit (1997) surveyed special and general education teachers and concluded that teacher candidates need to learn the "application of the philosophy" of inclusion.  They found that the inclusive beliefs of teacher candidates became increasingly negative during exposure to inclusive environments in the absence of instruction of specific pedagogy.  This seems to indicate that the teacher candidates

need to be taught how to make accommodations for students with disabilities.

Team-teaching involving a collaborative effort between special education and general education faculty is another training option that has been explored. Valparaiso (Brigham, 1993) studied two collaborative approaches to teaching a course about students with disabilities. A general education faculty member taught one section of the course for the first half of the semester, then a special education faculty for the second half. The other section of the course was approached from a team-teaching model involving both special education and general education faculty members. Students were surveyed upon completion of the courses and expressed stronger positive reactions for the team-teaching approach.

Some training designs include a field component. Rademacher, Wilhelm, Hildreth, Bridges, and Cowart (1998) studied changes in the attitudes of general education teacher candidates toward students with disabilities who participated in one of three possible course configurations. One group took a three-week, intensive mainstreaming course offered at the beginning of the semester. Another group was involved in a four-week intensive course that included a field component.

Finally, the third group took part in a course that took place across two semesters in conjunction with a professional development school. This course met intermittently throughout the year. All three courses were worth one credit.

Based on a comparison of pre and post course results of a survey the students completed, the researchers found the most significant changes in attitude [belief] occurred in those students who took part in the two-semester course configuration. They felt they could work with students with multiple disabilities and had stronger, overall, inclusive attitudes.

Both courses with a field component produced survey results that indicated a significant change in the teacher candidates' feelings around being prepared to work with students with disabilities. They also felt they had a clear understanding of the resources available to general education teacher candidates and how to use them to assist in their work with students having disabilities.

The teacher candidates in all three course configurations indicated they felt they had increased their knowledge of students with disabilities. Yet the teacher candidates who participated in the course that did not have a field component actually showed a decrease in their inclusive

beliefs. The researchers concluded that the results seemed to indicate

that:

> "student teachers' knowledge and attitudes [beliefs] may be
> significantly impacted by extensive field-based programs such as
> the Professional Development School model. Student teachers'
> direct contact over time with special education students in regular
> and special education placements, along with reflective discussions
> and assignments, appears to have a significant, positive impact on
> their attitudes toward students with special needs, inclusion,
> collaborative teaching, and their self confidence." (p. 162)

Therefore, those teacher candidates who had a combination of

coursework and supervised direct contact with students with disabilities

made the most positive changes in their self-efficacy about teaching in

inclusive environments.

Reber (1995) conducted a similar study comparing a course about

students with disabilities with a field component, a course without the

field component, and a self-study course targeted at dealing with

inclusive attitudes. The researcher also found the most significant

positive changes in inclusive beliefs occurred in those teacher candidates

participating in the course with the field component. The field

component involved matching two teacher candidates with a student with

disabilities. This configuration helped the teacher candidates gain

experience with students with disabilities early in their program. The

pairing allowed the teacher candidates to discuss and reflect on their

shared experiences.  Finally, this closely supervised experience allowed the teacher educators to immediately address misconceptions and concerns to help the teacher candidates' learning during the experience.

This dissertation will be an examination of an integrated instructional intervention and a subsequent field experience.  Past studies have examined field experiences designed to impact efficacy.  The field component in this study was not specifically designed to address the efficacy of the teacher candidates regarding their work in inclusive environments.  Therefore, this study is an opportunity to consider the impact of an integrated instructional intervention designed to impact teacher candidate efficacy for inclusive environments followed by an internship not specifically designed to address teacher candidate efficacy in inclusive classroom environments.

# Chapter Three

# Methodology

The research question guiding this study is: How do interns' knowledge, efficacy, and beliefs about the inclusion of students with disabilities change during preparation for teaching? To what extent can these changes be accounted for as the interaction of a) their responses to an integrated instructional approach in a teacher education program and b) particular features of their internship experience? This question was addressed first by examining the beliefs, knowledge, and levels of efficacy of teacher candidates before and after an instructional intervention. Selected teacher candidates were then followed into their internship placements where this examination continued.

## Study Features

This study includes an examination both of an instructional intervention and of the impact of a subsequent field placement. The subjects were individuals who had received at least a four-year college degree and decided to return to school to earn their teaching credentials, referred to in the program as "Post BA's". This group was selected for three reasons. First, the nature of the group allowed for the potential inclusion of various age groups in the study. They also were in a cohort

structure that helped in assuring the consistency of their instructional experiences.  Finally, I had been offered, as a graduate assistant, the opportunity to teach them in a program where I could integrate special education content into methods courses as I worked with elementary science and social studies methods instructors.

Data were gathered on the subjects before and after the instructional intervention.  Five interns were selected based on their representativeness of the larger group and followed into their field placements.  They were also chosen based on individual differences between the five.  Demographic information (See Table 3.1) was taken into account as much as data regarding inclusive knowledge and beliefs to create this representative sample (Mertens, 1998).

This study is unique in several ways.  It examines the efficacy of preservice general education teachers and follows them from pre instructional intervention through several months of their internship experience.  The instructional intervention took place in an integrative context.  Qualitative and quantitative data were collected and analyzed in this study.  These data consisted of surveys, interviews, field placement observations, and the teacher candidates' course assignments.  Indicators of efficacy were followed through different contexts over a year's time.

The elementary teacher preparation program, which was the site for this study, is part of the college of education of a large, Midwestern, land-grant university.  One of the options for preparing to become teachers available to students is known as the "Post BA Program".  This option for preparation was designed for those individuals who have already received a bachelor's degree and wished to return to earn certification as teachers.

These students, after acceptance into the program when they become known as "teacher candidates," take a variety of courses including content-area methods courses.  Typically, the elementary teacher candidates who are a part of the Post BA Program take their first content methods course, TE 401, during the spring semester.  This course is designed to help them learn to teach mathematics and literacy.  During the subsequent eight- week summer session they take TE 402, where they learn methods for teaching science and social studies.

These courses are followed by a two-semester internship, beginning in the fall.  The teacher candidates, who become "interns" at this time, are placed in an elementary classroom where they take on increasing

32

amounts of responsibility for teaching the students. In October, they take full responsibility for 2 – 3 subjects for a three-week period. This is referred to as their first "lead teaching" period. This internship experience culminates with an eight-week "lead teaching" period during the spring semester when the interns are in charge of the entire school day.

Their collaborating teacher (or "CT"), who is the certified teacher in the classroom, mentors them. Someone also supervises them from the university, sometimes referred to as a field instructor (or "FI").

The interns also take two graduate level classes during each semester of their internship. In these classes, the interns typically continue their content methods instruction. Sometimes, special sessions are arranged at which time the interns learn about topics like school law and special education.

This study began in the spring of 1998 and concluded a year later. In the spring, the teacher candidates were taking TE 401; the course designed to help them learn to teach mathematics and literacy. The study continued during the eight-week summer session, when the teacher candidates took TE402. The Post BA TE 402 course was designed to prepare the teacher candidates to teach science and social studies to

elementary students. Since this course took place during the summer session, the coursework occurred almost daily over the eight weeks. The elementary teacher candidates were divided into two sections for this summer session. The subjects for this study were found in both sections. I saw the teacher candidates as sole instructor for a total of ten clock hours. I also worked in conjunction with the content methods instructors. One instructor taught both sections of science and two different instructors taught the social studies sections. This structure means my collaborative efforts involved three instructors.

This coursework took place just prior to their yearlong internship. The teacher candidates had some field experience at this point in their program and some had some exposure to students with disabilities. This seemed an opportune time to work with the teacher candidates around issues of special education. The field exposure had helped them to be more cognizant of some of the challenges of inclusive environments. This awareness helped to reinforce the relevance and direct applicability of the instructional intervention.

<div align="center">Participants</div>

The initial pool of subjects for this study contained 34 teacher candidates in the elementary Post BA Program. Thirty teacher candidates

participated in the study in some way (See Table 3.1). Five of those

thirty were selected to be followed into their internship placements.

Table 3.1    Participants in the Study

| Subjects | n | Gender | Race | Age |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pool | 34 | 7 males<br>27 females | 3  African-American<br>31 Caucasian | 29  20-30 yrs<br>5  30+ yrs |
| Participants | 30 | 4  males<br>26 females | 1  African-American<br>29 Caucasian | 25  20-30 yrs<br>5  30+ yrs |
| Interns | 5 | 1 male<br>4 females | 0  African-American<br>5  Caucasian | •  20-30 yrs<br>1  30+ yrs |

## Data Collection and Intervention Overview

Data collection for this study occurred between March of 1998 and

March of 1999. I refer to four phases of data collection across this time

period (See Table 1.2). The first phase occurred when data were

collected during the spring semester of 1998, before the instructional

intervention. The second phase occurred at the conclusion of the

instructional intervention, during the summer session of 1998. Data were

gathered on the five selected interns during the fall semester of 1998,

the third phase of the study. Phase four data were collected on the same

five interns during the spring semester of 1999. All of the individuals

who participated in this study did so on a voluntary basis.

35

During the first phase of data collection, participants completed a set of three surveys (See Appendix A) and/or participated in a 20-30 minute interview (See Appendix B). I chose to conduct the interviews for this phase. I had no prior experience with the participants, which allowed me to play a neutral role in the process.

Participants were asked to complete the same set of surveys after the instructional intervention, the second phase of data collection. They were also asked to participate in the same 20-30 minute interview conducted in the first phase. In addition to the surveys and interviews, participants consented to the use of their written coursework for document analysis.

I hired another graduate student to conduct second phase interviews in order to ensure that the respondents would not react to questions in ways they might think I, as their recent instructor, would want to hear. I prepared the outside interviewer by explaining the questions, showing her the efficacy indicators upon which the questions were based, and talking about some of the responses I had heard during the first phase interviews. I especially emphasized that I was not looking for "right" answers to the interview questions. What the respondents

had to say were the right answers for them. I wanted to be careful that probing questions were not going to be used to lead the respondents to do more than expand on their own ideas.

Study Section Two

During the third phase of data collection, I selected five interns. I will say more about the criteria used to select these interns later in this chapter and in the next. These five interns were followed into their internship placements and were subsequently interviewed three times, just after the fall semester had started, at the beginning of their first lead teaching period, and after their first lead teaching period. I observed the interns twice, just prior to the second and third interviews, watching them teach a lesson each time. At the end of the fall semester, the third phase of data collection, the five interns completed the set of three surveys for the last time. I also interviewed the interns' collaborating teachers and field instructors during the third phase of data collection to consider their views as a potential impacting factor on the interns.

The fourth phase of data collection I observed in each intern's placement for a full school day and conducted an extensive final interview (See Appendix C for protocol for the final interviews). These events occurred approximately halfway through the spring lead-teaching period.

I chose to do the interviews and observations for the third and fourth phases myself. I believe the risks involved in having me, their former instructor, do the observations and interviews were outweighed by the benefits. The settings of the interns varied, making potential impacting factors dependent on the context. I conducted the observations to identify these potential impacting factors. All of the interviews except the first were conducted shortly after an observation. Therefore, having done the observations myself, I was able to incorporate things I had noticed into the standard questions used in earlier interviews.

Table 3.2 Summary of Data Collected

| Phase | Surveys | Interviews | Observations | Documents |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| One | 22 | 13 | NA | NA |
| Two | 9 | 8 | NA | 19 |
| Three (Field) | 5 (Interns) | 15 (Interns) 5 (CT's) 4 (FI's) | 10 | NA |
| Four (Field) | NA | 5 (Interns) | 5 | NA |

The Surveys

The surveys I utilized for this study were designed to examine the teacher candidates' perceptions of their inclusive beliefs and abilities. The Classroom Survey asked the teacher candidates to rate their inclusive

38

beliefs.  The Knowledge/Ability Survey asked the teacher candidates to rate their current knowledge of inclusive practices.  The Ratings for Classroom Teachers Survey asked the teacher candidates to make predictions about themselves as practicing inclusive educators.  The surveys were designed to examine how the teacher candidates rated themselves on the eight efficacy indicators (See Table 3.3).

## Table 3.3 The Surveys and Efficacy Indicators

| Classroom Survey (beliefs) | Knowledge/Ability Survey (current knowledge/abilities) | Ratings for Classroom Teachers Survey (predictions about future practice) |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Students with disabilities can learn in a general education setting. | • "I can help students with disabilities learn in a general education setting." | • "I will help students with disabilities learn in a general education setting." |
| 2. Students with disabilities can be efficiently managed in a general education setting. | • "I can efficiently manage students with disabilities in a general education setting." | • "I will efficiently manage students with disabilities in a general education setting." |
| 3. Reflection is useful for the improvement of teaching. | • "I can use reflection to improve my teaching." | • "I will use reflection to improve my teaching." |
| 4. Collaboration with colleagues and parents/guardians is a useful strategy for working with students with disabilities. | • "I can collaborate with colleagues and parents/guardians to improve my work with students with disabilities." | • "I will collaborate with colleagues and parents/guardians to improve my work with students with disabilities." |
| 5. Teacher expectations should be high for all students. | • "I can help all students meet my high expectations." | • "I will help all students meet my high expectations." |
| 6. Learning can be demonstrated and assessed in a variety of ways. | • "I can assess learning in a variety of ways." | • "I will assess learning in a variety of ways." |
| 7. A basic knowledge of the special education system and processes makes it possible to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities. | • "I understand the special education system and processes enough to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities." | • "I will understand the special education system and processes enough to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities." |
| 8. The responsibility for a student's success is shared between the student and the teachers. | • "I can recognize and accept my responsibilities for the success of students with disabilities included in my classroom." | • "I will recognize and accept my responsibilities for the success of students with disabilities included in my classroom." |

## Classroom Survey

This instrument (Yates & Sider, n.d.) was used by researchers in studies of integrated special/general education elementary teacher training programs at St. Cloud State University and Saginaw Valley State University (See Appendix A). The survey was designed to examine the inclusive attitudes [beliefs] of practicing and preservice teachers. I revised the document to update the terminology used in some items. In order to avoid positively worded response bias, fifteen of the items were worded negatively. This 39-item survey asks the respondents to rate themselves based on a five-point Likert scale. It was used during the first, second, and third phases of data collection.

## Knowledge/Ability Survey

This instrument (Barbus, Emond, & Curtis-Pierce, 1994) also was used by researchers in studies of integrated special/general education elementary teacher training programs at St. Cloud State University and Saginaw Valley State University (See Appendix A). The purpose of this survey was to examine the perceptions of preservice and practicing teachers regarding their current knowledge of information relevant for inclusive environments. I also added an item about the respondents' perception of the beliefs needed in order for inclusion to be successful. I

did this to examine how the teacher candidates currently perceived the importance of teacher beliefs. This 23-item survey asks the respondents to rate themselves based on a five-point Likert scale. It was used during the first, second, and third phases of data collection.

### Ratings for Classroom Teachers Survey

This instrument (Bacharach & Salk, 1992) was used by researchers in studies of integrated special/general education elementary teacher training programs at St. Cloud State University and Saginaw Valley State University (See Appendix A). The survey was originally developed to examine the feelings of efficacy of preservice and practicing teachers around tasks and issues found in inclusive environments. I revised the statements to clarify the self-efficacy connections to the statements. This 52-item survey asks the respondents to rate themselves based on a five-point Likert scale. The purpose of the survey for my study was to examine the teacher candidates' perceptions regarding their skills as future inclusive educators. It was used during the first, second, and third phases of data collection.

### The Interviews

The eight interview questions developed for this study (See Appendix B) were based on the efficacy indicators (See Table 1.1).

These questions were used for the first two phases of data collection, then supplemented with questions based on the observations done in the third and fourth phases. The interns' collaborating teachers and field instructors were asked the same eight questions. These individuals were considered potential influences on the interns' efficacy. Their beliefs and feelings of efficacy as inclusive educators were seen as potential impacting factors, therefore, these interviews were considered important for this study. The interviews for this study were audiotaped in private, quiet places. The length of the interviews for the first three phases of the study ranged from approximately 20 minutes to 45 minutes. The phase four interviews ranged in length from 60 minutes to 90 minutes.

<u>The Observations</u>

I conducted an observation of a single lesson taught by each of the interns on two occasions during the fall semester of their internship. The interns chose the lesson I would observe. During the spring semester of their internship, I conducted a final observation for a whole school day.

During the observations I recorded when and how the intern interacted with the students with disabilities included in their classrooms (Efficacy Indicators 1, 2, 5, 6, & 8). I also looked for patterns of interaction between students (Efficacy Indicator 2). I noted differences

in curriculum and behavior management between the students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers (Efficacy Indicators 1, 2, 5, 6, & 8). Along with classroom seating arrangements and other details found in the environment, I looked for particular details related to the creation of a learning community, like whether or not the students with disabilities were included on the weekly job board.

In two of the classrooms, paraprofessionals were present. I noted their interactions with all of the students. I also recorded interactions between the interns, their collaborating teachers, and any other adults present in the classroom.

## The Documents

Copies of student coursework, completed during the instructional intervention, was used to examine the impact of instruction/activities on the students' knowledge base, level of efficacy, and beliefs held about students with disabilities.

### Chronology of Data Collection Events

## Study Section One, Phase One Data Collection

The teacher candidates were required to take TE 401; a course designed to instruct them in methods for teaching literacy and mathematics. Preliminary interviewing and surveying was done during this

spring semester course, which is taken before the summer session course that included the instructional intervention. This was the fourth year the integrated instructional intervention format had been followed during the summer session. Thirteen teacher candidates agreed to be interviewed and twenty-two completed surveys for this first phase of data collection.

The first phase sets of these three surveys were used to establish initial levels of efficacy and to assist me in making instructional decisions during the summer session course. I returned to these survey sets at the end of the second phase of data collection to assist in choosing a representative sample of individuals to follow into the field.

The first phase interviews consisted of eight questions, designed to address each of the efficacy indicators (See Table 1.1). The interviews concluded by asking the interviewees if there was anything they would like to add to what they had already said. Sometimes, as the interviewees were responding to the questions, probing questions were used to clarify responses. These interviews were triangulated with survey data and used to help determine initial levels of efficacy and assist me in making instructional decisions during the summer session course.

The instructional intervention took place between the first and second phases of data collection. What follows is a description of my role as the instructor, my beliefs about inclusion, and the intervention itself.

## My Role

As an instructor attempting to integrate various aspects of the content methods courses with information about and teaching strategies for students with disabilities, I took on the dual role of collaborator and teacher. I observed several sessions of my fellow instructors' classes to look for opportunities to make connections between what they were teaching and what I needed to address. The other instructors and I also planned how I could give assignments that merged with the work the teacher candidates were doing for them.

## My Beliefs

One of the assumptions driving this study, especially the field component, is that the beliefs and attitudes of others may impact the teacher candidates' beliefs. In my role integrating special education content into their existing courses, I intended to directly address, inform, and alter the teacher candidates' beliefs about inclusion. During that process, my biases about inclusive issues may have become apparent and

made an impact on the teacher candidates. Therefore, I will describe my perspective on inclusion as a variable to be considered.

I do not see the question of inclusion as an either-or proposition. I believe the current practices and structures of most general education settings would not best provide for the education of some students with disabilities. Conversely, I believe the current practices and structures of most special education settings would not best provide for the education of some students with disabilities.

I believe we need to remember why special education was created in the first place. The principle of "least restrictive environment," first introduced in Public Law 94-142, provided a basis for the development of a continuum of services for students with disabilities. The ideal behind this structure was to provide students with disabilities with varying degrees of support, from full inclusion in the general education environment to complete segregation in the form of residential schools. I agree with this perspective. I believe the least restrictive environment for any student is that environment that will optimally benefit the student socially and academically. Full time general education may provide this for some students with disabilities while residential schools may be best for others. I believe that the degree of inclusion in general education is a

decision that must be made for each child individually, based on the

program options available to meet the child's needs.

When teaching, I present information about making programming

choices for students with disabilities to the teacher candidates using the

continuum of services as a guide.  I teach them that decisions about the

degree of inclusion in general education must be made while recognizing

that you may lose in one area, such as social competence, to gain in

another area, such as academic competence.  Therefore, the optimal

environment rarely translates to the perfect environment.  The best we

can do is look for the right balance for each student, based on our

resources and knowledge.  We should seek that balance for a student's

current program while setting goals to move toward increasing the

degree of inclusion in general education.

I do not tell the teacher candidates that we should not bother to

improve our practices in general education and just make the best use of

what we currently have.  An improvement of practices not only benefits

general education students but also could increase the accessibility of

general education for students with disabilities.  However, I believe we

shouldn't lose sight of the reasons the special education system was first

created.

I believe the special education system, in some form, will be necessary for a long time. James Kauffman (1999) wrote about the unrealistic expectations placed on special education. The perception, initially supported by special educators, was that meeting the individual needs of students meant eventually bringing them up to par with their peers. In other words, we would no longer have students who are behind other students. Most would recognize this vision as unrealistic at best, but somehow there is a perception that special education has failed if it has not brought all students up to a certain standard. Yet reform of epic proportions would need to occur in general education to achieve optimal programming for even most students. Special education exists to support the needs of those students who wouldn't get optimal programming in general education.

I find myself struggling when I consider questions of appropriate programming for students with disabilities. I inevitably find myself coming back to questions of potential and what that means. The existence of special education seems to infer a belief that there are those with limited potential. After all, couldn't we just put everyone in general education, use all the best teaching methods, provide tremendous support, and expect all students to master the given curriculum? Wouldn't that be

what would happen if general education was working perfectly?  I do not

think so.  I believe there are those students with disabilities who are not

going to master the general education curriculum under even the best

circumstances.

Am I saying, then, that I do not believe in limitless potential?  No, I

believe we all learn and continue to learn throughout our lifetimes.  What I

struggle with is the perception that potential is determined by the ability

to learn certain things.  Those things tend to be represented in the

general education curriculum.

My focus as a special education teacher was always on teaching my

students those things that would best support each of them in the

future.  Often, setting those goals meant prioritizing instructional time in

a way that excluded some traditional general education content.  I am

clear myself about what I believe about this and how I define potential.

Yet, I admit I do not communicate this well to those teacher candidates

whose initial reaction is to conclude that the exclusion of general

education content means the teacher has given up on the student.  Since

this was an issue addressed during the instructional intervention, my

doubts about my own efficacy in dealing with the topic are important to

disclose.

<u>The Instructional Intervention, Summer Session, TE 402</u>

During the spring semester preceding TE 402, the teacher candidates took TE 401; a course designed to prepare them to teach mathematics and language arts to elementary students. As part of this course, the teacher candidates were assigned to a classroom in an elementary or middle school, for four hours a week for ten weeks of the semester. The field experience for TE 402 was a continuation of this for the first three weeks of the summer session.

TE 402 is the last course in the teacher education program sequence before the teacher candidates begin their yearlong internship. The teacher candidates are taught methods for teaching science and social studies. My integrative efforts, therefore, were couched in the teaching of science and social studies methods with the teacher candidates bringing some prior experience to teaching specific subject matter to a diverse group of students. The teacher candidates were also looking forward to an intense field experience when teaching all subject matters to a diverse group of students would be required.

As a staff, those of us teaching TE 402 worked together to develop a schedule that would meet the expectations for the course. I knew I would need some time with the teacher candidates myself to

teach basic information about special education. I requested and was given ten hours in the schedule with each section. These ten hours were divided into six separate class sessions, almost weekly during the term.

I also spent time with the teacher candidates in their content area sections. I spoke with each of the three instructors to help me plan when those visits would be most beneficial. I used some of these visits to observe and look for connections I could make with the teacher candidates when I taught them myself, and co-teaching occurred during the other visits.

I had established a set of eight indicators of teacher efficacy in inclusive environments (See Table 1.1) prior to the beginning of the summer term. I used these indicators as a guide to develop instruction and assignments. I also used the interview and survey data collected before the term to help me think about how to tailor the content of the instruction to the teacher candidates' entering beliefs. These data allowed me to consider what I should emphasize during the instruction and what things about working with students with disabilities were of particular concern to the teacher candidates.

Next, I will describe below what happened in each session of the intervention for this study and which efficacy indicators were addressed

(See Table 3.4). Following this, I will describe the events of each session in detail.

Table 3.4 Overview of Session Activities

| Session Number | Session Activities | Efficacy Indicator(s) Addressed |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | General information about characteristics and instructional needs of students with emotional impairments, learning disabilities, and/or mild mental impairments. | 7 |
| 2 | Doing a lesson analysis as a method of identifying components that need adaptations for specific types of disabilities. | 1, 5, & 6 |
| 3 | Evaluation of recommendations made for adaptations and strategies for behavior management. | 2 & 3 |
| 4 | Taught five models of inclusive education which involved varying amounts of support. | 2 & 4 |
| 5 | Used the five models of inclusive education as a context for a simulation that involved planning a program for a student with a disability. | 2, 4, 7, & 8 |
| 6 | Dealt with issues of fairness in the inclusive classroom when you are in a context with limited resources. | 5 & 8 |

Session One

My first contact with the teacher candidates in TE 402 occurred during the first week in their science section. The content methods instructor gave them instruction regarding the unit planning design that would be used in the class. Later, I would integrate the question that was

53

the focus of this structure, "What do I want my students to know when I am finished?" into the lesson analysis process I taught. In addition, I used the unit to anchor one of the three main assignments I developed for instruction and data collection.

I also had my first of the six separate class sessions when I was the sole instructor with the teacher candidates during that first week. This session was used to convey basic information and concepts about special education to the teacher candidates. I provided information about the special education system and characteristics of students with emotional impairments, mild mental impairments, or learning disabilities.

I decided to focus on these three areas of disability based on past experiences with teacher candidates. Through these prior teaching experiences I learned that trying to provide instruction about all areas of disability in the limited amount of time that I typically had only led to a shallow understanding of each area, at best. I chose these three areas because the teacher candidates would be most likely to encounter students with these disabilities in an inclusive environment.

Session Two

During the second session with the teacher candidates, I focused on helping them learn to do lesson analyses. In the past, I had

approached this task by asking the students to think of a lesson, identify its primary objective, and identify what the students would need to do to complete the lesson. The teacher candidates were then given a table divided into three columns. These columns were titled, "Psychomotor," "Cognitive," and "Affective." I used this format to help the teacher candidates think about all the things that come into play for a student doing a lesson, not just the cognitive components.

I then asked the teacher candidates to identify all the things a student must be able to do or know to complete the lesson and put each of those things in their appropriate category. After doing that, each teacher candidate selected one or two slips of paper, each having a name of a student, a brief description of how their disability is manifested and a few words about the student's likes and dislikes and home situation. I intentionally did not allow them to select particular students since this would not have represented what happens in classrooms. For this reason, some teacher candidates may have an easy time adapting their lesson for their students while others would be very challenged.

After the students had been selected, the teacher candidates looked at their tables and identified the background knowledge, tasks, and dispositions needed to complete the lesson that may be particularly

challenging for the student. They were also asked to identify those areas where the student may excel. Based on this information and earlier instruction about adapting lessons, the teacher candidates adapted their lessons for their students. The final piece in this process was that the teacher candidates would then go back to the primary objective of the lesson to determine if the students with disabilities would meet that objective using the adaptive strategies. I have found that teacher candidates frequently create adaptations to help the student get through the lesson, not meet the objective.

So, for TE 402, I added steps to the lesson analysis. As usual, I asked the teacher candidates to do the basic analysis, identifying all the background knowledge, tasks and dispositions of a lesson they were developing for social studies or science. I then asked them to consider themselves as the student, as they remember themselves at the grade level of the lesson. They used these memories of themselves as learners to identify areas of strength and weakness and made the adaptations that may be necessary.

I then had them select a slip of paper that had a specific disability written on it. These slips of paper did not state the specifics about the manifestation of the disability. I then asked the teacher candidates to

return to the table they had made about themselves as learners and consider how it might or might not change if they had been students with the particular disability on their slip of paper but all other aspects of themselves remained the same. They made the adjustments to what they considered to be strengths and weaknesses and the needed adaptations. After this was completed, they selected two slips of paper with the names of students with disabilities, their likes and dislikes, and home environments. The teacher candidates then considered the students' strengths and weaknesses and made adaptations for them.

Session Three

The third session was a continuation of the second. The teacher candidates examined the adaptations they had made and evaluated them against the criteria for effective accommodations given in "Effective Accommodations for Students with Exceptionalities" (1997). Once we had finished that process, we began talking specifically about dealing with misbehavior. I chose to include this in a session based on the results of the first phase of data collection.

I used "Quick-Guides to Inclusion: Ideas for Educating Students with Disabilities" (Giangreco, 1997) as a framework for discussion around the basic principles of behavior management. I also presented general

guidelines for developing student behavior contracts. The teacher

candidates, in groups, applied these principles and ideas using student

cases involving various kinds of misbehavior (Kent I.S.D., 1987). Each

group presented their ideas to and received commentary from the class.

Session Four

We began the fourth session by examining five models of inclusive

education (Landers & Weaver, 1997). These models illustrated varying

degrees of collaboration, from full co-teaching to the special education

teacher as consultant. I put the teacher candidates into groups for this

session's activities.

After a presentation on different issues around collaboration

(Giangreco, 1997), least restrictive environment, and the five models of

inclusion, each group answered general questions about the use of the

models. I then assigned each group a specific model and they made

predictions and recommendations about its implementation. These

questions and predictions required them to consider issues around the

roles of the professionals involved, contextual needs, and possible

implications of the model for the students involved.

These considerations were a pre-activity for an "Inclusion Game"

simulation (Landers & Weaver, 1997). This simulation gave background

and goals for a student. The task of each group was to hold an Individualized Education Planning Committee meeting for this student, with each group member taking a role. Minimally, this meant each group was to have a student, parent, general education teacher, and special education teacher. One group member was asked to take the role of process observer and note patterns in communication and participation.

Each group was told to develop this IEP within the context of the model they had studied. Upon completing the plan, each group was asked to consider how their model did and did not meet the guidelines for least restrictive environment. A large group discussion about the dynamics of the communication in the IEPC and how the models represented the least restrictive environment ended the session.

Session Five

The fifth gathering was designated a work/help session which allowed me to answer questions about an assignment I had given the teacher candidates. I had assigned them the task of making adaptations for a portion of their science unit. This assignment required the teacher candidates to choose two "students" from a list of five possibilities. This list included a student with an educable mental impairment, one with an emotional impairment, and three with learning disabilities, each in a

different area.  Each student was described generally and briefly.  The teacher candidates then elaborated on the descriptions of their two chosen students.  After this, using the "voice" of each student, the teacher candidates created a narrative of the experience of the lessons.

The next part of the assignment required the teacher candidates to create a narrative using the teacher "voice."  This was intended to be like a journal, with the teacher candidates reflecting on what they imagined had occurred in the lessons.  The final step of the assignment required the teacher candidates to discuss how they thought the lessons could be adapted to better meet the needs of each student.

Session Six

The final session I had with the teacher candidates focused on issues of fairness.  I also brought in concepts about community and what it means to be a community of learners from the social studies sections. We discussed traditional and constructivist approaches to teaching and learning as a means of considering how schools do and don't make curriculum accessible for all students (Landers & Weaver, 1997).  I also introduced examples of scaffolding content to challenge the notion that all curricula are somehow sequential (Means, Chelemer, & Knapp, 1991).

On an overhead, I presented an ethical argument, written as a debate between two people (Strike & Soltis, 1992). The topic of the debate was gifted students and the fair distribution of educational resources. This debate presented the consequentialist and non-consequentialist points of view. We discussed the conflicts between the values of benefit maximization and basic human rights. I then put these ideas into the context of the classroom and had the teacher candidates think about the classroom teacher as a limited resource. We talked about how teachers make choices about where they assert their time and energy. We finished this discussion by examining quotes by Aristotle and John Rawls about equity and justice (both as cited in Strike & Soltis, 1992).

After completing this groundwork, I put the students in three groups. Each group was given a different case that underscored issues of accessibility and fairness. They were asked to analyze the cases, identifying the underlying issues and perspectives. Two of the three cases were presented as a problem to be solved. I asked the teacher candidates in those groups to resist the temptation to try to solve the problem and focus on the issues.

Each group's case was presented and discussed. I finished this final session by having the teacher candidates read *The Animal School* (as cited in Landers and Weaver, 1997) and write how they translate the *issues* of fairness found in the piece and how those issues apply to *schools* today. I also asked them to answer three questions regarding *their* opinions of fairness and equity issues encountered by inclusive *educators*.

Study Section One, Phase Two Data Collection

This phase of data collection occurred immediately after my work *with* the teacher candidates in TE 402. The data collected included eight *interviews* that were conducted by the outside interviewer utilizing the *same* questions used in the first phase. I distributed surveys to the *thirty*-four sets of the three surveys used during the first phase and 9 *were* returned. Nineteen teacher candidates gave me permission to use *their* course assignments for document analysis.

The low return rate of surveys for the second phase made any *overall* comparisons difficult to justify. However, four out of the nine *returned* surveys belonged to the interns I would later follow into their *internship* placements. Of these four, three of them had also completed *surveys* during the first phase. These, along with the final survey sets

collected, were used to examine changes in efficacy from the beginning of the study until the end of the third phase of three of the five interns.

The second phase interviews consisted of the same eight questions, designed to address each of the efficacy indicators (See Table 1.1). The outside interviewer concluded the interviews by asking the interviewees if there was anything they would like to add to what they had already said. Sometimes, as the interviewees were responding to each of the eight questions, probing questions were used to clarify responses. These interviews were used to examine changes in levels of efficacy, identify emerging themes, and help in determining interns.

I collected data on two assignments I developed to address the eight efficacy indicators. I also collected two fastwrites the teacher candidates produced during class. Fastwrites are brief written responses structured to help teacher candidates reflect on an issue or technique presented in class.

The challenge in this integrated context was to assign work that blended with the elementary coursework. Having limited time with the teacher candidates and considering their already heavy workload during this intense summer session, I needed to give assignments that had rich

instructional value, made efficient use of the teacher candidates' efforts, and considered existing beliefs.

The first assignment, the "What If?" assignment, asked the teacher candidates to consider how they, as they remembered themselves as learners at a grade they selected, would perform on a lesson they analyzed. I then asked them to adjust their description by imagining how things would have been different if they had been a student with a particular disability.

This assignment was designed to help the teacher candidates begin with what they've realized about themselves as learners. Using this self-knowledge, the teacher candidates applied knowledge of the nature of a disability to the characteristics of a learner they already knew.

This assignment was designed to elicit beliefs in order to provide data for those indicators. The teacher candidates wrote about themselves as learners with a disability. They needed to talk about their capacity for learning in general education and if that learning could be managed. There was evidence of reflection based on how they described themselves as learners and the application of information about the nature of their disability. They also needed to consider if accommodations could be effective. I saw how the teacher candidates

handled expectations when they accommodated for the lesson to be adapted. The accommodations used were a demonstration of how the teacher candidates utilized a variety of methods. As they described their needs for accommodation, the teacher candidates demonstrated problem-solving and advocacy. The teacher candidates were told they could consult a special educator in their scenario, and I looked for when that occurred and how much was asked of the special educator.

The second assignment asked the teacher candidates to choose two "students" from a list of five possibilities. This list included a student with an educable mental impairment, one with an emotional impairment, and three with learning disabilities, each in a different area. Each student was described generally and briefly. The teacher candidates were asked to elaborate on the descriptions of their two chosen students. After this, using the "voice" of each student, the teacher candidates created a narrative of the experience of a lesson or series of lessons they'd developed for their science section. The final part of the assignment was a narrative using the teacher "voice." The teacher candidates discussed how they thought the lesson(s) could be adapted to better meet the needs of each student.

The three parts of the assignment, the student description, student "voice" and teacher "voice" narratives, required the teacher candidates to call upon their knowledge of the nature of the disabilities of the selected students and possible strategies for adaptation of the lesson(s). They also expressed some indications of what they believed was their role as a teacher working with students with disabilities in their classrooms.

Since this third assignment called for the teacher candidates to consider how they might handle a learner as a teacher and write about both roles, belief and knowledge indicators applied. The teacher candidates needed to talk about each student's capacity for learning in general education and if that learning could be managed. There was evidence of reflection based on how they described the student and the voices of the student and teacher. They also needed to consider if accommodations would be effective. I saw how the teacher candidates handled expectations when they accommodated for the lesson to be adapted. The accommodations used were a demonstration of how the teacher candidates utilized a variety of methods. As they described the needs for accommodation, the teacher candidates demonstrated problem-solving and advocacy. The teacher candidates were told they

could consult a special educator in their scenario, and I looked for when that occurred and how much was asked of the special educator.

During the final session the teacher candidates responded to a reading and three questions regarding issues of fairness and equity. This fastwrite was designed to further examine how the teacher candidates saw their role as a teacher working with students with disabilities. Specifically, teacher candidates considered issues of fairness and equity along with the extent of responsibility they feel for the education of these students. I used an inclusion simulation activity to accomplish this. The teacher candidates were asked to set up a program for a student, describing the roles of the staff involved. The simulation was developed to ensure that there would be limited resources for the demands of the class. The teacher candidates had to make decisions about how these limited resources would be used.

Along with showing evidence of the ability to use knowledge of the nature of disabilities and strategies for making accommodations, the teacher candidates had to consider their roles as collaborators and advocates in an inclusive "case" situation. They showed evidence of how they would handle expectations and assessment. They were asked to explain how they saw fairness and equity in the case.

## Study Section Two, Phase Three Data Collection

This phase of data collection occurred during the fall semester following the instructional intervention. Based on the data from phases one and two of data collection, five teacher candidates were selected to be followed into their internship placements. These individuals were selected because they represented a cross-section of the original pool of gender, race and age (See Table 3.1 for demographics of original pool) and were placed in a variety of settings, across four different school districts (See Table 3.5). The diversity in their settings allowed me to examine the influence of a variety of factors on their levels of efficacy. They also ranged in their pre/post instructional intervention levels of efficacy as represented by the data from phases one and two (See Table 3.6).

Table 3.5 Interns' Demographics

| Intern's Pseudonym | Gender | Race | Age | Field Setting |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Abbey | Female | Caucasian | 20-30 yrs | Urban School District #1, Second Grade |
| Vicky | Female | Caucasian | 20-30 yrs | Suburban School District #1, Fifth Grade |
| Marlene | Female | Caucasian | 30+ yrs | Urban School District #1, Second Grade |
| Hillary | Female | Caucasian | 20-30 yrs | Urban School District #2, Third Grade |
| Curt | Male | Caucasian | 20-30 yrs | Urban School District #3, Third Grade |

Table 3.6 Interns' Levels of Efficacy

IA = Inclusive Attitudes          K/A = Knowledge and Ability

| | Low | Middle | High |
|---|---|---|---|
| Abbey | | IA & K/A | |
| Vicky | | | IA & K/A |
| *Marlene | K/A | | IA |
| *Hillary | | IA | K/A |
| Curt | K/A | IA | |

(*Phase two data only)

Interviews for the third phase of data collection occurred three times over the fall semester. The first interview took place early in the semester. The eight questions based on the efficacy indicators were used along with questions designed to get the interns' initial impressions of their placements. The second interview took place just prior to or

early in their fall lead-teaching period. The third interview happened after the fall lead teaching period. All three of these interviews utilized the eight questions used in the earlier interviews. In addition, questions specific to their field situation were added to identify and discuss those factors in the field that impact could impact their levels of efficacy. These questions were primarily based on things noted during the two observations done prior to the second and third interviews.

I assumed that the interns' collaborating teachers and field instructors were potential impacting factors, so I interviewed these individuals during the third phase of data collection. They were asked to give background information regarding their work with and educational experiences about students with disabilities. They were then asked the same eight questions used earlier with the interns.

I observed the interns twice during the third phase of data collection. The first occurred just before or early into the fall lead-teaching period. The second observation occurred after the fall lead teaching period. Each intern was asked to invite me into his/her class to observe a lesson. I started by asking the interns to invite me in for a lesson they considered to be inclusive in nature. I found I had to change this approach when the interns seemed reluctant to invite me to observe.

I think the criterion was, perhaps, intimidating for them. I altered my request, asking the interns to simply invite me in for a lesson about which they felt comfortable. Then, during the interview, I asked them to identify inclusive characteristics of the lesson.

<u>Study Section Two, Phase Four Data Collection</u>

The fourth phase of data collection required one final observation and interview. The final interview encompassed the eight standard questions and the latest observation. It also included questions about things the interns had said in the past, written in their coursework, and quotes from their collaborating teachers and field instructors. There were questions added to address the questions emerging from the data (See Appendix C).

The fourth phase of data collection also required one final observation. Rather than observe a single lesson, I chose to be present for a full school day. I did this based on questions emerging from the on-going data analysis. For example, based on observations conducted during the third phase, I believed the interns rarely called on the students with disabilities to answer questions. I also wondered how the interns who had students with disabilities only part of the day handled those transitions. I thought a full day observation would help to address these

questions. The interns were asked to invite me in for a day, but not to pick a day when there were things happening that were out of the ordinary.

## Data Analysis

Elements of qualitative and quantitative research methodology are combined throughout this study. Although this approach has been questioned (Rossi, 1994; Smith, 1994), House (1994) points out the ways they can actually complement each other. While qualitative methodology is sometimes criticized for its seemingly subjective analysis processes, quantitative reports rely on arguably qualitative data to explain the results. Knowledge of the context, program, and narrative history are all qualitative data used to interpret the numbers and explore plausible alternative explanations.

This study involved four phases of data collection. I will describe the data analysis processes for each phase.

### Study Section One, Phase One Data Analysis

The first phase of data collection was used to determine what beliefs about inclusion and levels of efficacy for tasks related to the practice of inclusion existed in the subject pool. The survey data were grouped by those items that went with specific efficacy indicators. These

groupings provided singular sets of data which represented the efficacy indicator for each survey. The Classroom Survey questions, which were negatively worded, were grouped and analyzed separately.

Composite scores were determined for the singular sets of data for each efficacy indicator. These scores were used to develop a profile of the levels of efficacy found in the group at this point. I also conducted a reliability analysis on each efficacy indicator to determine if the teacher candidates interpreted the survey items that I matched with each indicator in a similar manner.

Measures of central tendency and variability were used to determine high, medium, and low categories for each survey. Composite scores were used to determine those respondents who fell into the high, medium, and low categories. Although the identity of the respondents was still concealed at this point, I used the number on the survey for temporary identification purposes. The surveys provided an anonymous source of data and gave a broad picture of what the teacher candidates believed and thought they may have been capable of doing at that point.

The interviews provided a more focused source of data since the questions were designed around the efficacy indicators. Utilizing a qualitative data analysis program, I coded the interview data by the

efficacy indicator pieces of text represented. This allowed me to examine what the teacher candidates were saying about their beliefs and feelings of efficacy according to each efficacy indicator. The data were also coded by data collection phase of the study and origin of the data.

The results of this initial analysis of the data provided me with some guidance regarding what beliefs and knowledge areas needed to be addressed in the instructional intervention. This baseline of beliefs and knowledge was later utilized to assist in identifying teacher candidates to be followed into their field placements.

Study Section One, Phase Two Data Analysis

The second phase of data collection was used to examine the beliefs and levels of efficacy of the teacher candidates, for whom I have data, upon the completion of the instructional intervention. Since the return rate of surveys and participation in the interviews were low, but four of the five interns I would later follow into their internships did complete them, these data were maintained to track areas of change between the course and field. All of the surveys were also used to support or refute the themes emerging from the qualitative data.

The interviews, conducted by someone else, consisted of the same questions as were asked in first phase of data collection. I reread the

interview data from the first phase of data collection along with the interview transcripts for this phase helped to produce four emerging themes. It was also used as a means of assisting in the selection of interns.

The phase two data were coded according to the theme and efficacy indicator represented by each piece of text. The data were also coded according to the phase in the study, the respondent (specific respondent if it was an intern and "other" if the data came from someone else from the subject pool) and the origin of the data. The first phase interview data were recoded to match this method.

Copies of teacher candidates' assignments were used to supplement the survey and interview information. Data from the documents were coded in the same manner as the interviews and specific strategies recommended for making accommodations were noted from the documents of the interns. The interns were asked about these strategies in the fourth phase interviews to determine if they had used them and if so, whether or not they had felt able to effectively implement them.

Study Section Two, Phase Three Data Analysis

The surveys completed by the interns at the end of this phase of

data collection were used to examine changes in efficacy levels. Three of the five interns had completed surveys from the first and second phases of data collection, so changes from the beginning of the study to this time were able to be examined. One of the remaining interns completed the phase two surveys and change was also examined for her. The final intern only completed the survey for this phase, so it was used to complement other data.

Three interviews were conducted with the interns during this phase of data collection. An initial read of the transcripts revealed a fifth theme emerging from the data. These interviews were coded in the same way as the interview data from past phases of data collection, with the fifth theme added. The interview data from the first two phases were also reread and passages of text relevant to this new theme were coded accordingly.

The interns' field instructors and collaborating teachers were also interviewed during the third phase of data collection. These interviews were coded in the same manner as the interns' data to examine similarities and differences in their beliefs and areas of efficacy. This information was used to help me narrow potential impacting factors in the field for each of the interns.

Two lessons were observed for each intern during this phase of data collection. The observation data were coded in the same manner as the interviews to look for ways the interns' teaching behaviors and statements made in the interviews coincided or contradicted each other. Particular features of each interns' context were noted to explore as impacting features of the field.

Study Section Two, Phase Four Data Analysis

Interns were observed for a full school day during the second half of their lead teaching period. This full day observation allowed me to see how students with disabilities were pulled from the classroom for special assistance, how they were brought back in, and a broader perspective on the patterns of interaction in the classroom. This observation data was coded the same way as in prior phases.

The final interview for this phase of data collection consisted of questions derived from the observation, each intern's responses to past questions, responses of their collaborating teacher and field instructor to interview questions, work done on assignments during the instructional intervention, and the five themes. These questions were designed to prompt the interns to confirm or contradict past data regarding inclusive

beliefs and knowledge (See Appendix C). These interviews were coded in the same manner as in prior phases of data collection.

# Chapter 4

## Results

This chapter will examine each part of the research questions driving this study:

> How do interns' knowledge, efficacy, and beliefs about the inclusion of students with disabilities change during preparation for teaching? To what extent can these changes be accounted for as the interaction of a) their responses to an integrated instructional approach in a teacher education program and b) particular features of their internship experience?

Using the survey and interview data from phase one, I will describe the teacher candidates' beliefs and feelings of efficacy prior to the instructional intervention. I will then discuss the post instructional intervention data.

The second section of this chapter explores the data collected during the internship experience of the five interns. I will begin by describing how I used the results from the analysis of the first two phases of data collection to select interns I followed into their internship placements. I will then provide a profile of each of these five individuals and their internship settings. Finally, I will examine the survey, interview, and observation data for changes in the levels of efficacy of these five

interns. This examination will include particular attention to those factors in their internship placements that seemed to influence those changes.

I will discuss the results of the data analysis in this chapter and summarize the findings of each section. Major findings and conclusions will be reported in the next chapter.

### Section One: Pre and Post Instructional Intervention

Three surveys about teaching in inclusive environments (See Appendix A) provide data for the pre and post instructional intervention of the efficacy levels of the teacher candidates: 1) Ratings for Classroom Teachers, which asked the teacher candidates to rate their perceptions of their efficacy levels as future inclusive educators, 2) Classroom Survey, which asked the teacher candidates to rate their current beliefs about inclusive issues, and 3) Knowledge/Ability Survey, which asked the teacher candidates to rate their current knowledge about special education-related practices. All of the surveys utilized a Likert-type scale.

I conducted a reliability analysis on item groupings for each efficacy indicator of the first phase surveys to check the internal reliability. By utilizing Cronbach's Alpha, I was able to determine the degree to which the selected survey items were examining similar ideas (See Tables 4.1-

3). Overall, I found that the survey items selected for each indicator of efficacy were examining similar ideas half (.50 low alpha score) to most (.92 high alpha score) of the time. This would indicate that my interpretation of the survey items was similar to the teacher candidates'.

Phase One (Pre Instructional Intervention) Survey Results

I used the first phase set of surveys to examine the levels of efficacy of the teacher candidates before the instructional intervention. I also used these data to help me decide what to emphasize during the instructional intervention. Later, this set of data was used, in part, to determine which teacher candidates would be followed into their internship placements.

I administered the survey to the teacher candidates during their sections of TE401 in the spring semester of 1998. Participation was voluntary, with 22 teacher candidates of a possible 34 completing the surveys. The surveys were numbered, thus maintaining the anonymity of the teacher candidates while allowing me to identify participants after the instructional intervention.

I examined the survey items and placed each with the efficacy indicator that shared a similar meaning. This was done to create

composite scores according to those categories of efficacy, using the individual survey items (See Tables 4.1-3).

I used the composite scores of survey items for each efficacy indicator to determine measures of central tendency and variance. The Classroom Survey was used to examine the beliefs of the teacher candidates regarding issues related to inclusion (See Table 4.1). Six out of eight of the means of the composite scores for each efficacy indicator showed responses in the Neutral to Agree range. The indicator regarding assessment and learning produced a mean of 4.0, and the highest mean score, 4.3, was attributed to the indicator regarding the need for knowledge of the special education system to advocate for students with disabilities.

The distribution of the mean scores of the teacher candidates was slightly skewed to the right (See Graph 4.1). This indicates that overall the teacher candidates entered phase one, TE 401, with beliefs that were inclusive.

**Table 4.1 Classroom Survey**

| Inclusive Beliefs | Mean | Min | Max | α | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Students with disabilities can learn in a general education setting. | 3.4 | 2.5 | 4.1 | .66 | .52 |
| Students with disabilities can be efficiently managed in a general education setting. | 3.5 | 2.5 | 4.4 | .58 | .64 |
| Reflection is useful for the improvement of teaching. | 3.9 | 3.4 | 4.4 | .88 | .50 |
| Collaboration with colleagues and parents/guardians is a useful strategy for working with students with disabilities. | 3.8 | 3.2 | 4.1 | .85 | .48 |
| Teacher expectations should be high for all students. | 3.6 | 2.5 | 4.4 | .65 | .64 |
| Learning can be demonstrated and assessed in a variety of ways. | 4.0 | 3.1 | 4.4 | .77 | .49 |
| A basic knowledge of the special education system and processes makes it possible to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities. | 4.3 | 3.3 | 4.9 | .69 | .64 |
| The responsibility for a student's success is shared between the student and the teachers. | 3.5 | 2.5 | 4.4 | .55 | .71 |

Graph 4.1

## Classroom Survey Group Distribution



Std. Dev = .21
Mean = 3.06
N = 22.00

### Teacher Candidate Means
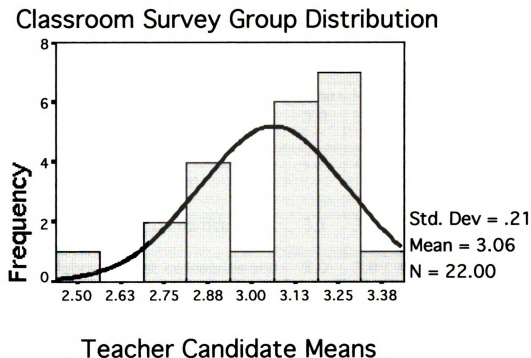
The Knowledge/Ability Survey was designed to examine the teacher candidates' perception of their current knowledge of special education and ability to implement the practices associated with teaching in inclusive classrooms, prior to TE 402 (See Table 4.2). They rated themselves in the Disagree to Neutral range on four of the efficacy indicators. The remaining four were rated on or very near the Neutral response.

The distribution of the mean scores of the teacher candidates was skewed to the left (See Graph 4.2). This would indicate that overall the

teacher candidates rated themselves slightly below the middle rating

category of Neutral. Their self rating indicate that they did not believe

they had the knowledge necessary to be inclusive educators.

Table 4.2  Knowledge/Ability Survey

| Inclusive Knowledge/Ability | Mean | Min | Max | α | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| "I can help students with disabilities learn in a general education setting." | 3.0 | 2.3 | 3.7 | .92 | .48 |
| "I can efficiently manage students with disabilities in a general education setting." | 2.9 | 2.3 | 3.4 | .91 | .46 |
| "I can use reflection to improve my teaching." | 3.1 | 3.0 | 3.2 | .65 | .17 |
| "I can collaborate with colleagues and parents/guardians to improve my work with students with disabilities." | 3.0 | 2.6 | 3.4 | .90 | .36 |
| "I can help all students meet my high expectations." | 2.7 | 2.3 | 3.2 | .89 | .50 |
| "I can assess learning in a variety of ways." | 3.0 | 2.8 | 3.4 | .88 | .22 |
| "I understand the special education system and processes enough to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities." | 2.4 | 2.1 | 3.0 | .88 | .39 |
| "I can recognize and accept my responsibilities for the success of students with disabilities included in my classroom." | 2.9 | 2.2 | 3.4 | .90 | .44 |

Graph 4.2

## Knowledge/Ability Survey Group Distribution



Std. Dev = .81
Mean = 2.84
N = 22.00
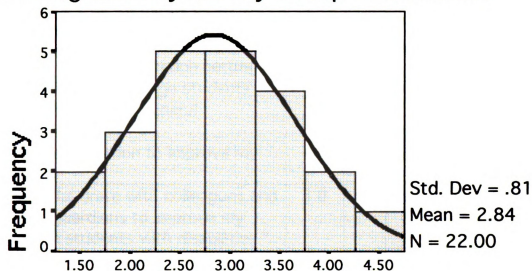
### Teacher Candidate Means

The Ratings for Classroom Teachers survey was designed to examine how the teacher candidates perceived their efficacy as future inclusive educators (See Table 4.3). They rated themselves between Neutral and Agree on four of the eight indicators and at Agree or between Agree and Strongly Agree on the other four.

The distribution of mean scores of the group surveyed skewed to the right, or there was more of a tendency to answer the survey items with an Agree or Strongly Agree response (See Graph 4.3). Overall, this

indicates that the teacher candidates expected to become effective

inclusive educators. Prior to the intervention, they felt highly efficacious.

Table 4.3  Ratings for Classroom Teachers

| Inclusive Knowledge/Ability | Mean | Min | Max | α | S.D. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| "I can help students with disabilities learn in a general education setting." | 4.0 | 3.5 | 4.5 | .88 | .28 |
| "I can efficiently manage students with disabilities in a general education setting." | 4.0 | 3.4 | 4.3 | .91 | .22 |
| "I can use reflection to improve my teaching." | 4.0 | 3.8 | 4.1 | .50 | .17 |
| "I can collaborate with colleagues and parents/guardians to improve my work with students with disabilities." | 3.8 | 3.3 | 4.3 | .86 | .30 |
| "I can help all students meet my high expectations." | 4.2 | 3.6 | 4.6 | .86 | .28 |
| "I can assess learning in a variety of ways." | 3.2 | 3.0 | 3.5 | .83 | .22 |
| "I understand the special education system and processes enough to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities." | 3.7 | 3.3 | 4.0 | .74 | .28 |
| "I can recognize and accept my responsibilities for the success of students with disabilities included in my classroom." | 3.9 | 3.5 | 4.3 | .78 | .24 |

Graph 4.3

Ratings for Classroom Teachers Survey Group Distribution



Teacher Candidate Means

Std. Dev = .45
Mean = 3.87
N = 22.00
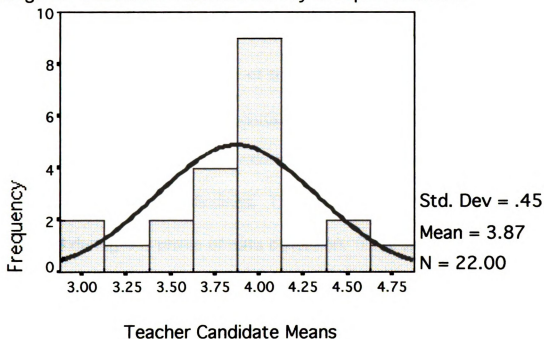
<u>Overall Phase One (Pre Instructional Intervention )Survey Findings</u>

1) The data suggest that teacher candidates believed that knowledge of the special education system is important for their work with disabilities, but acknowledged that they knew little about it. This interpretation is based on their mean scores on the seventh efficacy indicator on all of the surveys.

2) The teacher candidates predicted that they could improve in their ability to meet the needs of students with disabilities. This interpretation is based on their Neutral to Strongly Agree mean scores

on the eight efficacy indicators of the Ratings for Classroom Teachers survey.

3) The teacher candidates held overall inclusive beliefs.  This interpretation is based on their Neutral to Strongly Agree mean scores on the eight efficacy indicators of the Classroom Survey.

Phase One (Pre Instructional Intervention) Interview Results

The phase one interview, conducted before the instructional intervention, yielded similar findings.  Thirteen teacher candidates were interviewed during this phase of data collection.  They were all asked the same eight questions, which were designed to address the eight efficacy indicators (See Appendix B for the Interview Questions).  As with the surveys, my analysis of the interview data was intended to help me identify the beliefs and knowledge these teacher candidates had prior to the instructional intervention.  I also used the interview data to assist me in planning the instructional intervention.

In order to explicate these data, I will first quote examples of responses given by the teacher candidates that provide evidence for their beliefs about inclusion.  Next, I will quote responses that are evidence the teacher candidates provided as they considered teaching in inclusive environments.  These responses will provide evidence of the teacher

candidates' knowledge/abilities. Using this format will provide evidence regarding the two parts of efficacy, beliefs and knowledge.

In the interview, the questions were asked in an order that prevented the teacher candidates from predicting what the interviewer would be looking for next. Therefore, I will not always report the questions in the order they were asked in the interviews. I will address them here in a way that makes more sense conceptually.

Beliefs About Inclusion

Question One:

"The inclusion of special education students in general education classrooms is becoming increasingly common. Some people believe all students should be placed in general education full time. As a future teacher, what do you think about this? How do you see this working in your future classroom?"

This question was designed to elicit the teacher candidates' beliefs about the purpose of inclusion. One purpose mentioned was how inclusion could be beneficial for the self-esteem of the students with disabilities:

Lillie - "I've always thought that the stigma of special education should be done away with. I remember when I was in school and I was around other kids who were in special education. I don't think it's right that they have to be put away. I think that everybody should be together."

Janet – "I think for the special education students, you know, it kind of gives them a better outlook on themselves."

Others suggested that the purpose of inclusion was for the benefit of the general education students:

> Janet – "I also think it's important for the regular education students to, you know, get the experience working and, you know, socializing with kids that have, you know, handicaps or disabilities and learning from them as well."

However, some of the teacher candidates seemed to believe that the purpose of inclusion was not to replace special education:

> Elaine - "I disagree with the whole time inclusion. I feel that, I think that there should be teachers that have been specifically trained in areas such as special education and they should be spending at least part of their day with that person so they are not going to be completely lost in the classroom curriculum."

> Natalie - "I think it's good that special education students are placed in general education more but I don't think it should be strictly all. I think they have some special needs that other teachers need to meet."

> Elaine – "I'm not sure, I think for kids who have mild disabilities, mild learning disabilities, for them I think inclusion is definitely a good thing. When you get to kids that can't function normally any part of the day, then, I think it's a different story. It's sad, but I think that they should have at least way more time with the special education teacher, maybe coming in for an hour of the day to be with kids that are normal and spend time with them."

Teacher educators need to understand what teacher candidates believe is the purpose for inclusion. Based on this belief, teacher candidates may make decisions about what content is important to learn in the program. For example, if teacher candidates believe that the main

purpose of inclusion is to bolster the self-esteem of students with

disabilities, then they may not consider instruction about making

accommodations relevant to their futures as teachers.

Question Two:

"One of the issues being discussed as inclusive efforts continue is whether or not this is an efficient approach. There is concern that the presence of students with disabilities in a general education classroom will be disruptive. The student will require an inordinate amount of the teacher's time, the other students will suffer as a result of this inequity of attention, and the student with disabilities will not receive adequate support in this context. As a future teacher, what do you think about this? How do you see this working in your future classroom?"

This question elicited responses regarding what the teacher candidates

thought constituted acceptable criteria for whether or not a student with

disabilities should be included in general education. Some teacher

candidates seemed to believe the level of severity of the disability would

be the main criterion:

Curt – "I don't think a student should just automatically be in a general education classroom because that might hinder the performance of everybody. I don't know, I think it's a matter of degree, it's kind of hard to place a degree on how you make that decision, but I think you have to consider lots of things. If they are manageable, then I think the general education classroom is the best place for them. But I think in certain situations, I don't agree because you are already dealing with so many students."

Natalie – "It seems like having all the special ed kids in the room might not work. I mean, there may be some who have problems

that are too much for the general education teacher to handle. I guess it depends on how bad the problems are."

It is important for teacher educators to know that the teacher candidates may believe that the severity of a student's disability should be the criterion used to consider how they should be included in general education. This could indicate that the teacher candidates are not first considering what could be done in the classroom and what they might have to offer the student with disabilities. Instead, they may be focused on what the student is bringing to the classroom.

Question Five:

"The phrase, "all students can learn" is commonly used in current school reform efforts. As a future educator, what do you think about this? How do you see this ideal impacting your work as a future teacher in an inclusive classroom?"

This question was designed to elicit their beliefs about the learning potential of students with disabilities. Inclusive educators need to recognize that all students can learn and have special learning needs. In many of their responses the teacher candidates seemed to recognize that students learn at different rates and need to be taught in various ways:

Angela – "I do think everybody's capable, just at different levels. Maybe, I guess everybody reaches a plateau maybe, where after that you're just schooled out. I mean I can speak from experience. But I think everybody's capable of learning."

Vicky – "I think definitely all children can learn and it's our job to find a way in which they can learn. [But] everyone isn't going to learn everything as easily as I think they are."

Lillie – "Well, I believe it [that all children can learn]. I think I have a hard road ahead of me and I've cut it for myself. That's what I expect to work toward, though that buzz phrase really isn't what has been in my mind. But I do think that all students can learn. I think it's the teacher's responsibility to find out how each student learns. It's up to the teacher to teach how the child learns or how the child thinks is the best way to learn something. You have to find something each student can grasp onto. That's the responsibility of the teacher."

It is important for teacher educators to know that teacher candidates believe that all children can learn, but at different rates and levels. This belief could be helpful in justifying the need for them to learn a variety of teaching methods and the ways that children learn and demonstrate their knowledge.

Prior to the instructional intervention, these teacher candidates seemed to believe that inclusion benefits the self-esteem of students with disabilities, helps general education students learn to be tolerant, and should not completely replace special education. They also believed that the severity of a student's disability should be the primary criterion for inclusion. The teacher candidates believed that all students learn at different rates and levels.

Implementing Inclusion

Question Two:

"One of the issues being discussed as inclusive efforts continue is whether or not this is an efficient approach. There is concern that the presence of students with disabilities in a general education classroom will be disruptive. The student will require an inordinate amount of the teacher's time, the other students will suffer as a result of this inequity of attention, and the student with disabilities will not receive adequate support in this context. As a future teacher, what do you think about this? How do you see this working in your future classroom?"

This question was also designed to elicit responses regarding issues of

fairness and equity that can arise when students with disabilities are

included in general education classrooms. Possible challenges, such as

the potential need for the teacher to spend additional time with the

student with disabilities, were also mentioned in the question. Many of

the teacher candidates responded by discussing the lack of resources,

including time, available to teachers:

> Cathy – "I think that a lot of times the kids are going to fall through the cracks because we're not either going to spend enough money on them or we're not going to provide enough aides for them or we're not going to provide enough special media services, or the teachers simply won't have enough time to do everything."

> Lillie – "Well, I know that I'm going to have my hands full just helping students who aren't in special education. So I'm curious as to how, I'm not really sure. I'm in a gray area on that because I really don't know how I will separate my time."

Yet, others seemed to believe that the teacher was responsible for making things successful, regardless of the resources available:

Vicky – "I think the efficiency depends on the teacher. I think if the teacher is willing to help all the students and has the desire to help all of them and for all of them to learn, then it won't be such a problem. Yes, it will take more time to plan activities for each different group or each student. I think that's something we have to do; it's part of our job. We can make it efficient."

Natalie – "I think, regardless, you're going to have students that are gonna require more attention than others. So even if it's a child that has motivation problems or things like that, I don't find that as a problem 'cause different kids are going to have different needs and require more attention. You kinda do what you gotta do. As a teacher I'm gonna have to work with them and deal with it. I'll have to adjust and be flexible."

It is important for teacher educators to realize this variation in perception of what teachers are capable of doing exists in a group of teacher candidates. Those who are focused on the lack of resources could be reluctant to include students with disabilities. The teacher candidates who believe they will find a way to meet all needs could experience disillusionment when faced with their first field experience. Teacher candidates need to realistically understand the challenges they will face in the classroom.

Question Eight:

"Sometimes students with disabilities who are included in general education classrooms need extra help. As a future general

educator, what do you think your role would be in helping students with disabilities included in your classroom?"

This question was designed to elicit responses regarding how the teacher candidate saw the difference between the responsibilities of the special education teacher and the general education teacher of a student with disabilities. The responses varied between a focus on maintaining order and a focus on creating a learning community:

> Marcia – "I think my role would be to make sure that there's a good relationship going on between that particular student and the rest of the class so that child is not disrupting those kids or those kids are not disrupting that child."

> Curt – "I think the main thing would be to make sure that the kid has like a feeling that he's part of the whole classroom. You should try to make him feel as part of the group. You should include them in activities and talk to them like they're everyone else. I think it's pretty important for self-esteem and you shouldn't really single the kid out. That's what I would be worrying about."

What is important for teacher educators to know is that the teacher candidates did not mention that teaching academics to students with disabilities was part of their role.

> Question Four:

> "In the past, most teachers worked isolated from other adults. Recently, efforts have been made to increase the amount of collaboration occurring between and among teachers and teachers with the parents of their students. As a future teacher, what do you think about this? How do you see these types of collaboration being useful to you as a teacher having students with disabilities in your future classroom?"

was designed to elicit responses regarding how the teacher candidates thought they would use their special education colleagues and the parents of their students with disabilities as resources. Inclusive educators need to be willing to collaborate with these individuals to develop and implement effective Individualized Education Plan's. The teacher candidates saw their colleagues and the parents of the student with disabilities as sources of information about the student and ideas for teaching:

> Cathy – "I think parents can be a really wonderful resource because they know their children better than you do. They know their disabilities better than you do because they probably have been living with her for at least six years by the time they get into a school, five, six years. They know their children's capabilities but at the same time they know that they can do something when the kid says they can't. Other teachers, I think would be an excellent resource. Especially if those people have been doing this for a long time. They might have other ideas, different ways to approach things."

> Natalie – "Well, just like with the background and the parents and things, the more you know about the children, the better you're going to be able to help them. The more you know about their limitations and, or not, it's just going to be helpful to me. Well what, I don't want to use these terms, it's hard with the terms, it's like, not necessarily what's wrong, but, yeah, knowing what's wrong could only help me to help them."

> Elaine – "I think that being able to talk to specialists in the school system, you know, speech therapists, and special education teachers, resource room teachers, etc. is an important thing because you might be able to get really good ideas from those

people about how to get this kid to learn that you might never have thought of because that's not your specialty."

The teacher educator needs to understand whether teacher candidates see the parents and other teachers as valuable sources of information. This perspective could mean that they would value instruction about collaboration.

Prior to the instructional intervention, the teacher candidates believed that time could be a limited commodity for teachers but some teacher candidates believed this is something they could overcome. They believed that the teacher's role in inclusion is to maintain order in the classroom and help the student with disabilities to feel comfortable. Finally, the teacher candidates seemed to believe that the parents of their students and other teachers could be good resources for their work in inclusive classrooms.

### Preparing General Education Teachers for Inclusive Classrooms

Question Seven:

"Current general education teachers often say they feel they don't know a lot about the special education system. As a future teacher, do you think this is an important concern? Why or why not? How do you think what you know about the special education system will impact your work with students with disabilities included in your classroom?"

This question was designed to elicit responses regarding their perspectives on the preparation of teachers for inclusive environments. Many expressed concerns about their ability to work with these students and the potential effect their inexperience could have on the students:

> Cathy – "Maybe the teacher not knowing enough about that particular disability, or that particular child's needs, could do something harmful.  So I think that, as educators, that's one problem that I'm concerned about as a future educator."

> Marcia – "I think I'd be nervous at first because I don't have experience with it.  I'd be afraid of not being able to accommodate that particular student in with the other students.  But if I had more experience and more knowledge and more training I think that I'd be comfortable with it."

> Angela – "I've only seen, I've never been in a special education classroom but I've seen videos and I've seen cases where the teacher gets frustrated and the teacher's not prepared, or maybe he's not trained to work with it, with a special education child."

It is important for teacher educators to know that teacher candidates believe that receiving instruction about students with disabilities would be a valuable part of their preparation program. Recognizing the relevance of content is an important part of being motivated to learn it.

## Overall Phase One (Pre Instructional Intervention) Interview Findings

The following represent the range of beliefs revealed by the pre-intervention interviews.  It is important to remember that no one teacher

candidate held all of these beliefs.  Rather, all of these beliefs emerged from the corpus of the data.

1) The teacher candidates believed the purpose of inclusion was to help the students with disabilities improve their self-esteem and help the general education students to understand diverse individuals.

2) The teacher candidates believed that some time in a special education classroom is important for students with disabilities.

3) The teacher candidates believed that the amount of time a student with disabilities should be included in general education depends on the severity of their disability.

4) The teacher candidates believed that all students learn in various ways and at different rates.

5) The teacher candidates were concerned about a possible lack of resources available for implementing a successful inclusive program.

6) The teacher candidates believed their role as an inclusive educator was to maintain control in the classroom and help the student with disabilities to feel comfortable in the classroom.

7) The teacher candidates believed that the parents of their students as well as their colleagues were a good source of information about students with disabilities and ideas for teaching them.

8) The teacher candidates believed that preparing general education teachers for their work with students with disabilities is important.

## The Instructional Intervention

I used what I learned, as a teacher educator, from the first surveys and interviews to help me design my part of TE 402 (See Table 3.3). I focused the sessions, as described in chapter three, on:

➢ Providing general information about students with disabilities and the special education system

➢ Issues of fairness and equity in a system with limited resources

➢ The impact of inclusion on all of the students

➢ Techniques for accommodating students with disabilities in the general education classroom.

By the end of the course, I hoped the teacher candidates would believe that what they could provide in the inclusive environment is more important than the severity of the students' disabilities when making decisions. I wanted them to recognize the challenges of teaching in inclusive environments and learn the methods for making their efforts successful.

## Phase Two (Post Instructional Intervention) Survey Data

Following the course, I administered the surveys to the thirty-four subjects but received only nine in return. I believe this low return rate could best be explained by the time period in which the surveys were given. It was the last week of the summer term and the students were finishing major projects for their courses. I believe it is likely that most of the teacher candidates did not believe they had the time necessary for completing the surveys.

The number of returned surveys was not adequate for using them to create an accurate portrayal of the teacher candidates' ideas after TE 402. The small number of surveys would make it possible for extreme scores to skew the results. However, four of the teacher candidates who I would later follow into the field completed the phase two surveys. Their survey data will be discussed in the second section of this chapter as part of their profiles.

## Phase Two (Post Instructional Intervention) Interview Data

Eleven teacher candidates consented to be interviewed following their completion of TE 402, however, only eight of the interviews were completed. One of the teacher candidates had to leave town and was unable to be interviewed. The other two interviews were not completed

due to difficulties with the equipment. The pool of actual interviewees for the post course interviews included individuals who had not participated in the first interviews. Given the voluntary nature of the process, teacher candidates could opt to participate in all or parts of the data collection process.

I trained an outside interviewer to conduct these interviews. She asked the same eight questions used for the first phase of interviewing. These interviews occurred after the instructional intervention had been completed.

In order to explicate these data, I will first quote examples of responses given by the teacher candidates for whom I have data that provide evidence for what they believed about inclusion. Next, I will quote responses that are clear examples of strategies the teacher candidates used when considering teaching in inclusive environments. Using this format will provide evidence regarding the two parts of efficacy, beliefs and knowledge.

The low number of interviews conducted did not make it possible for me to create an accurate portrayal of the teacher candidates' changes in ideas after TE 402. However, I will present the results from the data collected. While the data collected during phase two do not

permit me to speak confidently about how the teacher candidates' ideas changed due to the instructional intervention, they do provide information regarding what the teacher candidates for whom I have data believed and knew at the time they entered the internship. Also, since four of the five interns completed these interviews, their data will be used to illustrate their development during the study. Those teacher candidates who were interviewed for this phase but not the first will be designated with an asterisk.

I will not address the questions in the order they were asked in the interviews. The questions were not asked in a logical, sequential manner to avoid having the teacher candidates make predictions about what the interviewer would be looking for next. However, I will address them here in a way that makes sense conceptually.

<u>Beliefs About Inclusion</u>

Question One:

"The inclusion of special education students in general education classrooms is becoming increasingly common. Some people believe all students should be placed in general education full time. As a future teacher, what do you think about this? How do you see this working in your future classroom?"

This question was designed to elicit the teacher candidates' beliefs about the purpose of inclusion.   One purpose mentioned was how inclusion could be beneficial for the self-esteem of the students with disabilities:

> *Chloe – "I think it's also probably beneficial for the special education student to be included in the classroom where regular education students are just for modeling and their self-esteem."

Another purpose of inclusion mentioned was that it could be beneficial for the general education students:

> *Chloe – "I think that it can be beneficial for the regular education students to be exposed to people, to learn to work with people with disabilities.  Also, just the regular education students could maybe provide some assistance, like say with reading or writing or that type of thing to the special education students."

The teacher candidates stated that time spent in a special education classroom was necessary for students with disabilities:

> *Libby – "I think it can depend on the child.  I really think that education should start everything in our society.  We should start looking at people as individuals or trying to, probably some children are going to need more attention than what they can get in just a regular classroom.  I think that maybe they would need to have outside help at different times.  But I would like to have them included in my classroom as much as possible."

> Abbey – "Hopefully I will have a co-teaching model like we learned in the class where there will be a special education teacher in there all the time but I know that's not possible all the time.  Maybe sometimes the students will need to go to that [special education] room."

The teacher candidates stated what they believed constituted acceptable criteria for whether or not a student with disabilities should be included in general education. Many believed that the level of severity of the disability would be the main factor:

> *Laurie – "But my concern is students with serious impairments will hold up a class, without a doubt. When I worked in classes in a school system where students were very accelerated to begin with, and that teacher moved at that pace. So without a doubt it would hold the other ones back. I don't think it's fair to the child and I don't think it's fair to the teacher."

> *Hillary – "I think anything beyond mild, like if they're severely disabled in a certain area then they might need extra help. But they should still be able to be in the regular classroom at least seventy to seventy-five percent of the time, but they might just need to be pulled out periodically for certain things or to have someone come into the classroom."

> *Chloe – "I think that having special education students in the classroom is positive for myself, the other students, and the special education students. On a full time basis, I think it's dependent on the level of disability that the student has, if it's going to be the most beneficial for everybody that they be placed in the classroom full time. "

> Curt – "Well, as far as addressing the issue if every special needs person should be in class, I think it kind of relies on the severity of that individual."

> Question Five:

> "The phrase, "all students can learn" is commonly used in current school reform efforts. As a future educator, what do you think about this? How do you see this ideal impacting your work as a future teacher in an inclusive classroom?"

This question was designed to elicit their beliefs about the learning potential of students with disabilities. Inclusive educators need to recognize that all students can learn and have special learning needs. The teacher candidates believed that students learn at different rates and need to be taught in various ways:

> *Chloe – "I think I definitely agree with the statement that all students can learn. It's something that can act as a challenge to teachers, I think, because if you recognize that all students can learn, all students are learning at different levels, at different speeds, starting out at different places, as really a challenge to the teacher to try to accommodate all those different learning styles and levels. But I think as a teacher you should challenge yourself to make those modifications for all of the students."

> *Hillary – "Yeah, I think so. I think "all students can learn" doesn't say it all, though. I think that students learn at different levels, some students probably learn more than others because, you know, you have the gifted kids or you have somebody who's not motivated. I think the goal should be keeping in mind that all students can learn but you need to look at the individual student and have realistic expectations so they can experience success and so they know that they can learn. Obviously, their [students with disabilities] learning curve isn't going to be as big as some genius kid but they're going to learn, nonetheless. It's important for them to learn, for all the kids to learn, no matter what their level is or their IQ or whatever."

> Vicky – "I very much hold that ideal. I think that all kids can learn and that if the teacher is willing to do everything to help that child learn then the child will learn. I think there will be different things that the kids need, that will require a lot of time and effort and reflecting and thinking about what you're doing and seeing what works with each kid. I think definitely all kids can learn. Maybe not exactly the same as other kids and not quite as well, but they will learn and take something out of the classroom."

Overall, the teacher candidates believed that inclusion benefits the self-esteem of students with disabilities, helps general education students learn to be tolerant, and should not completely replace special education. They also believed that the severity of a student's disability should be the primary criterion for inclusion. The teacher candidates believed that all students learn at different rates and levels.

### Implementing Inclusion

Question Two:

"One of the issues being discussed as inclusive efforts continue is whether or not this is an efficient approach. There is concern that the presence of students with disabilities in a general education classroom will be disruptive. The student will require an inordinate amount of the teacher's time, the other students will suffer as a result of this inequity of attention, and the student with disabilities will not receive adequate support in this context. As a future teacher, what do you think about this? How do you see this working in your future classroom?"

was also designed to elicit responses regarding issues of fairness and equity that can arise when students with disabilities are included in general education classrooms. Possible challenges, such as the potential need for the teacher to spend additional time with the student with disabilities, were also mentioned in the question. Many of the teacher candidates responded by discussing the lack of resources, including time, available to teachers:

*Chloe – "It [inclusion] would probably be a more positive experience with more resources from the school and it could probably be a bigger challenge with fewer resources in terms of additional help in the classroom. So I guess that's kind of basically how you would see working it as a teacher and that would be dependent upon the resources available in the school."

*Laurie – "I feel that it's [inclusion] going to pose serious, serious problems, I really do. I feel that there's no way on earth that an average teacher is going to meet those needs."

This focus on resources is important for the teacher educator to note. Teacher candidates who believe the success of students with disabilities depends on the resources available could assume their efforts alone, as teachers, will be ineffective with these students.

Question Eight:

"Sometimes students with disabilities who are included in general education classrooms need extra help. As a future general educator, what do you think your role would be in helping students with disabilities included in your classroom?"

This question was designed to elicit responses regarding how the teacher candidate saw the difference between the responsibilities of the special education teacher and the general education teacher of a student with disabilities. The responses varied between a focus maintaining order and creating a learning community:

Curt – "I think that, again, the role of the teacher is to provide an opportunity and facilitate learning with each student and as far as how much that student progresses is totally based on that person, well not totally based on that person, but it has to come from that

110

person with me being the stimulator as far as to get them to learn things, to gain knowledge, and to use that knowledge in a critical way."

*Libby – "Yeah, well I think that as a teacher my job is to meet the need of all of my students, which means finding out how they learn, what different ways they learn, what helps them the most and try to change, you know, make my strategies fit their needs."

*Chloe – "I guess my role would be to provide them with as much support as I can to help probably to achieve the goals that have already been set out in the IEP. I guess I'm coming to the realization that I probably won't be able to give all the students all the help that I want to. Hopefully, I can help them to become reliant on each other and also on themselves to get the help that they need."

Question Four:

"In the past, most teachers worked isolated from other adults. Recently, efforts have been made to increase the amount of collaboration occurring between and among teachers and teachers with the parents of their students. As a future teacher, what do you think about this? How do you see these types of collaboration being useful to you as a teacher having students with disabilities in your future classroom?"

was designed to elicit responses regarding how the teacher candidates

thought they would use their special education colleagues and the

parents of their students with disabilities as resources. Inclusive

educators need to be willing to collaborate with these individuals to

develop and implement effective Individualized Education Plans. The

teacher candidates believed their colleagues and the parents of the

student with disabilities as sources of information about the student and

ideas for teaching. During this phase of interviews the teacher

candidates gave specific examples of the forms this support might take:

> *Libby – "Well, we talked in our special education classes about having different, special education teachers in our classroom with us and I think that would be a good. The best approach is to have a special education teacher who either works as a team with an elementary teacher or something like that."

> Abbey – "I think the more help the better. We learned about different models like there's the co-teaching model where the special education teacher would be in the classroom. That would be wonderful. You could have someone who knows what to do with special education children in the classroom because I'm not a special education expert. It would help a lot. If the parents got involved, that would be great too. The more help the better."

> Curt – "One of the things that I think I would do would be to talk to the teacher who had the student the year before. I'd see what ideas I could get from that teacher about that student or I'd just want to know about any of my students. Also, I think it's really important because there are so many ideas out there and one person can't know them all so if you're going to reach every student you will have to gather as many ideas as possible. Other teachers might be able to help as far as including that student with special needs and maybe I don't, subconsciously, do the right thing as far as trying to get them in front of the class."

Overall, the teacher candidates believed that time could be a

limited commodity for teachers. They also believed that the teacher's

role in inclusion is to maintain order in the classroom and help the student

with disabilities to feel comfortable. Finally, the teacher candidates

believed that the parents of their students and other teachers could be

good resources for their work in inclusive classrooms.

Preparing General Education Teachers for Inclusive Classrooms

Question Seven:

"Current general education teachers often say they feel they don't know a lot about the special education system. As a future teacher, do you think this is an important concern? Why or why not? How do you think what you know about the special education system will impact your work with students with disabilities included in your classroom?"

was designed to elicit responses regarding their perspectives on the

preparation of teachers for inclusive environments. Many teacher

candidates expressed concerns about their ability to work with these

students and the potential effect their inexperience could have on the

students:

> *Chloe – "If teachers don't have the knowledge of the system they don't know what resources are available to assist the students and to assist themselves when teaching the students. I think it's very important that teachers are knowledgeable about the special education system."

> *Hillary – "I feel like I don't know much about it either and I'd like to know more about it. I think that they ought to have classes for regular education teachers so they can learn about those types of things. They're going to be, like, I'm going to be out there and come into contact with different personnel, different systems, and obviously you have to know about them. Even if you're not a special education major. I think it's important for regular education students to have classes or even one class at least to learn about these things or a seminar or something."

<u>Course Effect</u>

As the teacher candidates were responding to the questions for this phase of interviews, some volunteered comments that were specific to what they had or had not learned from the course. Chloe was able to talk about some of the things that she had learned:

> *Chloe – "I guess one of the, I kind of feel that my knowledge is limited, but one of the things I do know is about the IEP that has to be done each year and obviously that would be something that would be a differentiation point between the special education and the regular education students that has to be done for them. There's also, in some schools there is additional help for some students whether it would be in the classroom or a resource outside of the classroom that can be used to give the special education students the help that they need. I think that it's going to, I have a general idea of how the system works and from my understanding it's going to vary from district to district and school to school. I don't know, because everything is so different, I probably couldn't be more prepared than I am now. I have a general awareness and then I need to go out and find out the specific information myself."

But Libby, Abbey, and Laurie did not believe they had learned enough:

> *Libby – "I just think that, I don't know, we've learned some strategies for dealing with students with disabilities. I think that what I've learned so far isn't very deep as far as, I mean we just had time to touch the surface of what we probably need to be doing."

> Abbey – "I feel I don't know enough. I think our special education class was helpful, but, we had so little time that we only touched on a few things. We had the basic concepts but nothing too involved."

*Laurie – "What I've gotten is so minimal that it's not going to benefit me at all. But what it has made me aware of is that I will have to consult my resources, and that is the staff in the school, whoever is in charge of the special education area and finding out exactly where they are at, finding out what the criteria is, what's the IEP plan, and having to look at that and do my homework that way. Try to structure activities, etc., so I can accommodate as much as I can, the needs of that child and still have the group be productive, which is kind of like having a lot of plates in the air at the same time."

## Phase Two (Post Instructional Intervention)Document Data

The documents collected for this study were the teacher candidates' responses to assignments given in the context of the instructional intervention. Nineteen of the teacher candidates agreed to allow their work to be a part of the study.

Two kinds of written work were used for the document analysis. First, the teacher candidates completed an initial fast write, which was completed after I presented the first session, in which they explained what they had learned and what they felt they still needed to learn. After the session on issues of fairness and equity, the teacher candidates were asked to respond in writing to three questions designed to get their thoughts and opinions about these issues.

Second, they completed a lesson analysis, which included the "what if?" component, requiring them to think and write about themselves as

young learners with a certain disability. The teacher candidates also made accommodations for two students with disabilities within the context of the unit they completed for their science methods class. This assignment required them to fully describe both students, respond to the lessons using the "voice" of each student, and, as the teacher, make recommendations for accommodating the lessons for each student.

Both types of written work documented beliefs about inclusive issues and ideas for implementing inclusion. They revealed what they thought about issues of fairness and equity and ideas they had for making accommodations.

<u>Beliefs About Inclusion</u>

I will base my description of the inclusive beliefs teacher candidates held based on an examination of the responses the teacher candidates wrote to the questions about fairness and equity (See Table 4.4). These responses were written at the end of a three-hour session that included discussion about the teacher as a limited resource and the "one size fits all" curriculum.

Table 4.4   Beliefs Regarding Fairness and Equity

| Questions | Responses (# of times mentioned) |
|---|---|
| "What do you think are the main fairness and equity issues encountered by an educator?" | Teacher time (16)<br>Assessment of students (13)<br>Distribution of financial resources (15)<br>Student work (17) |
| "Choose two of the issues you identified and explain your stance on them." | Teacher time:<br>➢ Should be evenly distributed<br>➢ Should be distributed as needed<br>➢ Just not enough time to meet all students' needs |
| | Assessment of students:<br>➢ All should be assessed in the same way<br>➢ Should be assessed as individuals |
| | Distribution of financial resources:<br>➢ Should be evenly distributed<br>➢ Should be distributed as needed<br>➢ Just not enough money |
| | Student work:<br>➢ Designed to meet individual needs |
| "Choose one of the two issues you identified and explain how you would implement your stance in your classroom." | Sample Responses |
| | Teacher time:<br>➢ Make sure to spend time with every child each day<br>➢ Work with students before and after school |
| | Assessment of students:<br>➢ Help students understand that everyone has different needs<br>➢ Be discreet about making accommodations |
| | Distribution of financial resources:<br>➢ Figure out how to stretch what is there<br>➢ Lobby for more |
| | Student work:<br>➢ Help students understand that everyone has different needs<br>➢ Be discreet about making accommodations |

The teacher candidates gave evidence that they were looking for a

balance between equally distributing resources to all of the students and

117

attempting to meet all of the students' needs. This was evident in their responses regarding the distribution of resources and the assessment of students. In their responses, most acknowledged that achieving this balance will be difficult. They seemed to be trying to gain a balance between what the students needed and what they, as teachers would be able to do, by involving other individuals to help meet the needs. This could mean that the teacher candidates were recognizing some of the challenging aspects of teaching.

### Implementing Inclusion

In a culminating activity, the teacher candidates were asked to create accommodations as part of a science unit they had developed. I will describe those accommodations the teacher candidates recommended for the science unit to examine what they had come to understand at this point. The teacher candidates were required to make accommodations for two students they drew from an envelope. There were five possible students, three with learning disabilities, one with a mild mental impairment, and one with an emotional impairment. I will organize the description based on the accommodations recommended for each of these imagined students (See Table 4.5).

**Table 4.5  Accommodations for Science Unit**

| Student | Accommodations (# of times recommended) | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | Student - Independently | Other Help |
| Brad – A student with a learning disability in written expression. | Write less (2)<br>Draw (4)<br>Do orally (1) | Use parapro (2)<br>Teacher help (6)<br>Modeling (1)<br>Encouragement(6)<br>Praise (4) |
| Heather – A student with an emotional impairment, lives with foster parents. | | Use parapro (4)<br>Incentives (4)<br>Praise (6)<br>Build trust (2)<br>Other students (7)<br>Foster parents (5) |
| Rick – A student with a learning disability in reading comprehension. | Do simpler work (5) | Teacher help (6)<br>Other students (9)<br>More time to work (5) |
| Cheryl – A student with a mild mental impairment. | Simpler/more concrete work (8)<br>Less work (7) | Other students (8)<br>More time to work (4)<br>Teacher help (5)<br>Parents (3)<br>Parapro (4)<br>Sp Ed. Teacher (1) |
| Trinity – A student with a learning disability in basic reading skills. | Organizational checklist (1) | Other students (7)<br>Teacher help (6)<br>Parapro (7) |

The teacher candidates used accommodations that relied heavily on other individuals to provide assistance to the students with disabilities as opposed to adapting materials or the environment. This disproportionate reliance on the direct intervention of others suggest that for practice the teacher candidates would be inclined to give the students with disabilities

little opportunity to practice managing their own learning. The teacher candidates also assumed little responsibility for the academic learning of the students with disabilities. The teacher candidates believed they should maintain control in the classroom and help the students with disabilities to feel comfortable. Addressing the academic learning needs of the students with disabilities was not considered to be a part of their role.

## Phase Two (Post Instructional Intervention) Summary Results

This summary of the results of the phase two data represents those beliefs that emerged from the corpus of the data. It is important to remember that no one teacher candidate held all or none of these beliefs.

One of these beliefs was that the degree of inclusion should be determined by the severity of the student's disability. It is important for teacher educators to know that the teacher candidates may believe that the severity of a student's disability should be the criterion used to consider how they should be included in general education. This could indicate that the teacher candidates are not first considering what could be done in the classroom and what they might have to offer the student with disabilities.

Another belief was that the primary purpose for students to be included was to help them improve their self-esteem. It is important for teacher educators to understand what teacher candidates believe is the purpose for inclusion. Based on this belief, teacher candidates may make decisions about what content is important to learn in the program. For example, if they believe that the main purpose of inclusion is to bolster the self-esteem of students with disabilities, then they may not consider instruction about making accommodations relevant to their futures as teachers.

The belief that additional support is needed in the classroom in order for students with disabilities to be successfully included was evident in two places. This belief was mentioned in the interviews and suggested in the science units as an accommodation strategy. This support could come in the form of having a paraprofessional or another teacher present in the classroom. Other students were also considered a primary source of support.

The beliefs that the degree of inclusion depends on the severity of the student's disability and that accommodations should come in the form of direct intervention from another individual seem to take the teacher candidates from a focus on helping the students to learn to

seeing their role as passive participants in the students' programs. The belief that it would be the severity of the student's disability that would determine the degree of inclusion attributes the chances for success to the student. The belief that the best means for dealing with these students in the classroom is the support of another individual attributes the chances for success during implementation to someone else. The teacher candidates for whom I have data did not seem to consider the possibility of teaching the student with disabilities to learn academics in the environment themselves. Although they were able to talk about some strategies for teaching the students with disabilities during the interviews, their science units included only a few accommodations to the curriculum, specific methods of teaching, and/or adaptations of the classroom structure.

The belief that the main purpose for inclusion is for the students with disabilities to improve their self-esteem is consistent with a lack of focus on teaching the student with disabilities to work productively. The teacher candidates for whom I have data believed that as long as the students with disabilities are present in the classroom and interacting with other students, the purpose for the inclusion is being addressed. As one teacher candidate said:

*Chloe – "I think when the special education students are in the general education classroom they get a lot out of being with the general education students. I mean, the best thing is how the special education kids can see the general education kids working and playing. It just seems like they would need to have that kind of exposure, as long as they weren't being disruptive."

This would seem to be a return to the mainstreaming concept (Landers & Weaver, 1997). The student with disabilities was expected to adjust to the general education classroom or be returned to the segregated environment. The main difference from the teacher candidates' perspective is that the use of others to help the student function is considered a possible accommodation. The other options for making accommodations addressed in class made were rarely utilized.

The teacher candidates for whom I have data did seem to express a willingness to try to work with the students with disabilities. Many felt that was their role, but seemed to lack the information necessary for implementing this role as a result of the inadequacies of the instructional intervention. This could also explain the tendency to fall back on relying on others:

Elaine – "I know that inclusion is important and I want to do it. I want to have these kids in my classroom and help them. But I just really don't know how to do that."

The highest rated indicator of efficacy on the Classroom Survey during the first phase, that it is important for teachers to know about the

special education system, could be further evidence of the teacher candidates' willingness to try to work with the students with disabilities (See Table 4.1). The same efficacy indicator on the Knowledge/Ability Survey was rated the lowest. This would seem to indicate that the teacher candidates felt they knew little about the special education system before the instructional intervention (See Table 4.2). Therefore, it would seem that the teacher candidates valued inclusion, wanted to implement it, but did not think they knew how. However, they knew that there are teachers who have been trained to do this. It seems a logical that they would conclude that someone with the special training should assist in the inclusive environment.

Several of the teacher candidates for whom I have data mentioned collaborative models when they were interviewed during the second phase of data collection. These models of inclusion were presented and discussed during one of the instructional intervention sessions. It would appear that they gained an understanding of these models, especially those that included the presence of support in the classroom.

Overall, the teacher candidates for whom I have data believed they were not prepared to work with students with disabilities. In the second

phase interviews, many mentioned that they felt the instructional

intervention had presented some information, but not enough.

<u>The Transition to Phase Three, The Internship</u>

The data collected up to this point were used to make decisions

regarding which teacher candidates would be followed into their

internships.  They were also examined to determine if any themes seemed

to be emerging from the data.

<u>Choosing the Interns</u>

I considered many variables when I began choosing possible teacher

candidates to follow into their internship placements.  I considered the

demographics of the subject pool, the individual responses given on the

surveys as compared to the entire group of surveys, thoughts expressed

in the interviews, and ideas/concerns expressed in the coursework and

during class.  I hoped to identify a group of 4-6 teacher candidates (who,

due to their change in status, I will refer to as interns for the rest of the

study) who would represent the conceptual substance and demographic

make-up of the subject pool.

I began by considering those interns who had already been involved

in the formal study in some way.  I was hoping to include interns in the

final group who had participated in all aspects of the study.   I gathered

internship placement lists in order to create a group whose internships would occur in a variety of settings. I also hoped to choose interns placed in the campus area to expedite data collection. I checked to see if any of the interns on the list was placed where I would be the field instructor, which would automatically remove them from consideration. This was not the case for any of them.

Considering all of these factors, I compiled a list of potential interns. I took this list to the coordinator of the Post BA program and asked her, based on her knowledge of these interns, if there were those whose personal circumstances (finances, marital status, health, etc.) might keep them from completing the internship. I emphasized that the level of proficiency the interns had demonstrated up to this point was not a consideration. The Post BA coordinator identified two interns whose prospects for completing the internship, based on personal circumstances, were questionable. Given that the interns had shared this information with the coordinator in confidence, I did not inquire about the specific reasons for concern.

I continued this process by examining the data and placement arrangements of the only three interns remaining on the list who had taken part in every aspect of the study. Their placements represented a

variety of settings, though one was not in the campus area. I determined how they had rated themselves on the surveys, then compared their scores to the whole group. I found that they represented the large group in their beliefs and knowledge/ability (See Abbey, Curt, & Vicky, Table 4.7) I decided they would be strong subjects.

The fourth intern selected had participated in most aspects of the study and was going to be placed in a setting that would have represented a different grade level. This intern's levels of efficacy, according to her phase one survey scores, also made her a good subject to add to the group. This intern initially consented to be in the study then opted to withdraw. She cited concern about her workload as an intern as the reason.

I selected another intern who had not participated in the first phase of data collection but had been involved in all aspects of the second. Having not completed the first phase surveys, I was not able to compare her scores with those of the group. I also did not believe the number of surveys that were returned during the second phase was enough to make an accurate comparison. Therefore, I looked at this intern's interview and coursework data from the second phase. I found that she seemed similar in her inclusive beliefs to two of the interns already selected for the study

who had scored in the middle range. Her self-assuredness and ability to give examples of potential teaching strategies were similar to one of the interns already selected who had scored in the high range. This combination of levels of belief and knowledge/ability distinguished her from the other three who had been selected who did not demonstrate high knowledge/ability and middle inclusive beliefs (See Hillary, Table 4.7).

In order to represent the whole participant group accurately, I wanted to include an intern of nontraditional age. By examining my options, I saw that I had two interns remaining on my list who met that criterion. Although one had participated in more aspects of the study, I selected the other intern. I did this because the data I had on this intern and my conversations with her in class, indicated that she represented a combination of beliefs and knowledge/ability not displayed by the others who had been selected (See Marlene, Table 4.7).

I contacted the interns by telephone, explained my study, and asked them if they might be interested in participating. All five immediately agreed and added that they knew there would be students with disabilities included in the classrooms where they were being placed. Upon being given the choice, they all decided to ask their collaborating

teachers if their classrooms could be a part of the study rather than having me make that initial contact. All of the collaborating teachers agreed. I believed I had recruited interns who closely represented the larger group (See Tables 4.6 & 4.7).

Table 4.6   Survey Group Distribution

(IA) – Inclusive Attitudes          (K/A) – Knowledge/Ability

| Survey | Low | Middle | High |
|---|---|---|---|
| Classroom (IA) | (0 – 2.8) 1 | (2.81 – 3.2) 15 | (3.21 – 5.0) 6 |
| Knowledge/Ability (K/A) | (0 – 2.4) 7 | (2.5 – 3.4) 10 | (3.5 – 5.0) 5 |
| Ratings for Classroom Teachers (K/A) | (0 – 3.5) 5 | (3.6 – 4.1) 14 | (4.2 – 5.0) 3 |

Table 4.7   Field Subject Efficacy Levels

| | Low | Middle | High |
|---|---|---|---|
| Abbey | | IA & K/A | |
| Vicky | | | IA & K/A |
| Marlene | K/A | | IA |
| Hillary | | IA | K/A |
| Curt | K/A | IA | |

Emerging Themes

After collecting and analyzing the data from the first two phases of the study, I began looking for common themes of beliefs and knowledge/ability being expressed by the teacher candidates. I examined

129

the quantitative data first, identifying potential themes, then read through the qualitative data to see if those themes were supported. Next, I read through the qualitative data to see if other themes might exist there that were not first identified in the quantitative data.

This examination of the data produced four themes or patterns in the ways beliefs did and did not change. A fifth theme was added during the third phase of the study based on data collected at that time. I have named these themes in a manner intended to represent a continuum of beliefs and knowledge/ability regarding the dichotomy presented. I have briefly described these themes on the following pages.

I used these themes during the data analysis to consider the teacher candidates' thinking along this continuum. However, I will report the remaining results of the data analysis according to the two parts of efficacy in this chapter for the sake of clarity and consistency. I will return to the themes in the next chapter of this dissertation.

*Student* ⇒ *Teacher Responsibility*

This theme centers mainly on attribution theory, i.e., those factors the teacher candidates think account for the success or failure of the student. The first two phases of data seemed to produce evidence of the teacher candidates' struggle to resolve this dichotomy. They believed

that the success of students in an inclusive environment depended on the severity of the students' disabilities. Yet they also believed it was their role as the teacher to teach the students and help them to be comfortable in the environment. However, the teacher candidates did not seem to consider their potential work with the students as criterion for determining the degree to which a student would be included. The responsibility for success in the inclusive environment remained with the student.

*Separateness ⇒ Building a Learning Community*

This theme represents how the teacher candidates thought about including students with disabilities after they had been placed in their classrooms. The first two phases of the data seemed to produce a variety of responses ranging from having the students do the same things as the other students to having them work with a paraprofessional. This range indicates how the teacher candidates believed a student with disabilities should actually be included as a part of the classroom.

*Idealism ⇒ Tempered Idealism*

This theme represents a continuum ranging from the belief that as a teacher, the teacher candidates will be able to do anything on one extreme to recognizing certain limitations and challenges on the other.

The first two phases of the data seemed to produce evidence of recognition of challenges and the continued belief that the challenges can be dealt with successfully.

*Love is Enough ⇒ Tangible Strategies*

This theme represents a continuum ranging from the teacher candidates seeing praise  and encouragement as the primary means of helping students learn to using specific, pedagogical strategies.  The first two phases of data seemed to produce evidence that the teacher candidates continued to be limited in their knowledge of the implementation of specific strategies.

*"Experts" Use Child Specific Data ⇒ I Use Child Specific Data*

This is the theme that emerged during the third phase of the study. This theme refers to the continuum in responsibility for making decisions about students with disabilities in the general education classroom.  This continuum ranges from having others make all the decisions to the teacher candidates seeking out information and using it for planning and structuring the classroom.  The "experts" could include special education personnel, the collaborating teacher, and the parents.

## The Two Parts of Efficacy

In the first chapter of this dissertation, I asserted that there are two parts of efficacy: beliefs and knowledge. Teachers working in inclusive environments who believe that students with disabilities are capable of learning and functioning in those environments are more likely to be successful. Teachers must also possess the necessary knowledge to teach students with disabilities included in their classrooms in order to be efficacious.

I continued my analysis, prior to beginning the data collection in the internship placements, by examining the five themes to determine how they related to the two parts of efficacy. I concluded that Student ⇒ Teacher Responsibility, Separateness ⇒ Building a Learning Community and Idealism ⇒ Tempered Idealism seemed to represent the beliefs the teacher candidates held about the capacity for the students with disabilities to learn in an inclusive environment. The other two themes, Love is Enough ⇒ Tangible Strategies and "Experts Use Child-Specific Data ⇒ I Use Child-Specific Data seemed to represent the implementation of those beliefs. The beliefs about the learning capacity of the students drives the teacher candidates' thinking and compels them to look for knowledge that helps them to act in accordance with shifting beliefs.

PREPARING PROSPECTIVE GENERAL EDUCATION TEACHERS FOR THE
INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:  A STUDY OF CHANGES IN
EFFICACY

Volume II

By

Cindy S. Marble

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Teacher Education

1999

## Section Two:   The Internship Experience

I will begin this section by describing the data collected in the field. These data were collected during phases three and four of the study.

In order to understand the interns who were studied, I will begin by writing a pre-field profile of each of them.  I will continue by describing each intern's field placement and the data that were collected during phases three and four.  I will conclude this section by summarizing these findings to consider specific field factors that may have impacted each interns' levels of efficacy.

### Field Data Collection

The data I collected in the interns' placements were taken from surveys, interviews and observations.  I asked the interns to complete a final set of surveys near the end of phase three.  These were used to examine the changes in survey scores over time.  I was able to examine the scores of three of the interns from the beginning of the study.  I was also able to examine the scores of one intern from the end of phase two to the end of phase three.  The fifth intern, having only completed this set of surveys, was not examined for changes over time based on the quantitative data.  However, her scores on this final set of data will be used to assist in describing her internship experience.

The observations were conducted at the invitation of the intern. I completed two observations on each intern during the fall semester and a full day observation during the spring semester. I had told the interns they were welcome to request my assistance while I was there, as long as I could continue to take the notes I needed. I will describe those times when I participated in the classroom activities when I discuss each intern.

I conducted interviews with the interns three times during the fall semester and once in spring. The first fall interview was conducted within the initial three weeks of the internship. The next two fall interviews were conducted shortly after each observation. I also interviewed the interns' collaborating teachers and field instructors during the fall semester. The spring interview was conducted after the full day observation.

## The Interns

I will describe the interns by the order of the amount of data I have from each of them. I have decided to do this in order to provide an increasingly broad view of the results.

## Marlene

Marlene is a Caucasian female, over thirty years of age. She is a married mother of two teenagers. I first met Marlene in the TE 402

summer courses.  The only data I have for Marlene prior to her field

experience is from her coursework.  She had no prior experience working

with students with disabilities.

<u>Phase Two</u>

*Beliefs*

In her writing at the end of my first session with the teacher

candidates in TE 402, Marlene expressed serious reservations about her

ability to work with students with disabilities:

> "I've never really worked with kids like this [students with
> disabilities].  I don't see how I'll really know how to by the fall."

She emphasized the importance of having students with disabilities

included in general education, but seemed to believe she lacked the skills

necessary for accommodating them:

> "I think inclusion is a good thing.  Those kids [students with
> disabilities] need to be with the other kids, I think that's important.
> I just don't know how I'll manage.  This whole job seems like it's
> going to be really tough with just the regular kids."

Marlene mentioned, for both students for whom she made

accommodations in her science unit, that she would try to help them feel

welcome in her classroom.  She offered the idea of having the students

work in heterogeneous groups for socialization:

"I think the kids [students with disabilities] could benefit from being in groups. They would get to spend time with the regular kids."

*Ability*

In her science unit assignment, most of the accommodations she made for the two students with disabilities were based on direct intervention from the teacher and others:

"I think I would use groups to manage the learning issues and have a paraprofessional assist with any misbehavior."

The accommodations Marlene made mainly involved praising and encouraging the students and asking the other students in their work groups to do the same:

"I know that having these kids [students with disabilities] included is important and they will need some extra help and encouragement. But the kids in the group will probably do that."

She wrote of the need for the teacher to be patient with the students:

"I know it will take extra time and energy to work with these kids [students with disabilities], and I know I will need to be patient."

Marlene's written response following the fairness and equity discussion in TE 402 mentioned that teachers should be flexible in order to meet the needs of all of their students:

"I know that I will have students who need different things. I'll just be flexible and try to help them."

Marlene's written work indicates that she believed inclusion is important for students with disabilities. However, she expressed concerns about her ability to implement inclusive strategies successfully.

## Phase Three (The Internship)

Marlene completed one set of surveys for this study, during the fall semester of her internship.

Table 4.8  Classroom Survey – Marlene

| Inclusive Beliefs | Phase Three Mean |
|---|---|
| Students with disabilities can learn in a general education setting. | 3.4 |
| Students with disabilities can be efficiently managed in a general education setting. | 3.2 |
| Reflection is useful for the improvement of teaching. | 3.6 |
| Collaboration with colleagues and parents/guardians is a useful strategy for working with students with disabilities. | 3.5 |
| Teacher expectations should be high for all students. | 3.6 |
| Learning can be demonstrated and assessed in a variety of ways. | 3.4 |
| A basic knowledge of the special education system and processes makes it possible to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities. | 4.1 |
| The responsibility for a student's success is shared between the student and the teachers. | 3.9 |

**Table 4.9  Knowledge/Ability Survey - Marlene**

| Knowledge/Ability | Phase Three Mean |
|---|---|
| "I can help students with disabilities learn in a general education setting." | 2.0 |
| "I can efficiently manage students with disabilities in a general education setting." | 2.1 |
| "I can use reflection to improve my teaching." | 2.3 |
| "I can collaborate with colleagues and parents/guardians to improve my work with students with disabilities." | 2.1 |
| "I can help all students meet my high expectations." | 1.9 |
| "I can assess learning in a variety of ways." | 1.8 |
| "I understand the special education system and processes enough to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities." | 1.9 |
| "I can recognize and accept my responsibilities for the success of students with disabilities included in my classroom." | 2.0 |

**Table 4.10  Ratings for Classroom Teachers - Marlene**

| Knowledge/Ability | Phase Three Mean |
|---|---|
| "I can help students with disabilities learn in a general education setting." | 2.1 |
| "I can efficiently manage students with disabilities in a general education setting." | 2.3 |
| "I can use reflection to improve my teaching." | 2.3 |
| "I can collaborate with colleagues and parents/guardians to improve my work with students with disabilities." | 2.2 |
| "I can help all students meet my high expectations." | 2.1 |
| "I can assess learning in a variety of ways." | 1.9 |
| "I understand the special education system and processes enough to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities." | 1.8 |
| "I can recognize and accept my responsibilities for the success of students with disabilities included in my classroom." | 2.0 |

Marlene rated herself as having strong inclusive beliefs but weak in her current and future knowledge/ability. In fact, when comparing the scores from the Knowledge/Ability survey and the Ratings for Classroom Teachers survey, she anticipated improving minimally on her ability to meet the needs of students with disabilities. These self-reports are consistent with the conclusions I reached about her levels of efficacy, based on an analysis of her data from the second phase.

### Phases Three and Four

Marlene's internship took place in a second grade classroom in an elementary school which is described locally as one of the "neediest" of the schools in the district. There were fourteen students in the classroom when the year started. Three of the students had disabilities; two had a mild mental impairment and one had a learning disability. These students were included for all but one hour a day.

Marlene's collaborating teacher had twenty years of experience. There were also two classroom helpers present at the beginning of the year who were shared with an adjacent second grade class. These gentlemen were working in the classroom as part of a community impact program supported by one of the local industries. One of the men was

moved to another classroom during the fall semester and the other left during the spring semester.

Another intern (Abbey) who was part of this study was placed in the second grade classroom adjacent to Marlene's. This arrangement allowed me to explore how the two interns who planned almost everything together influenced each other.

*Beliefs*

One decision a teacher must make based on their beliefs regarding the learning capabilities of students with disabilities is how much to assist the students and how much to let them work on their own. The adult to student ratio in the classroom made Marlene's response to this tension unique. She acknowledged this during the first fall interview:

> Marlene – "I think it [the amount of inclusion] depends on the diagnosis and the degree of severity. Because I have a little bit of experience now, what, we have fourteen children? Most of the time we have three adults. So the three who have been diagnosed special ed, they can get a lot of extra help.

During a later interview in the fall, she mentioned how she believed all the available help could be problematic:

> Marlene – "Sometimes I think it might not be such a good thing, having all these adults in the classroom. The kids don't have to struggle with anything, and I think a little bit of that is good. People need to learn to work through their struggles but these kids have instant help all the time."

Another decision a teacher makes, based on his/her beliefs about students with disabilities, is how much the student should be included in general education. When asked during the final interview how she would determine whether or not a student would be included, Marlene disagreed with what her CT said when I interviewed her. The CT cited low academic levels and severe behavior problems, but Marlene said:

> Marlene – "I don't really think there is anything clear-cut. I have general ed kids in here who are lower academically than some of the special ed kids and are more disruptive. So who's to say? I think I've learned that it depends more on what the classroom is like than what the kids are like."

During the final interview I asked Marlene to tell me about any benefits she saw from the inclusion. Based on her response, it seemed that she had lost some of the positive outlook she had about inclusion at the beginning of the internship. But she finished her response with a possible benefit:

> Marlene – "What are the main benefits? I don't know if at this point I see any. We had such a nice group of kids in the beginning but now I just see an awful lot of reactionary type of behavior toward the kids who are special ed. I didn't see that at the beginning. I guess I didn't realize at the beginning that there's so much stereotyping of those kids who 'go upstairs'. It's like they're seen as second class citizens. And so much of what we do in here is taught in a large group. I just don't think they keep up or get much out of it. But when I've tried to do small groups the special ed kids aren't welcomed by the other kids. Some kids are just mean. I'm sure someone like you might know how to manage that, but I just don't know. I guess, I initially thought it is beneficial, but it's not an

easy thing to manage when you're new at this job. But sometimes the special ed kids are better at something than the other kids and I think they like that, seeing how they are smarter than the other kids. That could be a benefit."

Marlene's collaborating teacher, according to Marlene, did not have these problems with teasing. In fact, when I asked her, she said the students "wouldn't dare" say anything in front of the collaborating teacher. Marlene claimed her collaborating teacher's disciplinary style succeeded in ways hers had not.

Teachers need to determine what the purpose of inclusion is in order to focus their efforts of implementation. During the final interview I asked Marlene if she believed the purpose of inclusion was more academic or social:

> Marlene – "Academic, not social, there's too much teasing to be positive socially."

This seems to be a change from her beliefs about the purpose of inclusion that were a part of her assignments from the instructional intervention. Marlene had believed that working with the other students would be beneficial for the students with disabilities.

During the final interview, I asked Marlene if the students with disabilities seemed to be learning academic things in the classroom. Although she had said earlier that the main purpose of inclusion was

academic, in this response she did not think the students with disabilities were learning in the classroom:

> Marlene – "I just don't think the kids get anything out of being in here. They don't do the work most of the time so (CT) just gives them some paper and tells them to draw. So they're not learning anything and I can't protect them from the teasing. It's just not working."

*Ability*

There are many strategies that teachers decide to utilize for teaching in inclusive environments. Marlene began the year talking about structuring groupwork and the advantages of having students help each other:

> Marlene – "Well, to some degree, I think that that could be true [concerns about the efficiency of inclusion]. But I see it as an advantage if you are not adept at this of course. I would try to pair the kinder, brighter, if you don't mind that adjective, students with the kids that are more challenged. I think that would be beneficial for both of them. If you've got a student who is finishing quickly, there's one I'm thinking of in particular, I think she would love to go help this other girl. But it's not allowed. I haven't seen any group work or partner work so far. So until I lead teach, I can't see doing anything like that because I just follow what's been done. But I see that, because I work in a school, when I was doing my placement, it was multiage and we had kids anywhere from five years of age to, cause it was K-2, up to nine, and I saw a lot of kids naturally pairing off and helping each other and I thought that was a great thing."

Marlene did get the opportunity to try group work, which I was able to witness during my first observation in the fall. I mentioned to Marlene that I'd noticed some negative reaction from some of the general

education students when they learned they would be grouped with one of the students with disabilities. Marlene seemed to believe that this group arrangement wasn't working:

> Marlene - "I know. And I felt sort of bad and I thought, 'Well, I wonder if I did the wrong thing.' I just don't see that, I mean, they're always in this group and then they're, this is a pretty cliquey, they just move right along. I knew what would happen with them sitting at the end, they'd get nothing out of it. They're just told, 'Fill out this one, fill out that one.' So I'm going to have to think tonight what we'll be doing tomorrow so it could be more of a shared thing instead of this take-over type, somebody runs it all and somebody points and tells them what to do. They don't get anything out of that, I don't think."

After the second observation in the fall, when I observed a group lesson, Marlene expressed a reluctance to use a group structure in the class, but believed she would become proficient utilizing groups in a few months:

> Marlene – "I liked it better before we broke up into groups. I had the choice in this activity to do it whole group or to break up into groups. But (FI) has asked that we do more group things. But you know, I can see myself where in two or three months I bet it can go a lot more smoothly. But I think that a lot of that depends on me, the instructions I give, the way I manage things, I think many things start from the top down. So I think when I'm not that sure of myself and it isn't because I'm not prepared but because there are a lot of things that happen that you don't think about happening. So I think when I'm a little better at it, I think they too will be better at it. I think A**** and K**** and J**** [the students with disabilities] would be very capable of doing this, no problems. When I think until we do it more and until I get better at it, I think it would be better to have (helper) here."

145

But during the final interview, Marlene told me she had not reached that level of proficiency:

> Marlene – "I feel like I've just started being able to look beyond the lesson I'm teaching at the moment to notice what kids are saying to each other. Maybe all the teasing I'm seeing now was happening all along but I didn't see it. I just couldn't think about helping the kids work together and teach at the same time."

During the final interview, I read something to Marlene from her science unit. She had structured part of the activity as groupwork. I asked for her opinion of what she had written. She told me she had not been realistic, but continued to acknowledge that she would still try to use a group structure:

> Marlene – "Yeah, that sounds like how I used to think, very pie in the sky. I just don't know if I could do that much anymore. I don't know what to say to kids when they don't want to work together. The first time a student in here refused to work with another student, I was just floored. I don't know how to handle that yet. But I think I'd still try."

During the final interview in the fall, I asked Marlene to describe curricular accommodations that were being used in the classroom. She believed there was little evidence that anything like that occurred in her classroom. She made accommodation s primarily continuing one-on-one intervention:

> Marlene – "When the kids do a worksheet, for lack of a better example, we don't, when (Other intern) and I, we've been teaching science now since September. When we do a sheet, a recording

sheet or whatever, we have always made the sheets pretty simple so we could never think of modifications for A****, J**** and K****. In my mind, from what I listened to you say last summer and the little bit of reading I've done, is that I'm always wondering if there's a little bit I could simplify or make it, I don't know, make it different. But to me it's pretty self-explanatory and I go through it an awful lot. Then we always have (CT) and parapro and any number of other people here. It's almost kind of one-on-one."

Marlene had frequently expressed concern about the way discipline was handled in the classroom. In the beginning of the year, she was troubled by what seemed to be an authoritarian approach on the part of other faculty members:

Marlene – "Yeah, I do. I just think, I still think you need to challenge [have high expectations for students]. I don't think there's anything wrong with some struggle. I don't mean what I saw last week, though. (CT) got after K**** about not working fast enough and just terrified him. I really have questions about management. But it works. But it seems like a lot of teachers around here seem harsh sometimes. I don't know; I just wrestle with that sometimes. So I just do what I have to do to get along and do the best I can."

During the final interview, I asked her if she still had the same concerns. She reported that she was still struggling with what she saw the others doing. She also seemed concerned that she had started behaving in a similar manner:

Marlene – "I don't know, Cindy. I know I was upset earlier in the year. But then I see this approach working. I try it and it seems like it's the only way the kids will listen. But I don't like being that harsh. I don't like even hearing myself use that tone of voice. I don't even talk like that to my own kids. I'm not sure what to think sometimes."

During the second fall interview, I asked Marlene about the

assessment and grading strategies she had seen as the report cards were

being prepared.  She responded that she had not seen any evidence of

these practices:

> Marlene – "I don't know.  I feel, Cindy, that that's an area for me
> that I don't know hardly anything about.  Preassessment or
> assessment and I haven't seen any of it take place yet.  So I'm not
> too worried about it in this particular case, but I think it will play a
> big part in my future.  How do you assess someone who, you have
> to have different, forgive me for not using all the correct words,
> but you have to have a different way of viewing special ed or
> special needs kids.  But how you do it, to be honest with you, I
> really don't know yet."

During the final interview, when I asked about how she had

assessed students, Marlene said it was all done in the special education

classroom:

> Marlene – "I don't know how the kids are graded.  I didn't see any of
> that.  I don't even know how the grades on the report cards were
> decided."

During the first interview in the fall, I asked Marlene about the

interactions she had observed with the special education personnel up to

that point.  She responded that there had been minimal interactions and

believed her collaborating teacher did not encourage those exchanges:

> CM – "How have you seen your teacher work with the special ed
> teacher?"

Marlene – "I don't see it.  Other than to say, 'What time are you taking her?'  I think she (CT) sees that as 'Whew! Now they're off my back.' kind of thing.  But that's just my picking up body language or whatever.  She's never said, "Oh, I hope she's gone today." nothing like that.  But I haven't seen them, in fact there was, maybe you know the initials, some kind of conference thing."

CM – "IEP?"

Marlene – "I wanted to go to that and it was last Thursday but they had a school improvement team meeting at 8:00 and then the IEP was at 8:30.  I really wanted to go but she said no, she really wanted me to stay at that one.  I think that's pretty important.  This year I see myself as doing whatever works in that classroom.  But that kind of disappointed me because I think you can learn from that and I think ultimately, obviously, it kind of puts the child, it will make my job easier and better for myself and all the kids."

During the final interview, I asked Marlene how she would use the

special educator in her future place of employment as a resource:

Marlene – "I think a special ed teacher knows the kids better than I would.  They would have ideas for ways to work with them that may take me a month or more to think of.  I just don't know half the time basic things, like how the student is LD.  I know another student goes for medication at lunchtime, but I don't know what it is.  Sometimes she comes back from lunch and she seems groggy.  I wonder if the medication is doing that.  If I knew, I might change the way I handle her day.  I would want to get all of that information from the special ed teacher to help me make up ways of dealing with the kids too."

Marlene seems to sense the importance of this information and how

it might be useful to her, but does not mention the possibility of finding

out herself.

During the final interview I asked Marlene if she had received any

additional instruction in special education during the internship year.  She

said she had attended a session during her seminar a few weeks earlier.

She was reminded of some of her earlier inclusive beliefs:

> Marlene – "During the session I was told that I needed to remember
> that those kids [students with disabilities] are my kids too.  I knew
> that, but just haven't felt it this year.  (CT) refers to them as (the
> special ed teacher)'s kids.  I guess I started doing that too...I don't
> see the special educator talking to (CT) about the kids, except
> when she wants to place one.  Nobody talks about ways to teach
> kids."

But, she continued to express her hopes for doing a better job

when she's on her own:

> Marlene – "When I get my own classroom, I'm going to try to make
> sure I have the right materials and ask the special educators for
> help and ideas.  I won't let my kids just sit there and draw.  If I
> could have a parapro or someone like that, that would be great.
> But if I couldn't, I'd try to make it work.  It might take a while, but
> I'd figure it out."

## Summary

Marlene continued to lack confidence in her ability to manage an

inclusive classroom based on the skills and knowledge she had at the end

of the data collection:

> Marlene – "I just manage the classroom so poorly now.  I feel like I
> don't have any confidence, not enough to just intervene and take
> care of things.  When I see the kids being teased, I don't always
> know how to handle it.  It's such a difficult job.  Thank God I like it
> though, and I'll keep at it."

She felt her CT had not supported her:

Marlene – "I think she forgot I was here sometimes. I was having a really hard time earlier this year, and I don't think she even noticed. I think as long as I kept things under control, that's all she cared about. I feel really bad saying this, but I'm frustrated. I don't think I got the things from this experience that I should have."
Marlene's responses indicate that she became less willing to utilize group work in the classroom. Her belief about the likelihood that the students with disabilities would learn in the classroom diminished. She also expressed concerns about her ability to manage the classroom and help the students with disabilities to feel comfortable. This means that she believed she was unable to fulfill her role as an inclusive educator, as she had defined it after the instructional intervention.

This has serious ramifications for her efficacy as a teacher. Teacher efficacy in an inclusive environment depends on the teacher's belief that the students with disabilities will learn in the general education classroom. Marlene had serious doubts about this. Marlene also doubted her ability to help the students learn or even feel comfortable in the general education classroom. She did, however, believe that she would find a way to successfully implement inclusive practices in her future classroom.

<u>My Participation</u>

I participated in classroom activities in Marlene's classroom on two occasions. The first time, I helped a group of students who were practicing writing their addresses. The second time I recorded the results of an experiment on a large sheet of paper as Marlene directed the students.

<u>The Field Instructor</u>

Marlene's field instructor had been a public school teacher before pursuing advanced degrees. When I interviewed him, he shared his involvement in research on developing teaching methods for diverse learners and commitment to inclusion. Although he cited various occasions when he had discussed these things with his interns during seminar, Marlene did not seem to recall these occasions. The only evidence I could find regarding the field instructor's influence on Marlene was when she taught a science lesson using hands-on materials. She reported to have done this at the insistence of the field instructor.

<u>Further Comments on the Observations</u>

I found Marlene to be a more capable teacher than she had assessed herself to be. Although she made some errors, they were quite normal for any intern I have observed. She started the year concerned

about her collaborating teacher's management style, which was quite authoritarian, but she seemed to move from being passive to more authoritative as the year progressed.

Based on what I was able to observe, I think the amount of teasing the general education students were doing toward the students with disabilities did increase as the year progressed. This was not something that Marlene simply had not noticed at first. However, her recognition during the final interview that she was not able to confront the teasing would seem to bring to question her skills as an inclusive educator.

Hillary

Hillary is a Caucasian female, between twenty and thirty years of age. She got married the summer before her internship. My first encounter with Hillary occurred during the TE 402 summer course. Hillary chose to participate in all of the data collection activities during the second phase of the study. She stated that her prior experiences with students with disabilities involved being a mentor to troubled teenagers placed at a residential facility near her home.

Phase Two

Hillary participated in all parts of the second phase of the study.

The qualitative data gathered were assignments from the instructional

intervention and the phase two interview.

*Beliefs*

Initially, Hillary attributed most of the responsibility for the success

of inclusive efforts on the teacher:

> Hillary - "I think that definitely depends on the teacher and their
> whole frame of mind on having inclusive students in their
> environment. It can be, I guess, as difficult or, I don't want to say
> easy, as not difficult, as you can make it. I think if you have an
> open mind and you want those students in there then you can
> make it work."

But later in the interview, Hillary reported that the students

brought variables to be considered when predicting success:

> Hillary - "I guess it depends on the student. For me, I guess, be
> like, hypothetical because I've never really come across a student
> who's severely mentally impaired or something like that. I guess it
> might be somewhat different. I mean, I'm not saying that's bad,
> I'm just saying it's probably going to be different, like maybe the
> way that they learn is going to be different from the way the
> regular education person learns. So yeah, it's going to be different,
> but it still has to be respected, that the kid's going to learn
> something. You can't look down on them just because the kid isn't
> going to learn what society deems as valuable. I guess as a teacher
> you have to see all learning as valuable learning. But a lot of people
> out in society don't see it that way."

154

Hillary evidenced her ability to accept more of the responsibility for the student's success when she responded to a question about the limited resources in the classroom:

> Hillary – "I see it as like, in my classroom, I guess that it's going to be really challenging, especially the first few years for me. I want to make it an environment where all students can learn, but starting off as a novice teacher I think it's going to be hard. I'm not going to be as experienced as some of the teachers out there and that's kind of scary. I don't want someone to slip through the cracks in my classroom."

Hillary seemed to see success in an inclusive environment as a combination of what the teacher does and what the student brings to the classroom.

Hillary's course assignments showed a similar pattern of beliefs. The accommodations she made for her science unit were a combination of things that the teacher, or another adult, would do with the student and what the student would do for him/herself. For example, Hillary accommodated a journaling assignment for a student with a learning disability in written expression by having him draw. She stated:

> "I think he could draw his response for the day."

But in the next day's lesson, she placed the same student with a paraprofessional who would write his journal as he dictated:

> "It seems like a paraprofessional could write while he dictates."

Hillary seemed to value the idea of having her classroom operate as

a learning community:

> Hillary – "I know that when I get my own classroom, I might have
> students with disabilities included. I don't know how much choice
> I'll have about who they'll be or what kind of disabilities they'll
> have, but once they're in my room, I won't put them off to the
> side. I want them to feel included in as many aspects of the
> classroom as possible."

She reiterated these beliefs in the fastwrite done in class regarding

issues of fairness and equity:

> Hillary – "I know I may not have enough time for every student. But
> I'll at least make sure everyone feels welcome. I'll try different
> strategies for teaching the same thing so that all the students can
> be involved most of the time."

Hillary said more about the issues around the lack of teacher time

during the interview. She seemed to have moved away from accepting

that she won't have enough time to figuring out how she can:

> Hillary – "I think you have to have it really thought out, how you're
> going to do that, to give everybody an equal amount, well maybe
> not an equal amount of time, but the amount of time they need as
> an individual. I think that's very challenging, but I think if you're
> very organized and energetic, I think you can do that."

*Ability*

Hillary offered many ideas for working with students with disabilities

in the classroom in the accommodations she made for her science unit.

She thought the students could draw instead of write and only do part of

the work. The use of a paraprofessional was another strategy and she

mentioned praise and encouragement.

She was less specific in her response to the question about her role

with a student with disabilities:

> Hillary – "I think when I work with them, I'll figure out ways to help. I mean, I might not always know, I might have to ask someone. But I know I'll think of strategies."

This could be an indication that Hillary had researched ways of

working with the students she had been assigned for the science unit, but

wasn't familiar enough with all the options for making accommodations to

respond simultaneously.

Hillary seemed to acknowledge that students with disabilities might

need some help outside of the general education classroom:

> Hillary – "But I also think that there are certain situations where maybe periodically through the day they need extra help and maybe pulled out with a teacher who has been specializing in that area of disability or just, they might need extra help with something and they might not be able to get that in the regular classroom on a daily basis."

But she also wanted to be a part of the process and considered

knowing what was happening with the student her responsibility:

> Hillary – "My role is to make sure that they can get it, I would think. Whether it is me or someone else arranging it and making sure there is a plan and making sure there are goals set and that they are reaching these goals, whatever the goals are. I think it's really important to be involved if the student is going to be with someone

else for a certain amount of time during the day, just to make sure that whatever they are doing is working. I wouldn't be like, 'Oh, they're just going off here and that's just fine.' I mean, you still want to make sure that they are getting something out of it."

Phases Two and Three

Hillary completed surveys from the second and third phases of the study (See Tables 4.11-13).

Table 4.11  Classroom Survey - Hillary

| Inclusive Beliefs | Phase Two Mean | Phase Three Mean | Percent of Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| Students with disabilities can learn in a general education setting. | 3.0 | 3.2 | +6.7 |
| Students with disabilities can be efficiently managed in a general education setting. | 2.9 | 3.1 | +6.9 |
| Reflection is useful for the improvement of teaching. | 3.1 | 3.1 | 0 |
| Collaboration with colleagues and parents/guardians is a useful strategy for working with students with disabilities. | 3.1 | 3.3 | +6.5 |
| Teacher expectations should be high for all students. | 2.9 | 3.4 | +17.2 |
| Learning can be demonstrated and assessed in a variety of ways. | 2.9 | 3.2 | +10.3 |
| A basic knowledge of the special education system and processes makes it possible to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities. | 3.6 | 3.8 | +5.6 |
| The responsibility for a student's success is shared between the student and the teachers. | 3.2 | 3.7 | +15.6 |

**Table 4.12  Knowledge/Ability Survey - Hillary**

| Knowledge/Ability | Phase Two Mean | Phase Three Mean | Percent of Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| "I can help students with disabilities learn in a general education setting." | 3.9 | 4.1 | +5.1 |
| "I can efficiently manage students with disabilities in a general education setting." | 3.3 | 3.6 | +9.1 |
| "I can use reflection to improve my teaching." | 4.5 | 4.6 | +2.2 |
| "I can collaborate with colleagues and parents/guardians to improve my work with students with disabilities." | 3.5 | 3.7 | +5.7 |
| "I can help all students meet my high expectations." | 3.5 | 3.8 | +8.6 |
| "I can assess learning in a variety of ways." | 4.0 | 4.1 | +2.5 |
| "I understand the special education system and processes enough to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities." | 2.2 | 3.1 | +40.9 |
| "I can recognize and accept my responsibilities for the success of students with disabilities included in my classroom." | 3.4 | 3.7 | +8.8 |

**Table 4.13  Ratings for Classroom Teachers - Hillary**

| Knowledge/Ability | Phase Two Mean | Phase Three Mean | Percent of Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| "I can help students with disabilities learn in a general education setting." | 4.9 | 4.9 | 0 |
| "I can efficiently manage students with disabilities in a general education setting." | 4.5 | 4.6 | +2.2 |
| "I can use reflection to improve my teaching." | 5.0 | 4.9 | -2.0 |
| "I can collaborate with colleagues and parents/guardians to improve my work with students with disabilities." | 4.8 | 4.8 | 0 |
| "I can help all students meet my high expectations." | 4.3 | 4.4 | +2.3 |
| "I can assess learning in a variety of ways." | 4.4 | 4.5 | +2.3 |
| "I understand the special education system and processes enough to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities." | 4.9 | 4.9 | 0 |

Hillary's survey scores seem to indicate that her levels of efficacy

raised or stayed the same in all areas except one.  Her scores on the

Knowledge/Ability Survey show that she believed she was becoming more

knowledgeable about implementing the practices of inclusive classrooms.

The one negative score was regarding future predictions about the

effectiveness of her reflections.  Overall, her internship experience

resulted in a change in her efficacy levels that was more inclusive.

*Internship Setting*

Hillary started her internship experience in an elementary school in

Urban School District #1.  After one week, she began to express her

dissatisfaction with the placement. She felt the collaborating teacher was negative and harsh. She also said the collaborating teacher had told her she would not be permitted to use groups. Hillary lobbied to have her placement changed.

During the second week, Hillary was moved to a third grade classroom in Urban School District #2. Occurring so early, this move did not jeopardize Hillary's continued involvement in the study. Hillary's new collaborating teacher was open to allowing me to study her classroom. The school was diverse racially and socio-economically. There were around twenty students in the classroom throughout the year.

Hillary's collaborating teacher was a teaching veteran of thirty-five years. She was planning to retire at the end of the school year. When I interviewed her, she told me she had been involved in some form of inclusion and mainstreaming "since before those terms existed".

When I asked Hillary's collaborating teacher the eight interview questions, almost every response contained a reference to how good inclusion was for the general education students. She said that having students with disabilities included in the general education classroom helped the other students to develop patience and compassion. In spite of how I phrased questions about her responses, I was unable to elicit any

thoughts about how inclusion was beneficial for the students with disabilities. She said she took pride in the fact that she had been able to accommodate any student, regardless of their disability.

Hillary's classroom had three students with disabilities. One student had a severe speech impairment, another had a learning disability in reading and had been diagnosed with ADHD, and the third had a physical impairment. All three of the students were in the classroom for the full day. When I conducted the first fall interview with Hillary, she had only been in her new placement for a week. Yet, when I asked her about the students with disabilities in her classroom, she was able to describe them fairly thoroughly:

> Hillary – "OK. One of them is a male; well they're all male. One of the males is ADHD and has a learning disability in reading. He takes Ritalin and, but right now we're trying to figure out what the right dosage will be for him because he still has a really high activity level and I think he's on like five milligrams twice a day or something like that. They're checking to see if, according to his growth from last year, if they need to up his dosage because he's still like very, kind of all over the place. Like when I'm teaching a lesson he'll just be there and he's just very active and just talking to other kids and just doing all types of motion with his arms and moving out of his seat. Then we have another child who, and I don't think, I think they call it POHI and I'm not really sure what that is. Physically something…"

> CM – "Physically and Otherwise Health Impaired"

> Hillary – "OK. He was born with a small head and so I don't know exactly what is wrong with him. I know he's very sensitive but I

don't know if that has anything to do with it. There's been a few episodes where he has come in crying because he was late. You know, things where most kids wouldn't probably cry about. So he's very sensitive and otherwise, he's pretty smart, he's a pretty good reader and stuff, so I really don't know exactly what kind of problems he has, it just seems sensitivity type stuff."

<u>Phases Three and Four</u>

*Beliefs*

During the first interview in the fall, when she was asked about how she thought inclusive decisions should be made, Hillary reasserted the belief she had expressed in phase two of the study that part of the success of an inclusive environment depends on the students with disabilities:

> Hillary – "I think, like, depending on the disability, that they should be placed in the regular education classroom full time, if it's not too severe. They need to be able to do enough work to benefit from being there."

During the last fall interview, Hillary explained how she thought the responsibility for success is shared:

> Hillary – "I see it as sort of a collaboration between the student and myself. I think the student has to be willing to at least try and I have to be willing to be flexible enough to meet their learning needs. Neither one of us could make this work alone. But I think that's true with all students."

During the final interview, she continued to maintain this point of view:

Hillary – "I've learned a lot this year about working with kids who are reluctant to work. I think they may be a teacher's biggest challenge. I really think you can't get much accomplished if the students refuse to try."

Hillary seemed to maintain her belief that the responsibility for the success of inclusion should be shared between the teacher and the students across the phase two data collection through the final interview.

During my second observation of Hillary in the fall, she implemented a group activity. One of the students with disabilities became upset during the activity and went to sit alone in the back of the classroom. Hillary reported in the interview that helping this student to work with other students had been challenging:

Hillary – "It's just like you have to try different things with different kids to see what works. He's so sensitive but he's in with one of the groups and I'm not sure if it's a good idea. But you can't really isolate him because that isn't really fair. But sometimes I'm not sure that it's fair to the other kids because I think they become distracted too. So that's hard because we want them to have the social interaction but at the same time I feel like if we put a different kid in there, then that group of kids would be a whole different group. They might work better together."

During the final interview, when Hillary talked about forming groups for the students, she reported that it was still challenging:

Hillary – "I try to mix it up in terms of race and ability and things like that. I put the students with disabilities in different groups. But the hardest part is putting together kids who get along and keeping those that don't separated. I want to offset the arguments and teasing. It's hard to teach when that stuff is

happening. I know I should probably teach the kids to get along, but I haven't had time to get to that yet. I will."

During that same interview, I asked Hillary if she had noticed the students with disabilities being teased:

> Hillary – "No, and I have to admit, I'm surprised by that. Especially when it comes to a couple of them. The one with the speech problem, I can see how he would be teased easily because he's hard to understand sometimes. The kid with the physical impairment acts so strange sometimes and cries so easily, I'm surprised he's not a target for teasing too. But we just don't allow it."

Hillary was either contradicting herself at this point, or only the general education students were being teased in the groups. She did seem to maintain the commitment she mentioned during phase two about helping all students be a part of the learning community during the internship, even if her efforts have not been successful.

During the first interview, Hillary responded to the question about student learning potential by acknowledging that students have varying levels of ability:

> Hillary – "They can learn something. They're going to learn. But it may not be as much as the next person. But that's just the way it is because everybody's different. Everybody comes in at different levels. So I think that just because one kid, he may be, maybe he's doing the worst in your class, but you can't give up and think that they're not learning anything so why bother? He's going to learn something and it's not going to be as much as the top kid but you just can't give up. I guess, basically, I think they all can learn. It's just all different."

This belief that children learn at different rates and levels was maintained through the internship. When she talked about limitations, they were the limitations of the teacher. During the final interview Hillary said:

> Hillary – "I get frustrated sometimes because there never seems to be enough time. I get these ideas for lessons and I know the kids will benefit from them, but there are always other things that have to be done first. By the time I do them, I don't have the time or even energy to develop my ideas. I wonder if it will always be like this for me."

After the first observation, I asked Hillary why she thought her lesson had been inclusive. I immediately noticed how she was much more able to talk about a variety of specific strategies than she had during the phase two interview:

> Hillary – "Well I thought it was inclusive or a good lesson for all of the students because there was a variety of activities. I mean there was writing and some kids like to write and draw, so the kids who like to write and draw got to do that. Then there were things they could touch and put their hands on and other kids, probably most of the kids, like to do that. As far as talking, there was lots of chances for everybody to participate. I guess just with the variety of things that we did and that everyone got a chance to learn something or have some input or just be a part of it."

Later in the fall, I asked Hillary why the seating arrangement had changed from the last time I had observed. She continued to demonstrate the specificity in her thinking and show evidence of creative problem-solving:

Hillary – "Oh, we like to move things around about every month. Like when I lead teach, I plan to seat them in five groups. One group will be the Monday Group, another will be the Tuesday Group, and so on. What I plan to do is, on each group's day I will make it a point to really observe that group. This way, I know I'll be tuned in to all the kids at least once a week. I think it's easy to sort of look over the quieter ones, since the more active students call themselves to your attention so much. I don't want to not notice the quiet kids. I think this arrangement will help me to really be in tune with all the kids."

I commented about her steady growth in developing teaching strategies during the final interview. Hillary felt the growth was due to her own efforts. She read books about various strategies and checked the Internet regularly:

Hillary – "I really think it's important for me to keep growing and learning new things. Sometimes, in here, I felt like I had to figure things out for myself, so I guess I just kind of got into the habit and found myself enjoying it."

*Ability*

During the first fall interview, I commented that I was impressed with all of the information Hillary had managed to learn about the students with disabilities (See the *Internship Setting* description) in only a week. She replied:

Hillary – "I think it's like the most important thing, that you know about your students. I think all the students, but especially the ones with problems. How can you address the problems if you don't know what they are? I found the social worker and she told me all about them."

167

During the last interview in the fall, I asked Hillary about her

interactions with special education personnel:

> Hillary – "I haven't spoken much with the special ed teacher, but the social worker and I talk a lot. She is planning to come in to do some lessons with all the kids about getting along and solving problems. I'm looking forward to it. I think I would like to teach lessons like that someday, so I'm hoping to learn from her. We talk about the kids sometimes and I get ideas from her. She's been really helpful. But something I didn't know about, some reward thing. I know she and (CT) had talked about it, but I heard about it from the kids and had to find out what it was all about."

During the final interview, Hillary mentioned that she had just heard

that her classroom was a specially designated inclusive third grade

classroom. This led to a discussion about the importance of information:

> Hillary – "I mean, it's not like I would have done anything different. I noticed, though, that the other third grade classrooms didn't have any students with disabilities. I thought it was strange. I guess I'm just hurt that I wasn't told. This has been a problem for me this year. I feel like I have to go after all the information I get about kids and school supplies and lots of things. It gets frustrating. I'm always feeling like I'm left out of the loop."

Summary

Hillary said she felt freer to try things in her second placement than

she had in her first and that she was much happier. Sometimes, though,

she felt she had too much freedom and not enough guidance from her

collaborating teacher. She said she did not think they talked enough

about the students and that there were times when she hesitated to ask

for time to discuss things.  She once said she felt like she was learning on her own.

During my interview with the collaborating teacher in October, she said she felt very comfortable leaving Hillary in charge of the classroom. Hillary's assertiveness and initiative impressed her.  She said, "I know that Hillary will always tell me what's on her mind.  This is one intern I can be sure will not hold anything back."

### The Field Instructor

Hillary's field instructor had been a special education teacher in the public schools for several years before moving on to higher education. She seemed to be positive about inclusion, with some reservations about the appropriateness of it for all students.  Hillary's field instructor informed me that inclusion had been the topic of at least one seminar.

Hillary did not seem to recall this seminar or any other discussions regarding inclusion.  Hillary's overall attitude about her field instructor was not positive.  She did not believe the field instructor had been present enough or helpful.  She seemed to believe that her field instructor's impact on her teaching was minimal.

## My Participation

My first observation included a ride on a school bus to a nearby park where Hillary was planning to conduct a pond study. Along with the expected herding of children, Hillary asked me to take photographs during the lesson for her portfolio. During my final, full day observation, the students were rewarded for their reading efforts with a pizza party. I assisted in serving the food. I spoke with students who approached me during all of the observations. Our interactions usually included questions about who I was, if I would help with a question about their work, and if I would zip a coat or tie a shoe.

## Further Comments on the Observations

Although Hillary expressed frustrations about not being told enough about the students with disabilities by her collaborating teacher, I did not share her experience. Each time I visited the classroom to conduct an observation or interview, Hillary's collaborating teacher told me about all that had transpired for the students with disabilities since my previous visit. I was told about instructional decisions that had been made, changes in medication, and parental issues. When I shared what I learned with Hillary, most of the time she claimed to be hearing this information for the first time.

## Abbey

Abbey is a Caucasian female, between twenty and thirty years of age. I first met Abbey was when she consented to be interviewed during the first phase of data collection. She stated that her prior experiences with individuals with disabilities mainly involved her sister, who was hearing impaired.

Table 4.14  Classroom Survey – Abbey

| Inclusive Beliefs | Phase One Mean | Phase Two Mean | Percent of Change | Phase Three Mean | Percent of Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Students with disabilities can learn in a general education setting. | 3.1 | 3.1 | 0 | 3.3 | +6.5 |
| Students with disabilities can be efficiently managed in a general education setting. | 3.0 | 3.7 | +23.3 | 3.9 | +5.4 |
| Reflection is useful for the improvement of teaching. | 3.2 | 4.3 | +34.4 | 4.3 | 0 |
| Collaboration with colleagues and parents/guardians is a useful strategy for working with students with disabilities. | 3.1 | 3.6 | +16.1 | 3.7 | +2.8 |
| Teacher expectations should be high for all students. | 3.0 | 3.3 | +10.0 | 3.4 | +3.0 |
| Learning can be demonstrated and assessed in a variety of ways. | 2.8 | 4.0 | +42.9 | 3.9 | -2.5 |
| A basic knowledge of the special education system and processes makes it possible to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities. | 3.6 | 4.0 | +11.1 | 4.1 | +2.5 |
| The responsibility for a student's success is shared between the student and the teachers. | 2.9 | 3.1 | +6.9 | 3.4 | +9.7 |

## Table 4.15  Knowledge/Ability Survey - Abbey

| Knowledge/Ability | Phase One Mean | Phase Two Mean | Percent of Change | Phase Three Mean | Percent of Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| "I can help students with disabilities learn in a general education setting." | 3.0 | 3.1 | +3.3 | 3.2 | +3.2 |
| "I can efficiently manage students with disabilities in a general education setting." | 3.0 | 2.8 | -6.7 | 2.9 | +3.6 |
| "I can use reflection to improve my teaching." | 3.0 | 3.5 | +16.7 | 3.5 | 0 |
| "I can collaborate with colleagues and parents/guardians to improve my work with students with disabilities." | 2.7 | 3.3 | +22.2 | 3.4 | +3.0 |
| "I can help all students meet my high expectations." | 2.8 | 3.3 | +17.9 | 3.4 | +3.0 |
| "I can assess learning in a variety of ways." | 3.0 | 3.3 | +10.0 | 3.3 | 0 |
| "I understand the special education system and processes enough to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities." | 2.4 | 2.2 | -8.3 | 2.7 | +22.7 |
| "I can recognize and accept my responsibilities for the success of students with disabilities included in my classroom." | 3.3 | 2.9 | -10.3 | 3.4 | +17.2 |

173

**Table 4.16 Ratings for Classroom Teachers - Abbey**

| Knowledge/Ability | Phase One Mean | Phase Two Mean | Percent of Change | Phase Three Mean | Percent of Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| "I can help students with disabilities learn in a general education setting." | 4.0 | 4.6 | +15.0 | 4.6 | 0 |
| "I can efficiently manage students with disabilities in a general education setting." | 4.2 | 4.3 | +2.4 | 4.3 | 0 |
| "I can use reflection to improve my teaching." | 3.8 | 4.7 | +23.7 | 4.7 | 0 |
| "I can collaborate with colleagues and parents/guardians to improve my work with students with disabilities." | 3.1 | 4.1 | +32.3 | 4.4 | +7.3 |
| "I can help all students meet my high expectations." | 3.8 | 4.7 | +19.1 | 4.8 | +2.1 |
| "I can assess learning in a variety of ways." | 3.0 | 3.8 | +26.7 | 4.0 | +5.3 |
| "I understand the special education system and processes enough to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities." | 4.2 | 4.4 | +4.8 | 4.4 | 0 |
| "I can recognize and accept my responsibilities for the success of students with disabilities included in my classroom." | 3.3 | 4.6 | +39.4 | 4.7 | +2.2 |

Abbey's survey mean scores indicated that her efficacy levels

increased, substantially for some items, after the instructional

intervention. Her scores decreased in three areas, managing students,

her understanding of the special education system, and her role as an

inclusive educator in a collaborative relationship. Perhaps the

instructional intervention helped her to see what she did not understand in these areas.

During her internship, Abbey's survey mean scores increased only slightly or not at all. Her scores only decreased in one area, her beliefs about assessment. Her internship did not substantially change her levels of efficacy on the eight indicators.

### Phases One and Two

*Beliefs*

I asked Abbey when inclusion is or is not appropriate for the student with disabilities and/or the rest of the class. During the first interview, Abbey talked about behavioral issues as an important consideration:

> Abbey – "See, I really think that it depends on what the student's disabilities are. I was talking to my [TE 401] CT and she had a kindergartner who was emotionally impaired. She couldn't handle it. Everything was bad; she was hitting kids and stuff. I think in that situation it would be, maybe it would be better to put them in a self-contained classroom. But, I don't know. I think it would be good for all to learn about the differences in the world."

But, generally, she seemed to believe that inclusion was a positive educational practice. Whether or not a student should be included did, however, depend in her mind on the student's disability.

> Abbey – "I know from my sister and her experiences that, I know she likes to be around as many people as she can. I think that

175

including people can give her a chance to learn more about different kinds of people. I'm all for it. But I think you need to look at each individual's problems to decide what is best. I think it depends on the student's disability."

After the instructional intervention, Abbey continued to be positive about inclusion and to see the degree of inclusion as being dependent on the student's disability:

Abbey – "I think it's good when they're included, maybe not all the time. It depends on the student's needs, I think. I definitely think it would be a lot of work for me, but, that's my job."

Abbey believed that once a student is included in her classroom, it would be her responsibility to make sure the student learns:

Abbey If all students learn, I think they definitely learn in different ways. That's the hard part about being a teacher. You have to find out and adapt for all the students' learning styles. That's hard because there are so many different ways that people learn. How can I fix it so everyone learns?

*Ability*

After the instructional intervention, Abbey had trouble naming specific strategies for working with students with disabilities:

Outside Interviewer - "What would be some things that you would do, you know, maybe if they needed extra help...

Abbey – "Well, like, I would spend time before school or after school. Is that what you mean?"

Outside Interviewer – "Yeah"

Abbey – "Like if they needed a tape recorder to take notes, if they can't comprehend what the students are saying when they're giving

presentations. I'd give them a tape recorder or try to get what they needed. I would just try to do things like that."

Abbey developed her accommodations for her science unit in the same general manner. Both imaginary students with disabilities were accommodated by having another person, a paraprofessional, work with them. In the post instructional intervention interview, she comments about using other people:

> Abbey – "I just really think that inclusion would work best if there was someone in the room to work with those students. You know, someone whose responsibility it would be to look after them. I know I want to help those children learn, and I will, but I think asking a teacher to do all of the things they have to do and work with students with disabilities can be too much."

Abbey believed inclusion was positive for students with disabilities after the instructional intervention. She expressed the belief that it is the teacher's role to teach all students, but had trouble naming specific strategies for making accommodations for students with disabilities. She stated that she believed having another person in the classroom to work with the students with disabilities would be the best way to implement inclusive practices.

*Internship Setting*

Abbey's internship took place in a second grade classroom in an elementary school which is described locally as one of the "neediest" of the schools in the district. The classroom was adjacent to another

second grade, where another intern (Marlene)I studied had been placed. The two classroom helpers assigned to Marlene's classroom also assisted in Abbey's.

There were sixteen students in the classroom when the year started. Two of the students had disabilities; one student had a mild mental impairment and another had autism. The student with autism was assigned a paraprofessional who stayed with him throughout the day. The student with the mild mental impairment was in the classroom for all but one hour of the day. The student with autism was also out of the classroom for an hour a day.

Abbey's collaborating teacher had been teaching for over twenty years. During my interview with her, she said students with disabilities had been included in her classroom for many years. She considered the current year to be one of the easiest as far as the challenges the students presented were concerned.

*Beliefs*

One decision inclusive educators have to make is how students with disabilities will be made a part of the classroom learning community. During the second interview in the fall, I asked Abbey about this with regard to the student with autism:

> Abbey – "D****?  I try to call on him when I'm teaching a lesson. He's pretty smart; especially with spelling.  And when we do stories and things on the carpet, I always make sure he comes over too. But mostly, the parapro works with him."

During the second observation in the fall, I noticed that D**** (the student with autism) was not doing the same work as the other students. I also noticed that the paraprofessional was taking some notes in a notebook.  I asked Abbey about all of this:

> Abbey – "I'm not sure about the work.  Sometimes he does what we do and sometimes he doesn't.  I see the parapro bringing in things then they work on that instead of what we're doing.  I'm not sure why.  As for the notebook, I don't know about that either. She does that sometimes too.  I guess she taking some kind of notes on him."

During the final interview, I asked Abbey about her interactions with D*****.

> Abbey – "I guess I've only worked with him a little.  It's like I sometimes feel like I shouldn't try to do more.  The parapro is really nice and everything, but she stays right with him, so I think I might be intruding or something.  Sometimes I wish I knew more about what is going on and what he's doing and why, but I don't seem to hear much.  I think there's a lot I could have learned from him."

179

Abbey believed that D**** should be a part of the learning community, but felt uncomfortable trying to facilitate that. The purpose for D****'s inclusion and the way instructional decisions were made was not something she knew. Abbey seemed to have limited interactions with D****.

*Ability*

The student with a mild mental impairment in Abbey's classroom did the same work as the others. I asked during the second fall interview if any accommodations were being made:

> Abbey – "Sometimes she doesn't have to do as much of the work. (CT) just lets her do a few sometimes. But she does the same work. I think sometimes she takes some back to the special ed classroom when she goes there before lunch. I just think it's great that she's here."

Students were initially included in the classroom at different times of the year. Teachers need to understand what the student needs in order to teach them. A student with a learning disability was added to Abbey's classroom second semester. During the final interview, I asked her how she had become involved in making the initial instructional decisions for the student:

> Abbey – "I know we had an IEP when she came, but I couldn't go. (CT) told me she has a reading problem but that I should still expect her to read. I expect all of my students to read, so I don't

do anything different. She does have trouble and I see it. But I'm not sure what to do about that."

The paraprofessional in the classroom did not work with this student or the student with the mild mental impairment, only the student with autism. Therefore, Abbey's role as decision-maker for these students' instruction would seem to be clearer. But at this point in the year, Abbey seemed to have left that decision-making to her collaborating teacher.

### Summary

Abbey's lack of involvement in decision-making and discussions about the students with disabilities included in her classroom seemed to impede her growth as an inclusive educator. She seemed to maintain a positive inclusive attitude, but demonstrated limited ability to use or even discuss various strategies for making accommodations. The paraprofessional who was assigned to work with the student with autism did not seem to communicate with Abbey, other than to exchange pleasantries.

### My Participation

I actively participated as a member of Abbey's classroom once, during my final, full-day observation. The students were practicing for a

play and I was paired with a student who did not have a partner. I also played a role in the play when the class practiced together.

### The Field Instructor

Abbey had the same field instructor as Marlene. She, too, did not seem to remember any conversations about inclusion or indicate that he had made any impact on her teaching, except for the science lesson that was also mentioned by Marlene.

### Further Comments on Observations

Abbey's collaborating teacher, like Hillary's, always made a point to tell me about everything that had transpired with the students with disabilities each time I came to visit. Abbey, like Hillary, often heard this information for the first time from me. She expressed some frustration about not being kept abreast of what was happening with the students.

When I observed her for the last time, for the full day, I noticed a pattern of interaction between Abbey and her collaborating teacher that I had not noted before. Twice in the course of the day, when Abbey was explaining something to the students, her collaborating teacher interrupted then took over the lesson. I asked Abbey about this, if this was a common occurrence. She said it did happen a few times almost every day. I asked her how she felt about it, and initially, she said she felt

it was probably best for her since she was learning.  I described the expression I had seen on her face each time this had happened, and she then admitted that it did bother her.  She said she felt embarrassed in front of the students and especially uncomfortable that day since I had been there to see it.

I believe it is important to consider these things when examining Abbey's self-efficacy.  She seemed to be getting subtle signals that she was not equal to a teacher.  By not being a part of the instructional decision-making process or even informed of changes in the status of the students with disabilities, and, generally, being replaced in the middle of lessons, she did not seem to be granted the same respect as a teacher.

## Curt

Curt is a Caucasian male between twenty and thirty years of age.  My first encounter with Curt was when he consented to be interviewed during the first phase of data collection.  He had no prior experience with students with disabilities.

Table 4.17  Classroom Survey – Curt

| Inclusive Beliefs | Phase One Mean | Phase Two Mean | Percent of Change | Phase Three Mean | Percent of Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Students with disabilities can learn in a general education setting. | 3.1 | 3.3 | +6.5 | 3.2 | -3.0 |
| Students with disabilities can be efficiently managed in a general education setting. | 3.0 | 3.5 | +16.7 | 3.3 | -5.7 |
| Reflection is useful for the improvement of teaching. | 2.7 | 4.0 | +48.1 | 3.8 | -5.3 |
| Collaboration with colleagues and parents/guardians is a useful strategy for working with students with disabilities. | 3.1 | 3.3 | +6.5 | 3.3 | 0 |
| Teacher expectations should be high for all students. | 2.9 | 3.5 | +20.1 | 3.5 | 0 |
| Learning can be demonstrated and assessed in a variety of ways. | 3.1 | 4.0 | +29.0 | 3.5 | -12.5 |
| A basic knowledge of the special education system and processes makes it possible to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities. | 3.6 | 4.0 | +11.1 | 4.1 | +2.5 |
| The responsibility for a student's success is shared between the student and the teachers. | 3.0 | 3.0 | 0 | 3.1 | +3.3 |

## Table 4.18 Knowledge/Ability Survey - Curt

| Knowledge/Ability | Phase One Mean | Phase Two Mean | Percent of Change | Phase Three Mean | Percent of Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| "I can help students with disabilities learn in a general education setting." | 2.4 | 3.0 | +25.0 | 2.9 | -3.3 |
| "I can efficiently manage students with disabilities in a general education setting." | 2.4 | 2.3 | -4.2 | 2.2 | -4.3 |
| "I can use reflection to improve my teaching." | 2.5 | 3.5 | +40.0 | 3.3 | -5.7 |
| "I can collaborate with colleagues and parents/guardians to improve my work with students with disabilities." | 2.3 | 3.3 | +43.5 | 3.5 | +6.1 |
| "I can help all students meet my high expectations." | 2.3 | 3.3 | +43.5 | 3.2 | +3.0 |
| "I can assess learning in a variety of ways." | 2.5 | 3.3 | +32.0 | 3.2 | +3.0 |
| "I understand the special education system and processes enough to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities." | 2.0 | 2.2 | +10.0 | 2.3 | +4.5 |
| "I can recognize and accept my responsibilities for the success of students with disabilities included in my classroom." | 2.1 | 2.9 | +38.1 | 2.8 | -3.4 |

## Table 4.19  Ratings for Classroom Teachers - Curt

| Knowledge/Ability | Phase One Mean | Phase Two Mean | Percent of Change | Phase Three Mean | Percent of Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| "I can help students with disabilities learn in a general education setting." | 2.6 | 2.7 | +3.8 | 2.8 | +3.7 |
| "I can efficiently manage students with disabilities in a general education setting." | 2.4 | 2.8 | +16.7 | 2.8 | 0 |
| "I can use reflection to improve my teaching." | 3.0 | 3.7 | +23.3 | 3.8 | +2.7 |
| "I can collaborate with colleagues and parents/guardians to improve my work with students with disabilities." | 3.5 | 3.9 | +11.4 | 4.2 | +7.7 |
| "I can help all students meet my high expectations." | 3.3 | 3.6 | +9.1 | 3.4 | -5.6 |
| "I can assess learning in a variety of ways." | 3.0 | 3.4 | +13.3 | 3.3 | -2.9 |
| "I understand the special education system and processes enough to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities." | 3.6 | 3.6 | 0 | 3.5 | -2.8 |
| "I can recognize and accept my responsibilities for the success of students with disabilities included in my classroom." | 3.7 | 4.2 | +13.5 | 4.2 | 0 |

Curt's mean scores from the first to the second phase of the data

collection rose or stayed the same.  He showed significant growth in his

perception of his current knowledge after the instructional intervention.

The only score that showed a decrease was in the area of managing

classrooms with limited resources. Perhaps the instructional intervention helped him to become more aware of the challenges faced by teachers.

The data collected during phase three indicated that Curt was growing in his perception of his efficacy in some areas and regressing in others. Curt's challenging field environment (See *Internship Setting* in Curt's section) could have been a factor in this regression.

<u>Phases One and Two</u>

*Beliefs*

During the first interview, Curt expressed his view about learning. He indicated that learning is a constant process, but said nothing about different levels or rates:

> Curt – "I think it's pretty valid as far as the all students learn phrase. The fact that every second of life you learn something so if you're going to sit there, those students who seem like they're not learning anything probably are. Even if they're learning that they don't want to do the work or shouldn't do it, depending on the consequences, how they'll be held accountable."

But he reported that there could be different levels and rates during the second, post instructional intervention, interview:

> Curt – "I think there are different levels. I think one person might start here and progress to here, to a different level. But then you also have another person who starts out at a different level and they might progress to a different standard so I think every person has an individual learning style and also along with that, capability. So I think you have to provide the stimulus for the different styles."

During the post instructional intervention interview, Curt shared that he felt the amount of inclusion depended on the severity of the student's disability:

> Curt – "Well, as far as addressing the issue if every special needs person should be in class, I think it kind of relies on the severity of that individual. So I don't really know what the cut off point should be or anything, I would think that for the benefit of teaching, for me anyway, like extreme cases where the student needed strict and special attention, I don't think that would be appropriate for the classroom just because there are so many students in there."

It is important for inclusive educators to understand the concept of learning community and how it can be used productively with students with disabilities. Curt seemed to value the idea:

> Curt – "As far as a learning community, if I was in control of it, that's what I would try to do. I would try to set up a community where it was just that. The students would help each other I would be part of that. I might be sort of a facilitator but the classroom itself would be the learning community and they would be the ones responsible for helping each other and taking care of each other."

He added later in the interview:

> Curt – "Well, before I came to this program my philosophy was that everyone had to progress to a certain level. But now, since I've been in the classroom more with elementary kids and just learning things from the education department I realized that because assessment is such a key part for determining what a student knows and providing information to parents that you have to have some sort of regulations for that. I think what I'd like to do is to have students, instead of producing some sort of standard, they could produce what they know."

Curt's written response regarding issues of fairness and equity

seemed to indicate that he was struggling with individualizing work and

expecting all students to reach a certain standard:

> Curt – "I think you need to expect all kids to do certain things. Like reading and math, everyone has to be able to do the basics. I know that some kids will need more time and stuff, but that doesn't mean they shouldn't reach a certain level. I think it's fair to expect kids to do the same kind of work."

*Ability*

Inclusive educators need to understand the role of individualized

assessment in their work with students with disabilities. During the first

interview, Curt acknowledged this need to individualize:

> Curt – "I think that it's kind of hard to judge a whole class as a whole group. I think you have to judge everybody individually. Assessment pieces have to be based on that person's strengths, like with portfolios or just having an understanding of what that person might know. So I think it's more of an individual thing than testing the whole classroom together."

During the post instructional intervention interview, Curt talked

about using parents and the special education system as resources for

working with students:

> Curt – "I think it's really important to talk because I think the parents are the ones who spend the majority of time with the kids."

> Curt – "I guess what comes to my mind are ways in which you can, special education itself is a way to, I mean, unfortunately, it's a way to label certain students which is not good. But it's a way to make you aware of certain needs that people have so that the education

system itself, I see it as a resource to use so that you can include students in your classroom with special needs. So I would just, I guess when I think of the system I think of it as a resource."

During the same interview, Curt talked about how he would construct a learning community:

> Curt – "My role would be to produce a learning community where you can address the learning and learning styles and also including in that if there's a special needs student or group of students in my class then that's also having to take the time to plan for activities for that student or ways to stimulate the brain."

Curt expressed similar ideas about learning communities in his coursework. He mentioned using a learning community when he was making accommodations for his science unit for both students.

*Internship Setting*

The school where Curt was placed had a 95% minority student body, was in an urban setting within a low socio-economic neighborhood. The faculty recognized that the students needed a supportive learning environment and chose to structure themselves into "communities".

Each community was composed of four classes, grades second through fifth. This multiage structure made it possible for the teachers to provide the students with a familiar and supportive environment from year to year.

Curt joined a group of four general education teachers, a special education teacher who was present for part of the day, and another intern. Being the first year of the program, the teachers met frequently to plan and coordinate resources. Curt played an active role in these early planning meetings.

Due to construction in the building, Curt's community, which included eighty students, was housed in half of the gymnasium for the first semester. At the beginning of the second semester, Curt's community moved into a large room, approximately the size of four classrooms combined.

*Beliefs*

It is important for inclusive educators to be flexible and keep an open mind. Curt talked about his adjustment to his unusual field setting during the first fall interview:

> Curt – "It's been chaotic. I think it's because this is new to everyone. It just seems like we're existing from one minute to the next. I know you're going to ask me about the students with disabilities, and I can't even say much about them right now. I haven't had a chance to learn much about them. I guess I should expect all this and keep and open mind. I'm really trying."

During the last fall interview, we talked about how he had adjusted to his environment:

Curt – "It's been really hard. It might be because I didn't go to school in anything like this. I know the community idea is a good one, or that's what the books say. But it's so noisy and unorganized that it's hard to believe that sometimes. I'm just trying to make it work like everyone else."

During our final interview, Curt expressed his thoughts on his experiences over the course of the year:

Curt – "I just don't think this worked like this. I sometimes wonder what my internship would have been like if I had been in a normal classroom. I might have learned more about teaching. Here, it seems like I learned how to survive. I still would like to have a community atmosphere in a classroom, but just one classroom with one group of kids."

I think it is important to note what seemed to be Curt's growing disillusionment. He worked hard to remain open to this unfamiliar environment, but concluded that he wouldn't want to work in that structure again.

*Ability*

During the second fall interview, I asked Curt if he had been communicating with the special education teacher:

Curt – "She isn't in here like she was at the beginning. I think they gave her more kids so she has to be in her own room more. I would like to talk to her more about things that come up. Like certain things, like certain instances, I don't know if I should be doing something I'm doing. Like with the one kid that was being really disruptive. I don't know, because I know it's an inclusion classroom and I don't want to separate him, keep him isolated from the rest of the class and put him in a different chair. I kept thinking to myself, 'I don't know if I should do that because he is a special needs kid and I don't know if it would be good for him.'"

In the course of setting up the second observation, Curt informed me that a new student with disabilities had joined his classroom. Although she had only been in the room for two days, Curt was expressing his frustrations. He described the student as being unmanageable. After the observation, we talked about this:

> Curt – "I'm at my wit's end, and it's just been a few days. The special ed teacher is never around so I just let her go. I don't make her work or anything because she disrupts everything whenever I do. So I just let her run around while I try to teach everyone else. I know that's probably not the right thing to do, but I can't think of anything that might work."

This pattern of the student's misbehavior and Curt's lack of intervention was still happening when I came for the final observation in the spring. We talked about this in the interview:

> Curt – "I'm still frustrated with her and don't know what to do. But at least she isn't blowing up at me anymore. I talked to her grandmother and found out a bunch of stuff about her a couple of weeks ago. I think I at least understand why she acts this way. I heard all about everything that is happening in her life. I've been more patient and we've been getting along better. But I still can't get her to work."

During this same interview, I asked Curt to talk about what he had learned about making accommodations for kids:

> Curt – "Not much, quite honestly. I just don't see us doing much of that. But then, maybe that's all we do in here. All the kids in this room seem to have special needs. But we [the teachers in the community] don't talk very about the kids. It's more like we try to

make sure all of our schedules work right and stuff like that. Right now, the big issue is paper. We're all out, the school, that is. We have to figure out how to raise money to get more. It's just all about survival."

Summary

It was difficult to follow Curt's progress as an inclusive educator. His day to day efforts to, as he would put it, "survive," just seemed to overwhelm everything else. He told me he wanted to include students in his future classrooms, but the context he had this year just was not what he expected.

My Participation

During my final observation in Curt's classroom, I had my only formal interaction with the students. During a partner activity, I read with a student. Overall, I think my main participation in Curt's environment was as his counselor. Curt seemed very frustrated in this environment and vented his feelings during each of our encounters. He seemed to be trying to keep an open mind, but I think he finally concluded that this open classroom environment was not what he wanted.

The Field Instructor

Curt's field instructor, who he considered helpful, had an extensive background advocating at the state level for the support needed to make inclusion effective. She explained during our interview that she had

required the interns, in their first lesson plans, to make an "accommodations" section.  When I asked Curt if there had been any discussion about special education in his seminars, initially, he said he could not recall any.  But when I asked about the section on the lesson plans, he did remember that, but could not seem to tell me anything about it.

### Further Comments on Observations

Curt's collaborating teacher, like Hillary's and Abbey's, kept me informed about the students with disabilities in the classroom.  I was, again, usually the first one to share the information with the intern.

Curt's setting was challenging, especially the first semester when the community was housed in half of the gymnasium.  The acoustics of the gymnasium coupled with the sounds that traveled through the wall that divided it created a noisy environment.  There were times when I was observing Curt from the back of his area that I could not hear him, though his students were being quiet.  The kind of noise you would expect to hear in a classroom was happening in the other three grade levels of the community and amplified by the location.  This situation continued, to a lesser degree, when the community was moved into the classroom.

<u>Vicky</u>

Vicky is a Caucasian female between twenty and thirty years of age. My first encounter with Vicky was when she consented to be interviewed during the first phase of data collection. She had no prior experience with students with disabilities.

<u>Phases One through Three</u>

Table 4.20  Classroom Survey – Vicky

| Inclusive Beliefs | Phase One Mean | Phase Two Mean | Percent of Change | Phase Three Mean | Percent of Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Students with disabilities can learn in a general education setting. | 3.9 | 3.4 | -12.8 | 4.1 | +20.6 |
| Students with disabilities can be efficiently managed in a general education setting. | 4.0 | 3.7 | -7.5 | 4.2 | +13.5 |
| Reflection is useful for the improvement of teaching. | 5.0 | 5.0 | 0 | 5.0 | 0 |
| Collaboration with colleagues and parents/guardians is a useful strategy for working with students with disabilities. | 4.1 | 4.3 | +4.9 | 4.7 | +9.3 |
| Teacher expectations should be high for all students. | 4.4 | 3.8 | -13.6 | 4.4 | +15.8 |
| Learning can be demonstrated and assessed in a variety of ways. | 5.0 | 5.0 | 0 | 5.0 | 0 |
| A basic knowledge of the special education system and processes makes it possible to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities. | 5.0 | 5.0 | 0 | 5.0 | 0 |
| The responsibility for a student's success is shared between the student and the teachers. | 4.0 | 3.3 | -17.5 | 4.2 | +27.3 |

## Table 4.21  Knowledge/Ability Survey - Vicky

| Knowledge/Ability | Phase One Mean | Phase Two Mean | Percent of Change | Phase Three Mean | Percent of Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| "I can help students with disabilities learn in a general education setting." | 4.2 | 3.9 | -7.1 | 4.4 | +12.8 |
| "I can efficiently manage students with disabilities in a general education setting." | 3.9 | 3.5 | -10.3 | 4.5 | +28.6 |
| "I can use reflection to improve my teaching." | 4.5 | 3.5 | -22.2 | 4.4 | +25.7 |
| "I can collaborate with colleagues and parents/guardians to improve my work with students with disabilities." | 3.5 | 3.8 | +8.6 | 4.5 | +18.4 |
| "I can help all students meet my high expectations." | 4.0 | 3.8 | -5.0 | 4.3 | +13.2 |
| "I can assess learning in a variety of ways." | 3.5 | 3.3 | -5.7 | 4.4 | +33.3 |
| "I understand the special education system and processes enough to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities." | 3.2 | 2.7 | -15.6 | 4.1 | +51.9 |
| "I can recognize and accept my responsibilities for the success of students with disabilities included in my classroom." | 3.8 | 3.4 | -10.5 | 4.5 | +32.4 |

**Table 4.22  Ratings for Classroom Teachers - Vicky**

| Knowledge/Ability | Phase One Mean | Phase Two Mean | Percent of Change | Phase Three Mean | Percent of Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| "I can help students with disabilities learn in a general education setting." | 4.9 | 4.7 | -4.1 | 4.9 | +4.3 |
| "I can efficiently manage students with disabilities in a general education setting." | 4.9 | 4.8 | -2.0 | 4.9 | +2.1 |
| "I can use reflection to improve my teaching." | 5.0 | 4.7 | -6.0 | 5.0 | +6.4 |
| "I can collaborate with colleagues and parents/guardians to improve my work with students with disabilities." | 4.7 | 4.8 | +2.1 | 5.0 | +4.2 |
| "I can help all students meet my high expectations." | 4.9 | 4.6 | -6.1 | 4.9 | +6.5 |
| "I can assess learning in a variety of ways." | 3.7 | 3.0 | -18.9 | 4.5 | +50.0 |
| "I understand the special education system and processes enough to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities." | 4.8 | 4.4 | -8.3 | 4.7 | +6.8 |
| "I can recognize and accept my responsibilities for the success of students with disabilities included in my classroom." | 5.0 | 4.6 | -8.0 | 4.7 | +2.2 |

Vicky's mean scores during the first phase of data collection were among the highest of the group.  Yet after the instructional intervention, her scores dropped substantially.  I wonder if after the instructional

intervention Vicky concluded that there were many things she did not know.

The mean scores for the third phase seemed to indicate a return to the high-level efficacy scores. I wonder if this was due to Vicky's internship placement environment (see *Internship Setting* description for Vicky).

### Phases One and Two

Vicky participated in all aspects of this study. The qualitative data from these phases include her assignments from the instructional intervention and two interviews.

*Beliefs*

During the first interview, Vicky stated that she felt the degree of inclusion depended on the student:

> Vicky – "It will be difficult for me if all students are placed in my classroom. But I also think that it's important. As far as the full time thing goes, I think it will depend on the student and how they adapt. You're supposed to be fair to all students and give them everything that they need and I think that that definitely is important. So, I guess I think the full time really depends on the student and I don't think for every student that would be the best."

Vicky's cautious attitude toward inclusion also seemed to be related to her desire to succeed with the students:

> Vicky – "I mean, I have to help all these students and it isn't that I don't want to do it, I'm just afraid that I might fail. Then there's

that little fairytale part of me that wants to believe that I can reach every child. I think I can in some ways, but I think my first year is going to be quite a rude awakening."

Vicky's responses to the issues of fairness and equity questions presented during the instructional intervention were consistent with these statements. She stated a desire to include students who would have a good chance to succeed:

> "It just seems like you have to worry about so many things. I want to help all of my students succeed, but I don't know how much I can do, realistically. I think you need to be careful with who you place where."

*Ability*

During the post instructional intervention interview, Vicky was able to describe strategies she would use to teach students with disabilities:

> Vicky – "If I had students from special education in my classroom, I would set up the assignments to meet their needs. Like, if I had a student who had trouble writing, I would let them talk into a tape recorder, or draw, or dictate to someone. If the student had trouble reading, I would have them work with another student who could do the reading or even use a highlighter to help the student see the main points of the text. I just think there are things you can try."

The accommodations she made for her science unit were not as detailed. Vicky recommended intervention from a paraprofessional or herself if a student was having difficulties.

A willingness to collaborate is an important belief for an inclusive

educator to possess.  Vicky mentions this in the first interview:

> Vicky – "I'm so glad that we get to do the internship.  I think having
> a whole year to share ideas with your collaborating teacher will be
> so helpful.  I guess teachers don't usually get to talk to each
> other."

She expressed similar thoughts during the post instructional

intervention interview:

> Vicky – "I know there will be students with disabilities in my
> internship placement.  My collaborating teacher has already told me
> all about them.  I know it will be challenging, but I plan to talk to my
> collaborating teacher and the special education teacher and anyone
> else who might help if I have trouble."

*Internship Setting*

Vicky was placed in a suburban elementary school fifth grade

classroom for her internship.  The school had a mostly Caucasian student

body and seemed comfortable in terms of finances and resources.

Vicky's collaborating teacher had five years of teaching experience.

There was also a paraprofessional, with twelve years of experience,

present in the classroom all day.

There were twenty-six students in the classroom when the school

year began.  There were two students with learning disabilities at the

beginning of the year and two students with emotional impairments were

added partway through the year.

*Beliefs*

It's important for inclusive educators to believe that students with disabilities can learn in a general education environment.  Vicky's beliefs about this seemed to get stronger as the year progressed:

First fall interview:

Vicky – "I was concerned about S****.  He has trouble reading and dealing with just about everything emotionally.  But I think we've come up with a strategy that might work.  He will be able to go out into the hall whenever he gets upset."

Second fall interview:

Vicky – "We got two new students included last week.  These students are from the EI room.  I had heard about these kids.  But so far things seem to be going OK.  I know that we can implement these behavior plans if we have to.  But we put them into groups with kids who are nice and they seem to be working.  I think this will be good."

Last fall interview:

Vicky – "I really see these kids learning.  I mean, the students with the learning problems are tough sometimes, but we think of ways to make it work.  It's the same with the students with emotional impairments.  We just work at it and make things happen in the right ways, and they're able to work in here."

*Ability*

It's important for inclusive educators to be willing to try different teaching strategies.  Vicky talked about her plans during the first fall interview:

Vicky – "I know we will be teaching things about the core democratic values. I'm already thinking that I will let the students work in project groups to develop a song or a play or something like that to illustrate the values. I think that should work and they'll like doing it if they get to pick what they'll work on."

Inclusive educators need to understand how to develop effective accommodations for the students with disabilities. In order to do this, they need to understand the nature of the student's disability. Vicky was regularly told about the students and any changes in their status:

Vicky – "We (collaborating teacher, paraprofessional, and Vicky) talk every day after school. We talk about every student in this class. It really doesn't take that long, but I always know what is happening. We think about how the student did that day and what we might change for the next. It just helps to know this stuff."

I commented during the final interview about her knowledge of the students and the nature of the collaborative relationship in the classroom. Vicky said she thought these things were the key for her progress as someone learning to be a teacher:

Vicky – "I know it's unusual that we (the collaborating teacher, paraprofessional, and Vicky) talk so much. When I hear other interns talking in my classes, I can't believe what I hear. Some of them don't seem to know even basic information about their students. They say mean things about the students too. I don't think my situation should be unusual. I just know that I've been lucky because I have learned so much because we have taken the time to figure things out together."

## Summary

Vicky's experience seemed almost idyllic. She was working with a collaborating teacher who was creative and open to new ideas. When I interviewed her, the collaborating teacher said she has made it a point to figure out how to create an inclusive environment since she started teaching five years ago.

The paraprofessional in the classroom had twelve years of experience and worked with all of the students in the classroom. The students with disabilities were not singled out because there was an adult standing over them.

## My Participation

Vicky's was the only classroom of the five I observed where I was not asked to help with anything. My only interactions with the students occurred when they asked me who I was.

## The Field Instructor

Vicky's field instructor had some experience with students with disabilities through substitute teaching. She said she had seen how the students behaved in segregated classrooms and how they behaved in inclusive environments and believed the inclusive environments seemed to encourage better behavior. Vicky thought her field instructor was nice

and helpful.  She did not recall any discussion or instruction about inclusion.

### Further Comments on Observations

One important factor in Vicky's internship placement seemed to be the level of communication between the three adults in the classroom. Vicky seemed to be kept appraised of everything that occurred and her opinion was sought when there were decisions to be made.  I believe this made Vicky's placement unique in how it helped her to grow as an inclusive educator.

### Overall Findings for Phases Three and Four

1) All of the interns, regardless of their internship experience, seemed to remain committed to developing inclusive environments in their future classrooms.

2) Three of the five collaborating teacher s shared information about the students with disabilities with me when I visited their classrooms.

3) The interns of those same three collaborating teachers often heard the information about the students with disabilities for the first time from me.

4) One intern spoke with the other two adults in the classroom about the students on a daily basis.

5) This same intern rated herself more highly, based on the combined mean scores of the phase three surveys, than other four interns.

6) Four of the five interns continued to believe that the nature of the student's disability, at least in part, should be considered when making decisions about the degree of inclusion.

7) The one intern who was placed in a non-traditional environment did not believe he would like to participate in the same type of environment again.

# Chapter Five

# Discussion and Conclusions

In this study I examined the efficacy of *teacher candidates/interns preparing to teach in inclusive environments. (*Throughout this chapter, I will refer to my subjects as teacher candidates/interns when I am speaking of them generally, as teacher candidates when I am speaking of them before their internship only, and as interns when I am speaking of them during their internship.) Specifically, I sought to determine 1) to what extent the changes can be accounted for as the interaction of the teacher candidates' responses to an integrated instructional approach in a teacher education program and 2) to what extent the changes can be accounted for as the interaction of the interns and particular features of their field experiences. In this chapter I will discuss what I believe to be the major findings of this study and the conclusions I have reached based on those findings.

During my preliminary analysis of the data, five major themes emerged. I will use these themes, or variations of them, throughout this chapter to signify the underlying concepts of groups of findings.

# The Questions of Efficacy

## Who's Responsible?

One of the themes that emerged from the data, student ⇒ teacher

responsibility, was a reference to attribution theory, or those things the

teacher candidate/intern believed were factors in the success of the

student with disabilities. The arrow signifies a continuum in the degree of

responsibility the teacher candidate/intern believes he/she assumes for

the student with disabilities. The data led me to expand that theme to

include the intervention of someone other than the teacher

candidate/intern and things found in the classroom environment (See

Figure 5.1). The data showed that the interns added the additional

attributing factors of other people and the environment.

Figure 5.1  Responsibility for Success

Environment

Student            Teacher Candidate/Intern

Other Person
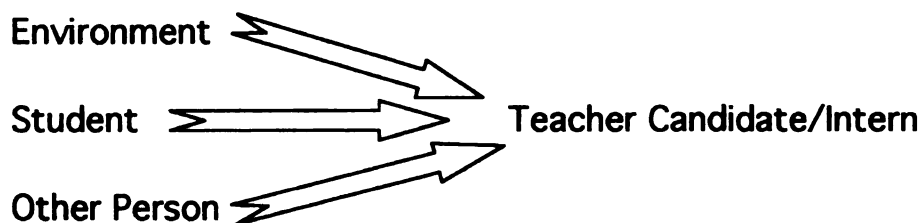
## The Student?

The first factor I will address involves how the responsibility for

success or failure is attributed to the students with disabilities. I found

that the teacher candidates, pre and post instructional intervention,

believed that the main criterion for determining the degree inclusion was the severity of the students' disabilities. The interns also cited the severity of the disabilities as criterion, and added other criteria, which I will discuss later. By attributing the success or failure of inclusion to the severity of the student's disability, the teacher candidates/interns were able to relinquish their responsibility for the student's learning.

Attributing the success or failure of students to the severity of their disabilities has serious ramifications. First, utilizing this criterion as a gate-keeping device is discriminatory. The severity of the disability cannot be given as a reason for denying an individual access to any public institution, including the general education classroom (Tucker & Goldstein, 1991). Second, by reacting this way the teacher candidates/interns deny themselves the opportunity to learn to utilize the teaching methods that will be helpful for these students. They pass up a chance to grow professionally and deny all of the students the opportunity to benefit from a variety of teaching methods (Waldron, 1996).

Another Adult?

The teacher candidates/interns often made other adults responsible for the success of the student with disabilities. The involvement of another individual was cited most frequently as an

accommodation for the science units they completed during the instructional intervention (See Table 5.1). This means that the teacher candidates/interns attributed the success of students with disabilities to the direct intervention of individuals other than themselves.

Table 5.1  Accommodations for Science Unit

| Student | Accommodations (# of times recommended) | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | Student - Independently | Other Help |
| Brad – A student with a learning disability in written expression. | Write less (2)<br>Draw (4)<br>Do orally (1) | Use parapro (2)<br>Teacher help (6)<br>Modeling (1)<br>Encouragement(6)<br>Praise (4) |
| Heather – A student with an emotional impairment, lives with foster parents. | | Use parapro (4)<br>Incentives (4)<br>Praise (6)<br>Build trust (2)<br>Other students (7)<br>Foster parents (5) |
| Rick – A student with a learning disability in reading comprehension. | Do simpler work (5) | Teacher help (6)<br>Other students (9)<br>More time to work (5) |
| Cheryl – A student with a mild mental impairment. | Simpler/more concrete work (8)<br>Less work (7) | Other students (8)<br>More time to work (4)<br>Teacher help (5)<br>Parents (3)<br>Parapro (4)<br>Sp Ed. Teacher (1) |
| Trinity – A student with a learning disability in basic reading skills. | Organizational checklist (1) | Other students (7)<br>Teacher help (6)<br>Parapro (7) |

210

Further evidence of this diversion of responsibility was produced when the teacher candidates were interviewed after the instructional intervention. When asked what stood out from the instructional intervention, the information they specifically mentioned most frequently was the five models of inclusion. The five models of inclusion were different configurations of collaboration and support involving personnel from special education. I spent about one half of a session providing information about the five models. However, I spent three and a half sessions providing information about making accommodations to curricula and the classroom environment. Their recall of models for support, along with the kinds of accommodations they made for the science units is evidence that, in spite of the more extensive instruction about making accommodations themselves, the means of implementing inclusion that came to the teacher candidates' minds when asked was the involvement of another individual.

Marlene gave us an example of how this pattern of thinking worked in the internship. She did not make accommodations to the students' materials but relied instead on the students' time in the special education classroom as the time when they would get instruction in academics:

> Marlene – "I know they don't get much [academic instruction] in here. I know we sometimes send their unfinished work back to

special ed with them.  But they're not in there very long.  But we don't do it here."

Abbey gave us a second example.  She allowed the paraprofessional assigned to the student with autism to dominate his instruction:

> Abbey – "I'm not really sure what is happening with D*** [student with autism].  I just know that [parapro] takes care of his work."

Curt hesitated to get involved in the discipline of a student:

> Curt – "I just let her [student with disabilities] run around.  I'm not sure what to do with her.  The special ed teacher hasn't told me what I should do, either."

These interns had relinquished the responsibility for the students' learning to someone else.  When I asked them during the final interview about what they would like as teachers of inclusive classrooms next year, all five of them first mentioned the presence of someone from special education in their classrooms.  This preference suggests that they expect to sustain their way of working with students with disabilities.  They expect someone else to be responsible.

Once again, this way of thinking about handling inclusion denies the teacher candidate/intern the opportunity to grow through the problem solving and creativity that can be the result of making accommodations. It is also evidence that the teacher candidate/intern has not yet reached

a level of self-efficacy necessary to accept the responsibility of helping a student with disabilities to learn.

What is really interesting about this pattern of thinking is how it applies to efficacy. The evidence does not support a correlation between the involvement of others and a positive impact on the efficacy of the intern. Curt's internship placement had approximately eighty students and seven adults, giving them an 11/1 student to adult ratio, the highest of the five interns. Marlene's classroom had fourteen students and three, sometimes more, adults. This meant her classroom had a 5/1 student to adult ratio, the lowest of the interns. Yet, according to their third phase survey scores, they both maintained low levels of efficacy (See Tables 5. 2-7, Phase Three Means). Allowing other adults to be responsible did not improve the efficacy levels for Marlene and the lack of available adults had the same effect on Curt. There was no correlation between the number of adults in the classroom and the interns' efficacy.

Table 5.2  Classroom Survey – Marlene

| Inclusive Beliefs | Phase Three Mean |
|---|---|
| Students with disabilities can learn in a general education setting. | 3.4 |
| Students with disabilities can be efficiently managed in a general education setting. | 3.2 |
| Reflection is useful for the improvement of teaching. | 3.6 |
| Collaboration with colleagues and parents/guardians is a useful strategy for working with students with disabilities. | 3.5 |
| Teacher expectations should be high for all students. | 3.6 |
| Learning can be demonstrated and assessed in a variety of ways. | 3.4 |
| A basic knowledge of the special education system and processes makes it possible to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities. | 4.1 |
| The responsibility for a student's success is shared between the student and the teachers. | 3.9 |

Table 5.3  Knowledge/Ability Survey – Marlene

| Knowledge/Ability | Phase Three Mean |
|---|---|
| "I can help students with disabilities learn in a general education setting." | 2.0 |
| "I can efficiently manage students with disabilities in a general education setting." | 2.1 |
| "I can use reflection to improve my teaching." | 2.3 |
| "I can collaborate with colleagues and parents/guardians to improve my work with students with disabilities." | 2.1 |
| "I can help all students meet my high expectations." | 1.9 |
| "I can assess learning in a variety of ways." | 1.8 |
| "I understand the special education system and processes enough to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities." | 1.9 |
| "I can recognize and accept my responsibilities for the success of students with disabilities included in my classroom." | 2.0 |

## Table 5.4  Ratings for Classroom Teachers – Marlene

| Knowledge/Ability | Phase Three Mean |
|---|---|
| "I can help students with disabilities learn in a general education setting." | 2.1 |
| "I can efficiently manage students with disabilities in a general education setting." | 2.3 |
| "I can use reflection to improve my teaching." | 2.3 |
| "I can collaborate with colleagues and parents/guardians to improve my work with students with disabilities." | 2.2 |
| "I can help all students meet my high expectations." | 2.1 |
| "I can assess learning in a variety of ways." | 1.9 |
| "I understand the special education system and processes enough to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities." | 1.8 |
| "I can recognize and accept my responsibilities for the success of students with disabilities included in my classroom." | 2.0 |

## Table 5.5 Classroom Survey – Curt

| Inclusive Beliefs | Phase One Mean | Phase Two Mean | Percent of Change | Phase Three Mean | Percent of Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Students with disabilities can learn in a general education setting. | 3.1 | 3.3 | +6.5 | 3.2 | -3.0 |
| Students with disabilities can be efficiently managed in a general education setting. | 3.0 | 3.5 | +16.7 | 3.3 | -5.7 |
| Reflection is useful for the improvement of teaching. | 2.7 | 4.0 | +48.1 | 3.8 | -5.3 |
| Collaboration with colleagues and parents/guardians is a useful strategy for working with students with disabilities. | 3.1 | 3.3 | +6.5 | 3.3 | 0 |
| Teacher expectations should be high for all students. | 2.9 | 3.5 | +20.1 | 3.5 | 0 |
| Learning can be demonstrated and assessed in a variety of ways. | 3.1 | 4.0 | +29.0 | 3.5 | -12.5 |
| A basic knowledge of the special education system and processes makes it possible to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities. | 3.6 | 4.0 | +11.1 | 4.1 | +2.5 |
| The responsibility for a student's success is shared between the student and the teachers. | 3.0 | 3.0 | 0 | 3.1 | +3.3 |

## Table 5.6 Knowledge/Ability Survey – Curt

| Knowledge/Ability | Phase One Mean | Phase Two Mean | Percent of Change | Phase Three Mean | Percent of Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| "I can help students with disabilities learn in a general education setting." | 2.4 | 3.0 | +25.0 | 2.9 | -3.3 |
| "I can efficiently manage students with disabilities in a general education setting." | 2.4 | 2.3 | -4.2 | 2.2 | -4.3 |
| "I can use reflection to improve my teaching." | 2.5 | 3.5 | +40.0 | 3.3 | -5.7 |
| "I can collaborate with colleagues and parents/guardians to improve my work with students with disabilities." | 2.3 | 3.3 | +43.5 | 3.5 | +6.1 |
| "I can help all students meet my high expectations." | 2.3 | 3.3 | +43.5 | 3.2 | +3.0 |
| "I can assess learning in a variety of ways." | 2.5 | 3.3 | +32.0 | 3.2 | +3.0 |
| "I understand the special education system and processes enough to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities." | 2.0 | 2.2 | +10.0 | 2.3 | +4.5 |
| "I can recognize and accept my responsibilities for the success of students with disabilities included in my classroom." | 2.1 | 2.9 | +38.1 | 2.8 | -3.4 |

## Table 5.7  Ratings for Classroom Teachers - Curt

| Knowledge/Ability | Phase One Mean | Phase Two Mean | Percent of Change | Phase Three Mean | Percent of Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| "I can help students with disabilities learn in a general education setting." | 2.6 | 2.7 | +3.8 | 2.8 | +3.7 |
| "I can efficiently manage students with disabilities in a general education setting." | 2.4 | 2.8 | +16.7 | 2.8 | 0 |
| "I can use reflection to improve my teaching." | 3.0 | 3.7 | +23.3 | 3.8 | +2.7 |
| "I can collaborate with colleagues and parents/guardians to improve my work with students with disabilities." | 3.5 | 3.9 | +11.4 | 4.2 | +7.7 |
| "I can help all students meet my high expectations." | 3.3 | 3.6 | +9.1 | 3.4 | -5.6 |
| "I can assess learning in a variety of ways." | 3.0 | 3.4 | +13.3 | 3.3 | -2.9 |
| "I understand the special education system and processes enough to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities." | 3.6 | 3.6 | 0 | 3.5 | -2.8 |
| "I can recognize and accept my responsibilities for the success of students with disabilities included in my classroom." | 3.7 | 4.2 | +13.5 | 4.2 | 0 |

## The Environment?

The interns also attributed the success of the students with

disabilities to the environment.  This means they were concerned about

the interactions of the students with disabilities and their non-disabled

classmates.  During the pre and post instructional intervention interviews,

the teacher candidates cited the teasing of the students with disabilities

as one of their major concerns about the success of students with

disabilities in an inclusive environment.  Some wondered if it would be

better not to include these students for their own protection:

> Chloe – "I would worry about the kids [students with disabilities]
> being teased.  I mean, it seems like kids can be mean sometimes.
> Maybe if they have some really serious problems or are really
> sensitive or something, maybe they should just stay in the special
> education room.  I mean, no kids should be teased like that."

Marlene was also concerned about teasing and whether or not the

students should be included in her internship placement:

> Marlene – "I just don't think the kids [students with disabilities]
> get anything out of being in here.  They don't do the work most of
> the time so (CT) just gives them some paper and tells them to
> draw.  So they're not learning anything and I can't protect them
> from the teasing.  It's just not working."

Curt believed it was the chaos in the environment of his placement

that limited the progress of the students with disabilities included in his

placement.  Notice how his attribution makes it possible for him to explain

classroom events without assuming personal responsibility:

> Curt – "Maybe if we [adults in Curt's "community"] were more
> organized.  I mean, it seems like it's  all too much to worry about all
> at once.  We can't seem to get even the basic things figured out.
> All of our kids have so many problems, it seems like kids with these
> special needs can't get them met with everybody so unsure about
> everything."

The teacher candidates and then Marlene, as an intern, were

concerned about teasing. But no one mentioned what strategies can be

used to prevent teasing or deal with it when it occurs. Marlene,

especially, expressed feelings of powerlessness:

> Marlene – "I don't hear the teasing when she's [CT] in the
> classroom. I mean, I guess they're too afraid of her to do it. But
> not with me. They tease and do all kinds of things when it's just
> me."

As he noted above, Curt also felt powerless. The entire

environment seemed too difficult to manage and Curt believed it was

preventing him from working effectively with the students with

disabilities.

Teacher efficacy depends on believing that students are capable of

learning and that the teacher can make that learning happen. As these

interns/teacher candidates attributed the success or failure of the

students with disabilities to factors outside of themselves, they also gave

up on the possibility that they can help students with disabilities to learn.

### A Deterrent to Ownership

The fifth theme, "Experts" Use Child-Specific Data ⇒ I Use Child-

Specific Data refers to a movement in responsibility for making decisions

about students with disabilities in the general education classroom from

"experts" (e.g., special education personnel, collaborating teacher, parents) to the teacher candidate/intern.  When teacher candidates/interns increasingly believe information about the student is important for planning, seek out that information, and use it for program implementation, they signal this movement from a reliance on special education personnel to thinking for themselves.

Abbey, Curt, Marlene, and Hillary believed they were not kept informed about the status of the students with disabilities.  Marlene, Curt, and Abbey did not seek out this information, leading them to relinquish responsibility for the learning of the students with disabilities.  Marlene and Curt expressed feelings of futility regarding their work with the students with disabilities.  Abbey seemed to have limited interactions with the student with autism included in her classroom since the paraprofessional seemed to take care of everything.  Hillary, on the other hand, sought out information about the students and did research on her own.  She assumed responsibility for the learning of the students with disabilities.

Possessing information about students is important for individuals who are beginning to teach.  Carter, Sabers, Cushing, Pinnegar, and Berliner (1987) have already shown this.  They studied how a group of

novice, postulant, and expert teachers would use information about each student in their teaching. All of the teachers were given profiles of each student before the class began. Novice and postulant teachers were more inclined to use the information in making instructional decisions than the experts. The experts only seemed to use the information to come to general conclusions about the class as a whole.

The results of the Carter, etal, (1987) study seem to parallel some of the dynamics I found in the internship placements. Four of the five collaborating teachers in my study had twenty or more years of experience as a teacher. Vicky's collaborating teacher, with five years of experience, used and shared child-specific information. Vicky expressed how important she believed it was to have this information:

> Vicky – "We [collaborating teacher, paraprofessional, and Vicky] talk every day after school. We talk about every student in this class. It really doesn't take that long, but I always know what is happening. We think about how the student did that day and what we might change for the next. It just helps to know this stuff."

Curt expressed his frustration about not knowing specific things about the students with disabilities. He also wondered why I was being given information he did not have:

> Curt – "After I talked to her [student with disabilities] Grandmother, I at least felt like I could understand where she was coming from. I mean, with all the things about her parents and everything, I guess I understand why she acts the way she does. It helps me to be more

patient. But there's other stuff I don't know. Like, you told me about F***'s learning disability. I didn't know what it was."

Abbey expressed similar frustrations:

Abbey – "I don't know what the parapro is doing with [student with autism]. We got a new student and I think she's special ed."

CM – "She's mildly mentally impaired. Your CT told me."

Abbey – "See, I didn't know that either."

Hillary found that I was being given information she had to seek out:

Hillary – "See, I have to go find this information but [CT] tells you. I don't understand it."

I asked Marlene what she would do with this kind of information if she

were kept better informed:

Marlene – "I guess it would depend on the information and the student. But it seems like you could make better decisions about instruction and discipline if you knew more about the students."

York and Reynolds (1996) pointed out the importance of having

specific information about the students with disabilities. They tell us that

understanding the nature of the student's disability is important for

making appropriate accommodations and maintaining proper expectations

for the student. By having this information, the interns could have

enhanced their inclusive practices and accept more ownership for the

learning of the students with disabilities. The interns in my study

recognized the value of having this information.

In addition to the importance of having this information, feeling excluded from communication is an issue to consider for the interns. The fact that I was given information, as an infrequent visitor, and they were not was frustrating for Abbey, Curt, and Hillary. When the collaborating teachers failed to share information the interns believed was important but readily gave that information to me, they violated the interns' beliefs about collegial relationships. Hall, Johnson, and Bowman, (1995) found that in order for student teachers [interns] to feel confident [efficacious], they need to be treated according to their image of what it is to be a teacher.

## Caretaker or Teacher?

Another theme, Love is Enough ⇒ Tangible Strategies, represented the continuum between praise and encouragement as the primary method for working with students with disabilities to the implementation of other specific, tangible teaching strategies. This was an indication of how the teacher candidates/interns perceived their role with students with disabilities.

The teacher candidates/interns believed, from the beginning of the study, that their role as teachers with students with disabilities was to maintain control in the classroom and help the students with disabilities

feel comfortable. Abbey, Curt, and Marlene continued to express this belief in their internship placements. On only one occasion during the instructional intervention I spent part of a session addressing behavior management. This was the only time I spent addressing anything similar to classroom control. I also talked once during the first session about the need for students with emotional impairments to feel safe. This was the only time I explicitly addressed student comfort. However, the teacher candidates/interns continued to see control and comfort as their role in spite of receiving much more instruction about methods of teaching and making accommodations during the instructional intervention.

As with attributing the success or failure of students with disabilities to factors outside of themselves, seeing their role as caretaker rather than teacher does not strengthen the self-efficacy of the teacher candidates/interns. The teacher candidates/interns minimize the possibility that they can teach these students.

How are the Students with Disabilities Included?

The theme, separateness ⇒ building a learning community, represented the continuum of the degree that the students with disabilities were included in classroom activities. This was an indication of how the teacher candidates/interns implemented inclusion within the

classroom as an entire community and how they saw students with disabilities as part of that community.

One set of beliefs held by the teacher candidates that is germane to this theme is that the purpose of inclusion is to help the students with disabilities to improve their self-esteem and to help the general education students to develop an awareness of and tolerance for diversity. Pre and post instructional intervention interviews indicated that these beliefs were maintained.

Phase One:

Janet – "I think for the special education students, you know, it kind of gives them a better outlook on themselves. I also think it's important for the regular education students to, you know, get the experience working and, you know, socializing with kids that have, you know, handicaps or disabilities and learning from them as well."

Phase Two:

Chloe – "I think it's also probably beneficial for the special education student to be included in the classroom where regular education students are just for modeling and their self-esteem. I think that it can also be beneficial for the regular education students to be exposed to people, to learn to work with people with disabilities. Also, just the regular education students could maybe provide some assistance, like say with reading or writing or that type of thing to the special education students."

What is problematic about this belief is that it tends to make care taking rather than teaching the students with disabilities the primary focus. The teacher candidates/interns believed that the teacher's role is to help the

students with disabilities to feel comfortable. This belief is consistent with the belief that the purpose of inclusion is to promote positive relationships.

Chloe's comment about having the general education students help the students with disabilities was also a commonly held belief among the teacher candidates. This accommodation was another example of having someone work directly with the students with disabilities which was recommended for the science unit (See Table 5.1). However, this strategy became a problem for some of the interns:

> Marlene – "The first time a student in here refused to work with another student, I was just floored."

> Curt – "None of the kids will work with her [student with disabilities], so I don't assign her to a group. That's probably not the right thing to do, but I don't know anything else."

But other interns did use this strategy successfully:

> Vicky – "I think part of the trick is to give them choices whenever you can. I also don't always put the same kids together when I decide the groups. I don't know, it just works. The kids are pretty good to each other."

> Hillary – "I think really hard about when I use groups or have the kids help each other. I think it's tempting to always put the nice kid with the student having trouble, but I don't think it's fair. I guess they haven't gotten sick of each other."

Hillary and Vicky put a lot of thought into their grouping strategies.

Curt and Marlene were not able to articulate this pattern of thinking.

Cooperative learning can be a powerful tool for successful inclusive environments (Putnam, 1993). Yet when groups are utilized improperly, the interns can conclude that this is not a useful teaching strategy:

> Marlene – "I don't like it when we use groups. It just isn't working for these [students with disabilities] kids."

The teacher candidates/interns demonstrated a willingness to utilize groups as a means of helping students with disabilities to feel included in the class. However, the implementation of the groupwork made it apparent that the primary use was to have other students help the students with disabilities with their work. The teacher candidates/interns, with the exception of Hillary and Vicky, were unable to discuss how they would help the students learn to work together. This type of instruction helps in the development of a learning community in the classroom, which, in turn, would help the students with disabilities to be a part of the whole group. Without this instruction, Marlene and Curt had problems utilizing groupwork as a means of helping the students with disabilities.

The interns were impacted by various factors in their field placements. The success or failure of students with disabilities was attributed to factors other than themselves, unless the interns' learning of inclusive practices was actively supported, as in Vicky's placement.

The potential factors for which the success or failure of the students with disabilities were attributed included: the severity of the student's disability, the nature of the involvement of other individuals in the instruction of the students with disabilities, and other factors found in the classroom environment. The nature of the collaboration that occurred between the intern and the other adults responsible for the education of the students with disabilities influenced the way inclusive strategies were or were not practiced in the classroom. The level of efficacy the interns brought to the internship placement and other personal characteristics impacted on their practices. Three of the five interns maintained the belief that factors outside of themselves determined the success or failure of the students with disabilities. These same three interns indicated that they had practiced few inclusive strategies.

The prominent beliefs that were held by the teacher candidates/interns in this study indicated that they attributed the success or failure of students with disabilities to factors outside of themselves. The method of implementing inclusion by utilizing another person brought into question how the teacher candidates/interns perceived their ability to teach the students with disabilities.

Teacher efficacy for inclusion requires teachers to believe that students with disabilities can learn in the general education environment and that they, as their teachers, are capable of making that possible. When I asked the teacher candidates/interns about the learning potential of all children, they indicated that they believe all children can learn and it is the teacher's job to teach them. This bold pronouncement indicates that theoretically, the teacher candidates/interns were thinking about the students as a whole group whose needs were to be met by the teacher. Yet the data indicate that they frequently attributed the success or failure of the students with disabilities to factors outside of themselves. An examination of this contradiction, which seems to be at the heart of the efficacy issue, may help us to understand what these data mean.

## The Contradictions

The theme, Idealism ⇒ Tempered Idealism, represents the continuum between the teacher candidate/intern believing they can meet all the students' needs in the classroom to recognizing the challenges that exist in inclusive environments. In this study, the teacher candidates provided information regarding their beliefs about inclusion, possible methods for creating inclusive environments, and the reality of working in them. Based on the data, somewhere between their beliefs about

themselves as future teachers and the actual implementation of inclusive
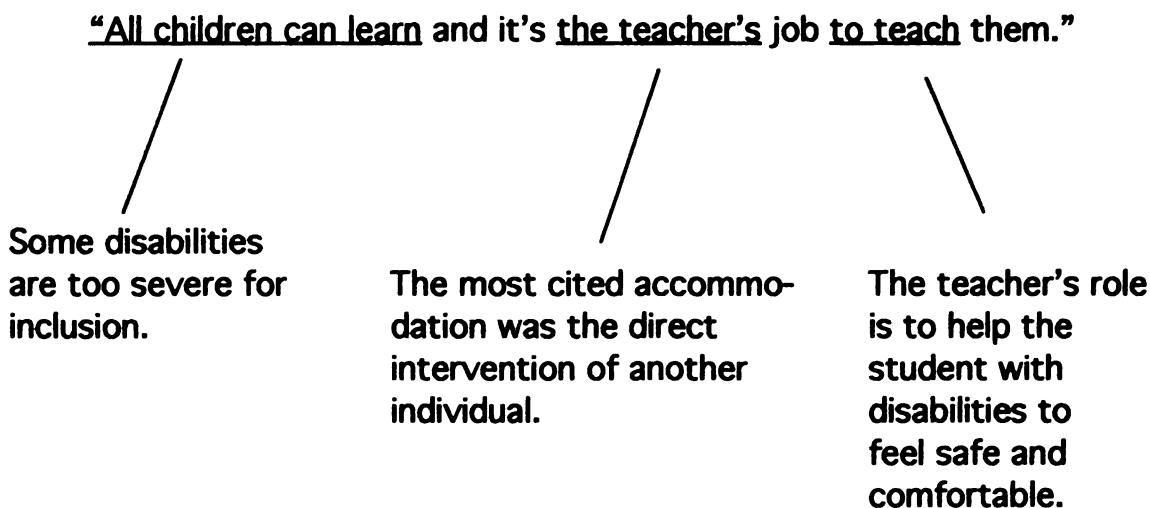
practices, contradictions apparently grew.

One of the interview questions I used throughout the study was:

"The phrase, 'all students can learn' is commonly used in current school reform efforts. As a future educator, what do you think about this? How do you see this ideal impacting your work as a future teacher in an inclusive classroom?"

Most of the teacher candidates, throughout the study, indicated that

they believed that all children could learn, at various rates and levels.

Most of the teacher candidates who responded in this manner also

mentioned that it was the teacher's job to help them learn. But further

examination of the results of this study would indicate that contradictions

occur when this ideal includes students with disabilities (See Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2

"All children can learn and it's the teacher's job to teach them."

Some disabilities are too severe for inclusion.

The most cited accommodation was the direct intervention of another individual.

The teacher's role is to help the student with disabilities to feel safe and comfortable.

The presence of students with disabilities in the general education classroom can challenge the beliefs interns have about themselves as teachers. Weinstein (1990) discusses the concern that teacher candidates often bring to their teacher education programs an unrealistic optimism that may inhibit them from engaging in a serious study of education. Beliefs about what it takes to be a good teacher, based on their experiences as a student, often fail to acknowledge the difficulties and complexities involved in teaching. Unfortunately, when this unrealistic optimism faces the realities of experience in the field, the disillusionment that results can be debilitating to the teacher candidate. Curt and Marlene seemed discouraged by the end of their internships, but these feelings did not seem permanent. They both stated that they intended to attempt to successfully include students with disabilities in their future classrooms.

Childers and Podemski (1982-83) studied the idealism of beginning teachers and what happens to those beliefs when they confront a contradicting reality. They found that a beginning teacher's level of efficacy depended on the degree to which the reality of the teaching situation matched their ideal. Those who experienced a broad chasm between reality and their ideal questioned their abilities.

Four of the five interns in this study experienced this chasm. Curt found himself in an environment that was very different from the classrooms he had known as a student. The methods of teaching and disciplining students were not what Marlene had expected in her internship placement. Abbey was not treated as a teacher when she was pushed aside in the middle of activities. Hillary did not receive the mentoring she expected. None of these interns were kept informed about the students in their classrooms.

However, according to the Childers and Podemski (1982-83) study, the teachers' self-doubts resulting from unmet expectations were usually short-lived if they encountered these challenges during their first year. Many of the teachers they studied continued to express their optimism that their situation would improve the following year. Any difficulties encountered that first year were attributed to particular variables in the environment that they believed were not likely to occur again.

The five interns who participated in this study, regardless of the nature of their field experiences, indicated that they would try to develop inclusive environments in their future classrooms. Even Marlene and Curt, who seemed convinced that the inclusive efforts in their placements were not successful, maintained the belief that they would be able to achieve

success in the future. In fact, Marlene's scores during phase three on the Classroom Survey, which was designed to examine inclusive beliefs, indicated that she continued to have positive beliefs about inclusion (See Table 5.2). Comparing Curt's first and third phase scores on the same survey would seem to indicate that his inclusive beliefs became more positive (See Table 5.5).

This resilience is consistent with what Bird, Anderson, Sullivan, and Swidler (1993) said about the stability of beliefs. I believe that the interns were able to maintain their inclusive beliefs, at least in part, by attributing the success or failure of the students with disabilities to factors outside of themselves, as was found in the Childers and Podemski (1982-83) study.

McDiarmid (1989) argued that teacher candidates, when faced with information or a situation that challenges their beliefs, will either reconfigure the new information to conform to their beliefs or reject the information completely. I would argue that the teacher candidates studied here did a similar mental maneuver. Their need to believe that they would be able to meet the needs of all their students was challenged when confronted with the realities of inclusion. Therefore, they

apparently placed students with disabilities in a different mental category.

The data suggest that the mental maneuver went something like this:

> "Those students have special needs that require the special teaching of a specialist (who is not me). But, they are in my classroom, and it should help them to be with the other kids, so I'll make sure the interactions are positive."

Based on the results of this study, these teacher candidates believed they were unprepared to actually *teach* these students. Therefore, they adjusted their perception of their role as teachers of students with disabilities to meet their needs as beginning teachers. This adjustment made it possible to maintain the belief that they were capable of helping all students learn, thus leaving their efficacy intact.

Another possible mental maneuver occurred as a result of the belief that the degree of inclusion should be based on the severity of the student's disability. This belief would logically allow the teacher candidates to attribute the success or failure of the inclusive efforts to the student. Given that students with disabilities were in a different category in the minds of the teacher candidates, they could reasonably see their teaching responsibilities differently.

This displacement of responsibility could occur regardless of the amount of effort the student displays. Prawat, Byers, and Anderson (1983) found that teachers would attribute less of the responsibility for

failure to a student who seems to be motivated. But in the case of students with disabilities, the belief that the degree of inclusion depends on the severity of the disability very likely allowed the teacher candidates/interns to conclude that the student never should have been in the classroom in the first place. This displacement of responsibility helped the teacher candidates/interns to keep their feelings of efficacy intact.

<u>So What Happened?</u>

This was a study about the changes in efficacy of teacher candidates as they progressed through a year of their teacher preparation program. Although the beliefs of the teacher candidates/interns remained relatively stable, the actual practice that occurred in the interns' placements varied greatly. In this section I will explain what I believe supported and deterred the learning of the interns in their internship placements.

Efficacy is the power to bring about a desired result. In the abstract, the teacher candidates/interns indicated that they believed all children can learn and it's the teacher's job to teach them. However, the data establish that the interns believed that students with disabilities are not part of the "all children" picture as students who are taught

academics. Since efficacy indicates power, it's important to examine

what the teacher candidates/interns believed was in their power and what

was not to consider what happened during the implementation of the

inclusive practices (See Figure 5.3). In this way, it is possible to

determine what factors in the internship placements impacted on the

interns' practices.

Figure 5.3   Efficacy and Power

| Efficacy: The power to bring about a desired result |
| --- |

## Desired Result:

"All Children Can Learn and It's the Teacher's Job to Teach Them"

**Within TC/Intern Power**
*TC/Intern sees role:*
Maintain control and help the
student feel comfortable

**Knowledge/Ability**

**TC/Intern Feels Powerless**
*Attributes fate of student to:*
Severity of Student's Disability
Factors in the Environment
Another Individual

Given that the teacher candidate/interns' beliefs about inclusion

were fairly positive and remained stable, the second part of efficacy, the

ability to implement inclusive practices, comes into question. The teacher

candidates/interns believed they were competent to play a care-taking

role for the students with disabilities. They may well have perceived this

role as something they could do without any particularly specialized skills.

Yet they believed the actual teaching of these students was something that was not within their power because they thought they lacked the knowledge and skills.

It is important for general education teachers to have knowledge about the various options for making accommodations for students with disabilities if inclusive efforts are to be successful. Gelzheiser, Meyers, Slesinski, Douglas, and Lewis (1997) found, in their study of the integration practices of general education teachers, that those teachers who were able to problem-solve and make decisions about accommodations were the most successful in their efforts.

Yet doing this kind of problem solving and decision-making requires knowledge of the options available and how to implement them. Reed and Monda-Amaya (1995), in their survey of general education teacher preparation programs in Illinois, found that only one offered any instruction in pedagogy for students with disabilities. The instructional intervention I undertook in this study, while at least a nod at a programmatic attempt to provide teacher candidates with knowledge for teaching students with disabilities, was not effective in helping the teacher candidates/interns to become proficient enough in practicing inclusive teaching strategies and making accommodations for students

with disabilities. The teacher candidates expressed their doubts about the instruction:

> Libby – "I just think that, I don't know, we've learned some strategies for dealing with students with disabilities. I think that what I've learned so far isn't very deep as far as, I mean we just had time to touch the surface of what we probably need to be doing."

> Abbey – "I feel I don't know enough. I think our special education class was helpful, but we had so little time that we only touched on a few things. We had the basic concepts but nothing too involved."

The interns carried these perceptions of inadequate knowledge into their placements where the perceptions were either confirmed or disproved through further instruction and experience. This is not the only possible scenario. Interns could have set aside this perception of their inadequate knowledge during the internship. This could have occurred when the interns attributed the success or failure of the students with disabilities to factors outside of themselves.

Vicky and Hillary seemed to disprove any perceptions of inadequacy. They were able to make some accommodations in their internship placements. For example, Vicky was able to talk about specific accommodations for individual students; Hillary mentioned strategies that were more generally applied to the whole class. Vicky collaborated regularly with the other adults in her classroom. Hillary took a more

independent, assertive approach to finding options for making accommodations with some collaboration with the social worker who worked with some of her students. These two interns were able to shore up any perceptions of the inadequacy of their knowledge through further instruction and experience.

The context of their internships helped them to develop the knowledge they needed. Vicky was in an environment where making accommodations was modeled. Hillary did not have modeling, but was not discouraged from trying different things. However, Curt, Abbey, and Marlene did not see modeling and felt inhibited by other factors in their internships in a way that kept them from trying different things or developing new knowledge.

Curt, Abbey, and Marlene, who could only recall few examples of curricular accommodations from the instructional intervention, seemed to transcend any perceptions regarding the inadequacy of their knowledge by attributing the success or failure of the students with disabilities to factors outside of themselves. Their internship contexts did not help them develop the necessary knowledge for teaching successfully in inclusive environments. Without adequate knowledge, these three interns diverted responsibility for the learning of the students with disabilities

away from themselves. For example, Curt believed the chaos in his environment was a barrier. Marlene believed the teaching and disciplinary style of her collaborating teacher was a barrier. Abbey believed she had no reason to interact with the student with autism due to the involvement of the paraprofessional.

Implementation Factors

There are two other factors to consider regarding the interns' implementation of inclusive practices in their placements. The amount of collaboration that occurred between the adults working with the students, both in and out of the classroom is one factor. Another factor to consider is the incoming efficacy level of the interns.

Collaboration

A majority of the recommended imaginary accommodations for the science unit involved the direct intervention of another individual (See Table 5.1). Yet the results of this study indicated that having these additional adults in real classroom does not help the intern to develop higher levels of efficacy. Curt and Marlene were at the high and low ends of the adult-to-student ratio among the interns for this study. Their scores on the Knowledge/Ability Survey, which was designed to examine their perceptions of current ability, indicated that their efficacy levels

actually declined in many areas (See Tables 5.3 and 5.6). Therefore, the

adult –to-student ratio was not a factor that impacted on their efficacy.

Yet when Soodak, Podell, and Lehman (1998) studied what

conditions helped teachers to feel efficacious in their work with students

with disabilities, they found that the teachers felt that having special

education personnel as resources in the classroom was vital. When asked

about including students with significant cognitive and affective

disabilities, the teachers felt the on-site support of special education

personnel was *the most* critical component for success (Soodak, Podell, &

Lehman, 1998; Jorgensen, 1995).

Therefore, the issue is more complex than it appears. What these

additional people do when they are in the classroom may be more

important than simply having many of them there. In their study, Soodak,

Podell, & Lehman (1998) found that teachers who started their inclusive

efforts with low levels of efficacy gained positive feelings when given

time to collaborate with others. They felt that they were able to reap the

benefits of the experiences of others and sharing concerns was seen as a

way of dealing with pressures and frustration. This was Vicky's

experience as she collaborated with her collaborating teacher and the

paraprofessional.

Marks, Schrader, and Levine (1999) studied the work of

paraprofessionals in inclusive environments. They found that those who

worked with all of the students, not just those with disabilities, were more

involved in making decisions in the classroom. In Vicky's classroom, this

increased interaction also involved problem solving for meeting the

curricular needs of the students with disabilities. By contrast, the

paraprofessional in Abbey's classroom worked only with the student with

autism. She rarely discussed the student with Abbey. The

paraprofessional in Vicky's classroom worked with all of the students and

was involved in the daily discussions about them. Vicky's efficacy levels

increased substantially during the internship on many of the indicators of

efficacy (See Tables 5.14-16). Abbey's levels of efficacy rose slightly or

remained the same during her internship (See Tables 5.11-13).

Although some classrooms are fortunate enough to have

paraprofessionals to help in the implementation of inclusive practices, this

is not the case in all classrooms. However, any student with disabilities

who receives special education services is assigned to someone who is

ultimately responsible for the student's program as written on the IEP.

Most frequently, the person responsible for the implementation of the

student's program is a special education teacher. If the student spends

some time in general education, it is still the special educator's responsibility to assure that the student's needs are being addressed. The special educator can monitor the student's progress as a team-teacher in the general education setting and/or by collaborating with the general education teacher.

Hobbs and Westling (1998) studied how collaboration between special and general educators contributed to the success of inclusive efforts. They found that those who met frequently and discussed the needs of the students and the classroom as a whole believed their efforts were successful. Vicky's colleagues in the classroom met after school every day, but she indicated that she rarely communicated with the special education teacher. Hillary sought information as she needed it and collaborated with the school social worker, but she, too, did not indicate that she spoke with the special education teacher. Curt, Marlene, and Abbey indicated that they rarely spoke with any special education personnel.

Therefore, although collaboration can be valuable in the development of efficacy for interns, as it was for Vicky, none of the interns collaborated with the special education teacher. Given that the

special education teacher has the information and skills that could be very beneficial to the intern, this lack of collaboration is a serious concern.

<u>Incoming Efficacy</u>

The other factor to consider regarding the interns' implementation of inclusive practices is their levels of efficacy when they began their internships. Allinder (1993) reviewed the literature regarding educators and efficacy and found that teachers with high efficacy tend to be more tenacious and experience greater success with the students. Hillary's incoming high level of efficacy helped her to overcome the lack of instruction and collaboration. Hillary's data confirm this. Hillary also demonstrated assertiveness when she insisted that her internship placement should be moved after just one week. The reasons she cited for the change included concerns about having the opportunities to try the teaching strategies she felt would be most effective for the students (See Tables 5.8-10, the percent of change between phases two and three).

**Table 5.8  Classroom Survey – Hillary**

| Inclusive Beliefs | Phase Two Mean | Phase Three Mean | Percent of Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| Students with disabilities can learn in a general education setting. | 3.0 | 3.2 | +6.7 |
| Students with disabilities can be efficiently managed in a general education setting. | 2.9 | 3.1 | +6.9 |
| Reflection is useful for the improvement of teaching. | 3.1 | 3.1 | 0 |
| Collaboration with colleagues and parents/guardians is a useful strategy for working with students with disabilities. | 3.1 | 3.3 | +6.5 |
| Teacher expectations should be high for all students. | 2.9 | 3.4 | +17.2 |
| Learning can be demonstrated and assessed in a variety of ways. | 2.9 | 3.2 | +10.3 |
| A basic knowledge of the special education system and processes makes it possible to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities. | 3.6 | 3.8 | +5.6 |
| The responsibility for a student's success is shared between the student and the teachers. | 3.2 | 3.7 | +15.6 |

## Table 5.9  Knowledge/Ability Survey - Hillary

| Knowledge/Ability | Phase Two Mean | Phase Three Mean | Percent of Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| "I can help students with disabilities learn in a general education setting." | 3.9 | 4.1 | +5.1 |
| "I can efficiently manage students with disabilities in a general education setting." | 3.3 | 3.6 | +9.1 |
| "I can use reflection to improve my teaching." | 4.5 | 4.6 | +2.2 |
| "I can collaborate with colleagues and parents/guardians to improve my work with students with disabilities." | 3.5 | 3.7 | +5.7 |
| "I can help all students meet my high expectations." | 3.5 | 3.8 | +8.6 |
| "I can assess learning in a variety of ways." | 4.0 | 4.1 | +2.5 |
| "I understand the special education system and processes enough to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities." | 2.2 | 3.1 | +40.9 |
| "I can recognize and accept my responsibilities for the success of students with disabilities included in my classroom." | 3.4 | 3.7 | +8.8 |

Table 5.10  Ratings for Classroom Teachers - Hillary

| Knowledge/Ability | Phase Two Mean | Phase Three Mean | Percent of Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| "I can help students with disabilities learn in a general education setting." | 4.9 | 4.9 | 0 |
| "I can efficiently manage students with disabilities in a general education setting." | 4.5 | 4.6 | +2.2 |
| "I can use reflection to improve my teaching." | 5.0 | 4.9 | -2.0 |
| "I can collaborate with colleagues and parents/guardians to improve my work with students with disabilities." | 4.8 | 4.8 | 0 |
| "I can help all students meet my high expectations." | 4.3 | 4.4 | +2.3 |
| "I can assess learning in a variety of ways." | 4.4 | 4.5 | +2.3 |
| "I understand the special education system and processes enough to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities." | 4.9 | 4.9 | 0 |

Abbey's data raise questions about the resilience of incoming

efficacy.  Abbey, whose incoming efficacy seemed high, did not seem to

demonstrate this tenacity.  One impacting factor for her was the

collaborating teacher's habit of interrupting and taking over her lessons.

Hall, Johnson, and Bowman (1995) point out that when beginning

teachers are being socialized into the profession, it's important for their

future growth to be treated as equal to the more experienced teachers.

The interruptions of Abbey's lessons and her sense that her collaborating

teacher withheld information about the students may have contributed to

her belief that she was less than equal (See Tables 5.11-13, percent of change between phases two and three).

Table 5.11  Classroom Survey – Abbey

| Inclusive Beliefs | Phase One Mean | Phase Two Mean | Percent of Change | Phase Three Mean | Percent of Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Students with disabilities can learn in a general education setting. | 3.1 | 3.1 | 0 | 3.3 | +6.5 |
| Students with disabilities can be efficiently managed in a general education setting. | 3.0 | 3.7 | +23.3 | 3.9 | +5.4 |
| Reflection is useful for the improvement of teaching. | 3.2 | 4.3 | +34.4 | 4.3 | 0 |
| Collaboration with colleagues and parents/guardians is a useful strategy for working with students with disabilities. | 3.1 | 3.6 | +16.1 | 3.7 | +2.8 |
| Teacher expectations should be high for all students. | 3.0 | 3.3 | +10.0 | 3.4 | +3.0 |
| Learning can be demonstrated and assessed in a variety of ways. | 2.8 | 4.0 | +42.9 | 3.9 | -2.5 |
| A basic knowledge of the special education system and processes makes it possible to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities. | 3.6 | 4.0 | +11.1 | 4.1 | +2.5 |
| The responsibility for a student's success is shared between the student and the teachers. | 2.9 | 3.1 | +6.9 | 3.4 | +9.7 |

## Table 5.12  Knowledge/Ability Survey - Abbey

| Knowledge/Ability | Phase One Mean | Phase Two Mean | Percent of Change | Phase Three Mean | Percent of Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| "I can help students with disabilities learn in a general education setting." | 3.0 | 3.1 | +3.3 | 3.2 | +3.2 |
| "I can efficiently manage students with disabilities in a general education setting." | 3.0 | 2.8 | -6.7 | 2.9 | +3.6 |
| "I can use reflection to improve my teaching." | 3.0 | 3.5 | +16.7 | 3.5 | 0 |
| "I can collaborate with colleagues and parents/guardians to improve my work with students with disabilities." | 2.7 | 3.3 | +22.2 | 3.4 | +3.0 |
| "I can help all students meet my high expectations." | 2.8 | 3.3 | +17.9 | 3.4 | +3.0 |
| "I can assess learning in a variety of ways." | 3.0 | 3.3 | +10.0 | 3.3 | 0 |
| "I understand the special education system and processes enough to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities." | 2.4 | 2.2 | -8.3 | 2.7 | +22.7 |
| "I can recognize and accept my responsibilities for the success of students with disabilities included in my classroom." | 3.3 | 2.9 | -10.3 | 3.4 | +17.2 |

## Table 5.13  Ratings for Classroom Teachers – Abbey

| Knowledge/Ability | Phase One Mean | Phase Two Mean | Percent of Change | Phase Three Mean | Percent of Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| "I can help students with disabilities learn in a general education setting." | 4.0 | 4.6 | +15.0 | 4.6 | 0 |
| "I can efficiently manage students with disabilities in a general education setting." | 4.2 | 4.3 | +2.4 | 4.3 | 0 |
| "I can use reflection to improve my teaching." | 3.8 | 4.7 | +23.7 | 4.7 | 0 |
| "I can collaborate with colleagues and parents/guardians to improve my work with students with disabilities." | 3.1 | 4.1 | +32.3 | 4.4 | +7.3 |
| "I can help all students meet my high expectations." | 3.8 | 4.7 | +19.1 | 4.8 | +2.1 |
| "I can assess learning in a variety of ways." | 3.0 | 3.8 | +26.7 | 4.0 | +5.3 |
| "I understand the special education system and processes enough to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities." | 4.2 | 4.4 | +4.8 | 4.4 | 0 |
| "I can recognize and accept my responsibilities for the success of students with disabilities included in my classroom." | 3.3 | 4.6 | +39.4 | 4.7 | +2.2 |

Vicky's data demonstrate that her levels of efficacy increased

substantially during the internship.  Her efforts were supported and her

skills nurtured through the collaboration and modeling in her placement.

Vicky's perceptions of her inadequacy of knowledge were disproved,

which is evident by the increase of her scores on the Knowledge/Ability

survey during the third phase (See Tables 5.14-16 percent of change

between phases two and three). Her practices were consistent with her

beliefs.

Table 5.14  Classroom Survey – Vicky

| Inclusive Beliefs | Phase One Mean | Phase Two Mean | Percent of Change | Phase Three Mean | Percent of Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Students with disabilities can learn in a general education setting. | 3.9 | 3.4 | -12.8 | 4.1 | +20.6 |
| Students with disabilities can be efficiently managed in a general education setting. | 4.0 | 3.7 | -7.5 | 4.2 | +13.5 |
| Reflection is useful for the improvement of teaching. | 5.0 | 5.0 | 0 | 5.0 | 0 |
| Collaboration with colleagues and parents/guardians is a useful strategy for working with students with disabilities. | 4.1 | 4.3 | +4.9 | 4.7 | +9.3 |
| Teacher expectations should be high for all students. | 4.4 | 3.8 | -13.6 | 4.4 | +15.8 |
| Learning can be demonstrated and assessed in a variety of ways. | 5.0 | 5.0 | 0 | 5.0 | 0 |
| A basic knowledge of the special education system and processes makes it possible to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities. | 5.0 | 5.0 | 0 | 5.0 | 0 |
| The responsibility for a student's success is shared between the student and the teachers. | 4.0 | 3.3 | -17.5 | 4.2 | +27.3 |

## Table 5.15  Knowledge/Ability Survey - Vicky

| Knowledge/Ability | Phase One Mean | Phase Two Mean | Percent of Change | Phase Three Mean | Percent of Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| "I can help students with disabilities learn in a general education setting." | 4.2 | 3.9 | -7.1 | 4.4 | +12.8 |
| "I can efficiently manage students with disabilities in a general education setting." | 3.9 | 3.5 | -10.3 | 4.5 | +28.6 |
| "I can use reflection to improve my teaching." | 4.5 | 3.5 | -22.2 | 4.4 | +25.7 |
| "I can collaborate with colleagues and parents/guardians to improve my work with students with disabilities." | 3.5 | 3.8 | +8.6 | 4.5 | +18.4 |
| "I can help all students meet my high expectations." | 4.0 | 3.8 | -5.0 | 4.3 | +13.2 |
| "I can assess learning in a variety of ways." | 3.5 | 3.3 | -5.7 | 4.4 | +33.3 |
| "I understand the special education system and processes enough to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities." | 3.2 | 2.7 | -15.6 | 4.1 | +51.9 |
| "I can recognize and accept my responsibilities for the success of students with disabilities included in my classroom." | 3.8 | 3.4 | -10.5 | 4.5 | +32.4 |

## Table 5.16  Ratings for Classroom Teachers - Vicky

| Knowledge/Ability | Phase One Mean | Phase Two Mean | Percent of Change | Phase Three Mean | Percent of Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| "I can help students with disabilities learn in a general education setting." | 4.9 | 4.7 | -4.1 | 4.9 | +4.3 |
| "I can efficiently manage students with disabilities in a general education setting." | 4.9 | 4.8 | -2.0 | 4.9 | +2.1 |
| "I can use reflection to improve my teaching." | 5.0 | 4.7 | -6.0 | 5.0 | +6.4 |
| "I can collaborate with colleagues and parents/guardians to improve my work with students with disabilities." | 4.7 | 4.8 | +2.1 | 5.0 | +4.2 |
| "I can help all students meet my high expectations." | 4.9 | 4.6 | -6.1 | 4.9 | +6.5 |
| "I can assess learning in a variety of ways." | 3.7 | 3.0 | -18.9 | 4.5 | +50.0 |
| "I understand the special education system and processes enough to advocate and problem-solve when working with students with disabilities." | 4.8 | 4.4 | -8.3 | 4.7 | +6.8 |
| "I can recognize and accept my responsibilities for the success of students with disabilities included in my classroom." | 5.0 | 4.6 | -8.0 | 4.7 | +2.2 |

Looking at these three interns, who all had high efficacy levels coming into their internship placements, we can see how they were impacted by factors found in these contexts.  The supportive environment of Vicky's placement made a positive impact on her efficacy

levels.  Hillary felt free to try different teaching strategies.  This freedom coupled with her assertive character helped her to create a successful inclusive environment.  Hillary's efficacy levels increased on most indicators.  Abbey, however, encountered a collaborating teacher who undermined her efforts by interrupting her in the middle of lessons.  She was also subtly discouraged from working with the student with autism due to the actions of the paraprofessional.  Abbey's efficacy levels increased slightly or not at all.

Therefore, what is important as a means of supporting interns in inclusive placements is seeing accommodations being modeled, having opportunities to collaborate, and being allowed to try different approaches. Collaboration and the intern's level of efficacy coming into the internship settings had an impact on the implementation of inclusive practices.

## Summary

This study has demonstrated that in the internship placements, modeling, collaborating, and being encouraged to try different techniques are important for interns to practice what they believe about teaching all students.  For Vicky, this experience helped her to overcome the inadequate instruction.  Incoming efficacy and personality traits can also

play a part in how an intern overcomes inadequate instruction. Hillary's personal resolve helped her to successfully implement inclusive strategies.

Curt, Abbey, and Marlene did not have these advantages. They maintained the pre/post instructional intervention beliefs that allowed them to attribute the success or failure of students with disabilities to factors they perceived to be beyond their control.

# Chapter Six

# Limitations and Implications

I will begin this chapter by describing the limitations of the study. I will continue by making recommendations for teacher educators based on the results of this study. These recommendations will emphasize the importance of helping teacher candidates/interns bridge the gap between their idealism and the challenges of classrooms. I will also make recommendations for further research and summarize the chapter by explaining how this experience will effect my work.

## Limitations of the Study

There were structures and methods that could have made this study stronger but for various reasons, were not utilized. Also, there are inherent aspects of a design of this type that can impact on the validity of the findings (Mertens, 1998).

### The Subjects

History and maturation can threaten validity within this type of research design. The subjects could have experienced an event or maturational step that would affect the data collected after the first phase.

The non-traditional nature of the subject group also brings the generalizability of the study into question. It is possible that the life experiences of this group of older students could have affected their responses. This would make it difficult to justify generalizing the results to traditionally–aged teacher candidates (Benz, Bradley, Alderman, & Flowers, 1992).

## The Internship Placements

This study did not include a high-level efficacy intern/low inclusiveness of placement or low efficacy level intern/high inclusiveness of placement dichotomy. For example, if Vicky, a high level intern, had been placed in Marlene's classroom, a low inclusiveness placement, the impact of the field placements on efficacy could have been more clearly determined.

The low number of placements studied, five, makes coming to general conclusions problematic. It is possible that Vicky's placement was typical and the other four were atypical of what is happening in other elementary classrooms.

## The Data

The low return of surveys and lack of participation in the interviews after the instructional intervention made doing any full-group comparison

questionable.  These data would have provided further support for the findings regarding the impact of the instructional intervention.

Most of the data collected in this study was of a self-reporting nature.  Therefore, the validity of these data were dependent on the honesty of the respondents and reliability of their interpretations of the interview questions and survey items (Mertens, 1998).

## The Researcher/Instructor

My background as a special education teacher, experiences as a course and field instructor, and personal biases about inclusive practices could have influenced my interpretation of these data and my conclusions.  My involvement as the teacher candidates' course instructor could have affected their responses to interview questions and survey items.  It also could have affected what I observed in the internship placements.

In spite of these limitations, the study does have the power to suggest how teacher educators could improve their practice.  I will address these possibilities for improvement and make recommendations for further research for the remainder of this chapter.

## Bridging the Chasm:  The Role of the Teacher Educators

### The Chasm Between Idealism and Reality

Teacher candidates enter their programs with optimism and idealistic expectations (Childers & Podemski, 1982-83).  They often believe that teacher preparation programs will offer concrete ideas for activities to use when teaching students.  They believe these methods will meet the needs of most of the students.  The teacher candidates also believe that if there are students who struggle, a little extra time and encouragement will help them to catch up.

The realities of schools, then, often come as a surprise to the teacher candidates.  Childers and Podemski (1982-83) point out that the more the reality is different from what the teacher candidate expects, the more that reality could affect his/her efficacy.  It is the responsibility of teacher preparation programs to help the teacher candidates deal with this chasm between expectations and reality.  University coursework and a closely supervised field experience would provide the support for the means of bridging the chasm between their idealism and reality.

Coursework

Idealism                              Reality

Teacher efficacy means "beliefs teachers hold about the effectiveness of teaching with particular types of students and about

260

their own competence to teach those students" (Miller, 1991). This means teacher educators hold a duel responsibility. We need to mediate the entering inclusive beliefs of the teacher candidates/interns with the realities they encounter in their field placements. We also need to help the teacher candidates/interns to understand the complexities of inclusive practice and develop the skills to deal with those complexities.

A strong foundation of knowledge regarding students with disabilities and the implementation of inclusive practices is important for the development of teacher efficacy. Teacher educators should begin to address this need through coursework. However, this coursework needs to be substantial; a token approach to addressing the needs of students with disabilities in general education is ineffective.

I found that inadequate instruction led the teacher candidates/interns to attribute the success or failure of the students with disabilities to factors outside of themselves. Further instruction and/or the opportunity to implement inclusive strategies in the internship placement did help two interns to gain a sense of ownership for the students with disabilities.

Gartner and Lipsky (1987) found that allowing teacher candidates to move through their programs without gaining an understanding of the

purposes and processes of special education can reinforce their belief that special education, and the students included in their future classrooms, are the responsibility of "those other experts". These teacher candidates also relinquished the responsibility for the students with disabilities to others due to the lack of instruction.

I also found that, in spite of the fact that I spent a majority of the instructional intervention sessions providing instruction about making curricular accommodations, only two of the five interns implemented any of these strategies in their placements. These two interns were provided with assistance in the field and/or encouraged to try a variety of teaching strategies. Overall, the responses of the teacher candidates during the post instructional intervention interviews indicated that the instructional intervention was too brief to be effective.

This is consistent with what Rademacher, Wilhelm, Hildreth, Bridges, and Cowart (1998) found when they studied various training configurations for preparing teachers for inclusive environments. The three week course, which was the most brief of their interventions, was found to be largely ineffective in impacting beliefs or helping the teacher candidates to feel more prepared for working with students with disabilities. The most effective configuration for helping teacher

candidates/interns to resolve the differences between their perceived ideals and the realities of teaching in inclusive settings was coursework throughout two semesters with closely supervised fieldwork.

Idealism *Field Experience* Reality

The finding of this study that I believe has the strongest implications for teacher educators is the lack of participation of the special education teachers in the work of the general education interns. As we work to help the general education interns resolve the differences between their perceived ideal of teaching and the realities of working in inclusive environments, the special education teachers could provide tremendous support.

I found that interns need to have information about the students with disabilities included in their classrooms. They also need to have making accommodations, based on this child-specific information, modeled for them. Finally, they need to have opportunities to collaborate to help them learn to problem solve and make decisions. Special education teachers could be instrumental in providing the interns with this support and instruction.

Special education teachers have extensive information on each of their students. This information includes family background, academic

levels and those teaching strategies that have been found to be effective. Interns could benefit from learning to use this information to develop accommodations for the students with disabilities included in their classrooms.

One potential barrier to this collaboration is that special educators are trained to only share what information is considered to be "instructionally relevant" (Slick, 1995) with other teachers. Teacher educators would need to help special educators understand how sharing this information with the interns could be instructionally relevant for the special education student.

The interns in this study indicated that their collaborating teachers and the special education teachers had minimal contact. This could present another barrier for teacher educators. If the special education teachers see the collaborating teachers as the primary mentors of the interns, they may be hesitant to become involved in their instruction. I think this is how teacher educators could play an important role as a facilitator. Teacher educators could help the collaborating teacher and special education teacher understand how their shared instruction of the intern could be mutually beneficial. The students with disabilities would benefit from the improvements in their instruction and the intern would

learn different teaching methods. An added benefit could be that the collaborating teacher would see the value of spending the time to work with their special education colleagues. The special educators could become better acquainted with what is happening in the general education classroom.

Through this collaboration, special educators could model the tenacity that is needed when trying various accommodations and teaching strategies with students with disabilities. The interns could see the need to try a strategy or accommodation more than once, and how to make on-going adjustments as you try.

<u>The Importance of Efficacy</u>

Teachers with low efficacy tend to lack persistence when a student is struggling and have lower expectations for their students. They also tend to attribute student failure to the student's lack of ability (Soodak & Podell, 1993). In this study, I found that teacher candidates, whose abilities had not yet been tested, tended to attribute the success or failure of students to the severity of their disability. Later, interns who felt powerless in their placements attributed the success or failure of students with disabilities to factors outside of themselves.

Allinder (1993) reminds teacher educators of the importance of efficacy when preparing teachers for inclusive environments. When teachers have high degrees of efficacy, they engage in effective teaching behaviors more often than teachers with low efficacy. Teachers who believe they can teach all students in their classes typically persist longer with students who are struggling and have greater expectations for their students' performance. Students with disabilities need teachers who will be tenacious in their efforts to help when they are struggling without lowering their expectations. The most effective way to help our future teachers to accept responsibility for the learning of the students with disabilities placed in their classrooms is through extensive coursework and supervised fieldwork that stresses collaboration.

## Recommendations for Further Research

As with most endeavors, my work with this study helped me to realize how much I do not know and the many questions that need yet to be addressed through research. One such question is, "Where are the special educators?" None of the five of the interns I studied had substantive interactions with the special education teachers in their placements. Vicky interacted with the paraprofessional assigned to her classroom and Hillary consulted the social worker, but the special

education teachers seemed to be out of the picture. Perhaps one area for further research would be to investigate the role of the special education teacher in the mentoring of general education interns. A study including university personnel as facilitators of this collaborative relationship could provide information regarding the complexities of these relationships.

Another question that came out of this research was, "How do the collaborating teachers see their role as mentors for interns working in inclusive environments?" It seemed that the collaborating teachers of four of the five interns I studied did not believe it was necessary to share information about the students with disabilities with the interns or model how accommodations are developed and implemented.

I would recommend a study investigating what practices collaborating teachers would consider to be important for interns to understand in inclusive environments. Simultaneously, a study of what the collaborating teachers are doing to mentor them in these practices could help to identify the contradictions that exist between what collaborating teachers see as important and what they help interns to understand. Perhaps we could then identify and contend with the barriers that exist in this mentoring relationship.

I would also recommend investigating whether child-specific information provided to the interns would make a difference in the way they work with students with disabilities. Given that the interns had enough background instruction to understand what the information meant about the students, I wonder if the interns, in the midst of learning the basics about classroom teaching, would utilize the information and if so, how.

Finally, I would recommend a study to examine how the interns' thinking about and implementation of teaching practices differs between their work with general and special education students. Are the issues about ownership and a lack of focus on academic learning specific to special education students or a problem in the interns' thinking about their role with all students? Are these issues simply more apparent when examining the interns' thinking about students with disabilities because the "individual needs" of these students are more explicit than those of general education students?

### A Return to the Question

The question driving this study,

"How do interns' knowledge, efficacy, and beliefs about the inclusion of students with disabilities change during preparation for teaching? To what extent can these changes be accounted for as the interaction of a) their responses to an integrated instructional

approach in a teacher education program and b) particular features of their internship experience?"

allowed me to consider the numerous complexities involved in preparing teacher candidates/interns for inclusive environments. Considering all of these complexities has been discouraging to me as a teacher educator, at least in some ways. Integrating special education content into general education coursework to the extent that is needed will be a monumental task in any teacher preparation program. Providing the support in the internship placements that will further the education of the interns will be a second mountain to climb.

Yet, at the same time, I am hopeful. The results and the implications produced a positive potential next step. As teacher educators, we can further consider the roles of the university personnel in creating courses and facilitating collaborative relationships. We can consider how partnerships between special and general education teachers can improve teaching practices for all students. If, indeed, the challenges for interns working with students with disabilities I found in this study are also present in their work with general education students, such a collaboration between special and general education teacher educators would be mutually beneficial.

As I move to my new position of employment, I know that one of my responsibilities will be to develop this kind of partnership. I will need to integrate special education content into general education content-area methods courses. I believe my biggest challenge will be to help my colleagues to understand how explicitly addressing the needs of students with disabilities can help teacher candidates to think about improving their overall practices. Inherent in that challenge is another challenge - helping my colleagues to recognize how the approaches and challenges in the two programs are similar.

I wonder if having two, separate teacher preparation programs makes seeing the similar challenges of special and general education teacher educators difficult. Having two separate programs must mean those teacher educators present different approaches to teaching in the university classrooms and encounter different practices in the field placements, right? After all, each program has its own professional language, organizations, and journals. But the similarities in the programs far outnumber the differences.

I think what is happening between these two groups of professionals is similar to the dynamics between different ethnic groups in this country. Just as various ethnic groups are more similar to each other

than different, so are these two programs in education. But the minority groups strive to maintain their identities by highlighting how they are different from the more dominant group. Special educators have been struggling in the past few years to express what is "special" about special education (Kauffman, 1999). They seem to feel the need to define what sets them apart from the more dominant general educators. However, I think that by highlighting their differences, special educators have suppressed the similarities. This has created a mental chasm between the professionals in both programs.

In the best possible world, all teacher educators would be working to help teacher candidates/interns to recognize how children are the same and different. Special education teacher educators would be helping their teacher candidates/interns to learn methods for teaching large groups of students and general education teacher educators would be helping their teacher candidates/interns to learn how to individualize programs. Each group of professionals would learn to use each other's language with as much ease as they use their own. Integrating special education content into general education methods courses would mean reinforcing the need for teacher candidates/interns to learn to address

the needs of diverse learners and helping them to understand the language and practices used in the special education program.

I think this study will help me to meet the challenge of integrating special education content in general education content-area methods courses by capitalizing on what I have learned and using that in conjunction with what previous research has told us about the practice of interns with general education students. I will point out how the challenges faced by teacher educators, both general and special, are similar. Jones (1996) found that interns are more concerned about learning how to manage student behaviors than on learning how to teach. I found that one of the primary concerns of the teacher candidates/interns is management of the students with disabilities. Beach and Pearson (1997) found that those teacher candidates who were supported in the field as they dealt with the dissonance between their ideal and the realities of the classroom were less inclined to attribute failures to outside causes than those without that support. I found that the teacher candidates/interns who were not supported were inclined to attribute the failures of inclusive efforts to causes outside of themselves. I think similarities like these will help me to begin with my future colleagues, both general and special education teacher educators, on

common ground.  I would recommend the same approach for other programs striving to integrate special education content and practices into general education programs.

# APPENDICES

**APPENDIX A**

**The Surveys**

# Classroom Survey

<u>Directions:</u> Thinking ahead to your role as a teacher in a general education classroom, consider what you feel about the following statements.  You should be thinking about a classroom with students having mild disabilities included.  To the right of each question place the number <u>1</u> to <u>5</u> depending on the extent to which you agree with each statement.

<u>1</u>  represents  <u>Strongly Disagree</u>
<u>2</u>  represents  <u>Disagree</u>
<u>3</u>  represents  <u>No Opinion</u>
<u>4</u>  represents  <u>Agree</u>
<u>5</u>  represents  <u>Strongly Agree</u>

_____ 1.  I think that the full time special education class is the best placement for students with disabilities.

_____ 2.  I believe that average children will profit from their contact with the needs of students with disabilities.

_____ 3.  Students with disabilities are more like normal students than they are different from them.

_____ 4.  It would be best if people with disabilities lived and worked with non-disabled people.

_____ 5.  As with non-disabled students, teachers should require students with disabilities to share accountability for their learning.

_____ 6.  Having to teach students with disabilities places an unfair burden on the majority of classroom teachers.

_____ 7.  Assignment of a student with disabilities to a regular classroom is a wise administrative decision.

_____ 8.  Most people with disabilities want more affection and praise than other people.

_____ 9. Integration of students with disabilities will require most teachers to learn and use new techniques and materials.

_____ 10. I believe that placing a student with disabilities in a typical classroom would damage the student's self-concept.

_____ 11. A student with disabilities will be motivated to learn in a regular classroom.

_____ 12. I am confident that I will be able to make students with disabilities feel comfortable in my classroom.

_____ 13. Students with disabilities should compete with normal children.

_____ 14. As a result of placement in a regular classroom, a student with disabilities will develop a more positive attitude toward school.

_____ 15. The integration of students with disabilities into a regular classroom represents an opportunity for the teacher to grow both personally and professionally.

_____ 16. In my role as an educator, I will have little confidence in my ability to control whether students make scapegoats out of "included" students with disabilities.

_____ 17. With a student with disabilities in a regular classroom, there will be an increase in the number of behavior problems among other children.

_____ 18. The presence of a student with disabilities in a regular classroom will be a cause for complaints from the parents of the other children.

_____ 19. People with disabilities are usually more sensitive than other people.

_____ 20. Placement of a student with disabilities in a regular classroom will likely result in his becoming socially withdrawn.

_____ 21. People with disabilities should not have to compete for jobs with normal persons.

_____ 22. A student with disabilities will be disruptive in a regular classroom.

_____ 23. I think that the integration of students with disabilities into the regular classroom will harm the educational achievement of average students.

_____ 24. The driving test given to a person with disabilities should be more severe that the one given to the non-disabled.

_____ 25. A student with disabilities will not respond even to your best teaching efforts.

_____ 26. There is not enough time in a teacher's day to deal satisfactorily with the different needs of both average students and those with disabilities.

_____ 27. I believe that average students are uncomfortable when they are with children who have obvious physical disabilities.

_____ 28. Workers with disabilities cannot be as successful as other workers.

_____ 29. Integration of students with disabilities will require most teachers to change the physical arrangements and management of their classrooms to increase the variety of learning environments available to children.

_____ 30. A student with disabilities will develop a more positive self-concept as a result of being placed in a regular classroom.

_____ 31. If I were the parent of a child with a learning disability, I would want him to be in a regular classroom for most of the school day.

_____ 32. A student with disabilities will likely form positive social relationships with other children in a regular classroom.

_____ 33. People with disabilities usually do not make much of a contribution to society.

_____ 34. People with disabilities do not want any more sympathy than other people.

_____ 35. I generally look forward to the challenge of working with students with disabilities.

_____ 36. The experience of being in a regular classroom will increase the chances of a student with disabilities attaining a more productive and independent place in society.

_____ 37. I believe that average students need the experience of being in contact with students with disabilities in an academic setting.

_____ 38. Given my current understanding, I believe that "inclusion" will benefit me as a teacher, as well as all children.

_____ 39. Integration of students with disabilities will require most teachers to use classroom time differently and perhaps more efficiently than is not the case.

# Knowledge/Ability Survey

Directions: Please think within the context of your future role as a
teacher in a general education classroom to respond to
the following statements. You should also be thinking
about a classroom with students having mild disabilities
included. Circling the numbers below, please rate your
current knowledge and/or ability in the following areas:

1 = none;   2 = a little;   3 = OK;   4 = good;   5 = excellent

1.   Understanding of human growth and development, both typical
     and atypical.
          1          2          3          4          5

2.   Understanding of disabilities and their educational
     implications.
          1          2          3          4          5

3.   The ability to analyze/modify/adapt curriculum content and
     strategies for students with disabilities.
          1          2          3          4          5

4.   The ability to develop lesson plans and adapt materials and
     methods for students with disabilities.
          1          2          3          4          5

5.   The ability to assist students in the development of learning
     strategies, communication skills, and social skills.
          1          2          3          4          5

6.   The ability to develop and implement behavior management
     procedures.
          1          2          3          4          5

7.   The ability to manage the learning environment for
     simultaneous curriculum activities.
          1          2          3          4          5

8.  The ability to plan to involve parents, aides, and other professionals in the instructional process.

    1        2        3        4        5

9.  The ability to apply effective instructional techniques as a proactive management strategy.

    1        2        3        4        5

10. The ability to develop positive student-student and teacher-student interpersonal relationships.

    1        2        3        4        5

11. The ability to use assessment techniques to gather, interpret and implement instruction.

    1        2        3        4        5

12. The ability to use assessment data to establish goals and objectives appropriate to individual students.

    1        2        3        4        5

13. The ability to use a variety of collection systems (observation, standardized tests, portfolios, curriculum-based, etc.) to analyze the effectiveness of instruction.

    1        2        3        4        5

14. The ability to translate the results of evaluation into an individual education plan.

    1        2        3        4        5

15. The ability to use curriculum-based assessment to determine instructional/developmental needs.

    1        2        3        4        5

16. Understanding of the roles professionals and parents play in a collaborative instructional relationship.

    1        2        3        4        5

17. Knowledge of interagency collaboration to support student goals.

    1        2        3        4        5

18. Knowledge of the principles of collaborative relationships with colleagues including problem solving, communication, conflict resolution, teaming, etc.

    1        2        3        4        5

19. Knowledge of program delivery systems, including all levels of the continuum of services.

    1        2        3        4        5

20. Understanding of the roles and organizational structures of education and how they relate to service provisions.

    1        2        3        4        5

21. Knowledge of the historical, organizational, and legal factors related to instruction.

    1        2        3        4        5

22. An understanding of how to access interagency resources relevant to instruction and management.

    1        2        3        4        5

23. Knowledge of teacher beliefs and attitudes needed for successful inclusion.

    1        2        3        4        5

## Ratings for Classroom Teachers

Directions: Thinking ahead to your role as a teacher in a general education classroom, consider the following statements. You should be thinking about a classroom with students having mild disabilities included. To the right of each question place the number 1 to 5 depending on the extent to which you agree with each statement.

> 1 represents Strongly Disagree
> 2 represents Disagree
> 3 represents No Opinion
> 4 represents Agree
> 5 represents Strongly Agree

_____ 1. I can administer, score and interpret standardized assessment instruments.

_____ 2. I can appropriately adapt assessment procedures when warranted.

_____ 3. I can develop and/or select classroom assessments that respond to cultural, linguistic, learning, and gender differences.

_____ 4. I can appropriately use non-standardized assessments including: curriculum based assessment, work sample analysis, behavioral observation, task analysis, and portfolio.

_____ 5. I can integrate assessment data with information from student/parent to determine individual learning styles and program placement.

_____ 6. I can recognize my personal biases that may affect my teaching and the classroom environment.

_____ 7. I demonstrate respect for people of different cultures, religions, gender, abilities and sexuality.

_____ 8. I can use teaching strategies that will prepare my students to live in a diverse world.

_____ 9. I can use teaching strategies to increase student self awareness and personal growth.

_____ 10. I can help students develop personal problem solving strategies.

_____ 11. I can create a classroom environment which encourages student self advocacy and independence.

_____ 12. I can develop and/or select instructional programs/practices which respond to cultural, linguistic, learning, and gender differences.

_____ 13. I can help all students actively participate in all activities in the classroom.

_____ 14. I can adapt and modify instructional method and materials as necessary to accommodate learning differences/styles.

_____ 15. I can develop instructional programs that are student-centered rather than curriculum driven.

_____ 16. I can develop teaching activities that are consistent with federal and Michigan laws and regulations.

_____ 17. I can use technology effectively to accomplish instructional goals.

_____ 18. I understand and can effectively implement district curriculum objectives.

_____ 19. I can prepare daily lessons that include a variety of activities.

_____ 20. I can supplement curriculum materials with additional resources as needed.

_____ 21. I can be flexible, according to the needs of my students, while implementing planned lessons.

_____ 22. I can appropriately encourage students to ask questions.

_____ 23. I can teach "study skills."

_____ 24. I can encourage my students to participate in setting instructional objectives.

_____ 25. I can appropriately allow students to work independently.

_____ 26. I can encourage students to monitor their own progress toward instructional objectives.

_____ 27. I can integrate career/vocational skills within the academic curriculum when appropriate.

_____ 28. I can address affective and social skills throughout instructional and noninstructional programs.

_____ 29. I can provide opportunities for practice, feedback, and review throughout an instructional lesson.

_____ 30. I can teach more through active learning methods than lecturing.

_____ 31. I can create and maintain records that accurately reflect student progress.

_____ 32. I can determine and direct the activities of paraprofessionals, volunteers, and peer tutors.

_____ 33. I can provide paraprofessionals with appropriate corrective feedback.

_____ 34. I can establish rules and expectations for the learning environment.

_____ 35. I can modify the learning environment to manage inappropriate behaviors.

_____ 36. I can plan and implement behavioral programming when appropriate.

_____ 37. I can use proactive strategies to prevent crisis situations.

_____ 38. I can intervene in a crisis situation effectively.

_____ 39. I know how to recognize the need for pre-referral intervention.

_____ 40. I can design and implement a pre-referral program.

_____ 41. I am willing and able to ask questions/seek information about the needs of the individual students.

_____ 42. I actively engage in self-evaluation of instruction and other professional tasks and use this information for continual improvement.

_____ 43. I know how to ethically communicate confidential information to others.

_____ 44. I can communicate orally with proficiency.

_____ 45. I can communicate in writing with proficiency.

_____ 46. My nonverbal and verbal communication are congruent.

_____ 47. I can effectively use collaborative strategies with colleagues and other professionals.

_____ 48. I can encourage and assist a student's family to become active participants on the educational team.

_____ 49. I can constructively facilitate discussion of individual perceptions in a group.

_____ 50. I can critically evaluate ideas for practice generated through collaboration.

_____ 51. I can collaboratively design, implement, and manage daily classroom practices.

_____ 52. I can recognize current educational issues which require collaborative/consultative functioning.

# APPENDIX B

## Opening Interview Questions

1) The inclusion of special education students in general education classrooms is becoming increasingly common. Some people believe all students should be placed in general education full time. As a future teacher, what do you think about this? How do you see this working in your future classroom?

2) One of the issues being discussed as inclusive efforts continue is whether or not this is an efficient approach. There is concern that the presence of students with disabilities in a general education classroom will be disruptive. The student will require an inordinate amount of the teacher's time, the other students will suffer as a result of this inequity of attention, and the student with disabilities will not receive adequate support in this context. As a future teacher, what do you think about this? How do you see this working in your future classroom?

3) The value of being reflective is stressed in MSU's teacher education program. As a future teacher, what do you think about this? How do you see being reflective impacting your work in your future classroom?

4) In the past, most teachers worked isolated from other adults. Recently, efforts have been made to increase the amount of collaboration occurring between and among teachers and teachers with the parents of their students. As a future teacher, what do you think about this? How do you see these types of collaboration being useful to you as a teacher having students with disabilities in your future classroom?

5) The phrase, "all students can learn" is commonly used in current school reform efforts. As a future educator, what do you think about this? How do you see this ideal impacting your work as a future teacher in an inclusive classroom?

6) Part of the teacher's role is to assess the learning of students. How do you see this task being done in a classroom including students with disabilities? Would the task be different if you didn't have students with disabilities included in your classroom? If so, how?

7) Current general education teachers often say they feel they don't know a lot about the special education system. As a future teacher, do you think this is an important concern? Why or why not? How do you think what you know about the special education system will impact your work with students with disabilities included in your classroom?

8) Sometimes students with disabilities who are included in general education classrooms need extra help. As a future general educator, what do you think your role would be in helping students with disabilities included in your classroom?

# Appendix C

<u>Final Interview Protocol</u>

Note: These questions were not asked in the order they were written. I determined the order most appropriate for each intern's specific field factors. I included quotes from each intern's past interviews and assignments for some of the questions.

1. One of the things teachers wrestle with is when to help a student and when to let them struggle a bit. Have you had some experiences like that?

2. What do you think are the key elements for a successful inclusive environment?

3. What do you think are the things to consider when there is discussion about the possible inclusion of a student with disabilities?

4. What are the benefits and challenges of inclusion?

5. How have the students with disabilities been part of the learning community in your classroom?

6. What have you noticed about the way students with disabilities participate in your class?

7. Describe what you would see as the best/worst case scenario for inclusion?

8. What kinds of things to you think about when you plan and implement an inclusive lesson?

9. As an intern, what could happen in the field to better support your inclusive efforts?

10. Have you had other instruction about special education this year in your classes, seminars, etc.?

11. What do you think would be the ideal training design to prepare teachers to work in inclusive environments?

12. What impacted you in this training design?

13. What has changed/stayed the same for you this year?

14. What surprised you/was expected about this inclusive environment?

15. Your collaborating teacher told me she has had __ years of experience with inclusive environments. How do you think this has affected you?

16. What have you noticed about assessment and working with students with disabilities?

17. Have you participated in an IEPC?

18. Describe how you've communicated with the special education teacher this year.

19. You probably recall a question from the earlier interviews when I asked you about the phrase, "all children can learn". What are your reactions to that phrase now?

20. I'm wondering if you've thought about the futures of the students with disabilities in your class. What do you predict for them?

21. Now's your chance: Tell me how MSU should change its program to better prepare interns for inclusive environments.

22. When you think about things you've done to accommodate the students with disabilities in your classroom, what do you feel you do well? How could you improve?

23. React to the following statements:
    (Assume these are students with disabilities)

➢ Student A is doing poorly.  The student is becoming increasing resistant to doing work.

➢ Student B makes strange noises in class.  The other students are complaining.

➢ Student C has been working on subtraction with regrouping for weeks. The student still doesn't understand it.

➢ Student D comes to your classroom with a paraprofessional.

# REFERENCES

# References

Adler, M. J. (1984). *The paideia program: An educational syllabus.* New York: MacMillan Publishing Company.

Allinder, R. M. (1993). I think I can, I think I can: The effect of self-efficacy on teacher effectiveness. Beyond Behavior, 4(2), 29.

Anderson, L. & Bird, T. (1995). How three prospective teachers construed three cases of teaching. Teaching & Teacher Education, 11(5), 479-499.

Armstrong, T. (1993). *Multiple intelligences in the classroom.* New York: The Putnam Publishing Group.

Bacharach, N. & Salk, J. (1992). *Behavioral indicators for inclusive teachers (BIIT).* A self-rating instrument developed at St. Cloud State University.

Barbus, S., Emond, S. & Curtis-Pierce, E. (1994). *Saginaw valley state university unified elementary pilot program competencies questionnaire.* A self-rating instrument developed at Saginaw Valley State University.

Beach, R. & Pearson, D. (1997). Changes in preservice and beginning teachers' perceptions of and strategies for coping with conflicts and tensions. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago.

Bellah, R. N., Madsen, R., Sullivan, W. M., Swidler, A., & Tipton, S. M. (1992). *The good society.* New York: Vintage Books.

Bird, T., Anderson, L.M., Sullivan, B.A., & Swidler, S.A. (1993). Pedagogical balancing acts: Attempts to influence prospective teachers' beliefs. Teacher & Teacher Education, 9(3), 253-267.

Bradley, D. F., King-Sears, M. E., & Tessier-Switlick, D. M. (1997). *Teaching students in inclusive settings: From theory to practice.* Needham Heights: Allyn & Bacon.

Brigham, F.J. (1993). Cross-training: Faculty-sharing between general and special teacher education programs. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Indiana Federation, Council for Exceptional Children, Indianapolis.

Brousseau, B. A. & Freeman, D. J. (1988). How do teacher education faculty members define desirable teacher beliefs? Teaching & Teacher Education, 4(3), 267-273.

Brown, J., Gable, R. A., Hendrickson, J. M., & Algozzine, B. (1991). Prereferral intervention practices of regular classroom teachers: Implications for regular and special education preparation. Teacher Education and Special Education, 14(3), 192-197.

Cannon, G. S., Idol, L., & West, J. F. (1992). Educating students with mild handicaps in general classrooms: Essential teaching practices for general and special educators. Journal of Learning Disabilities, 25(5), 300-317.

Carin, A. A. & Sund, R. B. (1980). *Teaching Science Through Discovery.* Columbus: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, pgs. 2-3.

Carter, K., Sabers, D., Cushing, K., Pinnegar, S., & Berliner, D. C. (1987). Processing information about students: A study of expert, novice, and postulant teachers. Teaching & Teacher Education, 3(2), 147-157.

Childers, J. H. & Podemski, R. S. (1982-83). Confronting idealistic teacher expectations: Strategies for training programs and school districts. Teacher-Educator, 18(3), 2-10.

Effective accommodations for students with exceptionalities. (1997, September). CEC Today, 4(3), 1, 9, 15.

Fairbairn, G. & Fairbairn, S. (1992). *Integrating special children: Some ethical issues.* Aldershot: Avebury.

Feiman-Nemser, S., McDiarmid, G. W., Melnick, S. L., & Parker, M. (1989). Changing beginning teachers conceptions: A description of an introductory teacher education course (Research Report 89-1) East Lansing: Michigan State University, National Center for Research on Teacher Learning.

Gartner, A. & Lipsky, D. K. (1987). Beyond special education: Toward a quality system for all students. Harvard Educational Review, 57, 367-395.

Gelzheiser, L. M., Meyers, J., Slesinski, C., Douglas, C., & Lewis, L. (1997). Patterns in general education teachers' integration practices. Exceptionality, 7(4), 207-228.

Gersten, R. (1990). Enemies real and imagined: Implications of "teachers' thinking about instruction" for collaboration between special and general education. Remedial and Special Education, 11(6), 50-53.

Gersten, R. & Woodward, J. (1990). Rethinking the regular education initiative: Focus on the classroom teacher. Remedial and Special Education, 11(3), 7-16.

Giangreco, M. F. (1997). Quick guides to inclusion: Ideas for educating students with disabilities. Baltimore: Brookes Publishing Company.

Goodlad, J. I. & Lovitt, T. C. (1993). Integrating general and special education. New York: MacMillan Publishing Company.

Grossman, H. (1995). Special education in a diverse society. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Hall, J. L., Johnson, B., & Bowman, A. C. (1995). Teacher socialization: A spiral process. Teacher-Educator, 30(4), 25-36.

Hobbs, T. & Westling, D. L. (1998). Promoting successful inclusion through collaborative problem solving. TEACHING Exceptional Children, 31(1), 12-19.

Hollingsworth, S. (1989). Prior beliefs and cognitive change in learning to teach. American Educational Research Journal, 26, 160-189.

Holt-Reynolds, D. (1992). Personal history-based beliefs as relevant prior knowledge in course work. American Educational Research Journal, 29(2), 325-349.

House, E. R. (1994). Integrating the quantitative and qualitative. The Qualitative and Quantitative Debate: New Perspectives, Spring 1994(61), 13-22.

Jones, V. (1996). Classroom management. In J. Sikula (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teacher education (2nd Edition, pp. 503-524)*. New York: Macmillan.

Jordan, A., Kircaali-Iftar, G., & Diamond, C. T. P. (1993). Who has the problem, the student or the teacher? Differences in teachers' beliefs about their work with at-risk and integrated exceptional students. International Journal of Disability, Development and Education, 40(1), 45-62.

Jorgensen, C. M. (1995) Essential Questions, inclusive answers. Educational Leadership, 52(4), 52-55.

Kauffman, J. M. (1999). Commentary: Today's special education and its messages for tomorrow. The Journal of Special Education, 32(4), 244-254.

Kent County Intermediate School District. (1987). Regular education interventions: Common solutions for the uncommon child. In Kent I.S.D., *Guidelines for: Learning disabilities standards and procedures (Second Edition, Appendix E)*. Grand Rapids: Author.

Kohl, P. L. & Witty, E. P. (1996). Equity challenges. In J. Sikula (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teacher education (2nd Edition, pp. 837-867)*. New York: Macmillan.

Landers, M. F. & Weaver, H. R. (1997). *Inclusive education: A process, not a placement*. Swampscott, MA: Waterson Publishing Company.

Lilly, M. S. (1988). The regular education initiative: A force for change in general and special education. Education and Training in Mental Retardation, 23(4), 253-260.

Marks, S. U., Schrader, C., & Levine, M. (1999). Paraeducator experiences in inclusive settings: Helping, hovering, or holding their own? Exceptional Children, 65(3), 315-328.

McDiarmid, G. W. (1989). Tilting at webs of belief: Field experiences as a means of breaking with experience (Research Report 89-8). East Lansing: Michigan State University, National Center for Research on Teacher Learning.

McDiarmid, G. W. (1990). Challenging prospective teachers' beliefs during early field experience: A quixotic undertaking? Journal of Teacher Education, 41(3), 12-20.

McDiarmid, G. W. & Price, J. (1990). Prospective teachers' views of diverse learners: A study of the participants in the ABCD project (Research Report 90-6). East Lansing: Michigan State University, National Center for Research on Teacher Learning.

Means, B., Chelemer, C., & Knapp, M. (1991). Teaching advanced skills to at-risk students: Views from research and practice. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc.

Mertens, D. M. (1998). Research methods in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative and qualitative approaches. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Miller, P. S. (1991). Increasing teacher efficacy with at-risk students: The Sine Qua Non of school restructuring. Equity & Excellence, 25(1), 30-35.

Paul, J. L., Berger, N. H., Osnes, P. G., Martinez, Y. G., & Morse, W. C. (1997). Ethics and decision-making in local schools: Inclusion, policy, and reform. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Prawat, R. S., Byers, J. L., & Anderson, A. H. (1983). An attributional analysis of teachers' affective reactions to student success and failure. American Educational Research Journal, 20(1), 137-152.

Putnam, J. W. (1995). *Cooperative learning and strategies for inclusion: Celebrating diversity in the classroom.* Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Rademacher, J.A., Wilhelm, R.W., Hildreth, B.L., Bridges, D.L., & Cowart, M.F. (1998). A study of preservice teachers' attitudes toward inclusion. The Educational Forum, 62(2), 154-163.

Reber, C.K. (1995). Attitudes of preservice teachers toward students with disabilities: Do practicum experiences make a difference? Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco.

Reed, F. & Monda-Amaya, L. E. (1995). Preparing preservice general educators for inclusion: A survey of teacher preparation programs in Illinois. Teacher Education and Special Education, 18(4), 262-274.

Richardson, V. (1996). The role of attitudes and beliefs in learning to teach. In J. Sikula (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teacher education (2nd Edition, pp. 102-119).* New York: Macmillan.

Rossi, P. H. (1994). The war between the quals and the quants: Is a lasting piece possible? The Qualitative and Quantitative Debate: New Perspectives, (6), 23-36.

Sachs, J. (1988). Teacher preparation, teacher self-efficacy, and the regular education initiative. Education and Training in Mental Retardation, 23(4), 327-332.

Skrtic, T. M. (1991). The special education paradox: Equity as the way to excellence. Harvard Educational Review, 61(2), 148-206.

Slick, G. A. (1995). *Emerging trends in teacher preparation.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

Smith, M. L. (1994). Qualitative plus/versus quantitative: The last word. The Qualitative and Quantitative Debate: New Perspectives, (6), 37-44.

Soodak, L. C. & Podell, D. M. (1993). Teacher efficacy and student problem as factors in special education referral. The Journal of Special Education, 27(1), 66-81.

Soodak, L.C., Podell, D.M., & Lehman, L.R. (1998). Teacher, student, and school attributes as predictors of teachers' responses to inclusion. The Journal of Special Education, 31(4), 480-497.

Stainback, S. & Stainback, W. (1996). Inclusion: A guide for educators. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Company.

Stone, B. & Brown, R. (1986-87). Preparing teachers for mainstreaming: Some critical variables for effective preservice programs. Educational Research Quarterly, 11, 7-10.

Strike, K. A. & Soltis, J. F. (1992). The ethics of teaching (2$^{nd}$ ed.). New York: Teachers College Press.

Swartz, S. L., Hidalgo, J. F., & Hays, P. A. (1992). Teacher preparation and the regular education initiative. Action in teacher education, 13(4), 55-61.

Taylor, R.L., Richards, S.B., Goldstein, P.A., & Schilit, J. (1997). Teacher perceptions of inclusive settings. TEACHING Exceptional Children, 29(3), 50-54.

Tucker, B. P. & Goldstein, B. A. (1991). The educational rights of children with disabilities: A guide to federal law. Horsham, PA: LRP Publications.

Vaughn, S., Schumm, J. S., Jallad, B., Slusher, J., & Saumell, L. (1996). Teachers' views of inclusion. Learning Disabilities Research and Practice, 11(2), 96-106.

Villa, R. A., Thousand, J. S., Stainback, W., & Stainback, S. (1993). Restructuring for caring & effective education: An administrative

*guide to creating heterogeneous schools.* Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Company.

Waldron, K. A. (1996). *Introduction to a special education: The inclusive classroom.* Albany: Delmar Publishers.

Weinstein, C. S. (1990). Prospective elementary teachers' beliefs about teaching: Implications for teacher education. Teaching and Teacher Education, 6, 279-290.

Woolfolk, A. E. & Hoy, W. K. (1990). Prospective teachers' sense of efficacy and beliefs about control. Journal of Educational Psychology, 82(1), 81-91.

Yates, C. W. (1996). Impact of efficacy beliefs on collaboration between special and general educators. Paper presented at the 19th Conference of the Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children, Washington, D. C.

Yates, C. W. & Sider (n.d.). *Inclusion questionnaire.* A self-rating instrument. Unpublished manuscript.

York, J. L. & Reynolds, M. C. (1996). Special education and inclusion. In J. Sikula (Ed.), *The handbook of research on teacher education (2nd Edition, pp. 820-836).* New York: MacMillan.