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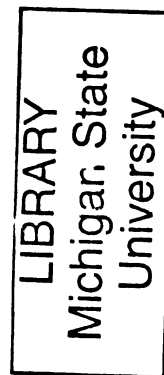
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**PREPARING PRESERVICE TEACHERS TO TEACH DIVERSE STUDENTS:
THE INTERACTION BETWEEN NARRATIVE CASES, HYPERMEDIA VIDEO-
CASES AND PRESERVICE TEACHER LEARNING**

By

Erica Christine Boling

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ABSTRACT

PREPARING PRESERVICE TEACHERS TO TEACH DIVERSE STUDENTS: THE INTERACTION BETWEEN NARRATIVE CASES, HYPERMEDIA VIDEO- CASES AND PRESERVICE TEACHER LEARNING

By

Erica Christine Boling

One of the greatest challenges that teacher educators currently face is how to help future teachers support the learning of a culturally and linguistically diverse student population. Preparing teachers for diverse classrooms becomes challenging, as the teaching force remains predominantly White and female while the k-12 student population grows increasingly more diverse. Having limited experiences with diverse groups of people can contribute to lowered expectations and limited views of students' abilities. As teacher educators face the challenge of preparing teachers, they are also confronted with the fact that little is known about the effectiveness of pedagogical approaches that are used in teacher education.

This study was designed to investigate the role that case methodology and narrative approaches to teaching have in preparing future teacher to teach literacy to diverse students. The study was designed to investigate the following: (a) how do teacher candidates respond to the images and stories presented in written and hypermedia video cases, (b) how do teacher candidates' personal stories and experiences interact with their interpretation and understanding of these cases, and (c) what do teacher candidates' responses to written and hypermedia video cases reveal about their views of teaching diverse learners over time.

This study followed 25 female teacher candidates in a literacy methods course. The researcher and course instructor co-designed the course together so that teacher candidates would have opportunities to engage in various personal writing and case activities. The researcher attended, audio-recorded, and took notes on all class sessions. All coursework created by students were collected, coded, and analyzed. Five focus students were also selected from the class and participated in interviews at the middle and end of the semester. Data collected on all teacher candidates revealed how a combination of personal writing, course, and field activities assisted teacher candidates in developing complex understandings of inclusion and ways to select, adapt, and modify literacy instruction for diverse students. Data collected on some teacher candidates illustrated how narrative served as an organizing framework and a way of making meaning from personal writing, case, and field activities. Engaging in personal writing and case activities assisted some teacher candidates in forming new understandings about themselves, teaching, and learning. For others, however, these activities sometimes reinforced prior assumptions and beliefs and contributed to misinterpretations of what it means to create an inclusive learning community

This study advances what is currently known about the role of case methodology and narrative in teacher education. It extends our understanding of how teacher candidates' conceptions of teaching diverse students can be constructed over time and the ways personal writings and case activities can assist teacher candidates in developing the knowledge and skills that are needed to teach literacy to diverse students. It also enhances our understanding of pedagogical approaches that assist teacher candidates in learning from narrative and case activities.

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To my parents

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Chapter 1 Introduction

One of the greatest challenges that teacher educators currently face is how to help future teachers support the learning of a culturally and linguistically diverse student population. As our nation's k-12 student population grows increasingly diverse, the teaching population remains predominantly white, middle-class, and female (Nieto, 2002; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). This disparity between teachers and students creates unique challenges for teacher educators who are preparing teacher candidates to teach in diverse classrooms. Reviews of research on learning to teach and preservice teacher beliefs revealed that teacher candidates' beliefs frequently differ from views that are being promoted in teacher education courses (Borko & Putnam, 1996; Pajares, 1992; Richardson, 1996; Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998). Teacher candidates tend to believe that teaching is simple and transmissive, children from "disadvantaged" home environments cannot learn, and diversity is a problem to be overcome and solved (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann's, 1989; Feiman-Nemser, 1990; Hollingsworth, 1989; McDiarmid & Price, 1993). As teacher educators face the challenges of trying to alter these views, they must also confront the fact that little is known about the pedagogy of teacher education and the impact that it has on teaching practice (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education [AACTE], 2002; American Educational Research Association [AERA], 2003).

Over the past four years, I have personally experienced the challenges and frustrations of preparing teacher candidates for teaching literacy to diverse students. I have struggled with introducing teacher candidates to progressive, literacy teaching

approaches that sometimes differ greatly from the traditional approaches they experienced as children. While teaching preservice teachers about learner-centered teaching approaches, I see them continually designing and teaching literacy lessons that are largely teacher-centered where children are given limited opportunities to offer ideas, ask questions, and engage in discussion.

While teaching literacy methods courses, I also became frustrated with the attitudes and beliefs that some teacher candidates held about diverse students and the ways they approached teaching these students. Teacher candidates sometimes made comments and designed activities that reflected low expectations for children who speak limited English, come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, or are ethnically and culturally diverse. I observed teacher candidates struggle to understand ways to make classrooms inclusive learning environments that promote learning for all students. On more than one occasion, I observed teacher candidates teaching lessons where English as a Second Language (ESL) and learning disabled students sat in the corner of the classroom, or sometimes in the hallway, filling out worksheet after worksheet while the rest of the class participated in engaging and authentic reading and writing activities.

My research questions have evolved from my experiences working with teacher candidates. Recently I have turned to cases¹ and case methodology² in an effort to better prepare teacher candidates for working with diverse students. Teacher educators have experienced some success using cases to dislodge preconceptions and motivate change in preservice teachers (Clark & Medina, 2000; The Cognition and Technology Group at

¹ A teaching case is as a story that is “told with a definite teaching purpose in mind and that rewards careful study and analysis” (Lynn, 1999, p. 2).

² The case method of teaching is a set of pedagogical techniques that instructors use in classrooms to “help learners reach specific learning objectives with the teaching case as a basis for discussion” (Lynn, 1999, p. 2).

Vanderbilt [CTGV], 1990; Laframboise & Griffith, 1998). There has been increased interest in the use of video cases of classroom teaching that are presented through hypermedia programs (Boling, in press; Hughes, 1999; Reinking, McKenna, Labbo & Kieffer, 1998). In my own teaching, I have used both written and hypermedia video-based cases and have wondered how these cases support teacher candidates in learning to teach diverse students.

I have designed three research questions in attempt to better understand how teacher candidates respond to written and hypermedia video-based cases. I believe that teacher educators will be able to use cases more effectively if they have a better understanding of how teacher candidates respond to them. The research questions that have guided this study are the following: (a) How do teacher candidates respond to the images and stories presented in written and hypermedia video-based cases? (b) How do teacher candidates' personal stories and experiences interact with their interpretation and understanding of these cases? (c) What do teacher candidates' responses to written and hypermedia video-based cases reveal about their views of teaching diverse learners over time?

I have focused one of my research questions on teacher candidates' personal stories because I have experienced that cases by themselves are sometimes not effective. I have experienced some success using cases in literacy methods courses (Boling, 2001; Boling & Roehler, 2002). For example, after reading a case about an ESL student, some of my students began to see that there were ways to include limited English speakers in literacy classroom instruction. After viewing videos of teaching that were presented through a hypermedia program, they also began to recognize how children's literature

can be used to support student-centered instruction. Even though these uses of cases worked well, I felt that teacher candidates sometimes responded to them by saying what they thought I wanted to hear rather than what they truly felt. I still heard comments that marginalized diverse and minority children, and I felt that teacher candidates were not taking ownership or embracing the issues and teaching practices I introduced in class. As I wrestled with these issues, I began to wonder what would occur if teacher candidates made personal connections to the issues, ideas, and instructional approaches that were being presented through written and hypermedia cases. Were some students already making more personal connections than others? Would teacher candidates be more likely to reflect upon and question their own assumptions and beliefs if they made personal connections? These questions encouraged me to investigate existing research on the use of personal narrative stories in teacher education. During this investigation, I decided that I wanted to examine these personal connections more closely in this study.

In the following sections, I expand the discussion on why this study is important and why further research needs to be conducted on preparing teachers to teach diverse students. I then describe some of the ways that cases have already been used in teacher preparation. Finally, I introduce some of the theories and perspectives that guided the design of this study.

The Need for More Research

Recently, a consensus panel on teacher education met at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA, 2003) to discuss the research that exists on teacher preparation. After conducting a review of the literature on teacher

education, the panel concluded that research on the pedagogy of teacher education is limited. Most of the studies that exist are self-studies conducted by teacher educators on their own practice. According to the consensus panel, these studies reveal that some of the common pedagogies used in teacher preparation include micro-teaching, written cases, hypermedia cases, and action research. However, insufficient numbers of studies have been conducted to understand the effectiveness of these approaches, the processes through which teacher candidates learn from them, and the impact of these pedagogical approaches on teaching practice. In addition, there has been a lack of theory on the pedagogy of teacher education. This study is significant because it investigates the use of cases in a teacher education course and how teacher candidates respond to cases as they learn to teach literacy to diverse students. This is a timely study because of the current mismatch between teachers and students and the limited studies that exist on preparing teacher candidates for working with students who are “increasingly different from them racially, linguistically, and socioeconomically” (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p. 18). I designed this study to investigate the use of cases in the context of a teacher education course where students were being prepared to teach literacy to diverse students.

Villegas and Lucas (2002) stated that differences between teachers and students create challenges for teachers when they know little about their students’ experiences and perspectives. The authors stated that this mismatch makes it difficult for teachers to

select materials that are relevant to the students’ experiences, to use pertinent examples or analogies drawn from the students’ daily lives to introduce or clarify new concepts, to manage the classroom in ways that take into account cultural differences in interactions styles, and to use evaluation strategies that maximize students’ opportunities to display what they actually know in ways that are familiar to them. (p. 18)

A review of studies conducted by the Teacher Education and Learning to Teach (TELT) research program revealed that preservice teachers often claimed differences among students, such as race, social class and gender, did not matter in teaching. What did matter, however, were individual differences such as personality characteristics (Feiman-Nemser, 1990; National Center for Research on Teacher Education, 1988, 1991; Wideen, Smith-Mayer, & Moon, 1998). Such thinking contributes to the belief that teachers do not have an influence over learners' difficulties and that specialists are needed to deal with the "problems" of minority students and students of color (Ladson-Billings, 1999; Nieto, 2002). Such thinking can also lead preservice and practicing teacher to make pedagogical decisions that lead to unequal learning opportunities for diverse groups of students (Nieto, 2002). In order to better prepare teacher candidates for teaching diverse students, we need to understand how to support them in developing both the knowledge and beliefs that promote learning for all students.

McDiarmid and Price (1993) conducted a study that revealed that many teachers "segregate students from one another during opportunities to learn" when faced with learners who bring "diverse interests, backgrounds, and capacities" to the classroom (p. 47). The researchers claimed that for some educators, it appeared that the answer to diversity was individualization. When teachers view difference as a deficit, they can form limited views about their students' abilities, and this can result in different learning opportunities for those students who they believe are low achievers and at risk students (Anyon, 1981; McDiarmid & Price, 1993; Richardson, Casanova, Placier, & Guilfoyle, 1989). Limited views about students' abilities can result in instruction that focuses on remediation, simplification, and basic drills, skills, and worksheets rather than higher

order thinking activities (Anyon, 1981; McDiarmid & Price, 1993). Even though these studies were conducted on practicing teachers rather than teacher candidates, their findings are significant for those who prepare teacher candidates for working with diverse students. These studies reveal how a lack of understanding and negative view of diverse learners can result in lowered academic expectations. A teacher's attitude and beliefs towards diverse students can impact the instructional choices and learning opportunities that are provided in the classroom. By designing a study that investigates the use of cases in a literacy methods course, I have created an opportunity to investigating the kinds of knowledge and beliefs that emerge as teacher candidates engage in various case-based activities.

This study has been influenced by previous work that has been conducted on the use of cases in teacher education. However, as I began to wonder about the relationship between case-activities and teacher candidates' personal stories and experiences, I turned to the literature on the use of narrative in teacher education. Researchers have argued that the reading and writing of narrative cases can generate emotional responses from teacher candidates, enable them to confront their own subjectivity and view themselves as part of a culturally diverse society (Florio-Ruane, 2001; Laframboise & Griffith, 1997). The methodologies and theoretical frameworks of narrative and case studies had an impact on both the design and analysis of this study. In the following sections, I describe the use of cases in more detail. I then present how ways of learning and knowing have been described in both case and narrative studies. Finally, I revisit the purpose and significance of this study.

The Use of Cases in Teacher Education

Cases have been used to help prepare learners for a world that “demands critical thinking skills and the ability to create convincing arguments, often with little time and incomplete information” (Lynn, 1999, p. 2). Case-based instruction has existed for many years and has a tradition in fields such as law, medicine and business (Christensen, 1987; Lynn, 1999). They have been used to teach practitioners “to think in the specific ways that scholars believe to be productive in practice” (Lynn, 1999, p. 80). In teacher education, cases have been around for over 50 years, and a variety of formats have emerged to illustrate the problems and dilemmas of teaching and learning (McAninch, 1993). Teacher educators have used cases to confront the challenges of preparing novice teachers for the classroom. For example, Harrington (1995) found that dilemma-based cases could be used to foster teacher candidates’ reasoning abilities. Others have discovered that cases can be used to help preservice teacher reflect on practice, explore important issues of teaching, and understand issues that surround cultural conflict (Laframboise & Griffith, 1997; Moje & Wade, 1997). Sykes and Bird (1996) stated, “What a case is, or is a case of, depends on the ideas used in constructing it and the purposes for doing so” (p. 19). For example, a case can be used to represent an exemplar in teaching practice, a problem situation, or a story of one’s teaching experiences (Carter, 1999). A review of the literature on case methods in teacher education has revealed at least three different formats, or representations, of cases used in the preparation of preservice and novice teachers: traditional teaching cases, literature cases, and hypermedia video-based cases. Research on literature cases has most informed this study; however, aspects of all three cases are used in the study. In the following sections, I

briefly describe three representations of cases that some researchers and scholars have used to categorize cases.

Traditional teaching cases. Traditional teaching cases are usually created for a teaching purpose and present stories written with “just the facts” in clear and unemotional prose (Laframboise & Klesius, 1993). Traditional cases introduce characters and settings that may or may not be taken from someone’s actual experience; however, the reader does not get the impression “that one of the characters wants to tell his story” (Conle, 2003, p. 6). Traditional cases have been used to illustrate various educational theories so that they can be discussed and studied by teacher candidates. The traditional approach to using teaching cases has preservice teachers applying educational theories to classroom situations and problems and encourages preservice teachers to look at teaching situations through the lens of different theories (Greenwood, 1989; McAninch, 1993). An example of such a case can be found in *Case Studies: Applying Educational Psychology* (Jackson & Ormrod, 1998). In this book, a case titled, *Throwing Tantrums*, is introduced in the following way:

Although Tyler Lipton is listed on the roster of Allie Schenk’s third-grade class, he spends most of each day in Sharon Osmer’s resource room. Concerned that Tyler is so often segregated from his classmates, Allie has arranged a meeting with Sharon, Principal Cecilia Dawson, and Tyler’s parents. (p. 55)

The case continues by following a conversation between characters without favoring any one particular viewpoint. The case describes examples of Tyler throwing temper tantrums. At the end of the case, Jackson and Ormrod (1998) listed prompts and questions to guide case discussions. In one example, they stated, “Using concepts from

social cognitive theory, explain why Tyler begins screaming soon after he is placed in Sharon Osmer's classrooms" (p. 57).

Lundeberg and Sheurman (1997) suggested that case discussions could be used to "generate theory which influences teachers' epistemological perspectives and, ultimately, their teaching practice" (p. 784). McAninch (1993) claimed that one of the advantages of such a use of cases is the fit between case analysis and the acquisition of theoretical understanding. Talking about cases with classmates can broaden students' own perspectives on classroom occurrences and teaching, and group discussions on cases can prove to be effective in helping students in drawing out, confronting and discussing both misconceptions and ineffective strategies (Laframboise & Griffith, 1997; Moje & Wade; Tippins, Nichols, & Dana, 1999). Case discussions can also enable more flexibility in students' thinking as they identify issues in a problem, share ideas with their peers, and hear alternative views and perspectives that they might not have originally considered.

Literature cases. Literature cases can be used like traditional teaching cases; however, they usually present "rich description of characters' backgrounds, personalities, and problems" (Laframboise & Griffith, 1997, p. 371.) Literature cases, however, are unlike traditional teaching cases because they "engage the emotions of the reader through the development of character and plot" (Laframboise & Griffith, 1997, p. 371).

Laframboise and Griffith (1997) argued that through the development of character and plot, literature cases could provide a "richer description of characters' backgrounds, personalities, and problems" in ways appropriate for use with "preservice teachers who lack the back-ground for understanding contexts and problems presented in traditional cases" (Laframboise & Griffith, 1997, p. 371).

Literature cases follow a narrative storyline that involves “an Agent who Acts to achieve a Goal in a recognizable Setting by the use of certain Means” (Bruner, 1996, p. 94). In these narrative stories, characters usually follow a sequence of events that present a problem to be resolved. Literature cases have been used “to enable students to view themselves as part of a culturally diverse society, confront their own subjectivity, and to examine critical issues related to children and schooling” (Laframboise & Griffith, 1997, p. 369). Laframboise and Griffith (1997) claimed that the narrative stories told through literature cases are more effective with novice teachers than traditional teaching cases. They argued that the rich descriptions in narrative cases provide additional scaffolding or support for preservice teachers who lack the “experiential bases for understanding complex school-based contexts and problems” (Laframboise & Griffith, 1997, p. 371). Sykes and Bird (1992) also described the advantages of using literature cases written in narrative form, stating that narratives can provide “powerful advantages in simulating and representing complex, multidimensional realities” (pg. 15).

Florio-Ruane (2001) used literature cases in the form of autobiographies. In her study, she invited student teachers to participate in the Future Teachers’ Autobiography Club. Over a period of 6 months, teacher candidates and Dr. Florio-Ruane came together to read and discuss autobiographies that presented stories of culture through the life stories of different people. In one autobiography, Jill Ker Conway (1989) described her life in Australia before immigrating to the United States “seeking and finding (although not without cost) security, education and economic opportunity” (Florio Ruane, 2001, p. 56). I present an excerpt from this story to illustrate how the personal and descriptive prose of literature cases differs from traditional teaching cases. In this example, the

author described a school experience after moving from the Australian bush to the city of Sydney.

When the bell rang for recess or lunch, my heart sank because I knew no one and had no subject of conversation remotely like the cheerful chatter which swirled around about weekend activities. Queenwood was a day school and there were no other girls from the bush there. It was painful when others talked happily about their fathers or boasted about the family fortunes. (Conway, 1989, p. 88)

As student teachers in the Future Teachers' Autobiography Club read and discussed culturally rich autobiographical stories, they explored culture as a "complex and lived process" (Florio-Ruane, 2001, p. 139). They began to draw comparisons and contrasts between their cultures and others, finding it easier to "examine the historical, social, and political dimensions of oppression in distant societies" than in familiar ones like their own (Florio-Ruane, 2001, p. 138). During the 6 months of the study, Florio-Ruane discovered that student teachers began to construct new understandings of culture and themselves as they engaged in discussions around autobiographies of immigrant experiences. Florio-Ruane's work illustrates how teacher candidates can learn and construct new understandings of themselves and others by reading literature and making personal connections to the lives of others.

The use of narrative cases in teacher education reflects teacher educators' and educational researchers' growing interest in narrative. Teacher educators have argued for the importance of personal narrative and its various forms (biography, autobiography, etc.) in teaching and in teacher education because from a critical perspective, personal narratives have been seen as "powerful instruments in either maintaining or transforming

teaching practice” (Carter & Doyle, 1996, p. 129). Laframboise and Griffith (1997) and Clark and Medina (2000) have demonstrated how narrative and case methodology can work together in teacher preparation. In a study conducted by Laframboise and Griffith (1997), researchers demonstrated how undergraduate students made meaning from instances of cultural conflict that were introduced through juvenile novels. As teacher candidates read narrative stories and shared their own stories, they were able “to view themselves as part of a culturally diverse society, confront their own subjectivity, and to examine critical issues related to children and schooling” (p. 369). In the same study, however, the researchers also presented examples of students making meaning from text in counterproductive ways. In one example, students were “either unable to identify the source of cultural discontinuity or made interpretations not substantiated by the text” (p. 380). In another example, some students interpreted episodes of cultural conflict using unexamined values and through a lens of an “American” way of doing things (p. 381).

These studies show the promise of narrative cases for assisting teacher candidates in confronting their views and assumptions about diverse learners; however, there are instances where ineffective uses of such cases need to be further investigated. Also, the majority of these studies have focused only on teacher candidates’ attitudes and beliefs, not the knowledge and skills needed to teach diverse students. The study that I conducted expands our understanding of the use of cases by investigating how they were used in a literacy methods course and looking at the ways teacher candidates responded to them. Designing a study around a methods course focused on preparing teacher candidates to teach diverse students presented a context where both the knowledge and beliefs of teacher candidates could be further explored.

Hypermedia video-based cases. Recently teacher educators have expanded the use of written cases and have turned to hypermedia video-based cases in order to help teacher candidates better understand the complexities of teaching. An example of a program that uses hypermedia video cases is the Reading Classroom Explorer (RCE). (See Appendix A for more information about RCE and cases used in this study.) RCE is a web-based hypermedia environment consisting of full-length videos and segments of videos of various elementary classrooms. The program provides teacher candidate with opportunities to view actual literacy instruction occurring in real classrooms. Currently, the program consists of video footage taped in 10 different schools and allows teacher candidates to search and view entire videos or clips of videos online. Users can search video clips by schools, themes, and keywords, post papers online, and participate in on-line discussion forums (Boling, in press).

Hypermedia video-based cases are believed by some to have an additional value over literature cases because they can present “vivid, concrete images of desirable instructional practices” that might help change the minds of novice teachers (Sykes, 1989). Merseth (1993) argued that hypermedia could serve as a “potent tool in dislodging preconceptions and in motivating change” (p. 294). Hughes, Packard, and Pearson (1999) suggested that there is an added value to being able to see and hear ambitious, reform-oriented teaching rather than just reading and discussing about it in the university classroom. In one study, for example, a teacher candidate was critical of using cooperative learning groups because her own experiences working in groups were negative (Boling, 2001). This teacher candidate believed that when students worked in groups, either groups were not productive or one person did all of the work. When

viewing productive cooperative learning approaches on RCE, however, she began to question her original views of group work and saw that there were indeed times when it was useful.

The random access capabilities of hypermedia video cases allow preservice teachers to quickly access and revisit multiple representations of teaching in ways not possible through traditional teaching cases and narrative literature cases. Research has shown that learning is enhanced when instruction involves multiple examples and encourages learners to reflect on the potential for transfer (Perkins, 1991). Spiro, Coulson, Feltovich, and Anderson (1988) argued that multiple representations of cases that allow for multiple dimensions of analysis could enhance a student's ability to apply new knowledge flexibly to other contexts.

Previous research on cases in teacher education has focused primarily on the influence of case-based instruction on reflective decision-making (Kagan & Tippins, 1992; Kleinfeld, 1992; Richardson, 1992; Sykes and Bird, 1992; Tippins et al., 1999). Within the past 10 years, however, a number of studies in the science and mathematics content areas have also examined the pedagogical knowledge that is acquired when case methods are used in teacher education (Lampert & Ball 1998; Tippins, Nichols, & Dana 1999). This study extends the research on written and hypermedia video cases by exploring how they are used to support teacher candidates who are learning to teach literacy. When describing cases, I depict them in ways that go beyond traditional teaching, literacy, and hypermedia cases. In the following chapters, I illustrate how cases are defined and described not only by the ways that they are represented to students but by the ways instructors and students interact with and use them. In addition to presenting

a more complex view of cases, this study extends our understanding of the different theories and perspectives on learning that support the use of cases in teacher education; the following section will present perspectives that were most relevant to the design of the study.

Ways of Learning and Knowing

Different perspectives on the ways people come to learn and know have influenced how I've conceptualized, designed, and analyzed this study. I was first introduced to the majority of these perspectives as I read literature reviews and research studies on learning to teach, teacher beliefs, and the use of cases in teacher education. When describing the education of teacher candidates, researchers have demonstrated the need for both *changing* and *building upon* teacher candidates' prior knowledge and beliefs. For example, Villegas and Lucas (2002) described the need to challenge and change teacher candidate's deficit views of children who are different from them racially, socially, and linguistically. In the introduction of the book *Educating Culturally Responsive Teachers*, they stated,

We see learning to teach as a process of conceptual change. To induce change in prospective teachers' thinking, teacher educators must first help them become aware of their own beliefs about the role of schools, the value of cultural diversity, and the nature of knowledge, teaching, and learning. (p. xix)

Villegas and Lucas (2002) emphasized the need to change teacher candidates' knowledge and beliefs while also confronting the knowledge and beliefs that teacher candidates already hold. However, there are others who describe the process of teacher

candidate learning by focusing less on the process of change and more upon the process of building *upon* prior knowledge and beliefs. For example, Florio-Ruane (2001) described how teacher candidates can transform their attitudes and beliefs about diverse groups of people by accessing their own ethnic identity, experiencing a process of self-discovery, and crafting new understandings of culture and diversity by studying “their own and other’s life narratives” (p. 11). When Florio-Ruane described how teacher candidates formed new understandings of culture, she focused more on the *discovery* and *construction* of self rather than on change. Indeed, preparing teacher candidates for teaching diverse students can involve building upon knowledge, constructing new knowledge, and changing knowledge and beliefs. However, I find it helpful to consider and revisit these two views because I have fallen victim to forming a deficit view of teacher candidates when I think of learning to teach as a process of conceptual change. By considering both perspectives, I have formed a more balanced perspective on learning to teach which has led me to consider alternative ways for describing how teacher candidates develop the knowledge, skills, and beliefs that are needed to support the teaching of diverse students.

Three perspectives on how people come to learn and know have guided this study and have helped me consider how new knowledge and beliefs are constructed, built upon, or changed. These perspectives are based on the process of conceptual change (Posner, Strike, Hewson, & Gertzog, 1982), cognitive flexibility theory (Spiro, Coulson, Feltovich, & Anderson, 1988), and narrative ways of knowing (Bruner, 1996). Underlying these three perspectives is a constructivist view of learning that emphasizes that we construct knowledge from our experiences, mental structures, and beliefs

(Jonassen, 1991). According to Harrington (1995), the case method is based on the constructivist conception that knowledge is “constructed, built on prior knowledge, coupled with experiences, transformable, evolving, and consequential and, thereby, provides students with insights into alternative solutions rather than ‘correct’ answers” (p. 203). In the final section of this chapter, I briefly describe the three perspectives and illustrate how they have guided and supported this study.

The process of conceptual change. The theory of conceptual change considers learning to be a process through which students’ conceptions change under the impact of new ideas and new evidence (Posner et al., 1982). It also regards learning as a kind of inquiry, with students making judgments on the basis of available evidence. According to conceptual change theory, if we want students to modify their strongly held beliefs, we must introduce new concepts and ideas in ways that create cognitive dissonance and are discrepant to the images and beliefs that novices already hold. They would also have to view their own existing conceptions with some dissatisfaction before seriously considering a new one (Posner et al., 1982). The theory of conceptual change has been identified primarily with studies that describe how children come to understand science concepts; however, I find it helpful to think about this process of conceptual change when thinking about the preparation of teachers.

Researchers have discussed and investigated learning to teach as a process of conceptual change (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Feiman-Nemser & Remillard, 1996; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). In one study, a group of teacher educators and researchers “jointly developed a conceptual change program in which student teachers were stimulated to explicate their beliefs, search for new knowledge, and enact what had been learned in

their practice teaching” (Tillema & Knol, 1997, p. 579). This conceptual change approach was then compared with a direct instructional approach that consisted of a presentation on the theories of teaching models followed by “the instructional steps involved in teaching according to each model” (p. 582). Instructors then gave assignments to match the instructional models that were covered in class. While conducting this study, Tillema and Knol (1997) discovered that contrary to what was expected, “the Conceptual change program did not result in higher levels of reflectivity” (p. 579). The researchers concluded that the conceptual change program can improve performance, but stated that “this will be only a superficial change as long as no concurrent belief change is reached” (p. 579).

A review of the literature on learning to teach indicated that teachers’ “existing knowledge and beliefs are critical in shaping what and how they learn from teacher education experiences” (Borko & Putnam, 1996, p. 674). The study conducted by Tillema and Knol (1997) revealed how difficult it can be to change teacher candidates’ prior beliefs and illustrated that one particular conceptual change program was incapable of producing such change. However, I still find that it is helpful to consider the process of conceptual change when thinking about the process of preparing teacher candidates to teach diverse learners. Studies have shown that reading literature cases, viewing hypermedia cases, and reflecting upon one’s experiences as a cultural being have shown some success in helping teacher candidates recognize and question some of their prior assumptions and beliefs about culture, teaching, and learning (Boling, 2001; Florio-Ruane, 2001; Laframboise & Griffith, 1997.) These studies indicate that reading and responding to literature cases could serve as a stimulus for conceptual change.

When considering the process of conceptual change, I see potential in using cases to present images of teaching and learning that contrast with the images that teacher candidates already hold. There is the possibility that when teacher candidates are confronted with alternative images of teaching and learning, they might begin to question and see weaknesses in their own ways of thinking. When selecting the kinds of cases to be used in this study, I considered the process of conceptual change. For example, since research has shown that teacher candidate's often view teaching as simple and transmissive, I selected hypermedia video cases that countered this view, presenting progressive, learner-centered teaching approaches (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1989; Feiman-Nemser, 1990; Hollingsworth, 1998). I also considered the process of conceptual change as I analyzed my data. For example, I paid close attention to instances when case activities seemed to produce tension and dissonance in the class. I also closely observed when teacher candidates began to recognize, question, and find fault in the ways that they viewed teaching, learning, or learners.

Cognitive flexibility theory. While conducting research on the education of medical students, Spiro Coulson, Feltovich, and Anderson (1988) used hypermedia video cases and developed a theory of cognitive flexibility that describes how people acquire the advanced knowledge needed when dealing with complex conceptual materials in ill-structured domains. According to this theory, learning to teach would be an example of an ill-structured domain because there are multiple ways to look at teaching children, and there are many different perspectives and approaches to dealing with dilemmas in the classroom. Spiro and his colleagues (1988) argued that advanced knowledge acquisition is "different in many important ways from introductory learning" and that the

characteristics of advanced learning “are often at odds with the goals and tactics of introductory instruction” (p. 375). They stated that the methods of education in introductory learning could lead to the “passive transmission of knowledge” and “rigid compartmentalization of knowledge components” (p. 377). They claimed that during the learning process, novices frequently make oversimplifications and develop an “overreliance on ‘top down’ processing” (p. 376).

Cognitive flexibility theory claims that if people are going to overcome the difficulties of acquiring the cognitive processes necessary for transferring knowledge flexibly in diverse contexts, instruction needs to help learners avoid oversimplification, provide multiple representations, and cover content material in different ways and at different times (Spiro et al., 1988). Spiro and his colleagues argued that hypermedia video-based cases have the potential to assist novices in acquiring this cognitive flexibility. They claimed that multiple representations of cases that allow for multiple dimensions of analysis could enhance a student’s ability to apply new knowledge flexibly. The technology of hypermedia cases allows preservice teachers to easily search, find, and revisit video clips of classroom instruction and allows them to quickly access multiple cases and multiple perspectives in order to make cross-case comparisons (Hughes et al., 1999). According to the theory of cognitive flexibility, novices “must attain a deeper understanding of content material, reason with it, and apply it flexibly in diverse contexts” if they are going to develop an advanced stage of learning (Spiro et al., 1988, p. 375).

The theory of cognitive flexibility has informed this study in a number of ways. First, it supported my decision to bring hypermedia video cases into the study. Second, it

made me consider how to design a study so that teacher candidates could most effectively use the cases. Third, it supported the analysis of the study when teacher candidates did not respond to hypermedia cases in ways that I had anticipated. For example, I designed the study so that teacher candidates would have opportunities to view and revisit hypermedia cases. I tried to select cases to present a variety of images of teaching and allow teacher candidates to make comparisons across cases. My intention was to help teacher candidates consider alternative ways of teaching that they might not have previously considered. When teacher candidates seemed to make inaccurate generalizations from the cases, I wondered if they had been given enough opportunities to view and revisit cases that presented multiple representations of teaching instruction. Turning to cognitive flexibility theory during this study has been helpful because little research has actually been conducted on using hypermedia cases to prepare teacher candidates for teaching diverse students. As I learned about the theory, I better understood some of the challenges that novices might face when engaged in hypermedia video case activities. Through this study I was able to gain insight into how hypermedia cases can be used to prepare teacher candidates to teach literacy to diverse students.

Narrative as a way of knowing. Educational scholars have written quite broadly about narrative, from its uses as a method of learning to its uses as a method of research. Narrative has been defined as both *phenomenon* and *method* and has been described as both a research methodology and a research methodological device (Carter & Doyle, 1996; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). Narrative has also been described as a *way of knowing*. Bruner (1996) described narrative as a “mode of thinking, as a structure for organizing our knowledge, and as a vehicle in the process of education” (p. 19). It is this

aspect of narrative as a way of knowing and mode of thought that has influenced the design of this study. Research has indicated that by having students read, write, view, and discuss various images of teaching through narratives, teacher educators can help preservice teachers surface and challenge the assumptions of teaching and learning they bring to their classrooms (Clark & Medina, 2000; Olson, 2000). For example, Clark and Medina (2000) discovered that reading and writing narratives could be “powerful tools fostering multicultural understanding and a more complex conception of literacy among preservice teachers” (p. 72). They stated, “Constructing narratives of past literacy events made them visible and available for examination and critical reflection” (p. 69). In their study, the researchers provided examples of how reading, writing, and responding to narrative stories “enabled preservice teachers to make connections between their personal narratives and other people’s narrative,” and helped disrupt their “stereotyped conceptions of *others*” (p. 73). Even though findings from this study appeared significant, Clark and Medina were tentative in making broad conclusions. They explained that their study only examined the experiences of three students and acknowledged that there is the potential for “literacy narratives to reify stereotyped conception of race, class, gender, sexuality, and ethnicity” (p. 73).

The rapidly expanding interest of educational researchers in narrative as forms of both inquiry and pedagogy has been directed especially to questions of how teachers understand and know their worlds (Carter & Doyle, 1996). Connelly and Clandinin (1990) stated that the study of narrative “is the study of the ways humans experience the world” (p. 2). Bruner (1996) has argued that humans organize and manage their knowledge of the world in two ways: a logical-scientific way of thinking and a narrative

way of thinking. According to Bruner, people frame their accounts of their cultural origins and their most cherished beliefs in story form, and it is through these narratives that we represent our lives to ourselves and to others. One of our principle means for understanding, interpreting, and contextualizing “essentially contestable, incompletely verifiable propositions in a disciplined way” is through narrative (Bruner, 1996, p. 90).

Bruner (1996) also claimed that in order to understand something well, people require “some awareness of the alternative meanings that can be attached to the matter under scrutiny, whether one agrees with them or not.” (p. 13). By reading and hearing others’ stories from alternative points of view, people can begin to “question and complicate their taken-for-granted beliefs and values” (Florio-Ruane, 2001, p. 77). For example, when members of the Future Teachers’ Autobiography Club read *Hunger for Memory* (1982), they learned about the life experiences of Richard Rodriguez. They read his criticisms of “the liberal educational establishment and its solutions to educational inequality” (Florio-Ruane, 2001, p. 76). Rodriguez’s educational experiences as a non-middle class, bilingual, male student differed greatly from club members who were reading his book. In *Teacher Education and the Cultural Imagination*, Florio-Ruane (2001) wrote that responding to Rodriguez’s book required members of the autobiography club to examine both Rodriguez’s and their own personal narratives about “going to school, learning language, and crafting a social identity” (p. 76). She explained that confronting difference in this way led the group to question and complicate “taken-for-granted beliefs and values” (p. 77).

Research has shown that the power of narrative goes beyond simply reading and responding to literature cases. The self-awareness and transformational experiences

described in Florio-Ruane's (2001) work made me consider how writing and reflecting about one's own life experiences can play a role in preparing teacher candidates for teaching diverse students. Reading about Bruner's (1996) views on narrative and learning about the experiences of members of the Future Teachers' Autobiography Club helped me think about the use of cases in new ways. I felt that perhaps cases could be used in more powerful ways if teacher candidates wrote about personal experiences and were encouraged to make connections between themselves and the cases that they were reading or viewing. My decision to use narrative cases in this study and my decision to investigate how teacher candidates' personal stories and experiences interact with their interpretation of cases has been largely influenced by work that supports narrative ways of knowing.

Moving Forward

Even though a number of studies have been conducted on the use of written cases in teacher preparation, most of these studies have "focused on the reasoning process rather than the pedagogical knowledge gained from case discussion" (Lundeberg & Sheurman, 1997, p. 784). Tippins, Nichols, and Dana (1999) have reported that the influence of case-based instruction on teacher education research has focused more on the process of "reflective decision-making" rather than on other areas of learning (p. 331). Recently there has been a focus on the use of hypermedia video cases in teacher preparation; however, none of these studies have focused on how hypermedia can be used to assist teacher candidates in acquiring or developing the knowledge and beliefs that support the teaching of diverse students. This study is significant because it combines

both written and hypermedia cases and investigates how cases can be used in preparing teacher candidates to teach literacy. This study is unique because it looks at how cases are used to prepare teacher candidates for working with diverse learners and investigates the ways in which teacher candidates respond to these cases.

This study reflects the difficulties and challenges of trying to integrate issues of diversity and inclusion into an introductory literacy methods course. It reflects the complexities of using cases to prepare teacher candidates to teach diverse students by mirroring the different shifts of focus that occurred during activities and discussions for the instructor and teacher candidates throughout the semester. For example, sometimes during the semester, class sessions focused on subject matter and instructional approaches for teaching literacy. Other times, class sessions and conversations focused on issues of diversity or inclusion, and the teaching of literacy did not always enter these conversations.

Even though this study was originally designed to investigate how teacher candidates responded to case activities, I present the following chapters in ways that reveal the changing shifts of focus that occurred throughout the semester. In order to understand how teacher candidates learned from cases, one must consider the various ways in which teacher candidates made meaning from and connections to different types of learning experiences. In order to follow the complex relationships among these learning experiences, the following chapters sometimes focus on issues of inclusion, diversity, and literacy instruction while the topic of cases remains in the background. However, in the final chapter, I revisit the relationship among these experiences and explain how investigating their role in preparing teacher candidates to teach diverse

students provides a better understanding of how cases can be used to support preservice teacher learning.

In addition to expanding upon case methodology, this study provides an opportunity to learn more about the role of narrative in teacher preparation. We know that reading, writing, and responding to narrative stories can encourage teacher candidates to reflect upon and challenge their own assumptions and beliefs (Clark & Medina, 2000; Florio-Ruane, 2001; Laframboise & Griffith, 1997; Olson, 2000). However, using narrative stories in teacher preparation

can confuse and frustrate novices, who lack the situated frames within which such stories are interpretable at all, who often presuppose that one learns best from clear and direct statements that are true, and who normally have well-developed conception of what it means to teach, conceptions that may or may not match the view represented in a particular story. (Carter, 1993, p. 10)

Carter (1993) and Connelly and Clandinin (1990) argued that there is still much that we do not know about the curricular issues that surround the use of narrative in teacher education. This study begins to investigate more closely the role that narrative has in teacher preparation and explores relationship between teacher candidates' personal, narrative stories and case activities.

What is missing from the literature is a deeper understanding of the variety of ways in which people respond to narrative and case activities and why they respond in the ways that they do. Much research still needs to be conducted on the ways that narrative and case activities can be used as a pedagogical approach for preparing literacy teachers. This study was designed to further our understanding of the ways in which teacher candidates respond to written and hypermedia cases in a literacy methods course. It investigates how narrative and case-based activities are used to prepare preservice

teachers for teaching literacy to diverse students. It also explores the ways in which teacher candidates' personal stories and experiences interact with both written and hypermedia cases.

The following chapters describe in detail how I designed and conducted research to investigate the ways in which teacher candidates responded to personal writing and case-based activities in a literacy methods course. These chapters illustrate various tensions that emerged when cases were used in the course. They also reflect how the focus of these tensions shifted across time. In Chapter 2, I introduce the context of the study and the methods used. I describe the research participants and how I designed opportunities to explore the ways in which they responded to narrative and case-based activities. In this chapter, I introduce how a team of teacher educators confronted the challenges of teaching content-based courses while also developing teacher candidates' awareness of what it means to teach diverse learners in inclusive learning communities. In this chapter, I also introduce how I analyzed data that were collected on teacher candidates in the course.

The findings of the study are covered in three different chapters. Chapters 3 and 4 present the findings that emerged from data that were collected from a group of five focus students in the literacy methods course. These chapters illustrate the tensions that emerged as the instructor of the course attempted to create a balanced curriculum that reflected both the teaching of subject matter knowledge and a program's commitment to developing students' awareness of issues related to diversity and inclusion. These chapters also reflect the tensions that emerged when teacher candidates' need for subject

matter knowledge conflicted with the instructional approaches that were introduced in the course and the course's focus on building inclusive learning communities.

In Chapter 5, I present findings from data that were collected on the entire class and compare these findings to what was learned from focus students. This chapter revisits some of the tensions that are introduced in Chapters 3 and 4 and illustrates how teacher candidates' responses shifted when cases were presented either visually or in writing. Finally, I end with Chapter 6 and enter a discussion about the significance of the study and the implications that it has on both research and teaching.

Chapter 2 Methodology and Analysis

This study was designed around a literacy methods course that was offered for teacher candidates at a public university in the Midwest. The design of the study was an ongoing process that began in summer 2002 and continued throughout fall 2002. For six months, I worked closely with the instructor of the course, Ms. Pratt³, as she planned for the semester, taught classes, and made adjustments to instruction. Ms. Pratt and I met three times before the semester began so that we could discuss her goals for the course, create a tentative syllabus, and begin thinking of ways to integrate personal writing and case activities into her lessons. I wanted activities to support Ms. Pratt's goals for the course while also providing opportunities to collect data to understand the ways in which teacher candidates responded to written and hypermedia case activities. Ms. Pratt's course provided an ideal setting for investigating my research questions. She regularly used personal writing activities and written cases in her classes, and her course was designed to prepare teacher candidates for teaching literacy to diverse students. Ms. Pratt was interested in learning more about hypermedia video cases and was eager to use them in her class. She was also willing to try new things in her course and was enthusiastic about the study.

The design of the study is closely aligned with the structure and content of Ms. Pratt's course. Ms. Pratt had a good idea of how she wanted to teach the course at the beginning of the semester; however, the specific details of how she taught lessons and conducted activities evolved over time. Throughout the semester, Ms. Pratt continually

³ Pseudonyms have been used for all participants in the study and for the university where the study was conducted.

assessed how students responded to activities and sometimes made adjustments in how she used personal writing and case activities. These adjustments impacted the design of the study and sometimes changed over time. Ms. Pratt taught the course and was a participant in the study. My role throughout the semester was as a researcher and participant observer. In addition to assisting Ms. Pratt in planning the course, I attended all class sessions, made observations, and sometimes engaged in conversations with the students when classes were taught. During the semester, Ms. Pratt and I met weekly to continue planning for the course. I used these planning sessions to collect data as she reflected upon how she was using cases and how students were responding to them.

In the following sections, I describe in detail the context and design of the study. I then introduce how I collected and analyzed the data from students who participated in Ms. Pratt's literacy methods course. It is important to understand the context of the teacher preparation program where Ms. Pratt worked because the program influenced my research questions and the content of the literacy course. Ms. Pratt and I were both doctoral students and worked collaboratively with a group of instructors who shared the common goal of integrating issues of diversity into our courses. We worked with a group of instructors and developed a team approach for preparing teacher candidates for working with diverse students. Prior to conducting this study, Ms. Pratt and I had worked together as colleagues and had taught the same methods courses. Understanding the context of the study and the goals of our literacy group helps to illustrate why Ms. Pratt's class was an ideal place for investigating my research questions. Understanding this context also illustrates why preparing teachers to teach diverse students is emphasized in ED 222 and in my research study. I have dedicated an entire section to describing the

context of the study because it influenced what was taught in ED 222 and what was learned from the study.

When describing the design of the study, I explain how participants were selected and describe the selection and use of personal writing and case activities. In the data collection and analysis section, I describe how I collected data on all of the teacher candidates in Ms. Pratt's class while also closely following the experiences of 5 teacher candidates. Data collected on the entire class consisted of field notes, students' written reflections, pre and post surveys, and self-assessments. For the 5 teacher candidates who I followed more closely, I also collected data from student interviews, dialogue journal entries, audio-recorded class discussions, philosophy statements, and student created lesson plans. I introduce how I collected and analyzed data in this chapter while providing more details in following chapters. I do this because data collection and analysis were ongoing and evolved throughout the semester and because focus student and class data were analyzed in different ways. A large part of the focus student data is in the form of narratives, and so I describe and analyze these narratives in more detail in Chapters 3 and 4. In Chapter 5, I present data that were collected and analyzed on the entire class.

Context of the Study

In the following sections, I situate this study within the context of a teacher preparation program. I also describe the context of the course in which the study was designed. Understanding how this research fits within the broader picture of a teacher preparation program is important because the use of cases and the emphasis on preparing

preservice teachers for teaching diverse students emerged from work that had already been taking place with a team of teacher educators with whom I worked. In this section, I describe what was already taking place within the teacher preparation program and explain how a team of course instructors came to share a common goal throughout their courses. I then describe how Ms. Pratt worked within a smaller group of literacy instructors and introduce the literacy course that was used for the study. Following this section, I explain the design of the course and introduce how data were collected and analyzed.

The Program

This study was designed to follow a group of preservice teachers who were enrolled in a 5-year teacher preparation program at Midwestern University (MWU). In this program, prospective teachers complete their bachelor's degree and much of their professional course work before participating in a yearlong internship working with a collaborating teacher (CT) in a public school classroom. Prospective teachers begin taking required courses for the program in their freshman year; however, they are not officially accepted into the program until the end of their sophomore year.

Prior to their acceptance into the program, prospective teachers at MWU take two education courses "that explore issues of diversity in relation to learners and to school as institutions" (Pardo, Rosaen, & Lantz, 2002). Upon acceptance into the program, they are required to take a course called Learners and Learning in Context. This course introduces students to their first field-based experiences where they spend at least two hours per week in a local elementary classroom. These classrooms are generally in schools that are

“urban, multi-racial and multi-ethnic, and lower socioeconomic status” (Pardo et al., 2002). In their senior year, teacher candidates begin taking content-specific methods courses that include a field placement component for each of the subject areas: literacy, math, science, and social studies. During their fifth year in the program, teacher candidates are placed in a classroom for the entire year and are mentored by their CT and university faculty. One day a week, except for the weeks when they are doing “solo” teaching, teacher candidates attend courses at the university. Even though their undergraduate coursework is completed during their senior year, teacher candidates in their internship year continue taking courses to receive graduate credit. This study followed students who were in their senior year as they were taking their first literacy methods course.

The Team

The teacher preparation program at MWU comprises of three elementary teams and one secondary team, each with faculty, graduate students, and collaborating teachers in partnership schools (Pardo et al., 2002). Upon entrance into the program in their sophomore year, teacher candidates are assigned to a team and usually remain with this team throughout the entire program. This allows students to progress through the program with a cohort or peers. Participants in this study were members of one of three elementary teams comprised of approximately 100 juniors, 100 seniors, and 90 interns.

Under the guidance of their team leader Dr. McMahon, the team associated with this study had been particularly dedicated to addressing issues of diversity throughout its teacher preparation courses. This focus was largely instigated by Dr. McMahon and her

team of instructors, including myself, as we recognized that interns' prior coursework related to issues of diversity and social justice were not necessarily adding up cumulatively and supporting their learning to become knowledgeable and skillful teachers who are prepared for working with diverse groups of students (Rosaen, in press). In an effort to weave issues of diversity and social justice more explicitly throughout our courses, our team investigated related issues and themes that had already been introduced to teacher candidates prior to entering the program. In the end, we identified and agreed upon three key concepts that would be integrated into each of our courses. These concepts were cultural capital, the hidden curriculum, and equity vs. equality.

Cultural capital. Schools have been known to reflect primarily the values of economically and culturally dominant groups in a society, supporting what Bourdieu (1977) has called “the *cultural capital* that students from such groups bring from home” (Nieto, 2002, p.60). Cultural capital is evident in such things as one's values, tastes, behaviors, and also in aspects of one's social background, language, dialect, and ethnicity (Bourdieu, 1977; Delpit, 1995; Nieto, 2002). Nieto (2002) described how experiences of children with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and those raised in poverty “tend to be quite different from the experiences of more economically and socially advantaged students,” and these differences “become evident when these children go to school” (pg. 8). Nieto (2002) stated that because our “predominantly white, female, monolingual teacher candidates” frequently have limited experiences with people from diverse backgrounds, teacher candidates frequently view diversity and difference “as a problem rather than an asset” (p.215). Research studies support this view, revealing that many teacher candidates view diversity as a deficit and develop low expectations for

minority students, students of color, and students who come from ethnically, linguistically, and socially diverse backgrounds (Gomez, 1996; Richardson et al., 1989).

Even though teacher candidates have been shown to have a deficit view of minority students and students of color (Gomez, 1996; Richardson et al., 1989), research has revealed how using children's "cultures, languages, and experiences in their education can lead to academic success" (Nieto, 2002, p. 60). Studies conducted both in the United States and overseas support these findings (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Moorfield, 1987; Nieto, 1996; Skutnabb-Kangas, 1988). One of the goals of our team has been to assist prospective teachers in viewing difference as "natural cultural and linguistic variability" rather than as a deficiency (Pardo et al., 2002). Another goal has been to provide prospective teachers with what Nieto (2002) described as "instructional and curricular strategies that encourage learning among a wide variety of students" (p. 42).

Hidden curriculum. Jackson (1990) stated that "in order to make their way satisfactorily through school, both teachers and students need to master two curriculums" (p. 34). The official curriculum, according to Jackson, is that which teachers "traditionally have paid the most attention" (p. 34). The hidden curriculum, however, is the unintended curriculum that emerges as a result of the ways schools operate and are organized. Hollins (1996) wrote about the hidden curriculum and defined it as "the subliminal transmission of the values, practices, and perceptions of the dominant culture that determine acceptable modes of communication, social interaction, ways of thinking and knowing, and ways of distributing power, status and resources" (p.85). These values, strategies, beliefs, and behaviors typically go untaught in schools; however, according to Jackson and others, they need to be mastered and internalized if students are going to

progress towards academic success (Jackson, 1990; Delpit, 1995). Our team of literacy instructors recognizes that if prospective teachers are going to support those students who do not have the cultural capital that is typically privileged in schools, teacher educators will have to help them in recognizing and understanding how the hidden curriculum operates in schooling.

Equity vs. equality. Much has been written about the inequality of the American school system and institutional discrimination (Delpit, 1995; Kozol, 1991; Viellegas & Lucas, 2002;). Inequities exist at various levels, from the funding that schools receive to the instructional approaches that are favored within classrooms (Delpit, 1995; Kozol, 1991). Nieto (2002) stated that knowledge is “neither neutral or apolitical, yet it is generally treated by teachers and schools as if it were” (p. 43). Every decision made at any level reflects a “particular view of learners and education” (Nieto, 2002, p. 43). Nieto (2002) stated that “traditional teacher-centered transmission models can limit the potential for critical thinking on the part of both teachers and students, but especially for students from dominated communities whose cultures and languages have been devalued by the dominant canon” (Nieto, 2002, p. 123). If teacher preparation programs are going to be successful at preparing prospective teachers for diverse classrooms, then they will have to discover ways to promote change in how many prospective teachers think and believe what students are capable of doing. They will also have to teach prospective teachers how to “select appropriate ways to make accommodations and adaptations for diverse learners that enhance, rather than diminish, the quality of their education” (Rosaen, in press).

The Literacy Instructors

Although our team instructors have been engaged in conversations about how to integrate concepts of cultural capital, hidden curriculum, and equity vs. equality into our courses, we have worked especially hard for the past two years sharing ideas on how to connect these issues with the content of our courses. One of the ways that our team has approached integrating these issues is by having students read and discuss written cases. Since I have been a member of this literacy team for over three years, I have engaged in these conversations and know how challenging it can be to integrate ideas of cultural capital, the hidden curriculum, and equity vs. equality into an already packed literacy methods course. My early attempts to use written cases in my literacy methods courses prompted questions about the effective uses of case-based activities in teacher education courses. These questions evolved into the ones that guided this study and were shared with Ms. Pratt and other literacy instructors.

Even though my research questions emerged from struggles I experienced in my own teaching, other instructors on my team were facing similar challenges. Since a number of us taught the same literacy methods course, I decided to approach another literacy instructor, Ms. Pratt, to see if she were interested in participating in my study. In the past, I had attempted to do research on my own teaching and found it to be challenging. I was constantly torn between the teacher and researcher roles, and felt that I could not put forth all of my effort into one or the other. I struggled with these two roles while teaching and felt that I could better investigate and be more dedicated to my research if I designed my study to take place in another instructor's class. Following students in another class would allow me to get to know students, observe class sessions,

conduct interviews, and collect data, which might not have been possible if I were teaching the same students and responsible for assigning their grades. When I shared my research questions with Ms. Pratt, she volunteered to participate in the study and was excited to work with me while planning her course.

Ms. Pratt has taught extensively at the elementary school level. She is also a published scholar who has experience teaching and mentoring students in MWU's teacher preparation program. Both Ms. Pratt and I had experience teaching the same literacy methods course, ED 222. Ms. Pratt had taught the course one time, whereas I had taught it three. Ms. Pratt and I agreed that we could both benefit from designing a study around her course. She would benefit from my prior experiences teaching ED 222, and planning together would assist her in developing new ideas for the course. She would also benefit because she was interested in learning about a hypermedia program that I had used in ED 222 classes. I, on the other hand, would benefit from working with Ms. Pratt because I could investigate my research questions in ways that might not have been possible if I were studying my own practice. We would be able to plan ways to integrate personal writing and case-based activities into her course so that I could collect data that answered my research questions and ultimately provide information to Ms. Pratt that would support her own teaching practice.

The Course

ED 222, Teaching Literacy to Diverse Learners, is the first of two required literacy methods courses for undergraduate students in MWU's teacher preparation program. Typically, prospective teachers take ED 222 in the fall of their senior year and their

second literacy course in the spring of their internship year. ED 222 provides prospective teachers with the fundamental knowledge, skills, strategies, and dispositions necessary to become a language arts teacher within an inclusive learning community. Since ED 222 provides students with their first exposure to teaching literacy in elementary schools, it's designed as a survey course to introduce students to a variety of literacy concepts and instructional strategies and to introduce students to literacy issues that will be covered in more depth during their internship year of teaching. During one of our interviews, Ms. Pratt described her course as an "overview of general literacy topics." In ED 222, teacher candidates are introduced to a balanced approach to teaching literacy that includes both skills-based and holistic, literature-based approaches. Spiegel (1998) explained that a balanced approach "is built on research, views the teacher as an informed decision maker who develops a flexible program, and is constructed around a comprehensive view of literacy" (p. 117).

When this study was conducted, our team offered four sections of ED 222, with instructors in each section using the same textbook and covering the same core concepts. However, each instructor had her own individual approaches to introducing literacy topics and integrating issues of cultural capital, hidden curriculum, and equity vs. equality throughout their class. Before planning the course, Ms. Pratt and I discussed what she had done with it the previous year. She explained that she had used written case but not hypermedia video cases with her students. She had also covered the concepts of cultural capital, hidden curriculum, and equity vs. equality in the course, but felt that she had taught in a way in which students learned the definitions of the concepts without grasping their true meanings. During her participation in this study, Ms. Pratt decided that

she wanted to approach these issues differently and weave them better into the course throughout the entire semester without necessarily defining and labeling them.

In order to better integrate the concepts of cultural capital, the hidden curriculum, and equity vs. equality into their courses, Ms. Pratt and the team of literacy instructors developed an overarching theme for ED 222 that focused on what it means to build an inclusive learning community. Even though many educators use the term *inclusion* to “describe the education of students with disabilities in general education setting” (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2000), Ms. Pratt and the other literacy instructors defined the term more broadly. Ms. Pratt used the term in her course to discuss the inclusive education of *all* students, “including those at the margins, who are at risk of school failure” (Wade, 2000, p.32). She designed her course around the theme of building inclusive learning communities because she wanted students to develop an awareness of the different ways children can be marginalized or excluded from learning opportunities. She hoped that teacher candidates would develop a more critical view towards their teaching practices and instructional choices if they developed such awareness. In the ED 222 syllabus, Ms. Pratt wrote that she wanted students to develop an understanding where difference is treated not as a deficiency, but as a “natural cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic and racial variability and as the inevitable range of abilities that one expects in today’s classrooms.” This focus, along with the emphasis placed on inclusive learning communities, supported the team’s goals for integrating issues of cultural capital, the hidden curriculum, and equity vs. equality in courses and for creating culturally responsive teachers⁴.

⁴ Culturally responsive teachers, as defined by Villegas and Lucas (2002), have “sociocultural consciousness,” “affirming views of students from diverse backgrounds,” and a “sense that they are both

When Ms. Pratt shared a draft of her syllabus with me, I asked her to tell me more about what she meant by developing an inclusive community and how she would approach this topic with her students. She explained that she wanted to help her students examine what it meant to develop an inclusive learning community. She wanted to help them think about how to create such communities by having them examine themselves as learners, teachers, and as a literate and cultural beings. During a conversation before the semester began, she explained that she believed students should come to terms with who they are as a literate person before teaching. She explained, “Who they are as a literate person influences who they are going to be as a teacher, and the stance they take will undoubtedly be related to the experiences that they’ve had.” Ms. Pratt wanted to help her students develop their own stance towards literacy instruction and to examine themselves, understanding what drives their instructional decisions in literacy classrooms. In order to support these goals for her class, she decided to structure her course strategically so that students would spend the first three weeks reflecting on what it meant to be a literate person, writing and discussing their beliefs about literacy instruction, and attempting to identify how their personal experiences impacted their beliefs about teaching and learning. Ms. Pratt wanted students to understand how personal experiences could impact who they are as teachers while also developing a stance towards literacy that is grounded in one or more theories of learning.

Ms. Pratt hoped that by spending time at the beginning of the semester talking about students’ conceptualizations of literacy and discussing how one’s personal

responsible for and capable of brining about educational change that will make schooling more responsive to students from diverse backgrounds.” They also “embrace constructivist views of teaching and learning,” “are familiar with their students’ prior knowledge and beliefs,” and design instruction “that builds on what students already know while stretching them beyond their limits” (p.xiv).

experiences and beliefs impact these conceptualizations, teacher candidates would use these understandings as a lens to examine and critique the various literacy practices that they were going to be studying throughout the semester. Ms. Pratt planned to spend the first two weeks of the course on these issues before introducing students to more content-based literacy issues. All of the instructors teaching ED 222 also covered the following: emergent literacy practices, the teaching of reading comprehension strategies, and ways to organize literacy instruction. Students enrolled in ED 222 met for three hours once a week on campus while spending an additional four hours in local elementary classrooms. Two of these hours were dedicated specifically to literacy-related observations and activities. Teacher candidates in Ms. Pratt's class were also expected to plan and teach at least one literacy lesson to students in their field classrooms.

Before Ms. Pratt and I met to decide upon the personal writing and case-based activities that she would integrate into her course, Ms. Pratt had already planned course assignments that were consistent with those traditionally covered in ED 222. All teacher candidates, in each section of ED 222, used the textbook *Literacy for the 21st Century* (Tompkins, 2003) and participated in book clubs⁵ using *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*, a young adult novel written by Mildred Taylor (1991). Teacher candidates in Ms. Pratt's class were also expected to develop and create a philosophy statement by the end of the semester. For their philosophy statement, students were expected to develop and write their personal philosophy of how teachers can support children in learning to read and write. Ms. Pratt had her students work on the statement in and out of class, both

⁵ The Book Club program is an instructional program based on sociocultural theory that "guides thematically organized literature-based instruction in reading, writing, and oral language" (McMahon, et al., 1997, p.5). In Ms. Pratt's class, students read *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* over a number of weeks, engaged in various written activities around the book, and met in small groups to discuss their responses to the reading.

individually and with their peers. She also designed a portfolio project where students collected and reflected upon their work throughout the semester. This portfolio assignment was based on a notebook project that Ms. Pratt had used with previous ED 222 students; however, she made some minor modifications to the assignment after I shared how I had used portfolios in my own teaching.

In addition to these course-related assignments, Ms. Pratt designed a project that was centered on teacher candidates' field placements. This case study assignment had also been used in her previous ED 222 course. The purpose of this assignment was to encourage teacher candidates to take a close look at one elementary student's literacy development over time. Teacher candidates selected a student in their field placement classrooms and closely observed how this child engaged in learning to read and write. Teacher candidates were expected to be involved with their case student in a variety of ways in the classroom, document their involvement with the child, and present what they learned about their case student by writing a paper and giving a class presentation at the end of the semester.

Much of what Ms. Pratt planned to do in her course corresponded with what she had taught and learned from her previous year teaching ED 222. However, my own teaching experiences and the design of the research study influenced her use of personal writing activities, written cases, and hypermedia video-based cases. In the following section, I introduce the design of the study and explain how Ms. Pratt and I developed activities that allowed me to investigate teacher candidates' responses to written and hypermedia cases.

Designing the Study

I describe the design of the study by beginning with the summer planning sessions that occurred before the semester began. Next, I explain how I selected 5 focus students for the study and briefly introduce them. Finally, I end this section by explaining how Ms. Pratt and I selected cases and designed activities so that I could collect data as teacher candidates read, viewed, and responded to written and hypermedia cases. I begin with our summer planning sessions because this was the time when I developed the overall framework for the study. By talking with Ms. Pratt about her goals and plans for the class, I saw how I could collect data from the natural artifacts that were produced in class. Before speaking with Ms. Pratt, I knew that I wanted opportunities to capture teacher candidates' thoughts before, during, and after case activities. However, I did not know what exactly this data would be. Meeting with Ms. Pratt before the semester influenced how I designed the study because I saw how her regular class assignments and activities could serve as data sources. During summer planning, Ms. Pratt and I discussed the kinds of cases that she would use with her students; however, specific cases were not decided upon until later in the semester. I separate the section on summer planning from the section that describes the personal writing and case activities because the ways in which cases were used for the study were influenced by summer planning sessions but did not become finalized until after the semester had already begun.

Summer Planning

Ms. Pratt and I met three times over the summer as she planned ED 222. Since she had previously taught the course, she had some definite ideas about what worked

well, what would remain the same, and what she wanted to change. Since I was designing my study around her course, it was important to learn about the kinds of things that she would be doing with her students. The kinds of assignments and activities that she used in her class would determine how I would gain access to information that would answer my research questions. I accomplished a number of things by meeting with Ms. Pratt over the summer. First, I interviewed her so that I could understand her overall goals for the course and learn about the kinds of activities that she planned to use throughout the semester. Second, I learned how she had previously used written cases in her course, discovered that she thought she could have done a better job using written cases, and suggested ways for using cases while participating in the study. Third, I introduced Ms. Pratt to the hypermedia video-based program Reading Classroom Explorer (RCE)⁶ and shared ideas for how it might be used in her class. Fourth, I assisted Ms. Pratt as she began designing the course so that her course activities would allow me to collect various data on students as they engaged in personal writing and case activities. Ms. Pratt and I designed a couple of personal writing assignments, or narrative writings, at the beginning of the semester so that teacher candidates could reflect upon their literate lives, begin to express their stance towards literacy instruction, and describe the kinds of schools where they envisioned themselves teaching. Ms. Pratt and I decided that the remaining personal writing activities would be connected more directly to case-based activities.

In our first planning session, Ms. Pratt and I spoke at length about the ways she had used written cases in her previous ED 222 course. We revisited some of the cases she had used and decided to search for more cases before making a final decision on which ones to use. We agreed that we wanted cases that could contribute to discussions on

⁶ See Chapter 1 and Appendix A for further information on RCE.

building inclusive learning communities in elementary classrooms. We also wanted cases that would support discussions about diverse learners and the pedagogical approaches that promote inclusive learning environments. We had an idea about what kinds of cases we wanted but struggled to find ones that seemed to be a perfect match for the content and goals of her course. In the end, we did not decide upon the specific cases that would be used until after the semester had already begun.

Ms. Pratt and I agreed that she would offer students a variety of ways to respond to cases so that I could try to capture their thoughts and reactions to various case activities. We decided that students would have opportunities to respond in writing, through small and large group conversations, and through Internet conversations. We also decided that if students wrote to each other using dialogue journals, we might be able to capture thoughts and feelings that they were hesitant to share with the entire class. Dialogue journals are conversations carried out by two people where one partner initiates a journal conversation and the other partner responds. In Ms. Pratt's class, dialogue journals allowed students an open space to discuss issues on literacy instruction. I explained to Ms. Pratt that when I used dialogue journals in previous courses, students would keep the same journal partner throughout the semester. This allowed friendships to form and sometimes prompted open and honest dialogues.

During summer planning sessions, Ms. Pratt and I discussed some of the projects that might be required for ED 222 students. Ms. Pratt decided to have students create a portfolio where they would collect and organize all the ED 222 work that they felt was important to their learning. During the middle and end of the semester, students would revisit the work in their portfolios, reflect upon its contents, think about their growth and

learning, and write a self-assessment on their learning. This portfolio assignment and self-assessment activity provided another space where teacher candidates could respond to written and hypermedia case activities.

Ms. Pratt and I also discussed how RCE might be used in her course. Six out of 10 videos shown on RCE come from a video series that were created by the Center for the Study of Reading. Ms. Pratt was familiar with these 6 videos; however, she was not familiar with other aspects of the RCE program and how it divided videos into shorter clips. Because Ms. Pratt needed time to become familiar with the program and its contents, we did not decide upon how it would be used until later in the semester. I did, however, provide Ms. Pratt with examples of how I had used RCE in my own courses. I explained that I felt it would be beneficial if students were introduced to RCE by viewing one of its 40-minute video cases in its entirety. Based on previous work that I had done with RCE and on comments that my own students had made about using the program, I found that showing an entire video could give students more of a context for viewing individual clips and would provide structure for them as they began learning how to use the various search functions (Boling & Roehler, 2002).

I explained to Ms. Pratt that sometimes my students felt overwhelmed with the search functions and clips when they had no prior knowledge of the videos that were available through the RCE program. Having background knowledge of one or two videos seemed to alleviate some of these feelings. This knowledge also helped RCE users have a better idea of what is available through the program. After telling Ms. Pratt about my RCE experiences, I suggested that she consider showing two particular videos, one filmed in Harlem and one in San Antonio. I suggested that these videos supported both

my research questions and her goals for the course because they featured African American and Hispanic children excelling in an academic environment. I explained that these videos might counter the views that some teacher candidates might have of minority students.

Ms. Pratt did not want to finalize any of the course assignments and activities until after meeting her students and seeing what their needs and interests were. During the summer, we designed a survey⁷ that students would take at the beginning of the semester so Ms. Pratt and I would have an idea of the knowledge and beliefs that they already held about teaching diverse learners. (See Appendix B for an example of the pre survey.) We also designed some open-ended questions in the survey so that I could use the information to help select focus students for my study. We decided that we would give the students a post survey at the end of the semester to see how their responses did or did not change after 15 weeks of classes. (See Appendix C for an example of the post survey.) Ms. Pratt used the surveys to informally assess students, and I used them as data sources for my study.

Pre and post surveys were designed to collect information about teacher candidates' prior experiences with diverse populations, their general expectations for diverse students, their knowledge and beliefs about creating an inclusive learning community, and their ability to plan literacy instruction for diverse groups of students. As we designed survey questions, Ms. Pratt and I considered the stance that she wanted teacher candidates to have in relation to issues of cultural capital, the hidden curriculum, and equity vs. equality. We designed the questions to discover such things as whether

⁷ A few of the statements in the survey were modified from a survey that appeared in an American Educational Research Journal article titled, "*Measuring Educators' Beliefs About Diversity in Personal and Professional Contexts*" (Pohan & Aguilar, 2001).

teacher candidates valued the languages that ESL students bring to classrooms and if they felt it was important for ESL children to maintain their first language. On the survey, teacher candidates described experiences they had with diverse groups of people and working with or teaching children. They also wrote responses to classroom scenarios that asked how they would provide literacy instruction to diverse groups of children.

Selecting Participants

During the first couple weeks of ED 222, I made general observations of the class and took notes during Ms. Pratt's lessons. I wanted to eventually select a small group of students to follow throughout the semester so that I could closely observe and document their experiences engaging in case activities. I wanted this to be a diverse group of students, so in the early weeks of the semester I paid close attention to students who spoke frequently, never spoke, seemed confused, or asked thoughtful and reflective questions. I tried to get a sense of the dynamics in the classroom and noticed who appeared to be friends with whom. I observed Ms. Pratt's instruction and the ways she interacted with students. I wanted to document these early interactions because I wondered if they might vary when Ms. Pratt used cases in the class.

During the fourth week of class, I provided students with information about the study and passed out consent forms. Ms. Pratt left the room at this time so that she would not know who agreed to participate and so that students would feel more comfortable expressing their level of interest and involvement in the study. Students were able to decide upon three levels of involvement. First, teacher candidates could choose to be most involved in the study by allowing me to observe and audio-record their interactions

in class, take written notes on these observations, and collect, photocopy, and analyze all of their coursework. Students who agreed to this level of participation would also take part in one to three interviews throughout the semester. Second, teacher candidates could give consent to participate in the same ways as the first group but choose to not participate in any interviews. Third, teacher candidates could decline to participate in the study. My intention was to gather data on as many students as possible and then select a small group of focus students to study more closely throughout the semester.

Ms. Pratt's class consisted of 25 teacher candidates who were enrolled in MWU's special education, elementary education, and child development programs. Even though our team consisted of those who were enrolled in the elementary education and child development programs, special education students could also take Ms. Pratt's course. All 25 teacher candidates gave consent to participate in the study and 15 out of 25 agreed to participate in interviews. All of the students were female. Twenty-four of the students were Caucasian, and one was African American. The African American student did not give consent to be interviewed.

Since I wanted the group of focus students to reflect the kinds of students that would best represent those found in elementary preservice teacher education programs, I chose to interview and select focus students who were elementary and child development majors and not special education majors. Since I wanted to follow focus students more closely throughout the semester, it was important that they agreed to participate in interviews. I decided to interview as many elementary and child development students as I could before deciding upon a smaller group that would be followed more closely and interviewed a second time. Three of the students who agreed to be interviewed were

special education majors, so I immediately eliminated them from my set of interviews. That left me with 12 students. I contacted these 12 by e-mail requesting interviews. Eleven responded to my request and were interviewed during the fifth and sixth week of the semester.

In order to better understand the different ways that teacher candidates might respond to written and hypermedia-based cases, I wanted to select focus students who had a range of experiences with people who were different from themselves and who represented a range of viewpoints about diverse learners. For example, I wanted focus students who both did and did not have a range of experiences with diverse groups of people. I also wanted focus students who varied in personality and academic ability. I wanted my focus group of students to include both academically strong and weak students and students who were outgoing and actively engaged in class and who appeared to be less outspoken and less engaged.

During the fifth and sixth weeks of class, I carefully reviewed all of the information that I had acquired on those students who participated in the first set of interviews. At the end of week 6, I used the information that I had obtained through class observations, student work, pre-survey responses, interviews, and Ms. Pratt's comments to decide upon 5 focus students. Some of the focus students were outspoken in class while others were more reserved and quiet. Some appeared to put forth a lot of thought and effort into their work while others turned in work that lacked detail and descriptions. One focus student had traveled overseas and had a diverse range of international experiences. Others had traveled throughout the United States or had little contact with people from diverse cultures and backgrounds. Overall, the students in the class were

from the Midwest and had limited experiences with people from diverse backgrounds. When asked how this group compared to other ED 222 classes, Ms. Pratt said that they were not as strong as the class from the previous year.

Ms. Pratt introduced book clubs to her students after I had selected focus students. While working in book clubs, teacher candidates would do various activities in fixed groups throughout the semester. Ms. Pratt and I met to discuss who we thought should or should not work together because we wanted groups to represent diverse perspectives. After our conversation, Ms. Pratt let me form the groups. I grouped students in different ways, sharing the makeup of the groups with Ms. Pratt so that I could see what she thought about the groupings. In the end, I used her feedback to form book club groups while still keeping the 5 focus students together. Forming the groups in this way allowed me put all of the focus students in the same groups without Ms. Pratt knowing whom I was following. All class sessions were tape-recorded. However, once book club groups were started, I began using multiple tape-recorders throughout the classroom. This made it possible to record small groups without drawing attention to the focus students. Even though I moved around the room during my observations, I made a point to be near focus students when they engaged in activities that were related to reading, viewing, and responding to cases. This allowed me to not only hear what they were saying about the cases but also observe their actions and facial gestures as they engaged in discussion. I made notes any time their expressions and body gestures seemed to conflict with their comments. I continued to collect data on all the students throughout the semester but gave more focused attention to the data that were collected on the 5 focus students. This allowed me to get to know these students better than others in the class.

Introduction to Focus Students

In this section, I briefly introduce each of the 5 focus students based on information that I gained during the first few weeks of the semester. These students will be described in much more detail in following chapters. Chapters 3 and 4 present the findings of my focus student data and illustrate how some of my initial thoughts about these students began to change. Chapter 5 presents the findings of the data that was collected on the entire ED 222 class.

Lydia. I knew very quickly that I wanted Lydia to be one of my focus students. Lydia was one of those students you can't ignore. In class she was always full of personality, quick thinking and witty. She was one who always spoke her mind and never seemed afraid to share her opinions, even if nobody else agreed with her. Many of Lydia's comments and questions in class were thoughtful and insightful. She appeared outgoing, knowledgeable, thoughtful, and reflective. As an elementary student, she had been exposed to both traditional and progressive literacy instructional approaches. Because of this, Lydia began the semester having more knowledge than most about what it means to have a balanced approach to literacy instruction. She had also done some extensive traveling throughout the United States and had experienced working diverse groups of people in a factory. In one of her assignments, Lydia wrote that diversity was important to her. She wrote that she wanted to work in a midsized community that had a variety of socioeconomic levels and mixed ethnicities. She also stated that she was not interested in working in the inner city or in a very small town.

Mallory. Mallory was another student I knew I wanted to follow. Mallory, like Lydia, had an outgoing personality and was always actively engaged in class discussions.

She stood out from the others, however, because she had spent time abroad in both Spain and Italy. Mallory had a minor in Spanish and said that she wanted to teach in a bilingual school in a big city. Even though Mallory had a variety of experiences with diverse groups of people, however, she alluded to biases towards difference that were not as apparent with other students. For example, during our first interview, Mallory spoke about friends and acquaintances who came from working class families. She described at length about how she had changed her negative views about these people after getting to know them. She described how she now respected them and didn't judge them like she had in the past. During our interview, however, I was not convinced that Mallory had completely changed her views. Her facial expressions, rolling of the eyes, tone of voice, and body gestures seemed to counter some of the things she was saying. At other times throughout the semester, Mallory seemed to contradict herself, making me want to better understand what was really going on in her mind. I was also interested in Mallory because she spoke frequently about her preference for phonics-based literacy instruction, appearing less knowledgeable of progressive literacy instruction than Lydia. By selecting Mallory and Lydia, I had 2 focus students who seemed to favor different instructional approaches and had different background knowledge about literacy instruction.

Jackie. During the first few weeks of classes, Jackie, unlike Lydia and Mallory, did not stand out in class. Jackie was quiet, rarely shared during whole group discussions, and her written work appeared to be average. Her initial journal entries, however, revealed that she was actively engaged with the issues being presented in class. For example, in one of the first classes, Ms. Pratt had discussed how the instructional decisions a teacher makes could have both a positive and negative impact on students.

She gave various examples to show how teachers might unknowingly marginalize individuals in class when they make instructional decisions. She then gave teacher candidates an article that described the practice of an elementary teacher and asked the class who gained and who lost from the instructional choices that the teacher made. Jackie extended the conversation of who gains and who loses into her dialogue journal throughout the next couple of weeks, writing about how she had never previously asked herself these questions prior to ED 222. Jackie initiated a written dialogue with her partner on this topic, and her journal entries revealed a thoughtfulness and reflectiveness that were not usually shared during whole class discussions. Jackie, like most of the students in the class, had limited experiences with people from different backgrounds and cultures. She grew up in a small Michigan town that consisted of mostly white, middle class families. When Jackie described her k-12 schooling experiences, she described teaching approaches that seemed progressive and that did not follow the traditional, teacher-led models. As she began to describe her involvement in her school's talented and gifted programs, I began to think that she was an academically stronger student than I had originally thought.

Lizz. As I began thinking about the selection of focus students during the third and fourth weeks of class, I realized that the more vocal, outgoing, and academically stronger students were getting more of my attention than the quieter, less academically strong students. During the next two class sessions, I made a point to sit next to and get to know some of the students with whom I was less familiar. It was during this time that I started to notice Lizz. Lizz shared ideas in class, but was not as vocal as Mallory or Lydia. On her pre-survey, she explained that coming to MSU provided the most experience that she

had with diverse groups of people. In an interview, she told me that for most of her life she had grown up with people who were like herself. When describing her ideal classroom, Lizz said she wanted a “mix of gender and learning abilities.” However, she did not mention any other kinds of diversity. Much of Lizz’s written work in class was less detailed than work produced by Lydia and Mallory, and her dialogue journal didn’t reveal the same kind of wrestling with issues that Jackie had shared. During our first interview, Lizz seemed to be struggling with the instructional approaches that were being introduced in ED 222 and explained how they were totally different from what she had experienced as an elementary student. She commented that learning about these new approaches was hard. Even though Lizz always appeared to be attentive in class, did her work, and seemed thoughtful about the issues that were being introduced, she admitted that she was struggling a bit with the literacy concepts that were being introduced to her for the first time.

Sadie. By the fourth week of class, I was pretty sure that Sadie would *not* be one of my focus students. Since I wanted to understand how teacher candidates responded to written and hypermedia cases, I felt they had to be *engaged* in the activities. Early in the semester, I had not considered that *non-engagement* could represent a form of engagement. Even though she shared comments and ideas in class, Sadie gave me the impression that she was not putting forth effort. Because of this, I was quick to exclude her from the study. For example, in one assignment students were asked to reflect upon their literate experiences growing up and write about these experiences. Sadie’s response was five sentences long. Her first sentence stated, “I don’t remember how I learned to read and write.” The rest of her sentences did not reveal much more about her prior

experiences. Sadie's other work in the course seemed to follow the same pattern. Her written work was usually short, lacking detail and explanation, and appeared to have been written in a matter of minutes.

It was hard to determine how knowledgeable Sadie was about literacy instruction because her work did not reveal much. Sadie's interview, however, was quite revealing. She explained how she grew up with an unpleasant childhood and did not like to think about it. She said that she grew up in an environment where family and friends were not expected to go to college. She admitted that she got "mixed up" with the wrong group of kids while in school, but she began heading in a new direction when she realized that she wanted to be a teacher. Sadie's interview comments made me think about her short reflective writing assignments in a new way. I began to question some of the earlier assumptions that I had made about her and her lack of effort. I wasn't sure how much I would learn from her as a focus student and continued to wonder how invested she was in the course. However, she seemed to come from a different background from most in the class, and her coursework revealed that there was room for her to grow in a number of ways.

The Use of Personal Writings and Cases

Some have argued that teacher candidates need to be exposed to a variety of perspectives and ways of thinking in order to help them become more critical of their own knowledge and beliefs (Clark & Medina, 2000; Laframboise & Griffith, 1997). Studies have shown that teacher educators can help create opportunities for this kind of self-critique by having students become involved in reading, writing, and sharing

narrative stories (Clark & Medina, 2000; Olson, 2000). Some studies have combined the telling and sharing of narrative stories with the reading of narrative literature cases (Clark & Medina, 2000; Laframboise & Griffith, 1997;). Other studies have shown how videos and hypermedia video cases can similarly challenge preservice teachers' knowledge and beliefs about teaching and learning (Boling, 2001; Boling & Roehler, 2002; CTGV, 1990; Hughes, 1999). This study was designed so that the teacher candidates in ED 222 would have opportunities to read, view, and respond to written and hypermedia video-cases and to write about personal experiences. In this section, I introduce the personal writing assignments and case-based activities that Ms. Pratt used throughout the semester. After the semester began, Ms. Pratt and I continued our weekly planning sessions to reflect on how classes were going and to plan activities around the reading and viewing of cases. In the following section, I will describe the specific data sources that were collected throughout the semester and introduce how data were analyzed. Since data on focus students and the class were analyzed a variety of ways, I'll provide more information on the analysis in the chapters that present focus student and class findings.

Reading Narrative Cases

In previous semesters, both Ms. Pratt and I had used written cases in our literacy methods courses to promote discussions on inclusive learning communities and teaching diverse students. Ms. Pratt felt that case-based activities had been helpful for her students, but she also believed that she could do a better job of integrating them into her course and revisiting them throughout the semester. In her previous ED 222, she described how students read and discussed a number of cases, but cases started to blur together, making

it difficult to remember what was discussed with each one. Ms. Pratt felt that it would be better to cover fewer cases while doing more with them.

I had used written cases in my classes in hope they would help students recognize how important it is to think about issues that surround the teaching of diverse students. I struggled with case-based activities because it seemed that teacher candidates were giving socially acceptable responses to each case without necessarily owning and embracing the ideas themselves. My frustrations with students' "generic" responses encouraged me to think about how instructors might encourage students to make personal connections to the issues and stories that are presented in written cases. I felt that having students tell, reflect upon, and make connections between their own personal experiences and the cases that they were reading might help more students take ownership for the issues at hand. Studies that have focused on the use of narratives and literature cases have revealed how the reading and writing of narratives can encourage teacher candidates to make personal and emotional connections to written stories (Florio-Ruane, 2001; Laframboise & Griffith, 1997). I felt that helping teacher candidates make these personal connections might help them take ownership and develop a proactive and passionate stance towards the teaching of diverse students. Before Ms. Pratt and I could even begin to discuss the role that personal narrative stories might have in ED 222, however, we felt that we first needed to decide upon the written cases that students would be reading. In the end, we decided upon three cases, two that Ms. Pratt had used the previous year and one that I discovered in a book titled *Educating for Democracy: Case-Method Teaching and Learning* (McNergney, Ducharme, & Ducharme, 1999). (See Appendix A for more information on these cases.)

In the article, *What is a Case? What is Not a Case?*, Carter (1999) described four categories of cases that have been used in teacher education: (a) case as exemplar, (b) case as problem situation, (c) case as story, and (d) case as narrative. Carter stated that each of the meanings for these categories highlights a “different aspect of professional preparation and, thus, a different facet of the case idea” (p. 166). Carter stated that since the same case might be used in a variety of ways, it might fall under more than one category. Even though Ms. Pratt and I did not consciously select cases so that they would fit the various meanings that Carter described, the cases that Ms. Pratt used in ED 222 did fit under some categories more than others. In an effort to help illustrate how the cases were used in ED 222, I will introduce them in relation to these four categories and will describe how they were used in class.

Lourdes’ case. The first written case that Ms. Pratt introduced to her students, *Peace Takes Practice*, described a kindergarten teacher, Lourdes, and her struggles to teach a diverse group of children. Lourdes’ case, as teacher candidates called it, can be described as a case as story. A case presented as a story can be used as a way to grasp the “richness and indeterminacy of our experiences as teachers and the complexity of our understanding of what teaching is” (Carter, 1999, p. 171). Such cases can be used to help one understand how others can be prepared to engage in the teaching profession. At a basic level, cases as stories have “events, characters, and settings arranged in temporal sequence implying both causality and significance” (Carter, 1999, p. 170). These cases carry information about how things work and what meaning events have (Carter, 1999). *Peace Takes Practice* described the teaching challenges that Lourdes faced while teaching a group of children that came from mostly low-income Haitian and African

families. The case described how many of the students in Lourdes' class had started school "having already learned that the world is an uncertain and often hostile place" (Teaching Tolerance Project [TTP], 1997, p.144). When children encountered disagreements in Lourdes' class, they frequently resorted to violence to settle their disputes. The case described a turning point in Lourdes' teaching when she realized that if she kept getting upset, focusing on the negative in the class, then students' behavior wasn't going to get any better. The case described how Lourdes began forming new ideas about teaching and her role in the classroom after enrolling in a three-day training sessions offered by the Peace Education Foundation (PEF) program. The majority of the case illustrated how Lourdes continued to face a number of challenges in her classroom, but managed to turn hostile and negative experiences into ones that focused on maintaining peace and respect in the classroom.

Ms. Pratt introduced her class to Lourdes' case during the second week of ED 222. One of Ms. Pratt's goals for this class was to help teacher candidates begin thinking about how teachers' conceptualizations of teaching impact the decisions they make in their classrooms. During the first weeks of the semester, Ms. Pratt wanted her students to begin thinking about their conceptualization of literacy so that they could begin drafting and forming ideas that would ultimately become a philosophy statement on literacy education. Ms. Pratt introduced Lourdes' case as an example of one teacher working on a conceptualization of literacy that had a community focus. She asked her students to read the case at home so that they could discuss it in their third class session. In week three, Ms. Pratt used the case to engage students in a discussion on how classroom learning communities can both support and hinder student learning. Ms. Pratt used Lourdes' story

to help teacher candidates think about who gains and loses when one makes particular decisions in his or her classroom. She asked students to discuss the case with a partner and answer the following questions: What does Lourdes value? What does she believe about literacy? What influences her decisions? Who gains? Who loses? Teacher candidates discussed the case but did not respond to it in writing. The issue of who gains and who loses, however, reappeared in class conversations and some students' dialogue journal entries throughout the semester.

"Goodnight Moon" case. "Goodnight Moon" represents a case as problem situation. Cases presented as a problem situation are used for analysis, inquiry, and problem-solving (Carter, 1999). The purpose of such cases is to prepare teacher candidates "for the exacting processes of interpretation and decision-making in teaching" (Carter, 1999, p. 167). They are also used "to examine and clarify the complexities and connections in teaching practice" (Carter, 1999, p.167). "Goodnight Moon" is a two-page case and was written by a doctoral student at MWU. The first page introduces the case and provides questions for the reader. The second page provides more background on the case and lists further questions for readers to discuss. The "Goodnight Moon" case described a real-life incident that occurred to Mary, an early childhood consultant, when she observed a young Alaskan teacher teaching children in the Alaskan Bush. Prior to being observed, Mary suggested that the teacher create a lesson around the book *Goodnight Moon* (Brown, 1991). She thought the book would be a nice one to use because it was considered to be a well-known and beloved book used in early education settings. Mary felt that recommending this book to the young teacher would help set her up for a successful lesson. In the end, however, the soothing bedtime story became

frightening to the children, and they began to cry when their teacher asked them questions about the story. (See Appendix D for the Goodnight Moon case.)

Ms. Pratt introduced this case to her class during the fifth week of class. Before passing out the case, she asked teacher candidates to write about a situation where somebody acted out of the ordinary and his or her actions were easily misunderstood. She asked teacher candidates to respond to the question, “How do people usually react when somebody acts out of the norm for their culture?” Before writing their responses, students heard Ms. Pratt give a personal example where she had negatively reacted to the actions of her daughter’s friends, but then later realized she had misinterpreted the situation. After sharing her own experience and having students write about theirs, Ms. Pratt introduced and read the book *Goodnight Moon* (Brown, 1991) to her class. She explained that she was going to read the book because she wanted teacher candidates to have a better understanding for the context of the case, and she had correctly predicted that a number of her students were not familiar with the book. After reading the book, Ms. Pratt passed out the “Goodnight Moon” case and had students read and discuss it with a partner. Students discussed questions that were listed at the bottom of the page that asked them to describe their initial feelings to the case and asked why they thought the children in the story reacted negatively to the book *Goodnight Moon*.

Teacher candidates participated in a whole group discussion about the case after sharing ideas with a partner. After they shared various ideas, Ms. Pratt passed out a second page that described why the kindergarten children might have responded in such a negative way. It described how the children were used to sleeping in family beds where they enjoyed the comfort of being able to reach out and touch a family member at all

times. These children did not sleep alone nor were left alone in the dark. The second page of the case pointed out and reminded teacher candidates that comfort and discomfort can be culturally influenced. After discussing the case with a partner and with the entire class, students took the last few minutes in class to individually write a response to the following questions: Are there any connections between this story and the quick-write you did earlier? Explain. Does this story make you think differently about teaching diverse learners and creating an inclusive learning community? Explain.

Christine's case. Christine's case was written in the first person narrative form and tells a story from the point of view of Christine, a teacher candidate. Christine's case could be described as a *case as narrative*; however, it can also be used similarly to *Peace Takes Practice* to illustrate *case as story*. Christine's case is different from Lourdes' case, however, because it's told from the first person point of view. This supports how Carter (1999) described the ways in which cases can be used as narratives placing "special emphasis on the view that we live storied lives" (pg. 171). Carter explained that narrative has taken on a somewhat distinct meaning showing concern for biography and autobiography and focusing primarily on "lived experiences or personal life stories" (pg. 171). Carter (1999) stated,

Rather than seeing teaching 'out there' as something happening to an anonymous someone, we can imagine a case as a personal account and construct an image of who the person in the case is. Such a frame connects the reader to a person who teaches in important ways. (p. 173)

Christine's case is a chapter found in the book *Educating for Democracy: Case-Method Teaching and Learning* (McNergney et al., 1999). The chapter is titled *A Case of*

Freedom to Learn: Balancing the Needs and Rights of All Children, and is told through the eyes of Christine after she views a video in one of her teacher education courses. The video presented the story of a child with special needs being mainstreamed into a general education classroom. In the case, Christine wrote about her thoughts and reactions when her classmates begin discussing the video, describing the advantages and disadvantages of including special needs students in the general education classroom. The case illustrated how Christine faced complex thoughts and reactions to the class discussion because her own sister has Down Syndrome. The case described how Christine faced “serious personal and professional questions about who wins and who loses when children with special needs are excluded (and included) in general education classrooms” (Peacock, Keller, & Rallis, 1999, p.159).

Prior to reading Christine’s case, Ms. Pratt asked students to write about issues of inclusion that could be connected to the observations that they were making in their field placements. Students were asked to write these reflections at home prior to reading the case. After reflecting upon their field experiences, students were to read the case and write an immediate reaction to it. Ms. Pratt asked students to complete both of these writing activities at home so that they could discuss the case during their tenth week of class. In class ten, students shared their responses to the case in small groups and wrote a final reflection on the case for homework. For this writing assignment, Ms. Pratt asked students to write about what personal “Aha” moments they now had about working with special needs students and inclusive learning communities. In class eleven, the following week, Ms. Pratt had students share their responses using a fishbowl⁸ format.

⁸ In a fishbowl discussion, a small group of students form circle with their chairs in the middle of the room and engage in a conversation. The rest of the class forms an outer circle, surrounding the inner circle, so

Viewing Cases

Ms. Pratt introduced her students to hypermedia video-cases using RCE. Ms. Pratt and I decided that we wanted to have teacher candidates view two of the full-length videos in addition to clips of classroom teaching. Ms. Pratt chose to use the two videos that I had recommended, one that was filmed in a kindergarten classroom in San Antonio, Texas, and another that was filmed in a second grade classroom in Harlem. These classrooms showed children who are typically labeled “at risk” excelling in classrooms that used many of the literacy instructional approaches that were being introduced in ED 222. The video cases introduced two classroom teachers, Mrs. Hemmeter and Dawn Harris Martine. Mrs. Hemmeter taught the kindergarten class, which consisted mostly of native Spanish speakers, and Dawn Harris Martine taught the a second grade class where the majority of the students were African American and came from low income families. Ms. Pratt decided to show the kindergarten classroom during the sixth week of the semester when teacher candidates were learning about emergent literacy practices. The second grade classroom video was introduced towards the end of the semester when teacher candidates were learning how to teach reading comprehension strategies to elementary students.

The RCE hypermedia video-cases illustrate what Carter (1999) described as cases as exemplars. Such cases are used “to illustrate a general category or to exemplify a practice” (pg. 166). A case as exemplar is commonly used in teacher preparation “to depict vividly such matters as the complexity of teaching environments, the way in which a method is actually carried out in a classroom” or the complicated ways “a general

that they can observe and hear the small group conversation. Students are encouraged to enter and leave the circle at will. When Ms. Pratt used the fishbowl, she asked for volunteers to sit in the inner circle and placed herself in one of the outer circle chairs.

proposition about learning or development might manifest itself in concrete situations” (Carter, 1999, p.166). Teacher candidates have spoken highly of RCE cases because they visually provide examples of the instructional practices that are introduced in many literacy methods course (Boling, in press; Boling & Roehler, 2002). For some teacher candidates, viewing videos and clips through RCE provides their first introduction to many of the literacy instructional approaches that are being promoted in today’s teacher education programs.

Mrs. Hemmeter case. Mrs. Hemmeter is an experienced kindergarten teacher in San Antonio, Texas. Mrs. Hemmeter modeled many of the practices that students in ED 222 had been reading about in their methods textbook. Prior to coming to class and viewing the case, Ms. Pratt wanted teacher candidates to reflect upon their k-12 experiences as a student and write a response to the following prompt: Did you have students in your school who were handicapped or disabled in some way, were non-English speakers, were from low SES, had very high or very low academic abilities, or were from another country? What do you think about when you think about these students? Where do you think these ideas come from?

The following week, the sixth week of the semester, teacher candidates viewed the entire Mrs. Hemmeter video in class and engaged in conversations about emergent literacy practices. Before viewing the video, students were placed into groups and each group was assigned a different emergent literacy “lens” for viewing the case. For example, one group was asked to look for emergent literacy practices that support reading and writing fluency. Another group was asked to note how reading and writing were taught together. After viewing the video, groups shared their thoughts and observations

about the case and discussed which practices seemed to support an inclusive learning community. At the end of class, Ms. Pratt asked students to look at their homework writing, think about their participation in class, and describe their own personal “aha” moment for the day. She also asked students, “What is it that you are not thinking differently about?”

In the next two class sessions, sessions 8 and 9, teacher candidates worked in groups in the computer lab and used the RCE program to search for and view various video clips. In addition to the clips that were filmed in Mrs. Hemmeter’s classroom, students were able to view footage from nine other elementary classrooms. The first day in the lab was designed so that students could become familiar with functions and content of the RCE program. They were asked to search for clips that would support them as they designed literacy lessons that would be taught in the field. In the following class, students read an article on teaching reading comprehension strategies and were told to search for clips that would support the big ideas in the article. Students viewed clips that were filmed in Mrs. Hemmeter’s and other classrooms. By the end of class, students selected their best clip and posted a message on the discussion forum that described why they selected it. Students ended their message with a question so that teacher candidates in another ED 222 class could respond to their messages. In class 10, Ms. Pratt had groups share their selected clip, discuss why they selected them, and then asked the class to think about how some students might gain or lose from literacy practices shown in the clips.

Dawn Harris Martine case. This case was originally selected so that it would support teacher candidates’ discussion on inclusive learning communities. This case introduced Dawn Harris Martine and her second grade students in Harlem. By the time

Ms. Pratt showed this case, she had overheard some students making comments about the writing assignments that they had been doing in class and felt that some resistance was developing towards the activities that asked students to think about inclusive learning communities. For example, in a previous class when students were asked to reflect and write about their thoughts on building inclusive learning classrooms, Ms. Pratt overheard a student comment to another, “We just wrote about this.” Ms. Pratt and I originally planned to have students view the case and discuss issues related to inclusion; however, Ms. Pratt felt that it might be best if she gave the inclusive learning topic a rest and returned to more literacy-specific content.

Even though Ms. Pratt and I felt that issues of inclusion and instruction were closely woven together, we found that students frequently separated the two. For example, a number of times when Ms. Pratt asked students to engage in conversations about instruction and inclusion, they would have content-specific conversations that did not cover any of the issues that had been discussed on how instruction was or was not including all students. We constantly struggled to find ways to integrate issues of inclusion and literacy instruction so that students could see how connected and interwoven they really were. Since students had already engaged in a number of conversations about inclusion, Ms. Pratt wanted to use the Dawn Harris Martine case specifically for content-based discussions. The semester was also coming to an end, and there were a lot of literacy topics that Ms. Pratt still needed to cover. In the end, she decided to have her students view the case in its entirety noting the kinds of comprehension strategies and assessment practices that Ms. Martine used. After viewing the case, students discussed the comprehension strategies and assessment practices that

they saw. Ms. Pratt did not give the students a follow-up writing assignment after viewing the case.

Creating and Writing Narrative Stories

Clark and Medina (2000) claimed that the concrete act of writing a literacy narrative can help students look critically “at their knowledge and the places/locations where that knowledge was constructed” (p. 68). As teacher candidates share their personal stories with one another, there is the possibility that they will begin to see contrasting views and relate experiences to one another. Conle (2003) described one facet of narrative as “the oral or written discourse that undertakes to tell of an event or a series of events” (p. 5). When Ms. Pratt and I designed writing prompts for narrative, personal writing activities, I had expected students to write about personal experiences as if they were telling a story. I had also expected them to describe events and feelings in these stories. However, students did not always respond to these prompts in the ways that I had predicted. Usually this was because a prompt was poorly designed and did not illicit narrative storytelling. There were also times when students had limited time to write in class and wrote such short responses that a narrative storyline never appeared.

When I originally designed this study, I wanted teacher candidates to write about personal experiences related to issues of diversity and inclusion prior to reading and viewing cases. Then, I planned to have students make connections between what they had written and what they were reading or viewing. Setting this up to occur in the classroom, however, turned out to be much harder than I had anticipated. First, Ms. Pratt and I struggled to create prompts that would encourage thoughtful reflection on one’s personal

experiences while at the same time making connections to a case that was going to be read or viewed for class. Second, even when students did write about rich, descriptive, personal experiences, it was difficult to find the time to share them in class. Because Ms. Pratt always felt pressured for time and struggled to cover all of the literacy content that needed to be introduced in the course, taking the time to have students write and discuss their personal stories sometimes became secondary to other issues. Third, when students responded to some of the prompts that Ms. Pratt and I created, they sometimes did not respond in the ways that we had anticipated.

In one example, Ms. Pratt and I designed a personal writing assignment where students were asked to pretend they were interviewing for a job and describe to the principal the kind of place where they would like to work. As it turned out, students responded to the prompt by giving a list of statements rather than by telling a story. I had hoped that students would respond by writing as if they were talking to the principal, providing a rationale for why they were responding in a particular way. After reading students' responses, I realized the prompt did not encourage them to respond in this way. In the end, almost every single student listed what they wanted in paragraph form, and their responses did not expand upon a particular event nor include any reflections on personal experiences. Examples of comments that they wrote were, "I don't have a preference for a specific kind of school." "I want to work in a school that has a welcoming feel." "I want to teach students of mixed abilities." "I want to teach in a school that has a lot of parental involvement." The information that students provided was useful, but it did not provide the kind of narrative data that I originally wanted for the study.

Some of the writing prompts did encourage students to retell personal experiences in a story-like manner. For example, the prompt that was given before students read Christine's case and the prompt that was given before students viewed Mrs. Hemmeter's case produced narrative stories from students. Prior to reading the Christine case, students were asked to write about experiences that they were having in their field placements that could be connected to issues of inclusion. Prior to viewing the case of Mrs. Hemmeter, students were asked to write about experiences that they had with diverse groups of people during their own k-12 education. In these responses, students were also asked to describe how they felt about these experiences.

In addition to the writing assignments that were planned as components for the study, unexpected opportunities arose where students wrote and shared personal narrative stories. These richly described personal experiences usually occurred as a natural part of the course and provided me with further opportunities to study how teacher candidates were making connections between their personal lives and the content and issues that were being introduced in ED 222. One example occurred during the first two weeks of class when Ms. Pratt asked students to write about what it meant being literate and growing up in their families. After having them write their responses at home, Ms. Pratt asked students to bring their writings to class so that they could analyze their own stories. Ms. Pratt modeled this activity by doing the same assignment that she had asked her students to do. She then shared the writing that she had produced at home which described how growing up in a very verbal family impacted the kinds of activities that she favored as a teacher. Ms. Pratt explained how her love for story telling extended into her own teaching as she engaged her students in book club. After sharing her own

experience, Ms. Pratt had students use highlighters and side notes, marking on their papers, to answer the question, “How do you think these experiences might influence your teaching?” This activity was designed to get students thinking about their conceptualization of literacy and how a person’s experiences and beliefs impact the conceptualization that they hold. Periodically throughout the semester, Ms. Pratt asked her students to revisit other personal writings and consider how their personal experiences might impact who they are as future teachers. Such writing activities produced the kinds of narrative stories that turned into rich data sources for the study.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection began in the summer when Ms. Pratt and I began planning the course and continued throughout fall semester. All planning sessions were audio-recorded and transcribed. Summary notes were also written after each planning session, highlighting key issues that were discussed. I attended all ED 222 classes and audio-recorded and transcribed each session. Once focus students were selected and put into groups, I placed multiple tape recorders around the room so that Ms. Pratt didn’t know which students I was following. During these weeks, only audiotapes that recorded focus students’ conversations were transcribed. During class sessions, I also took field notes on how focus students responded to activities in class and noted how they interacted with others in the class. During class discussions, I noted the ways students responded to written cases and the comments that they made about teaching literacy and building inclusive learning communities. Notes were written in a notebook during class, and I

summarized these notes once I came home, saving them as a Word document on my computer.

Even though Ms. Pratt and I informally met every week to plan the course, I conducted a more formal interview with her at the beginning and end of the semester. (See Appendix E for instructor interview protocol.) These interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. At the beginning of the semester, I asked her to describe the goals that she had for the course and the kinds of assignments and activities that she wanted students to do. I asked how she had used cases and personal writings in her previous ED 222 class and how she had integrated the use of technology into her teaching. In the second interview, I revisited many of the comments that she made during the summer and asked whether or not she felt she had achieved the goals that she had for her class. I also asked her to reflect and comment upon the various ways she had used cases and personal writing activities in her class and whether or not she felt these activities were successful. (See Appendix E for instructor interview protocol.)

During the fifth and sixth week of class I interviewed eleven students. I selected five of these students as my focus students and interviewed them again at the end of the semester. (See Appendix F for teacher candidate interview protocol.) Initial student interviews were used to gather information that would help in the selection of focus students. During the first set of interviews, I asked students to tell about themselves, where they grew up, and the kinds of early literacy experiences that they had in school. I asked how things were going in ED 222 and had them comment on some of the activities that they had already done in class. If they did not say anything about activities that were based on written or hypermedia cases, I would then explicitly ask them about the activity

and what they thought about it. I also brought some of students' class work to the interview so that I could ask them about things that they had written, pushing for more detail and clarification. I frequently chose to have them reflect on pieces of writing where they expressed a change in knowledge or beliefs about teaching diverse students, asking them to expand and explain how their current thinking compared to how they felt in the past. I also had them talk about what they thought had prompted change. I brought copies of some of the assignments where students wrote reflections after reading or viewing cases. I again did this so that I could ask them to "say more" about what they had written.

During the second set of interviews with focus students, I again asked questions about some of the work that they produced in class and brought pieces of their work to the interview. These conversations were similar to ones that took place during the first interviews; however, there were usually more assignments for us to discuss. I also asked focus students to describe what made the largest impact on their learning during this semester, where they experienced their greatest growth, and where they experienced their greatest change. I acknowledged that students might answer these questions in similar ways and told them that it was fine if they thought their greatest growth and greatest change were related to the same thing. I asked all focus students questions that were on the interview protocol but also allowed conversations to go in other directions. This usually happened when I asked questions about class work and course assignments because students responded to assignments in different ways. All instructor and student interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed.

In addition to field notes, planning session notes, interview summaries, and audio-recorded transcriptions, I collected all of the documents that Ms. Pratt created for her

class. This included such things as the course syllabus, lesson plans, handouts, and overhead transparencies. I also collected all documents that students created for course assignments and activities. Sometimes these documents were photocopied, and other times I had students e-mail them to me as attachments. These documents included such things as in-class written reflections, dialogue journal entries, pre and post assessments, self-assessments, philosophy statements, and lesson plans. Data that were collected on all 25 students were kept in individual student folders. When I analyzed data on the whole class, however, I regrouped student work in a variety of different ways. For example, one time I put all students' pre and post surveys together so that I could compare responses with one another. Another time I pulled together all students' responses to a particular case, making it easier to look across responses and compare findings.

Both top down (deductive) and bottom up (inductive) analyses were used for the study following grounded theory and constant comparative methods (Glaser & Strauss, 1965; LeCompte & Schensul, 1999). Glaser and Strauss (1965) first used and described the constant comparative method of data analysis in their book *Awareness of Dying*. The constant comparative method is a method of theory development where researchers gather new data and continually compare them with previously collected data in order to develop categories. According to Glaser and Strauss (1967),

The constant comparing of many groups draws the sociologist's attention to their many similarities and differences. Considering these leads him to generate abstract categories and their properties, which, since they emerge from the data, will clearly be important to a theory explaining the kind of behavior under observation. (p. 36)

Glaser and Strauss stated that the comparison of differences and similarities among groups "not only generates categories, but also rather speedily generates generalized

relations among them” (p. 39). In this way, multiple hypotheses can be pursued simultaneously.

Data analysis was ongoing as I collected documents, took notes, wrote summaries, and created research memos throughout the semester. At the end of the semester, I revisited and reanalyzed data in multiple ways, looking for new topics, patterns, and themes. Because the analysis was extensive and ongoing, I will highlight the major components of the analysis in this section and provide more detail in subsequent chapters. In the remaining sections of this chapter, I illustrate how I used a constant comparative method to analyze both focus student and general class data.

When I collected and coded data, I created initial codes that were based on my research questions. For example, I highlighted and noted any time explicit reference was made to case activities, diverse learners, or personal experiences that reflected students’ attitudes and beliefs about diverse groups of people. I also highlighted and labeled any data source that reflected students’ knowledge about teaching literacy. Whenever I thought a data source related to my research questions, I highlighted it and labeled it so that I could return to it for future reference. For example, because I wanted to know how teacher candidates responded to written and hypermedia cases, I collected data on what they said and wrote about cases and coded case-related comments in a number of ways. I wrote whether the comment was made in class, to the whole group, to a small group, or in writing. I coded whether it was made before, during, or after reading, viewing, or discussing a case. I coded the key ideas that appeared in the response and also noted, if possible, its tone. For example, sometimes students explicitly said or wrote that something was “helpful,” “confusing,” or “interesting.” Sometimes students explicitly

stated whether something in the case “upset” them, made them “angry,” or made them “want to cry.” When the entire class engaged in case discussions, I recorded and transcribed comments, indicating which case was being discussed, the key ideas that were being expressed, and how responsive the class seemed to be when answering Ms. Pratt’s questions or engaged in discussions.

In order to determine how teacher candidates’ personal stories and experiences interacted with their interpretation of cases, I noted what issues and themes appeared in personal writing activities and in cases. I then compared to see if there were any connections between the two. For example, if students wrote about having an experience where they felt uncomfortable being around a particular group of people, I looked for indications of discomfort in students’ responses to cases. I then compared to see how the uncomfortable feelings in the case and in the personal writings were similar or different. I also noted key ideas that appeared in case data and personal stories then analyzed data to see if and how these ideas reappeared throughout the semester. I looked to see if there were any kinds of relationships between the two. For example, one student commented that she liked a particular instructional approach while viewing a clip on RCE because both teacher and students were involved in creating a story together. After obtaining this information, I searched through all of the previous data that I had collected on this student to see if any other references were made to instructional approaches. I found that in one of her first personal writing activities, she had written that her own elementary school experiences had been traditional and teacher-centered. I then realized that this particular student was drawn to an RCE clip that represented a kind of literacy instruction that was different from what she had experienced as a child.

For my third research question, I wanted to understand what teacher candidates' responses to written and hypermedia cases revealed about their views of teaching diverse learners over time. In order to do this, I collected and coded their responses to cases and organized responses chronologically. Periodically throughout the semester I read through data in the order that it had been created. I also read through it backwards, starting first with the most recent data that had been collected. By analyzing data chronologically in this way, I was able to note patterns in how teacher candidates were thinking about the teaching of diverse learners, see whether or not ideas and issues appeared more than once, and compare responses to how they did or did not change over time.

Even though I considered my research questions while coding data, I also noted patterns that arose even if I did not always see significance in the patterns. Sometimes I did not recognize the significance of the data until later in the semester. For example, I noticed that the same students were always in control of the mouse and keyboard when using the computer to view RCE clips. I did not realize the significance of who was "in charge" of the computer until the end of the semester when students were asked to comment on the usefulness of RCE. When reviewing responses, I realized that students who always had control of the mouse reported that posting messages on the RCE discussion forum was helpful. However, those who never had control of the mouse tended to write that the discussion forum was not very helpful. I did not realize that students' experiences with RCE might be related to how they engaged with the program until after I made the connection between responses and who did or did not post messages.

While noting such patterns and consistencies, I also coded data that appeared to be inconsistent with one another. For example, in one observation I had written that Mallory seemed resistant to accept other people's opinions. I wrote in my field notes that she was holding on to her initial beliefs regardless of the different perspectives that she heard in class. However, Mallory wrote in one of her quick-writes that her classmates had made her begin to think of perspectives she had not previously considered. When I coded her written comments, I wrote "considering other's perspectives." I also wrote that Mallory's quick-write contradicted what I had originally written in my field notes. In my field note summary for that day, I wrote that I had to be more careful about making assumptions based solely on what students did or did not say in class.

Analyzing Focus Student Data

Every two or three weeks, as I collected data during the semester, I read chronologically through the artifacts that I had collected in order to find threads of topics and themes. For example, in one class Ms. Pratt asked students to consider who gains and loses when teachers make instructional decisions. In the dialogue journals that were written the following week, I saw that Jackie wrote to her partner that she had never asked herself who gains and who loses in classrooms. This comment prompted a response from Jackie's journal partner, and then a conversational thread of who gains and loses continued in their journal entries through the next couple of weeks.

Once I identified my focus students at the middle of the semester, I revisited all of the work that I had collected on them, double-checking the patterns that seemed to be emerging. I then began to periodically read backwards through focus students' folders,

starting from the most recently collected artifact reading back to the first piece of data that I had collected on them. I also did the same thing with my field notes. This allowed me occasionally to recognize and retrace backward threads of ideas that I might have originally missed. For example, I did not realize that Lizz was struggling with the kinds of instructional practices that were being introduced through RCE until after I had the chance to interview her. Once I realized that all of her prior exposure to literacy instruction had been based on traditional approaches, I revisited her folder of work and began to realize that some of her short responses to content-related questions might have been due to a lack of knowledge and not necessarily to a lack of effort. Because some of her written work lacked explanation and detail, I had wondered if she was being very thoughtful and reflective about her work. With the new information that I received in her interview, I saw Lizz in a new light. Based on her interview comments, I realized that she had been thoughtfully considering the literacy practices that were being discussed in class but was struggling with whether or not she agreed with them.

Once I identified focus students, analyzed the documents that had been placed in their folders, and began noting threads of ideas emerging for each student, I then revisited the data looking for patterns and themes that were common across all five students. This allowed me to understand the data in ways that were not possible when only focusing on one student at a time. Making comparisons across students helped me see how they made different connections to narrative and case-based activities in different kinds of ways. For example, I began to see that those who actually typed comments on the RCE discussion forum spoke more favorably of the discussion forum than those who sat in the group but

never got to type in a message. This made me think about the sense of ownership that one might have when typing and receiving messages on the forum.

Analyzing Class Data

I manipulated and analyzed my data differently when looking for common themes and patterns across the entire class rather than within the focus student group. The main reason for working with these data differently was because of the amount of data that I had collected. In order to identify common responses to personal writing and case-based activities, I relied on my field notes and summaries of audio-recorded class sessions. When I was able to collect student work that was related to case-based activities, I summarized comments and put them in charts so that I could easily look across responses. By visually presenting all responses using a chart, I then looked for patterns in responses and created codes based on these patterns. For example, after students discussed the “Goodnight Moon” case in class, they were asked to do a quick-write in class and comment on how they were now thinking about the teaching of emergent literacy in inclusive learning communities. Responses were usually a paragraph long, so I summarized the key ideas in these responses and displayed them in a chart so that I could analyze across the entire class. For the Christine case, I collected reflections that were written immediately after students read the case and collected a new set of reflections after they discussed the case with their peers. When I created a chart for these responses, I set it up so that I could compare individual responses with one another. I also set it up so that I could compare responses that were written before and after case discussions. I did similar analyses with students’ self-assessments and pre and post surveys.

Analyzing pre and post surveys. When analyzing data on the entire class, I realized that the pre and post surveys were not as helpful as I had originally expected. The surveys were created for two reasons: (a) to help identify a diverse group of focus students and (b) to identify change in students' knowledge and beliefs from the beginning of the semester to the end. The pre-survey did help in the selection of focus students because I was able to learn what kinds of experiences teacher candidates had with diverse groups of people. This was useful because I wanted the group of focus students to represent a range of experiences. The surveys were less helpful, however, when I attempted to analyze how teacher candidates' knowledge and beliefs had changed throughout the semester. It was difficult to determine from the responses on the surveys what teacher candidates' knew and believed. For example, for open-ended responses students sometimes wrote short and general comments both at the beginning and the end of the semester. I could not assume that this reflected a lack of knowledge, because some students might have just rushed through the survey. Also, there were parts of the survey that covered content that was not a focus of ED 222. I was not surprised, therefore, when pre and post responses looked very similar and when some students wrote that they did not know how to respond.

Other survey questions were not helpful because they did not reveal differences in responses or were interpreted differently by students. For example, one section of the survey asked students to rank their level of agreement with 7 statements and write a comment or two about their rankings. When comparing rankings on pre and post surveys, I found no significant pattern or tendency towards *agree* or *disagree*. I also found that students' comments were not always consistent with their ranking. For example, when

ranking their level of agreement to the statement, “Generally, teachers should group by ability level,” some students indicated, “disagree.” Then in their comments, some of the students who disagreed wrote that teachers should group students in various ways, sometimes using ability level and sometimes not using ability level. In another question, students were asked to rate their level of agreement with the statement, “Historically, literacy instruction has been monocultural, reflecting only one reality and has been biased toward the dominant (European) group.” Regardless of how students rated this statement, their written comments reflected that their response was based on what’s happening *now* in classrooms. For example, some students indicated that they disagreed with the statement and then wrote that many multicultural books are used in today’s classrooms. Some did not seem to take into account the word *historically* when responding to the statement.

Even though some of the survey data were useful, overall, I feel that I could have done a better job constructing questions that would have better supported my research questions. I found that having students respond to open-ended questions and scenarios revealed more about their knowledge and beliefs than the section that asked them to rank their level of agreement. However, even with the open-ended questions, it was still difficult to assess what students did or did not know. It was also difficult to know how honestly students responded when they were asked to talk about their beliefs. There is always the possibility that they were writing what they thought the teacher wanted to hear or what they thought was the socially acceptable answer.

Reflections on analyses. After the semester ended in December, I kept in contact with focus students. I told them that once I had my initial findings for the study, I would

be willing to meet with them individually to share what I had found. All of the focus students expressed an interest in my findings, and I knew from our conversations that they were curious to see what I was learning. I wanted to share my findings with them and was curious to see if they agreed with the ways in which I was making sense from the data that was collected throughout the semester. I also wanted to make sure that I didn't misrepresent students in ways that might offend them. In the end, I met with all of the focus students except Sadie. When I met individually with students, I summarized the kinds of things that I had learned from them and explicitly told them to let me know if I had misinterpreted something that they had written or said. As I shared my findings, sometimes students provided more details but never indicated that I had misinterpreted or inaccurately represented the data. There is the possibility that even if they had disagreed, they might not have told me. Even though sharing my findings with these students did not guarantee that my representations were accurate, I felt confident that I made every effort to represent them as accurately and honestly as possible.

The purpose of this study was to investigate how teacher candidates responded to written and hypermedia cases and how their personal stories and experiences interacted with their interpretation of the cases. The purpose of this study was also to explore what teacher candidates' responses revealed about their views of teaching diverse students over time. In the following 3 chapters, I present the findings of the study. Two chapters are dedicated to focus student findings, and one chapter is dedicated to general class findings. I begin with the findings that emerged from focus student data since I collected more data on these students, analyzed the data differently from the class data, and developed a better understanding of how they responded to personal writing and case-

based activities. Focus student findings are divided into two different chapters because distinct themes emerged when I analyzed their responses to written and hypermedia cases. In Chapter 3, I illustrate how focus students began to develop *awareness* and *beliefs* about what it means to create an inclusive learning community, what their stance was towards inclusion, and who is included in these communities. In the Chapter 4, I illustrate how focus students began to learn how one *acts upon* awareness and beliefs to create learning opportunities for students in inclusive classrooms. Teacher candidates began to understand the role of the teacher in the classroom and how the teacher designs and modifies literacy instruction to meet the needs of diverse learners. Chapter 5 presents the class findings in relation to what was learned from focus student data. I've included this chapter to give a broader picture of how others responded to written and hypermedia cases and to ground focus student findings with the entire class. Chapter 6 will explore the significance and implications of both focus student and general class findings.

Chapter 3 Awareness and Beliefs

Working closely with focus students provided an understanding of how reading cases, viewing cases, and sharing personal stories impacted teacher candidates throughout the semester. Because I was able to follow focus students closely in class and conduct follow-up interviews, I gained insight into the processes that supported their learning in the course. Data coming from a variety of sources reveal students experienced unique journeys as they began to come to terms with their understanding of what it means to have an inclusive learning community and who should or should not be included in these communities. Even though each student came to unique understandings about teaching diverse students, the paths that led to their understandings did have similarities. When interviewing focus students, I noticed that rich stories emerged as they described their experiences in the course and explained how they were gaining new insights about teaching, learning, and themselves. I developed a deeper understanding of how students were making sense of varied course activities as I saw emerging stories become intertwined with classroom discussions, written comments, and conversations. In the end, analyzing the personal experiences and stories that focus students shared revealed important insights about the ways in which students engaged in and learned from personal writing and case-based activities.

Lundeberg (1999) developed a model that outlines what cases can contribute to preservice teachers' discoveries about teaching and learning. She grouped these discoveries, which "are not exclusive and overlap to some degree," into five categories: (a) theoretical and practical understanding, (b) reasoning, (c) metacognition, (d) social,

ethical, and epistemological growth, and (e) beliefs (Lundeberg, 1999, p.5). Even though I do not categorize findings into five distinct categories, I did find thinking about Lundeberg's categories was helpful when considering the findings of this study. Teacher candidates' responses to personal writing and case activities revealed that they gained a number of new insights. A single case discussion could prompt new understandings that ranged from redefining the meaning of inclusion to knowing how to implement a specific reading comprehension strategy in the classroom. Lundeberg's categories helped me consider how teacher candidates' responses could be categorized. For example, many responses to written cases revealed that teacher candidates were developing general understandings and forming new beliefs about inclusion. In their responses to hypermedia cases, however, they spoke and wrote more about how to teach literacy and how to create an inclusive learning environment. Some responses reflected teacher candidates' general awareness and beliefs while others revealed how teacher candidates learned how to act upon these beliefs. By using Lundeberg's categories to help define my findings, I was able to see more distinction between responses and better understand how responses differed from one another. As I organized and categorized findings, I decided to present and discuss them using two categories: *developing awareness and understanding* and *moving from awareness to beliefs*.

The two categories that I use to present focus students findings are, like Lundeberg's (1999) categories, not mutually exclusive. There is evidence that teacher candidates developed awareness and beliefs as they learned to act upon new understandings. For example, Lizz developed practical understandings about how to implement literacy lessons while watching RCE video clips. These practical

understandings assisted her as she designed and implemented a literacy lesson for students in her field placement. Learning strategies from RCE helped Lizz move from awareness of teaching reading to actually being able to design and teach a literacy lesson. However, these same RCE experiences also supported Lizz in becoming megacognitively aware of the ways current, progressive teaching practices differed from the literacy practices she had experienced as a child. In this example, developing awareness of instruction and gaining knowledge to act upon this awareness occurred through the same RCE activity. Even though Lundeborg's categories were helpful, I found that trying to use her categories to describe findings like those from Lizz became problematic. So, I turned to Villegas and Lucas' (2002) curriculum framework for preparing culturally responsive teachers for support.

Villegas and Lucas (2002) developed and described six strands, or organizing constructs, that should be included when developing a curriculum for preparing culturally responsive teachers. They described the curriculum as a "series of strands that constantly intersect and that depend on one another to form a cohesive whole - strands that blend dispositions, knowledge, and skills" (p. 26). Villegas and Lucas organized the six strands into two different categories: fundamental orientations for teaching a changing student population and the practice of culturally responsive teaching. Considering these two categories helped me conceptualize and organize my findings in ways that Lundeborg's categories could not. Villegas and Lucas described the fundamental orientations for teaching as (a) gaining sociocultural consciousness, (b) developing an affirming attitude toward students from culturally diverse backgrounds, and (c) developing the commitment and skills to act as agents of change. They described the practice of culturally responsive

teaching as (a) understanding the constructivist foundations of culturally responsive teaching, (b) learning about students and their communities, and (c) cultivating culturally responsive teaching practices. These categories have similarities with Lundeberg's categories, however, I found the two organizing categories created by Villegas and Lucas better illustrated what I learned from this study.

This chapter presents how personal writing and case activities supported focus students in developing the awareness and beliefs that will eventually support them in creating inclusive literacy environments. These awareness and beliefs can be considered similar to the fundamental orientations that Villegas and Lucas (2002) described, orientations that support teacher candidates in being able to implement a culturally responsive curriculum. Chapter 4 presents how personal writing and case activities supported focus students in moving from awareness to action as they began to develop an understanding of the practice of culturally responsive teaching. As I describe my findings, I will make reference to both Lundeberg's (1999) and Villegas and Lucas' categories to help illustrate what teacher candidates learned. However, I do not strictly follow these categories.

I present the experiences of Mallory and Lydia in this chapter to illustrate the ways they made meaning from their ED 222 experiences. As I describe their experiences, I also explain the context in which responses to cases emerged. I then provide examples of how others responded to course activities so that Mallory's and Lydia's experiences can be understood in the wider context of the class. Their stories reveal how writing and sharing personal experiences and engaging in case-based activities can impact preservice teachers' awareness and beliefs about teaching diverse students. These stories reveal how

engaging in narrative and case-based activities in a teacher education class helped teacher candidates recognize and challenge their assumptions and beliefs about teaching diverse students. Both stories illustrate how engaging in such activities helped teacher candidates form new understandings about inclusion and recognize the ways in which their personal experiences and beliefs can impact who they are as a teacher. The second story, Lydia's story, also reveals how one teacher candidate openly struggled with the moral and ethical issues that surround including handicapped students in the general education classroom. After presenting Mallory's and Lydia's stories, I discuss how their experiences were similar or different from others in the class.

Mallory's Story

Mallory grew up in what she described as a "very small, all white community" and claimed that other than her two lesbian aunts, she had never confronted any diversity while growing up. In one of her personal writings, Mallory explained that her elementary school had no diversity because handicapped and disabled students were bused to other schools. She also wrote that there were no black students and no minorities in her school. During eighth grade, however, Mallory found herself in a different situation when her family moved to a new town. In one of her personal writing assignments, she wrote that she found herself "in shock" because there were black children and a number of handicapped students in her school. She also wrote that she "felt weird" around these students.

Even though Mallory described herself as having limited experience with people who were different from her, one of the reasons I selected her as a focus student was

because she had more variety in her experiences than the majority of students in the class. When Mallory was in high school, she took a summer trip to Spain and Italy. Then when she entered the university, she participated in a study abroad trip in Spain. Mallory openly talked about her passion for linguistics and Spanish, and in one of her writing assignments she expressed a desire to teach in a bilingual school. When she wrote about the kind of school where she would like to work, she wrote it would “most likely” be a middle class school because these schools “had more electives.” She added, “I would like to be in a community that is supportive of the school and is used to participating in activities outside of school.” Mallory’s vision of teaching in a bilingual school appeared to be that of teaching Spanish class, possibly an elective course, rather than working in a multicultural community where bilingualism is commonly seen in the general education classroom.

Developing Awareness and Understanding of Inclusion

Through her writings, classroom comments, and interviews, Mallory gave all indications she was an advocate for including diverse students in the general education classroom. For example, she described her preference for having a diverse classroom and wrote that her ideal teaching position would be in a bilingual school that had native English and Spanish speakers. Mallory’s personal writings expressed understanding and compassion for those who experienced difference, and she frequently wrote about her lesbian aunts’ children and her desire to protect them from those who might be anti-homosexual. At first glance, it might have appeared Mallory was comfortable about discussing issues of difference and had a solid stance that supported inclusion; however,

her personal writings at the beginning of the semester revealed there were many issues about working with those who were different from herself that still needed to be confronted and faced.

Making connections. In one of the first personal writing assignments, students were given a writing prompt that asked them to reflect back upon their own k-12 experiences.

Think back over your K-12 experiences as a student. Did you have students in your school/classes that were handicapped or disabled in some way, were not native English speakers, were from low socio-economic classes, had very high or very low academic skills, or were from another country? What do you think about when you think about these students? Where do you think your ideas come from?

This prompt was designed to get students thinking about their own personal educational experiences that involved interactions with diverse groups of students. Ms. Pratt hoped that if her students could make personal connections to diversity or inclusion from their previous k-12 experiences, then they would possibly make similar connections to the issues of inclusion that were going to be discussed in class.

Many of the students' writings became powerful pieces that raised issues that some of them would return to at the end of the semester. Mallory's response was one of these. In it, she described one school experience that made her feel uncomfortable around handicapped students and nervous about talking about them. These uncomfortable feelings foreshadowed the ways in which Mallory struggled with issues of inclusion later in the course.

I remember very specifically one time I was walking down the hall with my friend and we were in our own conversation. She was saying something was "dumb" but instead she said it was "retarded." The special education teacher just happened to be in the hall and he started screaming at her and saying that he better not hear her use that word ever again or she

would get a detention. He was a real jerk and looking back at it now, I still think he is a jerk. By approaching it the way he did, he scared me. I was completely nervous around handicapped children from then on, because what if I did something wrong by accident? Or, what if I didn't even know it was wrong?

The day that Mallory brought this writing to class, students observed an RCE classroom video and discussed what teachers do to support emergent readers and writers. While discussing the video of a kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Hemmeter, only a few students mentioned issues related to inclusion. A couple of students talked about how they might modify instruction for ESL students, but the rest described the different instructional strategies that they saw in the video. At the end of class, Ms. Pratt asked students to pull out their personal writings and to think about the video they had seen. She then asked them to reflect on the day's activities and write about what they were now thinking about inclusive learning communities. I was curious to see what students would write because most of the class discussion had focused on the practicalities of teaching, like what is *morning message* or *word walls*, rather than on issues of inclusion. Also, Ms. Pratt was short on time and didn't have students discuss their personal writings prior to writing their in-class reflection. I wasn't sure if students would have much to say about inclusion.

Students' in-class reflections revealed that students made more connections to emergent literacy instruction and inclusive teaching practices than Ms. Pratt and I had thought. They described how the teacher in the video used various instructional approaches that accommodated the needs of diverse students. For example, they explained how journal activities could be used for all levels of

writers and how teachers could use the natural classroom environment to create opportunities for students to practice their reading skills. While discussing students' responses, Ms. Pratt and I realized that a number of students' comments related to inclusion had not come out in whole class discussions. Ms. Pratt commented that she was concerned because she had noticed in other class activities that students were not sharing with the class things that they wrote for classroom assignments and were not engaging in meaningful discussion around issues of inclusion. For example, when sharing book club responses, students frequently read sections straight from their papers, finished reading the section, and then had the next person share. The next person would again read sections from her paper, finish, and then wait for the next person read from her paper. During these book club discussions, very little discussion actually occurred.

Responding to Christine's case. The next assignment that revealed some of Mallory's thoughts about inclusion and that engaged students in a class discussion on the topic occurred when students had to read a written case titled, *A Case of Freedom to Learn* (Peacock et al., 1999). In this case, Christine, a teacher education student, and her classmates viewed a video about a child with Down Syndrome who was mainstreamed in the general education classroom. This documentary presented the turmoil over whether "mainstreaming students with special needs either did or did not meet their social and educational needs, or whether mainstreaming may deprive other 'typical' students of appropriate education" (Peacock et al., 1999, p. 162). The case presented various sides of the debate from teachers', parents', and preservice teachers' perspectives. In the case,

Christine reflected upon her life with Alice, her sister who has Down Syndrome. She struggled with whether she should share her thoughts about her sister as her classmates viewed and discussed the video. In Ms. Pratt's class, students began to refer to this case as "The Christine Case." References made to Christine's case reappeared throughout the semester in Mallory's and other students' writings.

Ms. Pratt wanted students to think about their own field placements and issues of inclusion before they read the case. She asked students to think and write about their field placements and describe examples of inclusion or exclusion that they were noting in their classrooms. Ms. Pratt did not want students to use the assignment as an opportunity to criticize and complain about their collaborating teachers. Instead, she wanted them to be aware of the ways in which teachers unintentionally marginalize or exclude students when structuring their classrooms or designing instruction in a particular way. For example, teachers might unintentionally exclude English as a Second Language (ESL) students from instruction if they always expect students to orally share book club responses and don't provide opportunities for them to express their thoughts and understandings in other ways.

After writing about the inclusion they were seeing in the field, Ms. Pratt asked students to read Christine's case and immediately write a reaction to it. She explained that when she read the case, she was touched by the story and was emotional, feeling sympathetic for Christine's situation. The story had many of the characteristics of a literature case and provided a rich description of Christine's background, personality, and problems. Ms. Pratt's response to the

case supports Laframboise and Griffith's (1997) findings that literature cases can engage the emotions of the reader. Because Ms. Pratt had such a response to the case, she thought that others in the class might respond emotionally to the case. So, she decided to have students freely respond in their reflections and did not ask them to answer specific questions after reading the case. Ms. Pratt described how she was afraid a structured prompt might not capture the immediate emotional reaction that the case might generate. Students were asked to bring their written response to class so that they could share them with their group members.

Christine's case generated a wide range of responses and many emotions. One student wrote that she almost cried while reading it because she felt the family's frustration as they fought to get Christine's sister accepted into a general education classroom. Another student wrote that the case was written in a way that made her feel as if she were in Christine's shoes, and this feeling made her feel great empathy, compassion, and more understanding for the difficulties the family was facing. A third student said the case reminded her of her field placement and an autistic child who was in her classroom. This student noted how sometimes her teacher appeared frustrated while working with the child yet never expressed any kind of opinion that she felt the child should not be in the class.

Other students described how they were torn between the issues of whether Christine's sister should attend a general education classroom instead of a special education classroom. They stated that they understood Christine's family's point of view, yet they also understood teachers' concerns for not wanting Christine's sister in their classrooms because they did not feel prepared to work with a student who had

disabilities. For a number of teacher candidates, reading the case made them feel less prepared and more nervous about finding themselves in a similar situation. One of the focus students, Sadie, wrote, “When we were talking in class I had a totally different feeling like I don’t know anything about this and I’m not learning anything... How am I going to know how to deal with this when it comes?”

This range of responses supported Ms. Pratt’s prediction that Christine’s case would generate emotions from the students. Most of the responses revealed that students felt empathy for Christine and her sister and supported having Christine’s sister included in the general education classroom. Comments about understanding Christine’s situation, even though they didn’t have a sister with Down Syndrome, and comments that described feeling as if they were in her shoes showed that students were thinking about the issues from perspectives other than their own. These responses revealed how Christine’s case supported teacher candidates in developing affirming attitudes towards diverse students and gaining more awareness and understanding of the issues families face when children are excluded from the general education classroom. Teacher candidates’ responses illustrated how Christine’s case supported them in developing some of the social understandings that are needed to become culturally responsive teachers. Developing an affirming attitude toward diverse students and gaining sociocultural consciousness are part of Villegas and Lucas’ (2002) fundamental orientations for teaching a changing student population. Responses that revealed student frustration, however, indicated that not all students developed the same kinds of understandings and awareness when reading the case.

After reading the case, a number of students shared and discussed how it made them think about issues of inclusion in new and more complex ways. One student said that she did not know inclusion meant including all students, even special education students, in the classroom. A second student said the case helped her think about inclusion from another perspective, that of a special education student. A third student explained how she did not agree with including handicapped children in the general education classroom until after reading Christine's case. Mallory's response, however, indicated that reading the case only reinforced what she already felt and did not encourage her to think about inclusion differently.

This article did not make me feel any differently about inclusion. I strongly believe that children should be included in the classroom... I understand Christine's feelings about being protective. I have experienced a similar situation with my cousins. My aunts are lesbians, therefore my cousins have to deal with having two moms and not a strong father figure in their lives.

In the same response, Mallory made connections between Christine's case and her cousins' struggles, claiming they experienced similar things.

I believe it is the same struggles. We often thought, what if we get a teacher with a strong Christian and anti-homosexual relationships? That is much like thinking a child should not be in a class because they have Downs Syndrome.

It's difficult to know how Mallory is defining inclusion in this response.

However, when she discussed the case in class, she made multiple references to her cousins, comparing their experiences to Christine's sister's experiences. In the case,

Christine described instances where people sometimes did not welcome a special needs child in the general education classroom. The need to accept all children, regardless of their abilities and background, appears in Mallory's comments and in her writings. However, the case also introduced issues of equity and equality. For example, when the authors of the case described the video that was shown in Christine's teacher education course, they wrote, "The documentary presents the turmoil over whether mainstreaming students with special needs either did or did not meet their social and educational needs, or whether mainstreaming may deprive other 'typical' students of appropriate education" (Peacock et al., 1999, p. 162). In other areas of the case, Christine wondered how inclusion did or did not meet the educational and social needs of special education students. The complex issues that surrounded who does or does not benefit when special needs students are integrated into general education classrooms did not appear in Mallory's written response to the case. Mallory did not consider how her cousins' needs and the needs of special education students might differ. An initial step in becoming socioculturally conscious, according to Villegas and Lucas (2002), is "to learn that differences in social locations are not neutral. In all social systems, some positions are accorded greater status than others. With this status differentiation comes differential access to power" (p. 27). Mallory's response to Christine's case did not reflect an awareness of these issues of power and status.

Ms. Pratt gave students time in class to share their written responses from Christine's case. Students shared their responses in small groups. When Mallory shared her response with the other focus students, Lydia argued that Mallory could not make a comparison between special education students and her cousins. She stated that including

special education students was different, and she gave an example to illustrate her point. Lydia compared including an ESL student with a child who has Down Syndrome. She explained that the biggest difference was that an ESL student could quickly improve his or her English and soon work at the level as the rest of the students in a class. However, a child with Down Syndrome would never be able to “catch up.” Lydia’s comments had an impact on Mallory. Later in the semester in her writings and during her interviews, Mallory explained that hearing Lydia’s argument made her begin to realize she was “clumping” all of the children together and was arguing for a single case. In her second interview, Mallory explained that Lydia’s comments impacted the way she was thinking about inclusion. She stated, “It’s like I was looking at it [inclusion] the way I was supposed to look at it, like every kid should be included.”

Mallory’s in-class reflections and final self-assessment revealed hearing other viewpoints from her classmates made her begin to see how issues of inclusion were really much more complex than she had originally thought. She began to see that making a blanket statement of “all students should be included” did not acknowledge the various issues teachers, parents, and students would face when promoting inclusion for all. Mallory explained that reading and discussing cases like that of Christine helped her “understand what an inclusive learning community means to other people who look in.” She explained that she liked reading cases like Christine’s because they made experiences more realistic. During our interview at the end of the semester, Mallory explained that she learned a lot by reading Christine’s case. I then pointed out that when she first read the case, her written response revealed it did *not* make her think any differently. Mallory

then agreed discussing the issues with her classmates and hearing opposing views from Lydia were what really challenged her thinking.

Mallory's experiences reading and discussing Christine's case illustrate a number of important points. First, Mallory was not challenged to think about inclusion in new or more complex ways after she read the case. Reading the case only confirmed what she already thought. Second, discussing the case with others and hearing alternative perspectives was a critical point in Mallory's learning. Third, Mallory's conversation with Lydia revealed that teacher candidates were defining and thinking about inclusion in different ways. Mallory's experiences support what other researchers have discovered about the use of cases in teacher education. Novices tend to overgeneralize and oversimplify (Spiro et al., 1988); however, discussions with peers can encourage them to look at cases more critically (Tippins et al., 1999). Mallory's experiences extend our understanding of the use of cases because they reveal how developing an awareness and understanding of inclusion is complex. Teacher candidates do not always define inclusion in the same ways. Cases can be used to assist teacher candidates in deepening their understandings of inclusion; however, some teacher candidates might need further scaffolding and support to move beyond basic and rudimentary understandings. Teacher candidates like Mallory might need encouragement to consider issues of equity, equality, status, and power when framing new definitions and understandings.

Issues from the field. Mallory's ideas about inclusion and teaching diverse learners were also challenged when she spent time in the field in a first grade classroom. Mallory's field assignment was in a school located near the university and had a diverse student population. Many of the international graduate students who attended the

university sent their children to this school. Children in Mallory's class came from various countries and spoke a variety of languages. After one of her first visits to her field placement, Mallory expressed in her dialogue journal her amazement at how easily the children in her class talked about difference.

I have heard kids talk about differences, but never really be mean about it. It seems that they are aware of their differences, but not as an inequality. An example of when I saw this was when a white girl was talking to an African girl and said, "Black people are from Kenya, like where you are from," then they went off holding hands to play.

This journal entry revealed that Mallory was surprised that children saw each other as equals, regardless of skin color, and could talk about difference in an open way. One of the goals that Ms. Pratt's team had for their classes was to assist teacher candidates in seeing difference not as a deficiency, but as a natural, inevitable variability that should be expected in today's classrooms. When Mallory visited students in the classroom, she actually got to *see* and hear a real interaction between two children who held these beliefs. When she saw two children acknowledging and accepting difference in a very natural way, Mallory expressed surprise. This journal entry revealed that Mallory was beginning to grapple with what it means to create an inclusive learning community when differences in skin color and ethnicity are involved. Here she wrote and wondered about issues of inequality, something that she did not acknowledge when reading and responding to Christine's case.

In another dialogue journal entry, Mallory again wrote about her amazement at how easily children spoke about difference. In her journal entry to Lydia, Mallory wrote the following:

I had kind of an interesting issue come up in my classroom last week. Okay, first of all I feel like every education class I take has to do with diversity. It drives me insane because I feel like half the stuff is common sense stuff. So, in my classroom this little girl who is I think half black and half white was drawing a self portrait of herself. She finished most of the picture and then came up to me and was like, "Um...what color am I?" I think my eyes must have bulged right on the spot. I was like "Hahaha... (nervous laughter) Well, what color do you want to make yourself???? (more nervous laughter) and she was like "orange." So, I was like, "Okay that sounds good!" (nervous laughter yet again). I felt like the teacher might comment...so I went and told my CT. He told me that was a perfect answer and it was fine. That made me feel better but I think I was still in shock about it. It is strange that I was surprised by it. I guess I had just never thought about, "What color am I?" It was odd. I have come to the obvious decision that you can never really be prepared for a question about diversity so it is a waste of time to learn about it because I was still not ready...

In this entry, Mallory revealed how she was surprised by the student's question. "What color am I?" She was also surprised at her response to the question because she was uncomfortable and didn't know what to say. Mallory appeared to enter a dilemma when she discovered answering the question didn't seem so "common sense." Because she felt unprepared to answer the student, Mallory drew the conclusion that learning about diversity in university classes has been a waste of time. Even though many of her courses covered issues about diversity, she stated that she still did not know how to respond.

Mallory's belief that the university should be able to prepare her with knowing what to do in a situation is not unique. Some students responded with frustration to Christine's case because they claimed they still did not know what "to do" if a severely handicapped child were to enter their classrooms. These tensions between having awareness of inclusion and knowing how to act upon this awareness appeared at various times throughout the semester and revealed how teacher candidates separated the two

concepts. These tensions also illustrated the importance that teacher candidates placed on knowing specific strategies for dealing with issues related to diversity and inclusion in the classroom.

Even though Mallory wrote that learning about diversity was a waste of time, in other assignments and interviews she explained how it was important to read and discuss cases in class. These statements contradicted what was written in her journal entry to Lydia. In her second interview, I pointed out this discrepancy to Mallory and asked her how she felt about the cases she had read in class. She admitted she still felt one could never actually be fully prepared to respond to real classroom occurrences like the ones she experienced in her field placement. She then added, “It is important for me to be reading all the case studies and stuff because I don’t know all about those things.” During an interview, Mallory explained the cases were helpful because they gave her new insight into some of these issues; however, she still believed case discussions did not actually prepare her for knowing what to say when faced with the question, “What color am I?”

They can’t prepare you but they can help you with the information, information like there *are* going to be these kinds of situations. That’s like what I really like about reading the articles... The cases, they open your eyes to these kinds of things but they don’t say straight out, “This is what you should do.” The cases exposed me to what was going on, to things that could happen.

Lundeberg (1999) argued that cases could help develop teacher candidates’ metacognition, reasoning, and beliefs about teaching and learning. She also argued that cases could support teacher candidates in acquiring theoretical and practical understandings. Mallory’s responses to Christine’s case and the “Goodnight Moon” case

revealed how case discussions supported her in a number of these areas, but she still struggled to identify how reading and discussing cases provided practical understandings that could be acted upon in the classroom. When considering these findings in relation to Villegas and Lucas' (2002) curriculum framework, there is evidence of how cases supported Mallory in acquiring the fundamental orientations for teaching diverse students. However, there is less evidence to support how these cases assisted her in developing understandings about the practice of culturally responsive teaching.

In Mallory's journal entry, she claimed she did not know how to respond to the question, "What color am I?" However, she was still able to give a response. One might argue that Mallory did know what to say and responded in an appropriate manner. However, it appeared that discussing these issues in her ED 222 did not alleviate the frustration and confusion that arose when she was actually confronted with the question. For her final self-assessment, Mallory was asked to revisit her personal writings, dialogue journal entries, and assignments and look for indications of growth and change. In this self-assessment, she wrote that revisiting her personal writings and course work made her realize she could easily pull information that allowed her to have a "totally different view on what it means to teach literacy to an inclusive learning community." She realized one of the reasons why she was continually in shock at the ease in which students in the field spoke about difference was because the children were yelling out comments that she was taught "were forbidden comments" when she was young. In her final self-assessment she wrote,

I just cannot even think back to when I was a kid and ever remember talking about different skin colors because we did not have any. When I

moved to middle school and there were a few black kids I would never talk about it because I was taught it was mean and I was scared to point out differences. Having an inclusive community like this can teach so much about respect and answer children's questions. It changes my own thoughts and interactions because it shows me that it is okay for me and children to talk about their differences.

These comments written at the end of the semester showed Mallory was beginning to move from an awareness of inclusion to knowing how a teacher creates inclusive environments. Mallory saw that it was important for teachers to talk about difference with their students and began to understand what these discussions might look like. Looking back and revisiting her personal writings played a large role in helping Mallory to become aware of why she felt uncomfortable about discussing difference and why she was continually shocked at the ease in which children spoke about difference in the classroom. In her final self-assessment, she explained how revisiting her work helped her better understand herself.

Writing about personal experiences was one of the main things that helped me understand how I wanted to teach. When I was writing the responses I gave honest answers, but was not able to immediately pull a philosophy from them. However, at the end of the course I was able to analyze what kind of life I have had and see what kind of teacher I want to be. My personal writings specifically helped me understand myself and diversity.

In her self-assessment, Mallory explained that looking back upon her own experiences helped her learn the most about why it's important to have diversity in classrooms and why it's important to talk about difference. She wrote that she would not have reached new understandings about herself if she had not been placed in a diverse classroom. Being in a diverse classroom made her realize how important it is for children

to have similar opportunities to learn about themselves and others. Revisiting her writings helped Mallory see that she had originally been thinking about diversity and inclusion in a very narrow way. She initially wrote that she wanted a diverse classroom and wanted to teach Spanish and English speaking children. However, when she revisited these comments at the end of the semester, she realized she wanted to work with English and Spanish speakers because these were the ones with whom she felt most comfortable. In the end, she recognized her statement was quite limiting because she had not mentioned wanting any other kinds of diversity in the classroom. Mallory recognized and wrote about her fears of working with students who were different from herself in her final self-assessment. She wrote that she needed to “change that fear into something positive.”

Mallory’s time spent in a culturally diverse classroom helped her broaden her definition of diversity and helped her see value in having a wider range of cultural diversity in a classroom. During our final interview, I asked Mallory if this realization of being “scared of diversity” was something she recognized prior to ED 222. She responded that she *had* thought about it but had never seen this fear as being a problem until taking ED 222. She explained, “It wasn’t like I was scared. I kind of like ignored it. It’s like I was faking the diversity thing.” Mallory explained how reading cases, engaging in conversations about difference, actually seeing children openly accept and discuss each other’s differences, and reflecting upon her own growth throughout the course helped her realize some of her own biases. She also began to see how these biases were impacting how she thought about inclusion, inclusive learning communities, and the teaching of diverse students.

Focus Students' Perceptions of Inclusion

Other students in the course described how their definition and understanding of inclusion had changed throughout the semester. Most students had grown up in white, middle-class midwestern towns and had limited experiences with people who had different backgrounds from themselves. A number of students explained how writing about their personal experiences, reading about the experiences of others, and reflecting back upon class discussions and course assignments helped them better understand some of the issues that surround teaching diverse learners in inclusive learning environments. Comments made by focus students were representative of others in the class. During our second interview, Jackie stated,

The only thing I had thought about before this class was my personal experiences in inclusion and exclusion. Those are beneficial, but it also helps to see how other teachers have encountered and dealt with inclusion issues. I had thought about this issue before but not how important it is.

Jackie explained how reading cases like the Christine case and the “Goodnight Moon” case helped her understand these issues from other perspectives.

Jackie and Lizz, like Mallory, described how case conversations within their small group helped them see they were defining inclusion too narrowly. Jackie said she began to see that creating an inclusive learning community involved gender, race, language abilities, behavioral disorders, and much more. Lizz, who first thought inclusion meant, “to just include all disabled children to the best of their ability,” also had changing views. In her final self-assessment that was written at the end of the semester, she defined inclusion as “giving all students a fair chance to learn, which also means including all students from different races, ethnicities, abilities, and backgrounds.” Lizz

wrote that her lack of exposure to diverse groups of people had contributed to the unrealistic belief of diversity she had at the beginning of the semester. Lizz explained how reading the novel *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* (Taylor, 1991) played a large role in helping her realize she had not been including aspects of ethnicity and culture when thinking about inclusion. Sadie also explained how course activities and case discussions helped her think about inclusion from different people's perspectives; however, she explained that her opinions on having inclusive classrooms did not undergo any major changes throughout the semester. In her final self-assessment she wrote,

I am holding my thought that I want to have inclusion in my classroom when I become a teacher and I will welcome any student with special needs. Just because I think that now doesn't mean that I am not going to be frustrated if I have a special needs child in my room.

These comments from focus students indicated that they were beginning to gain the sociocultural consciousness of how their own "world view is not universal" but is shaped by their "life experiences, social class, and gender" (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p. 27). They were starting to recognize the limitations of their own perspectives and personal experiences with diverse groups of people and were broadening their understandings of inclusion. For some students, this awareness brought about change in the ways they were thinking. For others, it brought about a deepening understanding. Lizz made a comment about "giving all students a fair chance to learn." This comment reflected her commitment to making a difference in the classroom and to providing equitable learning opportunities for all students. "Developing the commitment and skills to act as agents of change," according to Villegas and Lucas (2002), is one of the fundamental orientations that teacher candidates need to develop if they are going to become culturally responsive teachers (p. 53). One of Ms. Pratt's goals for the course was

to assist teacher candidates in examining themselves as learners, teachers, and cultural beings. Another goal was to assist them in developing an awareness of ways children could be marginalized or excluded from learning opportunities. Focus students' comments about case discussions and experiences in the course indicated that they were becoming metacognitively aware of their own views and beliefs and were beginning to change or deepen their understandings of inclusion. They were also beginning to form a stance towards making their classrooms inclusive learning communities.

Lundeberg (1999) stated that complex cases of teaching dilemmas can provide "rich contexts for teachers and preservice teachers to examine and reflect on their knowledge, assumptions, and beliefs" (p.13). She also stated that case pedagogy can enable teachers "to compare and evaluate their own and others' perspectives, to become more open-minded and to develop learning communities engaged in critical reflective inquiry" (p. 5). Focus students' responses to case activities supported these claims and revealed how teacher candidates' understandings of inclusion were being constructed over time.

Even though students were introduced to the concept of inclusive learning communities on the first day of class, their definitions of inclusion evolved, grew, and changed through their course and field experiences. Comments made by Mallory indicated that she began to move from a surface understanding that inclusion is accepting all students in the classroom to thinking about issues of equality when ethnic differences entered the classroom. For Lizz, creating an inclusive learning community also involved developing a commitment to providing equal learning opportunities for all students. As they developed a more complex view of inclusion, the majority of the teacher candidates

maintained a commitment to developing inclusive learning communities. However, one teacher candidate responded differently to case activities and was more critical of including all students in the general education classroom. Her story revealed how personal writing and case activities could challenge teacher candidates to consider and question the moral and ethical issues that surround inclusion.

Lydia's Story

Lydia, unlike the other four focus students and the majority of the students in the class, experienced different reactions to issues of inclusion when reading and responding to cases. Her story is unique and needs to be shared because it illustrates another aspect of how teacher candidates might respond and relate to personal writing and case-based activities. Throughout the entire semester, Lydia had a personal struggle with how she defined inclusion and whether or not she was in favor of it. Lydia's journey is a revealing one because she was the only student who openly challenged, doubted, and questioned the benefits of including all students, especially severely handicapped, in the general education classroom.

Confronting the Dilemmas of Inclusion

From the first weeks of class it was obvious Mallory and Lydia were good friends and knew each other before the semester began. They frequently sat together and joked with one another throughout class, but never did it in such a way that seemed to disturb their classmates. Being dialogue journal partners, I later learned, helped the two become closer friends. I was attracted to the idea of being able to closely follow two focus

students who were also dialogue journal partners, and I was happy to learn that both Mallory and Lydia were interested in being interviewed for the study. During the beginning weeks of the semester, I paid close attention to their interactions in class.

In their first dialogue journal exchange, both Lydia and Mallory wrote that they wanted honesty from one another and hoped writing to each other would push them to think in new ways. In Lydia's first entry she told Mallory that she, too, was from "a very small, white community and did not experience much diversity before attending MWU." Lydia wrote that when she was growing up, there was only one minority student in her school. The rest of the students were White. Lydia explained there was no ethnic diversity in her school but stated there were socioeconomic differences. When describing her town in her first dialogue journal entry, Lydia wrote, "Trailer parks spring up right next to mansions. This makes for tension sometimes in the community, with adults as well as children."

Even though Lydia and Mallory were good friends, they held different perspectives on inclusion and the teaching of diverse students. At the end of the semester, Lydia commented that Mallory's responses to her entries often presented new insights and perspectives that she had not previously considered. She explained how Mallory's responses had really surprised her because she initially thought Mallory would respond in ways that corresponded with her own thoughts and beliefs. Lydia's interviews, classroom discussions, and written work revealed she was struggling with some issues that were very different from the ones Mallory faced.

Making connections. Lydia's first personal writing began to reveal some of her prior educational experiences. She described how her first grade teacher put students into

reading groups based on a preliminary reading test. Lydia was placed in a low reading group because of her poor reading comprehension skills and was sent to a remedial program when her reading did not improve. She wrote,

My mother cried when she found out that I was being sent there because she thought it meant that I was mentally handicapped in some way. My father took the opposite approach. He saw it as a positive thing, just as a sick person sees medicine as a solution to a problem.

The remedial program appeared to have worked. Lydia commented in an interview that by second grade, she was among the top readers in her class. In Lydia's second personal writing, where she was asked to describe the ideal place where she would like to work, she wrote, "I would like to work in a midsized community with a variety of socioeconomic levels and mixed ethnicities. Diversity is very important to me." Later in the semester, however, Lydia began to face the moral and ethical issues surrounding inclusion and struggled with her feelings for working with special education students. Lydia's writings and comments in class reflected how she began to face these struggles and question her beliefs about inclusion.

Lydia's personal struggles with inclusion began to appear in her third personal writing assignment. This assignment was given to students prior to reading Christine's case, and they were asked to write about their k-12 experiences with diverse groups of people. Lydia wrote about one particular student, Nick, who had autism and really stood out in her mind. She wrote, "He doesn't stand out because of his disability so much, but more because of the way that other students, and especially teachers pushed him to the outer edge of everything." Lydia explained Nick could not speak and had an aide who stayed with him throughout the entire school day. He would communicate and indicate

what he wanted by pointing or spelling out words with his fingers. Lydia described how he did not really misbehave in class, but would have occasional outbursts.

In his outbursts, Nick would stand up from his chair and run about the room. He would slap his face repeatedly or put his fingers in his mouth. The most disturbing behavior he exhibited was when he would sort of scream or yell out in this very deep and then very shrill tone. Our teacher never knew how to handle this behavior. So, instead of addressing it or asking him to sit down, they would sort of ignore him and pretend he wasn't even there. This might be easy to do when students are drawing on their desk, passing notes, or whispering to a friend. It is entirely another thing to ignore a student when they are running all over the room slapping themselves and screaming. I always felt uncomfortable in these situations because I didn't know what I was supposed to do. It was very hard to just ignore what Nick was doing, even though I thought that was what my teachers wanted me to do. Some teachers would even tell us to ignore him during these outbursts. I feel that this overlapped into times when Nick was acting just fine. Students still felt like they were supposed to ignore Nick and pretend he was invisible. At least, this is how I felt about the issues.

In this description of her experiences with Nick, Lydia also wrote that she had mixed feelings about how to deal with handicapped children like him.

I guess I don't know how to approach them. I feel like treating them like they are special or talking to them differently is belittling to them and frustrating for them. However, I feel that treating them like they are normal is unrealistic because they are not. To me it says that you have to be normal to be talked to; if you don't recognize how they are unique then it makes it seem like you are avoiding it or something. I don't really know how to articulate this or explain it properly. I guess I am just confused.

Soon after Lydia wrote this response, I interviewed her and asked her about the incident and if she could tell me more about what was going through her mind when she wrote the assignment. She explained that she was thinking as she was writing and the

thoughts just came out. She had not rehearsed what she was going to write. She commented how the whole issue of inclusion was really frustrating to her because she felt she was not prepared for it as a teacher. She said that if she were a teacher and received a student like Nick, she would “be just really scared.” Lydia then told about her cousin who was adopted and had cerebral palsy and severe mental retardation. She explained how dealing with her cousin was a big challenge for her. Lydia commented that her aunt would say, “Treat her like the rest of the kids,” but she would think to herself that her cousin was *not* like the rest of kids. Lydia’s writing indicated she was having conflicting thoughts about how one should treat handicapped children, especially the severely handicapped. In the coming weeks, Lydia shared her feelings of doubt and concern with her classmates.

Responding to Christine’s case. After writing about their personal experiences, students were asked to read Christine’s case and write a response to the article for homework. Lydia wrote her response and included it in her dialogue journal entry to Mallory. In this entry, she again shared her frustrations about the issue of inclusion.

I wanted to type my personal response to you for my dialogue journal this week because the special education inclusion issue is one that I constantly struggle with and I am curious as to what your thoughts will be regarding my response to the narrative... I agree with what many of the students in the classroom [in the article] said after viewing the video; like them, I do not feel prepared to teach students with special needs. There are some of my colleagues who have chosen to focus specifically on working with those types of students with special needs; I have not. They have the training, patience, and desire; I do not... When Christine compares Alice and Sean with a group of migrant children in an effort to prove her point, I feel she was sadly mistaken. With extra time for a short time, ESL students can begin speaking English and perform as well as any other student. Down Syndrome students will need special help forever and will probably never surpass other “normal” students.

Lydia's personal experiences and responses to Christine's case revealed how she was wrestling with the "ethical questions and moral consequences" of including handicapped children in the general education classroom (Lundeberg, 1999, p. 15). Lydia was struggling with issues of equity and equality and wondered what it meant to be "normal." Lydia wanted to treat her cousin like other children, but she wondered how to treat them equally when her handicapped cousin was obviously "*not* like the rest of kids." Lydia's frustration over not feeling prepared emerged here and at other times throughout the semester. I wondered what she meant by *being prepared* and tried to get her to state more explicitly what she meant during an interview. Lydia explained, "I wouldn't know what to do even when he [Nick] does have an aide." She added, "I'm supposed to teach him things, and I don't know how to like talk to him or act around him."

These comments, like ones made earlier by Mallory, illustrated the tension between having an awareness of inclusion and knowing how to act when confronted with real issues in the classroom. Lundeberg (1999) defined practical knowledge as "oriented toward performance and arises from the situations and experiences of teachers" (p. 6). Lydia appeared to be frustrated because she had not acquired the practical knowledge that was needed for teaching special needs children. When Lydia said that she did not have the "training, patience, or desire" to teach children with special needs, she also demonstrated that she had not developed one of the fundamental orientations for becoming a culturally responsive teacher. She had not developed the "moral obligation" to "facilitate the

growth and development” of all children, not just for some (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p. 53).

When Mallory responded to Lydia’s journal entry, she indicated that she understood how Lydia felt. She wrote, “Part of me is saying, What? How am I supposed to have enough time for a class and special needs students?” Mallory provided Lydia with another perspective. She explained how she felt it was not fair to exclude special education students from the regular classroom and wrote, “It is quite possible that learning to teach them is something a teacher learns to do over time. Maybe you can’t be ‘prepared’ for it, it just comes over time.” Mallory admitted it was all a bit scary, but demonstrated more commitment and favorable view towards inclusion than Lydia. In her written response to Lydia, Mallory explained that she believed teachers would eventually work through these difficult issues.

During an interview, Lydia explained that what prompted her to open up and share her true feelings with Mallory and other group members was a result of something Mallory had said in class prior to reading Christine’s case. Mallory made a comment about how sometimes people are afraid to be honest in discussions about inclusion because they do not want to seem insensitive for feeling inadequate when it comes to instructing children with severe handicaps. In a writing assignment completed after students discussed Christine’s case, Lydia wrote that she decided to “just be blunt and honest” about how she felt after hearing Mallory’s comments. When students discussed the Christine case in class, Lydia was as honest with her group members as she was with Mallory. While discussing the case, Lydia made an analogy between people going to the dentist and students going to special education class. She explained that if you have a

vision problem, you wouldn't go to a dentist for help. She said how she saw nothing wrong with "admitting to a weakness and going to a specialist for help." When I heard Lydia make this comment, it eerily reminded me of when she described going to a reading specialist in elementary school and explained how her father saw it as a positive thing, "just as a sick person sees medicine as a solution to a problem." I couldn't help but wonder if Lydia thought of handicapped children as having a problem that needed to be fixed.

When discussing Christine's case with classmates, Lydia stated she didn't think it was "all bad" if schools had special education students see specialists rather than "expecting the regular classroom teacher to do everything." When Lydia's group members heard her make this comment, one of them asked what it would take to make her feel more comfortable about teaching handicapped children. Lydia responded that perhaps more knowledge and training would make her feel more comfortable. After she made this comment, another group member stated that time and experience would make one more comfortable working with special education students. Lydia's response was, "Yeah, but I still don't want to deal with it."

According to Villegas and Lucas (2002), teacher candidates who hold a deficit perspective of diverse students believe children who "don't conform to the dominant culture" are "in need of 'fixing'" (p. 36). Villegas and Lucas claimed one of the challenges of preparing culturally responsive teachers is finding ways to confront and change teacher candidates' deficit views. Lydia's experiences show that even when confronted with alternative perspectives, her frustration and lack of commitment to teaching special needs students did not change. Reading and discussing Christine's case

did not appear to support Lydia in acquiring the fundamental orientations that are needed to become a culturally responsive teacher. Research on teacher preparation has shown how difficult it is to change preservice teachers' attitudes and beliefs (Calderhead & Robson, 1991; Tillema & Knol, 1997). Lydia's responses highlight some of the difficulties in preparing culturally responsive teachers. Her experiences illustrate some of the challenges teacher educators might face when using cases to prepare teachers for working with diverse students.

After reading Christine's case, some students wrote they felt unprepared to teach handicapped children. For a few teacher candidates, reading the case seemed to enhance their anxieties and fears about working with special needs students. When teacher candidates shared some of their responses in small and large group discussions, however, these concerns and fears were not made public. During our next planning session, Ms. Pratt explained that she was going to use a fishbowl activity to try to surface some of the issues that students were not making public. In a fishbowl activity, a group of students volunteer to sit in a circle and discuss their thoughts about an issue. The rest of the class sits around this circle, forming an outer circle. The purpose of the fishbowl is to model small group conversations in front of an entire class. When Ms. Pratt used fishbowl in class, she explained her reasoning for using it and discussed with students how a teacher might model and discuss her expectations for small group discussions using a fishbowl.

Lydia volunteered to participate in the discussion during the fishbowl activity and shared with the entire class the same concerns she had shared with her small group members. She explained inclusion was "more than just having a teacher who is really excited" about including students. She added, "You can write papers all day saying how

much you want to include students, but this doesn't change the fact that people might still struggle with how exactly they will go about doing this." In the fishbowl discussion, Lydia admitted she didn't know what the goal was for including special education students in the regular classrooms. "Is it to be fair?" she asked. One of the special education preservice teachers in the class responded that she didn't think it was to make everything necessarily fair, rather, it was "more to make the special education kids not feel different from the others and also to make the general education students experience this." The response given by the special education student did not seem to satisfy Lydia, and she continued to share her doubts and concerns about knowing how to include special education students in the classroom. The fishbowl discussion surfaced issues of fairness and equity with the entire class. Lydia's question encouraged some students to think about these issues and ask themselves what is fair. The discussion did not, however, alleviate Lydia's questions, frustrations, and concerns.

After discussing Christine's case in class, students were asked to write a reflection for homework on what they were thinking after reading the article and engaging in the class discussions. In her reflection, Lydia wrote, "I do not know what else to say about teaching in inclusive learning communities." She expressed a frustration of feeling that she was being pushed to come up with "some kind of right answer." In this assignment, she reflected on when she shared her feelings with her small group members.

I decided to just be blunt and honest about how I feel. My group seemed sort of shocked. I told them that I do not completely agree with inclusion... It might not even be about the training issues because if the training was offered to me I don't think I would take it. I'm just not interested. I sound like a jerk to some people for saying this, but I am trying to be honest.

Issues from the field. About the same time Lydia was struggling with issues of inclusion in her ED 222 course, she was also observing how her collaborating teacher was struggling with similar issues in the elementary classroom. In her dialogue journal entries, Lydia spoke about a student in the field who had attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and was creating a lot of behavior problems in the classroom. Lydia's collaborating teacher spoke with Lydia about her frustrations working the child and openly discussed how she was struggling with knowing what to do. Lydia wrote about the child with ADHD and explained how the classroom teacher was thinking about seating the child away from his classmates, who were sitting in a small group arrangement, so he could not disturb his peers. Lydia's collaborating teacher stated that she might put tape marks on the floor so that the child would know the boundaries for where he should place his desk. Lydia felt uncomfortable with this idea. When she wrote about her field experiences prior to reading Christine's case, Lydia stated,

This bothers me but I don't know of another solution... I can't imagine how he will feel when he is alone all the time, while everyone else sits together in groups. However, it isn't fair for his neighbors to suffer because of his distractions either.

These comments were written near the end of the semester and revealed how Lydia was struggling with how inclusion can be fair when what benefits one child might not benefit another. In Lydia's eyes, she could not envision a resolution that would benefit *both* the student with ADHD and the other students in the class. Lydia was frustrated with this situation because she was aware that the "solution" for the problem could marginalize some students while favoring others. She was dealing with the very issues of equity and equality that Ms. Pratt had wanted students to understand and consider. Lydia understood

the issues at hand but still struggled with the practicalities of what a teacher *does* in such situations.

In the final two weeks of the semester, Lydia described to her group members and wrote about how her attitude towards inclusion was undergoing change. In weeks ten and eleven of the semester, Lydia appeared frustrated with the whole idea of inclusion. In week thirteen she was unusually quiet in class and did not contribute to any whole class discussions on the issue. The previous week, however, she had shared her viewpoints and frustrations in the fishbowl activity. In week fourteen, Lydia shared her ED 222 portfolio to group members and discussed the growth she had experienced throughout the course. As I walked around the room listening to students share their portfolios, I overheard unusually positive and uplifting comments coming from Lydia. I positioned myself so I could hear her talking to her group and later revisited the audio recording of this discussion. Lydia commented how in the beginning, she “wasn’t really excited” about the idea of inclusion. However, she had seriously considered a comment a classmate, Brianna, made in class.

During the fishbowl activity, Brianna told the class that teachers couldn’t just say, “I don’t want to teach those students.” Brianna pointed out that teachers have the responsibility to teach all students and picking and choosing whom you want to teach is not an option. Lydia told her group she agreed with Brianna’s comments and explained that she now understood in the real world you can’t just say, “I don’t have the training so I’m not going to do it.” Lydia also told her group that she still agreed with what she wrote in her dialogue journal about her concerns for inclusion but was now considering the issue from a new perspective. Lydia acknowledged that teachers have to take some

responsibility on their own for learning more about disabilities if they have a special needs student in their class. She acknowledged that there were a number of places where she could go for information and for help. During the small group conversation, Lydia admitted she was now more willing and excited about the prospect of teaching special education students than she was earlier in the semester.

As I listened to Lydia's comments, I was quite amazed by her change in attitude. What had contributed to such a change? When I read her final self-assessment and interviewed her at the end of the semester, Lydia explained how it all started to come together. It appeared Lydia's experiences in the course and her experiences in the field had combined together to give her a better understanding of how teachers create inclusive classrooms and support the learning of all students. She explained that she began to see that even experienced teachers struggle with these issues and there are no "right" answers. In our second interview, Lydia explained how seeing her collaborating teacher struggle with the very issues that were being discussed in ED 222 helped her realize how a teacher would actually go about making her classroom an inclusive one. Lydia explained that she was very concerned with her collaborating teacher's decision to isolate the ADHD child in her class; however, in one of her last field visits she realized the teacher was *not* isolating him. She stated, "This is how she is including him because now he can be who he has to be to learn stuff, like when he's learning and the most engaged, he's the loudest." She added, "I realized that while she was isolating him initially, that was how she was making him a better member of the community."

In a sense, what Lydia realized was that treating a student fairly, for his best interest, did not necessarily mean he was treated just like the others. Lydia commented

that the child was separated from the others just enough so his movements in the desk would not bump and disrupt his neighbors; however, he sat just close enough that he still functioned as a member of the group. Lydia also saw how the teacher strategically placed the child near students with whom he worked best. Lydia realized that treating students equally and fairly did not necessarily mean that she had to treat students exactly the same.

During her second interview, Lydia explained that many things occurred at the end of the semester that helped contribute to her change in attitude towards inclusion. First, discussions in ED 222 influenced the way she observed students during her field visits. Reading and discussing cases and viewing teaching on RCE helped her realize what she should be observing then in the field. Instead of labeling the issue surrounding the ADHD student as a simple behavior problem, she explained that she was now seeing it as a problem related to inclusion. Second, she began to realize teachers are constantly struggling with issues and learning new things; there are no “right” answers. Lydia explained how she was fascinated by the fact that Ms. Pratt left classroom teaching to pursue more education at the university level. She was intrigued that an experienced classroom teacher was seeking to learn more. At the same time, Lydia observed her CT trying out new things and showing that she, another experienced teacher, also had more to learn. Lydia explained that seeing her collaborating teacher, an experienced teacher, struggling with the very issues that were being discussed in the course helped her realize teachers are constantly problem solving in the classroom and are constantly learning. Third, Lydia began to realize resources exist for teachers as they struggle with problems and continue to learn. For example, she saw how her CT sought advice from other people and realized the Internet and programs like RCE could also serve as resources.

In her last interview, Lydia explained how she was beginning to see teachers in an entirely new way. She explained that she had first thought teachers already knew everything but was now seeing teachers “as life-long learners.” She stated, “It’s like if you [the teacher] are a learner, then you can be like the lead learner among them [students in the class].” Lydia explained how thinking about herself as a *lead learner* made her excited. She stated that she realized she would never have “the answer,” but she now understood that teachers are always learning, using different resources to support this learning. Lydia’s changing beliefs about knowledge and finding “the answer” support what others have learned about the ways cases can support teacher candidates’ epistemological awareness and growth (Barnett & Tyson, 1993, 1999; Lundeberg & Fawver, 1994; Lundeberg et al., 1999). Researchers have discovered that case discussions can affect teacher candidates’ views regarding sources of knowledge and provide them with a stronger sense of autonomy (Barnett & Tyson, 1993, 1999).

Reflections on Lydia’s experiences. Lydia’s journey was a complex one that involved personal writings, small and large group discussions, responding to cases, participating in a field experience, and a variety of other activities that occurred throughout the semester. She admitted she could have easily responded to assignments in class by writing “a long spiel” about how she was “really excited to create an inclusive learning community.” However, she described in her final self-assessment that she decided to instead explore the issues because, in the long run, it “would be a better road” for her. When asked, Lydia could not explain why she decided to personally confront these issues in class. However, in her final self-assessment she explained that reading Christine’s case was a key turning point for her in the course. She acknowledged that

reading the case was when the issue of inclusion became “very real” to her and when she began to openly struggle with the issues.

Reading and responding to written cases was one of the most helpful things for me this semester as far as personal learning & growth are concerned. The Christine case was how I began to seriously think about my attitude towards inclusive learning communities. I really struggled with this, and in the end was inspired to learn all that I could about building these types of communities.

Lydia’s journey stands out from the others because she was the only student in the class who publicly criticized and questioned the idea of inclusion. Perhaps she was not the only one undergoing such questioning and turmoil over the issue; however, she was the only one who openly expressed her critical views consistently throughout the semester with the entire class. Acknowledging and understanding Lydia’s journey is important because it shows how various aspects of the course came together for her, and it illustrates the role personal stories and cases had in this journey. Reading cases, discussing cases, and observing dilemmas in the field exposed Lydia to issues of inclusion that were not consistent with her views and beliefs. According to conceptual change theory, discrepant images can create cognitive dissonance and prompt conceptual change (Posner et al., 1982). Before change can occur, however, Lydia would have to view her own existing conceptions with some dissatisfaction before considering a new one. This description of how conceptions come to change does provide some explanation for Lydia’s experiences. However, what prompted Lydia to become dissatisfied with her views is not clear. Lydia admitted that she could have responded to Christine’s case saying what others wanted to hear, even if she didn’t believe

what she was saying. However, she chose to confront and try to understand what was causing such dissonance rather than ignore it.

What causes some students to ignore dissonance, maintaining their original beliefs, while others confront it? Lydia provided some insight when she stated that the Christine case made her think about her own attitudes, and the issues became very real to her. Discussing the issues in class, writing about similar personal experiences, and seeing issues of inclusion being confronted in the field all provided ways to make the issues real. However, it wasn't until Lydia took ownership for the issues and began to make connections between these various experiences did a change in her conceptions begin to occur. Lydia's story shows how her discoveries evolved over time and demonstrates how making the connection between course work and the field, with one supporting the other, became one critical turning point for her in the course. Informal conversations with Lydia and Mallory revealed some of their friends in the course shared the same concerns Lydia expressed in class. However, these concerns were usually revealed in one-on-one conversations between friends, sometimes occurring outside the classrooms. They were not openly revealed with others in the class.

At the end of the semester during her second interview, Lydia expressed her frustration with her classmates for not speaking out, questioning the purpose of inclusion, and engaging in class discussions with a more critical view. She felt this lack of support from her peers helped her realize she had to tackle these issues on her own and seek out other resources that would support her in her own learning. Lydia admitted that at one point in time, she felt she would "never be

able to understand how an inclusive learning community would work.” In her final self-assessment, she stated that she remembered being “relatively hopeless about the whole situation.” Once Lydia began to make various connections throughout the semester, however, she began to view issues of inclusion and the teaching of diverse students in new ways. Some of her tensions and frustrations began to disappear when she saw how a teacher could take action and solve practical classroom dilemmas while maintaining an inclusive learning environment. Lydia explained how the combination of different experiences helped her grow into a better learner who was more open to thinking about and discussing issues of inclusion.

Learning from Stories

What can we learn from the experiences of Mallory and Lydia? Even though these two teacher candidates do not represent the entire class, their stories reveal that engaging students in personal writing activities and having them read and respond to written cases can lead to a deeper awareness and understanding of what it means to create inclusive learning communities. Focus students began to question and critique the limitations of their assumptions and beliefs about teaching diverse learners when they made connections between their personal experiences, field experiences, and the cases they were learning about in class. Engaging in conversations with peers and hearing alternative perspectives were especially important, because sometimes the simple act of writing about experiences and reading cases did not encourage teacher candidates to look critically at the assumptions they held.

These findings are important; however, they are not unexpected when considering the research that has already been done on case methodology and narrative studies. Lundeberg, Levin, and Harrington (1999) stated that even though they thought using cases with preservice teachers fostered development in a variety of areas, they knew little about how this development happened. This study is significant because it illustrates how following the experiences of five focus students provided new insights that other narrative and case methodology studies have not provided. What is significant about focus students' responses is that they illustrate the process in which individuals made meaning from case-based activities and personal writing assignments. By using narrative as both a pedagogical approach and as a method for analyzing data, narrative stories emerged and could be analyzed to see how teacher candidates formed new understandings about inclusion.

Mallory's and Lydia's stories illustrated how reflecting upon and revisiting their personal writings helped create a framework for talking about their experiences in the course. When they spoke about new insights, changing beliefs, and their most powerful learning moments in the course, they usually did so by making connections to the personal stories and relating these stories to course and field experiences. Mallory's and Lydia's greatest growth did not come from a single case, a single writing activity, or a single discussion. These experiences arose from both carefully structured activities and from experiences that could not have been planned in advance. Ms. Pratt provided scaffolding for course activities by modeling activities, providing prompts to support case discussions, and having students share personal stories. However, she found it was not

always easy to find ways to help students make connections across activities. She also found it difficult to find time in class for students to discuss these connections.

Mallory's and Lydia's experiences are significant because they reveal some of the challenges teacher educators might face when using narrative and case activities in their classes as they attempt to prepare teacher candidates for working with diverse students. Ms. Pratt spoke about her frustration when students did not openly share their thoughts during class discussions, and Lydia also expressed frustration with her peers for not being more critical of the issues during class. Having students work in fixed groups where relationships could form and having them write to a dialogue journal partner throughout the semester did surface critical issues. Group discussions and open dialogue conversations created opportunities for students to hear and critique one another's perspectives. The fishbowl conversation allowed more ideas to become public; however, there were still some individuals who did not speak out during these discussions and felt it was harder to speak in front of a large group rather than a small group.

Focus students' responses to case activities revealed a tension between developing an awareness of inclusive learning environments and knowing how to actually create these environments. Making connections between cases and the field made some focus students begin to think about issues of equity and equality in the classrooms, issues that they had not previously considered when reading Christine's case. Discussing cases, relating them to personal experiences, and seeing connections in the field supported teacher candidates in acquiring the fundamental orientations that are needed to become culturally responsive teachers. Comments made throughout the semester illustrated the variety of ways teacher candidates were constructing definitions of inclusion. Some

teacher candidates thought of inclusion as acceptance of others, regardless of their skin color, cultural background, language, or ability. One defined it as “giving all a fair chance to learn” and explained how it was a teachers’ responsibility and moral obligation to teach all students. Another came to understand that inclusion meant talking about difference in ways that honor all children’s backgrounds.

These emerging definitions of inclusion illustrate what can occur when personal writings and case activities are used to prepare teacher candidates for teaching diverse students. Understanding how teacher candidates come to define inclusion through these experiences expands what has been previously learned in narrative and case studies. Teacher candidates’ responses, however, also revealed that there was tension between developing an awareness of inclusion and being able to act upon this awareness. In the next chapter, I illustrate how course activities and cases, especially the “Goodnight Moon” case and hypermedia cases, assisted teacher candidates in moving from awareness to action.

Chapter 4 Moving From Awareness to Action

The purpose of this study was to investigate how teacher candidates responded to case activities, how their personal stories and experiences interacted with their interpretation of cases, and how their views of teaching diverse learners changed over time. In Chapter 3, I introduced stories of focus students to illustrate how teacher candidates constructed new definitions of inclusion when engaged in personal writing and case activities. These stories revealed how making connections between personal experiences, field experiences, and course activities prompted some teacher candidates to have powerful learning experiences. Chapter 3 introduced some of the tensions that occurred when teacher candidates developed an awareness of inclusive learning environments but felt unable to act on this awareness. In this chapter, I illustrate how personal writing and case activities helped move focus students from awareness to action. These activities helped teacher candidates understand the role of the teacher in inclusive learning environments. They also helped teacher candidates begin to acquire the knowledge and skills that are needed to provide children with literate learning experiences in these environments.

This chapter presents some of the ways personal writing and case activities assisted focus students in making a connection from theory to practice. The tensions between theory and practice in teacher education are not uncommon. Researchers have written about the lack of impact that teacher education courses seem to have on preservice teachers (Feiman-Nemser, 1883, 1987; Kennedy, 1999). They have found that preservice teachers frequently complain that education courses place too much emphasis

on theory and not enough on actually teaching them how to teach (Feiman-Nemser, 1983; Lampert & Ball, 1999; Lortie, 1975). Additional tensions also emerge when teacher educators' views of teaching do not match the views that teacher candidates bring to their education courses. Studies have revealed that teacher candidates frequently view teaching as primarily involving the development and refinement of technical skills (Bartolome, 1994; Giroux, 1989; Moje & Wade, 1997; Tippins, Nichols, & Dana, 1999). This view of teaching can lead teacher candidates to expect their education courses to provide them with a set of tools and techniques that will work in classroom teaching situations (Moje & Wade, 1997; Tippins, Nichols, & Dana, 1999).

Villegas and Lucas (2002) stated that a central task of culturally responsive teachers is "to create a classroom environment in which all students are encouraged to make sense of new ideas - that is, to construct knowledge that helps them better understand the world - rather than merely memorizing predigested information" (p. 92). Villegas and Lucas also stated that culturally responsive teachers "tailor instruction to their students rather than impose singular teaching styles to which all students must adapt" (p. 102). These visions of culturally responsive teachers parallel the goals that Ms. Pratt and the team of literacy instructors had for their courses. They designed a literacy methods curriculum around the theme of building inclusive learning environments so that they could help their students develop an understanding of what it means to teach diverse learners. They promoted constructivist views of learning that acknowledge difference not as a deficit but as something to build upon. Throughout the semester, Ms. Pratt created opportunities for students to engage in personal writing and case activities while

continually posing the questions, “What does it mean to create an inclusive learning community?”

In the following sections, I describe how personal writing and case activities assisted focus students in acquiring the knowledge and skills for teaching literacy and creating inclusive learning environments. The majority of this chapter describes what focus students learned; however, I occasionally describe how others in the class responded to activities to provide a context for focus student findings. I present the findings in two sections. In the first section, I examine how one particular case activity helped teacher candidates begin to reconsider the role of the teacher in an inclusive learning environment. In this section, I describe how focus students began to understand how teachers’ actions in classrooms could impact the learning of their students. I also share the story of how one focus student realized that she had to confront her own past if she wanted to create a supportive learning community for children. In the second section, I describe how teacher candidates developed general content and pedagogical knowledge for teaching diverse learners. I highlight some of the case activities that provided teacher candidates with examples of how teachers can accommodate and adapt literacy instruction for a diverse range of learners. I end the chapter by summarizing what supported focus students in acting upon their awareness and understandings of inclusion.

Reconsidering the Role of the Teacher

During the first few weeks of the semester, I began to see indications that focus students were beginning to think about the role of the teacher in new ways. It was during these weeks that Ms. Pratt introduced issues of learning communities, theories of

learning, and teachers' conceptualizations of literacy instruction. Ms. Pratt's first homework assignment required teacher candidates to read McGee and Tompkins' (1995) article titled, *Literature-Based Reading Instruction: What's Guiding the Instruction?* This article described how literature-based reading instruction could result in very different approaches and activities in classrooms. The article demonstrated this by presenting four different teachers, descriptions of their teaching, and the theoretical approaches that guided their literature-based instruction. In the second week of class while students were discussing the article, Ms. Pratt asked who gained and who lost when a teacher chose a specific instructional approach for his or her classroom. One of the goals that Ms. Pratt and other instructors had for their courses was to develop teacher candidates' awareness of the ways children can be marginalized or excluded from learning opportunities. They also wanted teacher candidates to become aware of how an unintended, hidden curriculum⁹ could privilege some children and not others. Ms. Pratt hoped that by asking the question, "Who gains and who loses?" she would assist teacher candidates in thinking more critically about teacher decision-making and classroom instruction. She also hoped that asking the question early in the semester would help teacher candidates begin to think about issues of equity and equality in the classroom.

Teacher candidates responded to Ms. Pratt's question by describing how children who don't like to read, who don't like to talk in small groups, and who are poor readers might be at a disadvantage when teachers use a literature-based approach to instruction. After discussing the article, Ms. Pratt informed students that they were going to read for homework another article that introduced a teacher who was struggling with her own conceptualization of literacy. In this article, *Peace Takes Practice*, (TTP, 1997) a

⁹ See chapter 2 for a definition and discussion of the *hidden curriculum*.

teacher described her struggles to make her classroom a peaceful, learning community for all students. The article described how the teacher, Lourdes, confronted her own reactions to disturbances in the classroom and realized that her first, natural reaction to children's behavioral problems was not necessarily the kind of reaction that she wanted to act upon.

While discussing *Peace Takes Practice* during the third week of class, teacher candidates were asked to think about the various communities in which they belonged. Ms. Pratt asked students to think about how they fit into each of these communities and how people learn the social norms for various communities. Ms. Pratt also asked teacher candidates to think about classroom communities and how children come to learn the social norms of the classroom. She added, "Who will determine which culture is privileged? Which is marginalized?" After introducing these questions, she had students form pairs and discuss the following questions: What does Lourdes value? What does she believe about literacy? What influences her decisions? Who gains and who loses when she makes these decisions? These questions prompted much discussion both in and out of class. Focus students revisited the question of "Who gains and who loses" in their dialogue journals and during interviews.

Ms. Pratt indirectly introduced issues of cultural capital¹⁰ when she asked her students to think about the social norms of communities and how children come to learn the social norms of classrooms. Nieto (2002) argued that the experiences of children with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and those raised in poverty "tend to be quite different from the experiences of more economically and socially advantaged students" (p. 8). Since the cultural capital that is privileged in schools reflects primarily the values and goals of the White, middle class society, children from diverse

¹⁰ See chapter 2 for a definition and discussion of *cultural capital*.

backgrounds can become marginalized in schools when teachers hold lower expectations for them (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann's, 1989; Feimen-Nemser, 1990; Hollingsworth, 1998; McDiarmid & Price, 1993). Ms. Pratt wanted teacher candidates to become more aware of issues surrounding equity vs. equality, cultural capital, and the hidden curriculum when making literacy instructional decisions. One of the ways she assisted them in thinking about these issues was by having them think about who gains and who loses when teachers make certain decisions in the classroom.

Ms. Pratt's question of who gains and who loses prompted teacher candidates to reevaluate and question the role of the teacher. One focus student, Jackie, was instantly struck by the question of who gains and who loses and wrote about it in a dialogue journal entry.

The question posed in class about who gains and who loses from a situation really opened my eyes. I had never thought about students who might not gain from the method of something being taught, especially in the cases where the methods being used were ones I benefited greatly from. For instance, when we were reflecting in our groups, I was sharing how I really enjoyed incorporating personal experiences into activities. However, I had never stopped to consider those children who may have not grown up with good past experiences to draw and make connections.

When I interviewed Jackie later in the semester, she shared what she expressed in her dialogue journal and explained that she felt these new ideas greatly impacted her. She described how she believed thinking in this way, asking herself who gains and who loses, helped her to become more flexible and more aware that students might not be getting something out of an activity. Villegas and Lucas (2002) wrote that built into the fabric of schools "are curricular, pedagogical, and evaluative practices that intentionally or unintentionally privilege the affluent, white, and male segments of society" (p. 30). They

stated that from childhood, we are told that “schools ‘level the playing field,’ providing opportunities for all, regardless of social background, by serving as the impartial grounds on which individuals freely prove their merit” (p. 30). Jackie’s journal entry revealed that she was beginning to consider how schools might *not* level the playing field. She was beginning to develop a cultural awareness and an understanding that others do not necessarily share her personal perspective. Such awareness, according to Villegas and Lucas, is an initial step in developing sociocultural awareness and becoming a culturally responsive teacher. Jackie was beginning to see that she and her students might not share the same experiences and was considering how this might impact children in a classroom environment.

Lydia, another focus student, was also struck by the question of who gains and who loses. In her first interview, she explained that she had never thought about who gains and who loses until Ms. Pratt asked the question in class. Lydia stated, “I never really thought about who’d gain or lose and like how everything I do will effect [students] in such a great way.” Lydia related the ideas of who gains and loses to her own elementary experiences. In one of her personal writings that described her literate experiences growing up, Lydia described how her elementary school had switched from a phonics based, traditional approach of literacy instruction to a more holistic approach that focused heavily on writing workshop. She remembered all of the phonics workbooks being thrown away during the middle of second grade and described teachers’ literacy instruction was drastically changed for the rest of her elementary schooling.

In her mid-semester assessment, Lydia reflected again on her school experiences and wrote that she felt she had “lost out” when the school changed its literacy program.

She described how she later changed schools and took standardized tests that asked about specific grammar points that she could not answer. She also remembered taking a university English course and being unfamiliar with how to diagram a sentence. Lydia explained that she began to realize how much her prior schooling had impacted her when her classmates commented that the English class in which she was enrolled would be a guaranteed 4.0 because it was all a review of what they had learned in middle school. For Lydia, however, this was not a review. In her self-assessment, Lydia commented on the role that learning theories have on teacher decision-making and reflected on her prior schooling experiences. She began to form clearer ideas about the ways teachers' actions can positively or negatively impact students and wrote about these ideas in her self-assessment.

This makes me feel a lot of pressure. This situation makes me realize that not only will learning theories force me to make decisions in my classroom, those decisions are serious. My decisions will affect the way my students learn, and will define what they learn about and what they do not. This is a big deal, and up until recently I never realized how much responsibility teachers have on their shoulders.

Studies have shown that preservice teachers' hold transmissive views of teaching (Joram & Gabriele, 1998; Moje & Wade, 1997; Tillema & Knol, 1997), and these views can lead teacher candidates into believing that teaching is a politically neutral activity (Bartolome, 1994; Giroux, 1989). Researchers have also found that preservice teachers tend to believe that children themselves are responsible for their academic problems (Gomez, 1996; Paine, 1989). As Lydia reflected upon her own schooling experiences, however, she saw how teaching is not neutral. She began to recognize how teachers define what is learned in classrooms and realized that teachers have more responsibility that she had originally thought. Writing about and reflecting upon her own personal

experiences provided Lydia with a real example of how students can gain or lose when teachers make instructional decisions.

When asked the question of who gains and who loses, Sadie, a third focus student, also began to think about the role of the teacher and made connections to her own personal experiences. During her first interview, she commented, “I never thought of the people that aren’t getting anything from the way a teacher is teaching.” She added,

It’s just when I was in school, that was the way they taught and there was no other way. You know? So it was like either you get it or you don’t. And if you don’t, I guess you get extra help.

Sadie laughed at herself as she explained what she used to think, “I didn’t even realize there could be another way. It’s just a teacher teaches the way she teaches and all the other teachers teach the same way. And there is no other way!” During the interview, Sadie continued to explain how her new view on the role that teachers play in the classroom was impacting her thoughts as she participated in other university courses. She explained how when she now sat in other classes, she thought about the way instructors taught. She said that she began to notice moments in class when other students were not understanding and began to think about how the instructor could possibly restate a phrase or change his or her instruction so that more students could be included. Sadie explained how she was now thinking about how her instructors could teach “the same thing in a bunch of different ways.”

Sadie, like Lydia, was thinking about the ways in which teaching is not neutral. Instead of believing that students are responsible for their own academic failures, Sadie was beginning to see the responsibility that teachers have for teaching all students. Villegas and Lucas (2002) explained that culturally responsive teachers help students

access their prior knowledge, “deliberately plan and implement instruction so as to involve all students,” and “tailor instruction to their students rather than impose a singular teaching style to which all students must adapt” (p. 102). Thinking about who gains and who loses in classrooms prompted Sadie to think about her own schooling experiences and the beliefs she used to have about teachers. When Sadie reflected upon these issues and experiences, she began to see new responsibilities and a new role for the teacher.

These various experiences revealed how reading a case like *Peace Takes Practice* and thinking about an instructor’s questions assisted focus students in reconsidering the role of the teacher. These examples show how focus students wrestled with the question of who gains and who loses at different times throughout the semester. As they thought about the question and reflected upon personal experiences, focus students began developing sociocultural awareness and understanding how teaching is not neutral. They began to see how teachers’ decisions could impact students and began to develop a new awareness of teachers’ responsibilities. One might wonder how these experiences would have been different if Ms. Pratt never asked students to consider who gains and who loses. Studies have shown that when preservice teachers read or view cases of classroom teaching, they tend to be critical of teachers and focus on classroom management rather than the effectiveness of instruction (Moje & Wade, 1997; Tippins, Nichols, & Data, 1999). They also rarely analyze the “purpose or function of the major activity structures” in the classroom (Tippins et al., 1999, p. 345).

Ms. Pratt assisted teacher candidates in thinking more critically about instruction when she had teacher candidates consider how teachers’ theories of learning impact their decisions in classrooms. She also prompted teacher candidates to think more critically

when she asked the question of who gains and who loses when these decisions are made. The scaffolding that Ms. Pratt provided for case discussions helped teacher candidates think about instruction from a students' perspective. Ms. Pratt designed activities that allowed teacher candidates to write about and reflect upon personal experiences that related to issues of who gains and who loses. Teacher candidates might not have reconsidered the role of the teacher if this support were missing.

The impact of children's cultures. All of the focus students grew up in Michigan and came from small towns. All but Mallory had very limited experiences with people from other cultures. When asked about the schools and communities where they grew up, focus students described similar settings and depicted schools that had little or no ethnic and cultural diversity. When asked to describe the kinds of experiences that they have had with diverse groups of people, the majority of teacher candidates in the class stated that their most diverse experience was coming to MWU. Since today's k-12 classrooms are becoming increasingly more diverse (Ladson-Billings, 1999; Nieto, 2002), teacher educators are frequently placed in the same situation where Ms. Pratt found herself, wondering what was the most effective way for preparing a mostly white, female teacher candidate population for working with children who are very different from themselves. When teacher candidates read the "Goodnight Moon" case, I began to see how cases were helping teacher candidates develop an awareness of how a child's culture can impact the experiences and learning opportunities that he or she has in the classroom.

The "Goodnight Moon" case¹¹ was a short, two-page case describing an incident that occurred when a Native Alaskan teacher read the book *Goodnight Moon* (Brown,

¹¹ See chapter 2 for a detailed description of the "Goodnight Moon" case and a description of how Ms. Pratt used it in her class.

1991) to Native Alaskan children. The first page of the case described the incident where children unexpectedly started to cry when their teacher read the story *Goodnight Moon*. The second page explained that children were so frightened because they usually slept in family beds, were not accustomed to sleeping alone in the dark, and found the concept of going to bed in the dark was quite scary. When Ms. Pratt introduced the case, she only had teacher candidates read and respond to the first page. Teacher candidates' responses greatly varied as they tried to figure out why the children in the case began to cry. Some teacher candidates expressed how they were confused about the case and felt that Kae, the teacher in the case, had not expected the children to respond to the story in a negative way. They felt that Kae had not properly prepared for the lesson but seemed to be sympathetic towards her case.

One group that discussed the case together explained how they treated the case as mystery and problem that needed to be solved. Others, however, had a completely different reaction to the incident. Some teacher candidates thought that Kae purposely read the story with the intention of scaring the children. Some teacher candidates thought that Kae had poorly prepared for the lesson and should not have engaged children in a conversation around the book in the way that she did. Another group of teacher candidates reacted very strongly to the case and said that Kae was crazy for emphasizing parts of the story that scared the children. Mallory, who was one of the most critical of the case, swore that Kae was some kind of "maniac." When a more sympathetic view of Kae was shared with the entire class, Mallory would repeat again and again that Kae was crazy. She seemed resistant to view Kae in a more positive light. Even though these critical responses of teachers can be typical from teacher candidates (Tippins et al.,

1999), I was still surprised at teacher candidates' negative and critical reactions to this case. Many of the teacher candidates seemed very quick to judge Kae without having a complete understanding of what was really happening.

Ms. Pratt passed out the second page of the case after teacher candidates had a chance to voice their reactions. When teacher candidates read the second page, they expressed surprise that culture could have such an impact on how children interpreted the story. Almost all of the teacher candidates stated that they had never considered that the children's response to the story was culturally related. Even though the final class discussion was less emotional and critical than when teacher candidates first responded to the case, I still did not feel that the activity had gone well and that teacher candidates had learned much from it. Some teacher candidates expressed that they were still confused about the case, even after reading page two, and I did not understand why they were confused.

At the end of class, Ms. Pratt had students write a reflection on the day's activities. She asked them to explain if the "Goodnight Moon" case made them think differently about teaching diverse learners and creating an inclusive learning community. Teacher candidates' reflections revealed new understandings and insights that were not mentioned when they discussed the case in class. In their written reflections and in focus student interviews, teacher candidates commented how the case made them think about the role and responsibilities of the teacher in an inclusive learning community. One focus student, Lizz, commented in her class reflection that the case was a "definite eye-opener" because "it's easy to assume that everyone thinks just like you. Teachers have to be very

careful in examining the diversity of their classroom and researching students' backgrounds." Another focus student, Jackie, wrote,

To a certain extent we live in a world of "sameness" and we forget that not everyone acts like us. This story made me realize that a great deal of thought has to go into planning lessons. Also, it might be good to ask questions to get a feel for a child's ideas and background experiences.

Jackie also shared how the case made her realize that teachers need to take into consideration their students' backgrounds, prior experiences, and knowledge when planning instruction. When Lydia responded to the case, she explained that the case made her think about how teachers create inclusive learning environments and the importance of building a safe, inclusive community. Sadie wrote that the case made her think about how Kae made her instruction inclusive. She explained that even though all the children were crying, the teacher and students had something in common and were doing the activity together.

During interviews, focus students again talked about the "Goodnight Moon" case and described how they learned from it. In one interview, Mallory emphasized that it wasn't just the case that made her realize the impact that culture can have on teaching; it was the format in which the case was presented. She explained that being able to solve the problem on her own and being encouraged to think about all the possible reasons why children responded negatively *before* being presented with the real reason made the case much more powerful. Mallory explained how she tried to come up with various explanations for what was occurring in the case. She explained that when she realized that she had never considered culture to be a factor, she thought, "Oh, my gosh! There really *are* different cultures." Carter (1999) wrote, "Rather than simply illustrating, a case as problem situation becomes a canvas on which various types of information are

combined and arranged to resolve an issue or dilemma” (p. 167). Teacher candidates’ responses to the “Goodnight Moon” case revealed the reasoning that students used as they tried to make sense and understand the case. Focus students’ responses revealed that analyzing and discussing the case made them think about the role of the teacher and how teachers create inclusive learning communities. They became more aware of the thought and planning that goes into teaching and recognized that teachers need to consider a child’s background and culture when planning instruction. In the next section, I illustrate how one focus student, Sadie, began to realize that understanding her *own* background and culture was also important when creating an inclusive learning community.

The impact of one’s own culture. Sadie was the last of the focus students I decided to include in this study. At the beginning of the semester when students reflected on their early literate experiences, Sadie wrote, “I don’t remember how I learned to read and write.” Her response did not reveal anything about her early experiences with reading other than it was easy for her to learn and that her family was not one “to use big words.” When reading this response, my first impression was that Sadie rushed through the assignment and had not given it careful thought or consideration. Her second personal writing, where she described the kind of school where she would like to teach, was equally lacking in content and detail. I began to see a different side of Sadie, however, during her first interview.

In one of my first questions, I asked her again about her early literacy experiences. I wanted to see if I could get more information than she had provided in writing. Once again, she responded, “To tell you the truth, I really don’t remember

anything.” I thought this was odd for a person to claim that he or she didn’t remember *anything*. I sat quietly and let Sadie continue to talk, and she began to slowly reveal things about herself. She stated that she remembered being a “bad kid” and getting into trouble all the time; however, she also remembered really liking school. She described how she “hung out” with students who were a “bad influence” on her but did not elaborate on why they were a bad influence. She indicated that going to college was not an expectation that she or others had for herself and explained that most of her friends during high school did not plan to go to college.

I began to think about Sadie’s dialogue journals when she told me about her high school experiences. I remembered her first entry when she introduced herself to her journal partner. After our interview, I revisited this entry. In it, she had written a little more about herself and her family. She wrote that she was married to her best friend and had no children. She wrote that her mother had just recently married, and she never knew her father. He had passed away when she was young. In our interview, Sadie indicated that she had not had a happy childhood and did not like to think about it. Not much else was said about her past in her writings and during our interviews. I began to wonder if my initial impressions about Sadie had been incorrect. Perhaps she was more invested in the course than I had thought, and maybe she didn’t write much in her early assignments because she was not willing or interested in revisiting her past.

As the semester progressed, Sadie indicated that writing about herself was uncomfortable and that she didn’t enjoy it. This was consistent with the comments that she made about not wanting to think about her past. It made sense that Sadie would not enjoy some of the writing activities in Ms. Pratt’s class because Ms. Pratt frequently

asked students to reflect upon and write about past experiences. Even though she was uncomfortable talking about herself, however, Sadie did value these assignments. I was not aware of this until I read one of her dialogue journal entries. In it, she wrote, “I think it is exciting to think about literacy and to think about our past experiences and how that shapes what we feel about literacy.” In another entry she asked her dialogue partner, “What do you think about the activity we did in class about our personal literacy conceptualization? I thought it was cool to think about how we want to teach literacy and what we value about it.”

At the end of the semester, I again asked Sadie how she felt about the various personal writing assignments that she had written throughout the semester and pointed out that she had previously said she didn’t like writing about herself. Sadie explained that after reflecting back upon the course, she felt that these assignments were very beneficial. She explained how revisiting her personal writings helped her see how she had changed from the beginning to the end of the semester. Revisiting her writings helped her remember what she had learned. She explained how revisiting “the personal stuff” helped her realize where she needed to develop the most as a teacher. Sadie stated that even though it was uncomfortable, reflecting on personal experiences was beneficial. She stated that because it was so helpful, she would possibly do similar writings with her own students.

In her dialogue entries, Sadie frequently wrote about her field placement and how much she was learning. She explained that she didn’t think she wanted to teach young children, but was happy that she was placed in the class where she was because she felt that her collaborating teacher, a kindergarten teacher, was such a good role model. In a

number of entries, Sadie wrote about a child who continually posed discipline problems for her teacher. In one entry she wrote, “It is so hard not to get angry when he acts up.” Sadie explained that she felt it was very beneficial to see how her teacher responded and interacted with this child. She was impressed with how calm her teacher remained and with the patience she showed when interacting with the child. Preservice teachers frequently claim that the classroom is where their “real” learning occurs (Feiman-Nemser, 1989), and Sadie’s comments reflected how she valued her time spent in the field. Sadie’s journal entries also revealed that she struggled to know what to do when children misbehaved. She saw her collaborating teacher as a model and found that it was helpful to see how the classroom teacher dealt with discipline issues. Sadie’s journal entries revealed her frustration with not knowing what to do, and this reflected the tensions that some of the other teacher candidates experienced throughout the semester.

From the beginning of the semester, Sadie was an advocate for including all children in the general education classroom. On a pre-survey questionnaire that was handed out at the beginning of the semester, students were asked to rate how much they were in agreement with the following sentence: Teachers often expect less from students from the lower socioeconomic class. Sadie responded that she agreed with the statement and added, “I don’t feel this way but I experienced it as a student. Teachers didn’t expect much from me so I didn’t perform well (not that it’s an excuse not to perform well).” Sadie explained that she felt it was important for teachers to “not believe all stereotypes about children when trying to create an inclusive learning community” because “all students need equal opportunities.” When Sadie read and responded to Christine’s case, she again reiterated her belief that students need equal opportunities and stated that she

believed in mainstreaming special education students into the general education classroom. However, she also indicated that there might be instances when a particular child might not benefit from being in a general education classroom and so should not be mainstreamed. The last sentence of her response to the Christine's case stated, "I think it should be a decision for parents to make because they should know what is best for their child."

Sadie's presurvey response indicated that she was already aware at the beginning of the semester of some of the ways that children are marginalized in schools. When describing her own schooling experiences, she shared a personal story where teachers held lower expectations of her because of her background. Early in the semester, Sadie's comments revealed her belief that students should receive equal opportunities to learn. Her final response to Christine's case is interesting. Prior to reading Christine's case, teacher candidates had not discussed parents' roles in education. Christine's case described some of the difficulties that Christine's mother faced when she tried to enroll Alice, the daughter who had Down Syndrome, into a general education classroom. In the case, Christine stated,

I don't ever remember my mother crying over Alice, but I remember the struggle she had with the school to enroll Alice at Middle River.... My mother told me she learned to be stubborn and to stand firm from being a farmer's wife. At the same time, I remember my mother wondering aloud what it would be like for Alice when she went to school. (Peacock, et al., 1999, p. 162)

Throughout other sections in the case, Christine wrestled with complex issues that surrounded including special needs students in the general education class.

Christine thought about when Alice was included in the general education classroom and sometimes appeared sad. She thought about special needs children

who are not accepted by their peers and wondered if they might be happier in a special education classroom.

After reading Christine's case, some of the teacher candidates commented on how Christine's mother was an advocate for Alice. They stated that because Alice could not stand up for her own rights, it was important that her mother do it for her. Lundeberg and her colleagues (1999) wrote that using cases in teacher education could contribute to preservice teachers' discoveries about teaching and learning. They explained how these discoveries could lead to social, ethical, and epistemological growth. Sadie's and other teacher candidates' responses to Christine's case revealed that they were beginning to think about the ethical issues that surrounded the inclusion of special needs students in the general education classroom. Sadie did not explicitly state that the case made her consider how parents' should have a voice in the decision of whether special needs children are included in the classroom. However, it was only after teacher candidates read the case that they began discussing these issues.

At the end of the semester, I conducted a second interview with focus students and asked them what had been the greatest impact on their learning throughout the semester. Students explained how they had learned a lot about inclusion and mentioned how the fieldwork and coursework both supported them in their learning. Sometimes they even mentioned specific activities that influenced how they were thinking about inclusion and teaching. Sadie's response, however, stood out from the others. Instead of commenting on inclusion or on the new understandings that she had acquired about teaching literacy, she responded that the greatest impact throughout the semester was

learning a lot about herself. Sadie explained that just recently she had been noticing that her first reaction to a child's misbehavior in the field was to jump up and yell, "No, stop!" She explained that one of the biggest things she learned about herself was the realization that this response, wanting to stop and yell at the children, came from her past. She explained that this realization, that her past experiences were impacting how she acted in the classroom, really did not appear until the end of the semester when she was revisiting all of her work and writings for her final self-assessment. Her self-assessment revealed how her own past experiences were influencing how she responded to children in the field. She wrote that during her field experiences there were times when two particular children in the class would start to get out of control. She wrote that her collaborating teacher always found a positive way to reinforce these students' good behavior and get them back on task. In her self-assessment, she described her reaction to these classroom disturbances.

I find that sometimes I get very frustrated with these two students and then it is so hard to be patient with the rest of the class. I know that if patience is not practiced all of the time, or at least most of the time, by me, that the inclusive learning community that I am trying to create will be jeopardized. If I use negative words and don't reinforce positive behavior in my classroom, then none of the children will respect me and they will not be able to have fun learning, because I will not be having fun teaching... This always makes me think back to my family. When I was younger, it seems that everything at my house was solved, or not solved, by yelling. I have realized that I am struggling with trying to be positive and not put down children when I am trying to get my point across. I feel sometimes that the only way I can get people to listen to me is by yelling. I am fortunate to realize this so that I can work on it.

Sadie recognized that if she responded to her students by yelling, she might "put down children." Her image of who she should be as a teacher and how she should communicate with students clashes with the way her family

communicated with one another. Sadie recognized this tension and felt that she needed to communicate in a more positive way if she were going to be able to create an inclusive learning community. Sadie's insights reflect that she is becoming aware of how cultures can clash in the classroom. In this example, she recognized how her own cultural norms for communicating clashed with the norms of the classroom. She also recognized that if she imposed her cultural norms on her students, some students might become marginalized and "put down." Sadie was beginning to recognize how one's own cultural background could have an impact on his or her teaching, and her new insights revealed how she was becoming a more culturally responsive teacher.

During our final interview, I asked Sadie to tell me more about how she came to the realization that her struggles in the classroom, her wanting first to respond by yelling, were a response that came from her own family experiences. She explained that when she revisited her course work, she reread her first personal writing and thought about how her family didn't read or do much together. (This was the writing assignment that was five sentences long and did not expand on her childhood experiences.) Sadie explained that as she reread the comments that she wrote, she realized that her family would often communicate by yelling. She commented, "You know, when I'm in the schools, I'm like, my gosh! How come it's so hard for me to talk to them without yelling?" Sadie began to find answers to her question when she revisited her coursework and personal writings at the end of the semester.

Sadie explained that when she revisited the case *Peace Takes Practice* (Peacock et al., 1999), a case that was read at the beginning of the course, she began to see a

connection between herself and the teacher in the case. She explained, “She [Lourdes] was a bad teacher and yelled at the students a lot, and then went through this whole thing and she changed.” Sadie explained that in the case, Lourdes stated that whenever she felt like she wanted to yell and say something that she shouldn’t, she would “do the opposite.” This, Sadie commented, was exactly how *she* felt when she was in the field. She explained that she did not realize what was happening in the field until after she read the case and reflected upon her own family experiences. She stated, “It just dawned on me the way your parents bring you up really impacts like how you communicate when you get older.” Sadie described how helpful it was looking back over what she had written throughout the semester and thinking about how she had changed. She stated, “I can sit here and half of this stuff I don’t even remember writing it last week.” However, when she began to revisit what she wrote, she explained it all began to come back to her. She said that “definitely coming back and looking at it for a second time” really helped her connect and see how what she thought at the beginning of the semester had changed. In her final self-assessment, Sadie described how reading and analyzing cases supported her in her learning.

I feel that analyzing these cases was very helpful to see why we thought these people did the things that they did. It was interesting to see how we all felt differently about the Goodnight Moon case. I especially felt that the *Peace Takes Practice* article was helpful because I feel that I could so easily get trapped into the way that this lady was teaching. So it was helpful to see how she turned her attitude around and worked to make peace in her classroom.

Revisiting cases that were read throughout the semester and revisiting personal writing assignments played a large role in Sadie’s new realizations about herself, her past, and her responses to children in the classroom. By working with elementary

students in a classroom, Sadie was introduced to some of the challenges that teachers face when providing instruction to a group of children. When she revisited her assignments and readings, she was able to bring together her coursework and her experiences and frustrations that had occurred in the classroom. Making connections between Peace Takes Practice her frustrations in the field, and her personal family experiences led Sadie on a journey of self-discovery. Sadie's experiences illustrate how these various experiences came together, complementing one another, supporting her in her learning. Other focus students also described new discoveries when their field experiences, coursework, and personal experiences came together; however, Sadie's story best illustrates how these experiences helped one teacher candidate recognize the power and influence that one's own culture can have on teaching. One of Ms. Pratt's goals for the course was to have teacher candidates examine themselves and understand what drives their instructional decisions. She wanted them to understand that who they are as a literate person influences who they are going to be as a teacher. Sadie's experiences revealed how making personal connections to case and field experiences assisted her in meeting these goals.

Developing Knowledge and Skills for Teaching Literacy

Ms. Pratt's original intentions for ED 222 were to weave the building of inclusive learning communities throughout the course while assisting students in acquiring the knowledge and skills that are needed to teach literacy. When Ms. Pratt and I met during our summer planning sessions, we had some ideas for how she might do this. However, we weren't exactly sure how to design activities to achieve this goal. Ms. Pratt began by

having students respond to prompts after they read or viewed cases. These prompts usually asked questions that pertained to the literacy content of the case, such as emergent literacy, and to issues of inclusion. For example, a prompt for one activity might ask, “How is the teacher assessing students’ reading comprehension? How does the instruction in the video support or not support an inclusive learning community?” In the beginning of the semester when students answered such questions, they frequently responded to the content part of the question and not on the part that focused on inclusion. As the semester progressed, conversations around cases tended to lean more towards one issue or the other. Teacher candidates occasionally made clear connections between the two, but this less frequently and usually occurred towards the end of the semester. This might have been due to a number of reasons. Maybe it was because Ms. Pratt and I developed better questions at the end of the semester, or it might have been due to teacher candidates’ increased understanding of the content and issues that were being introduced in the course.

When I began analyzing data, I noticed that the majority of the data that reflected teacher candidates’ understanding of literacy concepts and pedagogical approaches came from the days when teacher candidates viewed and discussed RCE¹² video and hypermedia cases. RCE proved to be a powerful tool for supporting teacher candidates in this learning process. By engaging in RCE activities, teacher candidates were able to recognize and identify some of the concepts and instructional practices that they were learning about in their course. They were also able to recognize and explain ways to adapt literacy instruction for diverse learners. In the following sections, I describe how

¹² A description of the Reading Classroom Explorer (RCE) is provided in chapter 1. More information is also provided in Appendix A.

Ms. Pratt used RCE during class. Then, I provide various examples of how students responded to and learned from RCE activities. Finally, I discuss the kind of scaffolding Ms. Pratt provided when students were engaged in these activities.

The use of video and hypermedia cases. During the first few weeks of class, Ms. Pratt introduced teacher candidates to various theories of learning and started a class discussion on the conceptualization of literacy instruction. She had students read the “Goodnight Moon” case and asked students to think about who gains and who loses when teachers make instructional decisions. During the fourth and fifth weeks of class, students were introduced to the concept of emergent literacy, and it was at this point that RCE was introduced. Ms. Pratt decided to introduce her class to RCE by showing the case of Ms. Hemmeter¹³, a kindergarten teacher. This case complemented what teacher candidates had been reading in their textbooks because Ms. Hemmeter modeled many instructional approaches that supported emergent readers and writers. The case also supported the inclusive learning theme, and the majority of the students in Mrs. Hemmeters classroom were Hispanic and non-native English speakers. In order to prepare for the video, Ms. Pratt had students skim through various chapters in their textbook for homework and provided a study guide to support the reading. The study guide asked questions such as the following: What are the stages in the reading process? What might each stage look like in an emergent literacy classroom? What are five types of reading, and how might teachers decide to use one over the other? What are the key features of the writing process?

¹³ Six out of 10 classroom videos on RCE were originally created for the Center for the Study of Reading at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Ms. Pratt introduced teacher candidates to some of the content of RCE by first showing them the video version of Mrs. Hemmeter’s case. The following week, teacher candidates had access to this video and others through the RCE hypermedia program.

The following week, Ms. Pratt used the study guide to divide the class into groups, having each group use a set of questions as a lens for watching the Ms. Hemmeter case. Ms. Pratt also asked each group to take notes on how Ms. Hemmeter was promoting an inclusive learning environment. After viewing the video, groups discussed their reactions to what they had observed and discussed answers to the prompts that they were given for viewing the video. After sharing ideas in small groups, they then shared their responses with the entire class. Teacher candidates made comments about how engaged and motivated the children appeared in the video. They also noticed how Ms. Hemmeter created opportunities for children to read and write throughout the entire day.

Teacher candidates spoke and wrote about how impressed they were with the way the kindergarteners in the classroom used journals. Many made comments about the ways in which journals could be used to accommodate the various writing abilities in the class. Children in the video wrote in their own way, whether it was by scribbling, drawing pictures, using letters or sentences. Other than discussing how journal writing could accommodate different levels of learners, most teacher candidates spoke about the literacy content in the case and did not explicitly discuss issues of inclusion. At one point, Ms. Pratt asked how one might modify instruction for ESL students, but this question did not prompt a focused discussion on inclusion.

Based on classroom observations and comments, I began to think that teacher candidates had forgotten that Ms. Pratt wanted them to focus on instruction that promoted an inclusive learning environment. However, I realized that the case did influence how teacher candidates were thinking about creating an inclusive learning community when I read students' written reflections for the day and heard them talking about the case when

they were working on their philosophy statements in small groups. At other points throughout the semester, teacher candidates had a number of opportunities to revisit clips of Mrs. Hemmeter's case through the RCE program. They also had opportunities to view other clips from other schools. Teacher candidates' comments to both videos and clips showed that RCE introduced them to the practice of culturally responsive teaching. Viewing RCE videos and clips also encouraged some teacher candidates to form new conceptions of teaching and learning.

Teacher candidates' responses to RCE cases. Mrs. Hemmeter's case showed how Mrs. Hemmeter created a literate environment by posting word walls¹⁴, poetry, and stories around the room. The case showed how children had opportunities throughout the day to read and discuss books, recite poetry and rhymes, listen to stories, and read words posted in the room. The case also showed how Mrs. Hemmeter created literacy play centers¹⁵ where children could pretend they were authors writing on a typewriter or waiters taking orders in a restaurant. When reflecting on the video at the end of class, all of the focus students and a number of other teacher candidates described in writing how Ms. Hemmeter's case helped them see how teachers could create a literate environment throughout their entire classroom and provide literacy instruction throughout the entire day. Teacher candidates also noted that Mrs. Hemmeter provided authentic and meaningful literacy experiences for her students. One focus student, Sadie, wrote,

I have realized after today's class that it is so easy to include reading and writing in so many different ways for children. It doesn't always have to

¹⁴ Word walls are "alphabetized collections of words posted in the classroom that students can refer to when they are reading and writing and for word study activities" (Tompkins, 2003, p. 498).

¹⁵ Literacy play centers allow young children to "learn about the purposes of reading and writing as they use written language in play" (Tompkins, 2003, p. 113). Teachers supply literacy play centers with authentic literacy materials so that children can experiment and use them to learn about the purposes of written language.

be what you do at the beginning of the day with the morning message¹⁶ and reading a book, but it can be incorporated into every activity that the children are doing.

The majority of teacher candidates had field placements where they saw morning message being used. Most of them visited classrooms in the morning because this was the time that most teachers taught literacy. Because they came for a limited amount of time in the morning, teacher candidates frequently observed their collaborating teachers leading morning message and sometimes didn't get to see other literacy instruction. Sadie's comment indicated that viewing Mrs. Hemmeter's case gave her other ideas for how teachers can create literacy learning opportunities for students.

Another part of the video showed children writing in journals and showed Mrs. Hemmeter telling children that they could write in a variety of ways. Mrs. Hemmeter explained to the children that some of them wrote in their journals using pictures to represent words. She also explained and demonstrated how other children used scribbles or printed letters to write. Mrs. Hemmeter accepted all of these forms of writing from her students. Focus students referred to this part of the video a number of times. They wrote that the scenes with the journal writing helped them see how teachers can provide learning opportunities that accommodate the various needs of individual children. They recognized how Mrs. Hemmeter used journals in ways that honored all students' writing abilities. Focus students described in their reflections and in interviews how these scenes helped them see how Mrs. Hemmeter was accommodating various writing abilities and making her class more inclusive.

¹⁶ In morning message, the teacher begins by "talking about the day and upcoming events, and students share their news with the class" (Tompkins, 2003, p. 115). The teacher writes the message for all to see, providing an opportunity for children to learn about the direction of print, spelling, and other conventions used in writing.

Lydia and Mallory were particularly intrigued with the way children used journals in Ms. Hemmeter's class. In her in-class quick write, Lydia wrote about the segment of the video where Ms. Hemmeter told students they were going to write in their journals and then demonstrated the various ways that children write. The idea of allowing children to write at their various levels and then honoring all forms of writing was a new concept to some teacher candidates. Mallory stated that before viewing the video, she probably would have responded to students' scribbles and pictures by saying, "You're not writing anything. You're just drawing pictures!" In an interview, she stated that viewing Ms. Hemmeter's use of journals was very good because prior to that she "would have never seen pictures as being associated with learning." When asked to describe the insightful, "Aha," moments that she had while viewing the video, Lydia wrote the following:

My Aha! moment is about allowing students to work at different levels. I think this is essential in a truly inclusive learning community. Anne [Ms. Hemmeter] allowed her students to write at different levels. The children in turn wrote and drew freely to express themselves without feeling frustrated or restricted by guidelines. Anne was comfortable with this and so were students. Because she didn't make rules, students felt free to be creative rather than worry that they did it differently than their peers.

Lizz, another focus student, wrote that the video helped her see that it can be easy to include reading and writing in a variety of different ways. In a previous interview, Lizz had commented that she never felt comfortable with her own writing skills and described herself as a slow reader. She said that she never remembered using reading and writing together when she was in elementary school. She, like Sadie, wrote that viewing Ms. Hemmeter's case helped her realize that literacy can be "incorporated into every activity that the children are doing." She noted how Ms. Hemmeter easily related literacy events to students' lives. Lizz wrote that she liked how the various play center activities

provided authentic learning opportunities for children. Other teacher candidates gave further examples of the various ways in which Ms. Hemmeter created authentic learning experiences in her classroom.

In addition to helping teacher candidates understand how teachers can accommodate various abilities in a classroom, Ms. Hemmeter's case also challenged some teacher candidates' prior conceptions of teaching, conceptions that were formed from their own k-12 experiences. For example, one student, Jackie, was placed in reading groups that were based on ability when she was an elementary student. Her only experiences with early literacy instruction involved a teacher grouping students by ability level and then providing different instruction to the various groups. In her reflections on the Hemmeter video, Jackie wrote, "It is much harder to try and reach a child on a different level than to exclude them. In fact, I was not even sure there was a way to solve this type of problem until I saw it tackled in reality." She added,

The video helped me see that one classroom with a variety of learners can be tailored to reach each student in some way. I realized we don't have to segregate students into categories in order to reach them on their level.

Even though Jackie had only experienced reading instruction where children were "segregated by intelligence levels or learning levels," the video of Ms. Hemmeter helped her realize that "one classroom with a variety of learners can be tailored to reach each student in some way" and that teachers "don't have to segregate" their students.

Viewing the RCE case of Mrs. Hemmeter supported teacher candidates in understanding the practice of culturally responsive teaching. According to Villegas and Lucas (2002), one of the three strands of the curriculum framework for preparing culturally responsive teachers is "embracing the constructivist foundations of culturally

responsive teaching” (p. 65). Teachers who embrace constructivist views create environments where all students are encouraged to make sense of new ideas and “construct knowledge that helps them better understand the world” (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p. 92). They understand that active participation in classroom activities “is a stimulus for learning,” and they “deliberately plan and implement instruction so as to involve all students” (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p. 101). Even though some teacher candidates had only experienced traditional approaches to teaching, they were able to become familiar with new approaches and strategies by viewing Mrs. Hemmeter’s teaching. They saw how she created literacy learning opportunities for children by designing activities that accommodated a broad range of abilities. They also saw how she designed learning activities around children’s experiences and actively engaged them in the learning process. For example, in one part of the case Mrs. Hemmeter had children bring household items to school that represented different letters of the alphabet. She used items that were familiar to children, like cereal boxes, to reinforce children’s understanding of phonics and phonemic awareness.

Lizz, like Jackie, was another focus student whose prior conceptions of teaching were challenged by Mrs. Hemmeter’s case. During her first interview, Lizz stated that her early memories of learning to read involved “pretty much memorizing words.” She remembered reading and writing being taught as separate subjects and stated that the kind of literacy instruction that she was learning about in ED 222 was very new to her. In this interview, Lizz did not seem convinced that this new way of reading and writing was a better way. In our first interview, she admitted that it was difficult learning about literacy instruction that was so different from the kind of instruction she had experienced as a

child. The tone in her voice indicated that she was struggling with this. In our second interview, I told her that she seemed to be struggling with these issues last time we met and asked if I had interpreted the situation correctly. She admitted that she *had* been struggling with the instruction that was being introduced in class and admitted that she had been asking herself many questions about this. She shared her questions and concerns with me and asked, “Am I just a moron now because I wasn’t taught the way they are saying that we should be taught now? I mean, was I totally deprived as a student?” She added, “You kind of go back to the traditional way and wonder how come I was taught this way, and now they are changing it. And what’s really the right way?”

In her second interview, Lizz stated that seeing instruction through RCE videos and clips supported her as she began to embrace a new stance towards literacy instruction. She explained that she now thought the instruction that she had learned about in ED 222 was more beneficial than the kind of rote learning that she was exposed to when she was young. Viewing Ms. Hemmeter’s teaching was a key moment for Lizz as she struggled with these issues. The reflection that she wrote after viewing the case revealed how she was beginning to embrace and understand a new stance towards literacy instruction.

Today’s class really made me realize how much literacy is incorporated into everything that we do. I found it very interesting that in the video the teacher found ways to teach the students about reading and writing without really “teaching.” For example, during free time some of the students played restaurant with a menu that had the name of the item written out and also the picture. One of the students was the waiter and pretended to write the items down. I also realized that it is not that hard to teach literacy in the classroom because it is literally all around us. As a teacher you just have to point that out.

Lizz's comments and writings that resulted from viewing more student-centered teaching practices revealed that she was beginning to see how literacy instruction can occur without the teacher being the center of instruction. Lizz's philosophy statement written at the end of the semester revealed that she was beginning to form a new conceptualization of literacy instruction that differed from the kind of instruction she experienced as a child. Early in the semester she had written that she could not remember reading and writing ever being taught together. In her philosophy statement, however, she wrote, "Reading and writing should be taught simultaneously. I believe that reading and writing are inextricably linked and that students should understand this. I think that this can be accomplished by teaching reading and writing together."

In Chapter 1, I explained how I considered the process of conceptual change when selecting cases for the design of this study. Ms. Pratt and I selected cases that presented progressive, learner-centered teaching approaches knowing that these cases might counter the images of teaching that teacher candidates already held. Lizz's comments reveal how viewing Mrs. Hemmeter's approach to teaching created cognitive dissonance. Lizz recognized that the images of teaching that were presented in class were very different from what she experienced as a child. She began to feel unsettled when she realized that the kind of instruction Ms. Pratt was advocating differed from the instruction she had received when she learned to read and write. Lizz began to feel conflicted and began to question how she had been taught in elementary school. Even though she had learned how to read and write from a traditional approach, Lizz began to wonder, "Was I totally deprived as a student?" Posner and his colleagues (1982) stated that novices have to view their own existing conceptions with some dissatisfaction before they seriously consider a

new one. Lizz's comments at this point in the semester revealed that she was beginning to question her existing conceptions of teaching. However, she had not become totally dissatisfied with these conceptions because she recognized that she did learn to read and write from more traditional approaches.

Various data collected on Lizz revealed that viewing RCE videos and clips had a large impact on how she was thinking about literacy instruction, and a lesson plan that she created represented how she began to put these ideas into action. For one of her assignments, Lizz had to create and teach a literacy lesson to children in her field placement. In the middle of the semester, Ms. Pratt asked her students to share the ideas that they had for their lessons. Lizz had not decided upon a specific lesson, but e-mailed Ms. Pratt indicating that she had received various ideas from watching videos and clips on RCE.

In the following weeks, Lizz drafted out a lesson, taught it, and wrote a reflection on her teaching. When she turned in the assignment and the reflection, she included a photograph that she had taken of a chart that had been created by her and her students when she taught. When I saw this chart, I realized it had a striking similarity to one that was shown on an RCE video clip. Lizz's lesson, which focused on the teaching of story grammar, was almost a mirror image of a lesson that she saw while viewing clips. During my second interview with Lizz, she confirmed that her lesson was closely modeled after the one that she saw on RCE. She explained that her collaborating teacher had initially recommended a lesson idea, but she felt that it was not very exciting. Lizz explained how she really liked the lesson that she saw on RCE and decided to use it as a model. She stated that what she particularly liked about the RCE lesson was that the teacher involved

children in the story writing process, and children had a say in what they wanted to write. Lizz was impressed with how the students and teacher worked together to review story grammar and create their own story. Lizz's use of RCE is significant because it revealed that viewing RCE videos and clips could not only impact preservice teachers' views and beliefs about teaching, it could also impact how they carried out instruction once they were given the chance.

Lizz and Jackie's responses to RCE demonstrated how viewing and discussing RCE cases challenged their prior assumptions about teaching and learning. In these two examples, Lizz and Jackie began to seriously reflect upon and question the kind of literacy instruction that they received when they were young. In a third example, Lydia described how viewing a different RCE clip challenged the biases she had formed about a reading comprehension strategy that was introduced in class. In this example, teacher candidates read an article that discussed the importance of teaching reading comprehension strategies to children. One of the strategies that was introduced involved asking students to make and confirm predictions as they read. Lydia strongly opposed this idea and told her group members that no student wants to stop and make a prediction while he or she is reading. Lydia felt that children would find it tedious and would resent being asked to do it. However, while using RCE, she stumbled upon a clip that showed a teacher working with a small group of students, asking them to make predictions about their reading. Lydia selected this clip to show the rest of the class and explained why it was significant. She commented,

I just thought that if I had to do this when I was in elementary school I wouldn't want to do it. But then we watched the clip... It seemed [the students] all contributed and felt that it was fun. So, it changed my whole outlook of prediction.

Before showing the clip a second time to the entire class, Ms. Pratt asked Lydia what she wanted classmates to notice. Lydia explained that she wanted people to notice how excited the children were to share their predictions and how the level of enthusiasm was contagious. In future classes and interviews, Lydia again made reference to this clip and how it made her change her views on having students make predictions while reading.

Lydia's experience provided another example of how an RCE clip offered an image of teaching that countered a teacher candidate's conception of teaching. Lydia's comments revealed how she changed her view of making predictions after she saw how motivated students were in the RCE clip. Lydia's comments, however, do not show that she was going through the same kind of inner turmoil that Lizz experienced. The RCE video and clips that were mentioned by focus students can be described as *cases as exemplar*. According to Carter (1999), cases as exemplars "are commonly used in teacher preparation to depict vividly such matters as the complexity of teaching environments" or the way in which "a method is actually carried out in a classroom" (p. 166). The various examples that have been provided in this section show how viewing RCE video and clips prompted change in teacher candidates' conceptions of teaching. The RCE video and clips also provided teacher candidates with examples of literacy instructional approaches that reflected culturally responsive teaching; however, these cases did not always contribute to deeper understandings of inclusion. Some teacher candidates' responses revealed that viewing RCE cases supported superficial views of inclusion, and this will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Scaffolding learning for RCE users. Teacher candidates described how RCE case activities supported their learning and spoke about the benefits of being able to see the kind of literacy instruction that they were learning about in ED 222. However, not all activities were as successful as the ones that were described above. Sometimes teacher candidates misinterpreted assignments and made inaccurate assumptions when viewing clips. Other times they focused on children's actions and behaviors in clips rather than on the literacy instruction that Ms. Pratt had hoped they would notice. In one example, Ms. Pratt asked teacher candidates to search for clips that presented examples of informal literacy assessment. She then told groups to select their favorite clip and post a message on the RCE discussion forum¹⁷ describing why it was an example of informal literacy assessment. When Ms. Pratt read teacher candidates' comments, she realized that they had inaccurately interpreted the term *informal assessment*. In another example, Ms. Pratt asked students to view clips and tell why certain teaching practices were more inclusive than others. Students' responses revealed that they were not using the term *inclusive* in the way that Ms. Pratt had intended. Some teacher candidates thought that if a child were included, then he or she was *participating*. And if the child was not actively participating in class, such as by speaking or raising his or her hand, then he or she was not being *included*. Teacher candidates who made such comments did not seem to understand that instruction could include children even if they were not participating in a way that was observable to the eye.

¹⁷ When teacher candidates used the forum, Ms. Pratt usually had them post a comment about the clip and then write a question that they wanted answered. Ms. Pratt's purpose for having students use the forum was to give them opportunities to view and read comments about clips and to enter discussions about what they saw.

Ms. Pratt and I began to form hypotheses about why some RCE activities were more successful than others after comparing the ways in which students were responding to different activities. After closely studying focus students and interviewing them about RCE, I began to form a better understanding of what did or did not support their learning. Focus students described in detail how viewing videos and clips on RCE, combined with other activities and experiences in ED 222, gave them a fuller understanding of the content and issues that were being discussed in class. Jackie explained that being able to see how instruction was being used in real classrooms helped her “more fully understand the concept” than if she were to just hear it being described in class. Being able to visually see progressive literacy instruction occur especially helped students like Lizz who were only familiar with more traditional teaching practices. For some students, RCE provided their first exposure to progressive, student-centered teaching approaches.

Mallory spoke repeatedly about how having choice throughout the semester supported her learning and kept her motivated. She described how RCE gave students the flexibility to pick and choose through keywords what they wanted to watch, but she also explained how she liked the guidance and support that Ms. Pratt provided for RCE activities. A few students described how their first introduction to the various keywords was a bit overwhelming, but they also pointed out the Ms. Pratt would give them suggestions for which ones they might use for viewing a particular aspect of literacy instruction. Mallory, for example, described that when the class was searching for clips on literacy assessment, Ms. Pratt suggested viewing clips from a specific school because it provided more video footage of teachers assessing students. Lydia, Jackie, and Lizz described how they also liked the flexibility of being able to view clips at home.

Sometimes when students worked in groups on one computer, they didn't get to view the clips that interested them. Being able to access RCE from home allowed them to revisit clips that were already seen in class or view new clips that they had not previously seen.

All focus students spoke about how beneficial it was discussing and sharing ideas with others while viewing instruction on RCE. Students spoke more positively about their RCE experience when they had the opportunity to discuss the clips that they were viewing. During her second interview, Jackie explained that discussing what she saw on RCE made her think about things in new ways, ways that she had not previously considered. She spoke about the advantages of using the discussion forum and described how it was a "really helpful tool" because a person could attach a link to a video clip when typing a message. This made it easier for others to view and respond to the clip. Lydia described how simply forming and typing a question on the discussion forum helped her process what she had just seen. The incident with the informal assessment activity, however, revealed that simply having students discuss and write about clips with one another did not always result in deeper understandings. When Ms. Pratt and I reflected on the informal assessment activity, we realized that she had not provided any prior instruction about informal assessments before having teacher candidates search and comment upon clips. As a result, teacher candidates formed their own definitions.

Even though teacher candidates gave examples of how the discussion forum supported them in their learning, they also expressed frustration when they posted messages and did not receive responses. Lydia even went as far as giving one of her messages a controversial title, hoping that this would trigger a response from the other class. Another group complained because they felt some of the responses to their

questions were neither sincere nor helpful. At the end of the semester, Ms. Pratt asked students to write and tell her how they felt about the different activities that they did in class. She explicitly asked students to write a comment about how they felt about RCE. Sadie wrote, "I don't think that the discussion forum was all that helpful because we didn't discuss that much [online] and didn't get much insightful feedback." End of the semester writings revealed that all teacher candidates thought using RCE was valuable; however, their reactions to the discussion forum varied.

Lydia and Mallory spoke favorably of the forum and even stated that it was one of their favorite parts about RCE. Sadie, on the other hand, didn't feel that the forum was very useful. Lizz and Jackie had mixed feelings; they felt that it was helpful, but could have been used in a better way. When reflecting back on when the group used RCE in class, I realized that either Mallory or Lydia always had control of the mouse and posted various messages. The group would decide together what they would write, but ultimately the person typing the message had more control over what was actually written. Lydia even posted a number of messages from home and received responses from both Ms. Pratt and students in another ED 222 class. Lydia commented that posting the questions on the forum gave her a sense of ownership over the forum and questions. It appeared that students who were most active on the forum and who received the most responses to their questions had a more favorable impression of the RCE on-line discussions than those who were not as engaged in posting messages. If Ms. Pratt and I had known this prior to planning the course, we might have had RCE-groups function differently.

When I reanalyzed data at the end of the semester, I paid careful attention to the kinds of support that was provided to teacher candidates when they used RCE. I noted what Ms. Pratt did before, during, and after RCE activities. I noted what support was provided when activities seemed to be successful, and I also noted what kind of support seemed to be missing when activities were less successful. It appeared that teacher candidates benefited from the prompts that Ms. Pratt provided. These prompts alerted teacher candidates to what they should be observing when viewing clips. Teacher candidates also gained new insights when they had opportunities to discuss the clips with one another, sometimes relying on articles that they had read or Ms. Pratt's comments to guide these discussions. Interviews with focus students revealed that RCE was helpful when they were able to compare what they were seeing in clips to what they were observing in the field. Sometimes teacher candidates saw teachers in the field providing instruction that was very similar to RCE clips, and other times they didn't. When instruction was similar, teacher candidates spoke about using RCE to think about ways lessons might be modified and adapted. When instruction was not similar, teacher candidates used RCE as an opportunity to see what could be possible.

Observations on Moving from Awareness to Action

This chapter provided examples of how personal writing and case activities assisted focus students in developing the knowledge and skills that are needed to provide literacy instruction in inclusive learning environments. Throughout the semester, focus students developed awareness and understanding of inclusive learning communities, but sometimes became frustrated when they felt that they didn't know how to create and

teach in these environments. This chapter highlighted the ways in which reflecting upon personal experiences and engaging in case activities helped provide focus students with the ability to move from awareness to action. They began to form new understandings about the role of the teacher when they engaged in case activities and reflected upon their personal experiences. They recognized that teachers needed to consider children's backgrounds and cultures in order to create inclusive learning communities. Some focus students also recognized how their own backgrounds impact who they will be as teachers.

This chapter illustrated how focus students began to develop an understanding that classrooms are not neutral places and that teachers' and students' perspectives sometimes differ. These new understandings helped teacher candidates move from a general awareness of inclusion to an awareness of what inclusion looks like in the classroom. Viewing RCE videos and cases supported focus students in understanding the practice of culturally responsive teaching. They began to learn how to accommodate and adapt literacy instruction for a diverse range of learners. They learned about specific pedagogical approaches that reflect the constructivist foundations of culturally responsive teaching. Viewing RCE cases also prompted some of them to begin to reflect on their own educational experiences and encouraged them to form new conceptions of teaching.

The examples presented here, like those in the previous chapter, illustrated how focus students made meaning out of activities by making connections between their own lives and the cases that they were reading or viewing. However, sometimes these connections appeared to happen by chance as teacher candidates made connections to the content and issues of the course in their own, individual ways. When Ms. Pratt specifically assigned personal writing activities to correspond with case activities, she

frequently did not have class time for students to discuss their writings. However, revisiting these writings on their own, at the end of the semester, prompted some teacher candidates to have some of their most insightful moments. The success stories that are revealed in this chapter illustrate what can be possible when all the right connections are made; however, not all teacher candidates' told stories of new insights, revelation, and change. Teacher candidates who did not share personal stories of learning made it difficult to understand the process in which they made meaning out of the various activities that took place throughout the semester. The stories that were presented in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 illustrated how focus students sometimes struggled to see value in what they were learning if they could not immediately see how it applied to practice. Viewing RCE cases helped them begin to see what inclusive learning practice looks like in action. For some focus students, embracing these new teaching practices required a critical reflection upon themselves and their personal experiences. In the next chapter, I situate focus students' experiences within a broader context by presenting what was learned from data collected on the entire class.

Chapter 5 Class Findings

Following focus students closely throughout the semester provided a window into the ways in which a small group of teacher candidates responded to and made meaning from written and hypermedia video case activities; however, data collected on focus students do not necessarily reveal how others in the course responded to these activities. Through interviews, I was able to ask for clarification about what focus students said or wrote in class and was able to probe more deeply into their individual experiences. Even though I did not have the opportunity to get this kind of detailed information from all teacher candidates in the class, I did collect coursework from all 25 teacher candidates in ED 222.

Data that were collected and analyzed on the entire class consisted of the following: (a) in-class reflections that were written when students finished discussing the “Goodnight Moon” case, (b) the quick-writes that students’ wrote before and after discussing Christine’s case, (c) pre and post survey responses, and (d) final self-assessments. I also used classroom observations and field notes to support what was learned from other data sources. Teacher candidates did not respond to *Peace Takes Practice* in writing, so I did not have class data for this case. I did not analyze dialogue journals because I did not have copies of all journal entries. I did, however, take notes on journal entries as I read them throughout the semester. I read these assignments as teacher candidates completed them and noted general patterns and themes that emerged. These notes became part of my field notes as I reflected upon and summarized each class session. I did not analyze students’ philosophy statements because I did not collect all of

the drafts that were written throughout the semester. I also did not analyze students' lesson plans because teacher candidates worked on these with a partner and sometimes received feedback from their collaborating teachers. Because students did not create their own lesson plans, it was impossible to know who generated which ideas when reading the lessons.

At the end of the semester, I revisited the documents that I had collected on the entire class in order to see if the general class findings reflected what was learned from the five teacher candidates whom I followed closely throughout the semester. I learned that focus students and others in the course learned similar things when they were engaged in written and hypermedia video case activities. However, by analyzing data that were collected on the entire class, I reached new insights that might not have appeared if I had only focused on the experiences of five people in the course. In this chapter, I describe how I analyzed data from the entire class and present new discoveries that were made. I also explain some of the challenges that I faced as I attempted to make connections between what was learned from focus students and what was learned from others in the course.

In this chapter, I organize general class findings according to two key themes that emerged. These themes also appeared in focus student data. In the first section, I describe how data collected from written case activities, pre and post surveys, and end of the semester self-assessments revealed how reading and responding to written cases assisted teacher candidates in developing an awareness and understanding of inclusion. In the second section, I describe how data collected from RCE case activities and pre and post surveys revealed the ways in which teacher candidates began to develop the knowledge

and skills that are needed to teach literacy to diverse students. Within each section, I describe how data were analyzed and illustrate the context in which data were collected. I end this chapter by summarizing how teacher candidates defined inclusion, describing the pedagogical approaches that supported them in constructing these understanding, and illustrating what was learned when comparing focus student and general class findings.

Developing Awareness and Understanding of Inclusion

Chapters 3 and 4 described how focus students began to develop an awareness and understanding of inclusion throughout the semester. Reading and responding to written cases helped focus students recognize that they had been narrowly defining inclusion and had been unaware of some of the issues that surrounded the inclusion of diverse students in the general education classroom. Focus students began to recognize the impact that culture can have on teaching. They also began to recognize the roles and responsibilities that teachers have when creating an inclusive learning environment. This chapter describes how other students in the class developed similar understandings when responding to case activities. Data collected on the entire class indicated that focus students and the rest of the class responded to and learned from cases in similar ways. When analyzing data from the entire class, I became most aware of their new understandings of inclusion when I analyzed the ways in which they responded to Christine's case and the "Goodnight Moon" case.

In the following sections, I illustrate how reading and responding to cases prompted a number of teacher candidates, not just focus students, to develop a deeper understanding and awareness of inclusion. I begin by describing how teacher candidates

began to define inclusion by broadening their understanding of diversity and asking themselves *who* is included. I then explain how teacher candidates came to recognize the impact that culture can have on instruction. Next, I illustrate how reading and responding to cases helped teacher candidates understand the role of the teacher and how teachers include children in instruction. Finally, I describe how data collected at the end of the semester supported what was learned from the quick-writes and reflections that were written earlier in the semester. I end this section by revisiting what was learned from focus students and compare focus student and general class findings.

Recognizing who is included. Reading and discussing the Christine case assisted teacher candidates in forming a definition of inclusion, deciding who is included in inclusive learning communities, and coming to terms with whether or not they supported inclusion. Comparing responses before and after discussing Christine's case revealed that the case impacted teacher candidates in different ways. When Ms. Pratt talked about inclusion, she wanted her students to think about the inclusion of *all* students in the classroom, including ESL, special needs, and minority children. She defined diversity in the broadest sense and continually challenged her students to think of ways to include diverse students in the general education classroom. Ms. Pratt wanted teacher candidates to hold high expectations for all students while providing them with equal opportunities to learn. Because she defined diversity very broadly and wanted teacher candidates to think about the inclusion of diverse students, we purposefully selected written cases to reflect different ways in which diversity can exist in a classroom. The "Goodnight Moon" case was selected to represent how cultural differences can impact teaching, and Christine's case was selected to represent issues of inclusion and diversity from the

special education perspective. In the middle of the semester, teacher candidates read Christine's case. As described earlier, this case described the thoughts and feelings of Christine, a teacher education student, when her class participated in a discussion about the inclusion of special needs children in the general education classroom.

Ms. Pratt asked teacher candidates to read Christine's case at home and then write an immediate reaction to the case. Teacher candidates wrote their reactions before having the opportunity to discuss the case with others. After having teacher candidates share and discuss their reactions in class, Ms. Pratt asked students to do a reflective writing at home, considering the Christine case and class discussions. She asked teacher candidates to respond to the following question: What personal 'AHA' did you have about working with special needs students and inclusive learning communities? Teacher candidates' pre-discussion quick-writes, which came from their very first responses to the case, and post discussion class reflections were analyzed to see what common themes appeared in the responses.

In order to analyze the data, I created a chart that contained all pre discussion responses in one column and all post discussion responses in another column. I placed these columns side by side so that I could compare teacher candidates' responses to one another and compare individual's pre and post discussion responses. I used abbreviations and symbols to shorten and summarize each response so that I could represent as much of the actual response on the chart. As I searched for patterns and themes, I noticed that a number of responses described frustration, new insights, and personal experiences and stories. As these patterns emerged, I reread through the chart multiple times to code responses based on the categories that I had created from these responses.

Over half of the teacher candidates (54%) responded to pre-discussion quick-writes by telling personal examples or stories that they felt were related to Christine's case. For example, one teacher candidate wrote about a brother who was placed in a special education classroom, and another described how she had experience babysitting children who had special needs. In these responses, teacher candidates basically shared their stories, made connections to Christine's case, and described how they could empathize with the feelings that Christine was experiencing. Four teacher candidates, or 16% of the class, expressed that they struggled with the issue of including special needs students in the regular education classroom and could see reasons for and against inclusion. Three teacher candidates, or 12.5% of the students, explained how reading the case challenged them to think about issues of inclusion in new and different ways. For example, one wrote that she had previously thought that including special needs students in the general education class "was a waste of money and staffing." She felt that it would also "hinder the learning of other students." After reading the case, however, she wrote, "I now think differently... I am now sympathetic to this whole idea and I do fully feel for Christine and her sister named Alice." In the remaining responses, teacher candidates expressed their support for inclusion but did not describe any new insights or changes in their thinking.

Post discussion responses revealed an increase in those teacher candidates who described having new understandings about inclusion after discussing the case with others. Thirteen teacher candidates, over half of the class, described how their understandings of inclusion had changed after having the opportunity to discuss the case with others. These responses are a significant increase when comparing post discussion

responses with pre discussion responses. In her post discussion reflection, one teacher candidate said talking with her classmates helped her realize that she had been “clumping” all children together and had not considered the variety of ways in which diversity can enter a classroom. She described how she began to form a new understanding of inclusion by broadening her definition of diversity. A second teacher candidate wrote about a similar discovery. She described how her group discussion helped her realize that there were “various groupings of inclusion” and that she needed to broaden her definition of inclusion so that it included ESL students and students with learning and behavioral problems. Others described how discussing Christine’s case with their peers and hearing different perspectives helped them think about inclusion in new ways.

Even though the majority of the class supported inclusion and described how discussing Christine’s case helped them think about inclusion in new ways, there were still a few teacher candidates who expressed some frustration after discussing the case with others. These teacher candidates explained how they saw both the positive and negative aspects of including special education students in the general education classroom but expressed frustration over not being prepared to work with such students. These teacher candidates wrote that they would need support and extra training if they were to receive handicapped students in their classrooms.

After reading and discussing Christine’s case, all teacher candidates indicated that including special education students in the general education classroom would be challenging. The majority of the teacher candidates provided general statements that showed their support for inclusion. However, pre and post discussion responses indicated

that more than one person struggled with the concept of inclusion and whether or not they agreed with it. These responses were not evident in whole class discussion, where Lydia, one of the focus students, was the only one who publicly critiqued including special education students in the general education classroom. Comparing pre and post discussion responses revealed that discussing the Christine case with their peers encouraged more teacher candidates to question and challenge their understanding of inclusion than when responding to the case on their own. Figures 1 and 2 illustrate the differences between pre and post discussion responses. The charts illustrate the proportion of students who responded by (a) describing a deepening understanding about inclusion, (b) responding with uncertainty and frustration, (c) sharing a personal story related to the case, or (d) stating their support for inclusion without describing new or changed understandings.

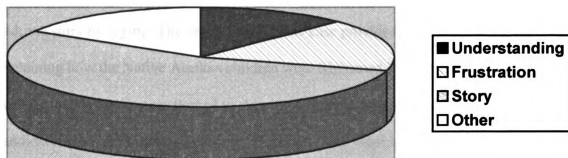


Figure 1. Types of responses written about Christine's case prior to class discussions.

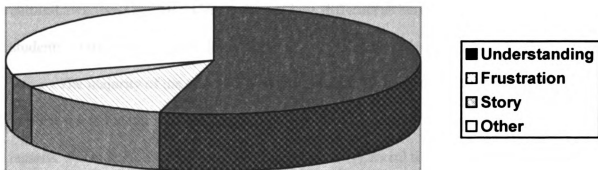


Figure 2. Types of responses written about Christine's case after class discussion.

Recognizing the impact of culture. Almost all of the teacher candidates in ED 222 grew up in small, midwestern towns and had very limited exposure to people from different cultures. One of the reasons that the “Goodnight Moon” case was chosen was because it illustrated how two different cultures clashed, impacting the learning environment in the classroom. As described in Chapter 2, the “Goodnight Moon” case described how Native Alaskan children unexpectedly responded to a popular children’s bedtime story by crying. The second page of the case provided more context for the case, explaining how the Native Alaskan children were frightened by the bedtime story because they were not accustomed to sleeping by themselves in the dark. After teacher candidates read and discussed the case, Ms. Pratt asked them to explain and write whether or not the case made them think differently about teaching diverse learners and creating an inclusive learning community. I analyzed all 25 responses that were written in class to see how teacher candidates responded to the activity. Most responses were short, and many of the teacher candidates wrote about the same topic. However, responses revealed that reading and discussing the case assisted teacher candidates in developing

cultural awareness and an understanding of how differences between teachers' and students' cultures can impact classrooms.

The majority of the class, 72%, responded that the case made them consider how important it is for teachers to consider students' background and culture while planning lessons. These teacher candidates described culture in general terms, spoke about cultural insight, described cultural change, or did not make an explicit reference to culture (see Figure 3). One teacher candidate wrote about culture in general terms, stating that it was important for a teacher to consider students' cultures. Seventeen teacher candidates described how reading and responding to the case either enhanced or even changed their views about the impact of culture on teaching. The remaining teacher candidates, 28% of the class, did not explicitly mention culture but described how the case made them think differently about such things as the use of children's literature, the role of the classroom environment, or the importance of planning lessons in advance.

Eighteen teacher candidates described how the "Goodnight Moon" case enhanced their understanding of culture. They explained that the activity helped them in recognizing the impact that culture could have on instruction and the need for teachers to acknowledge children's cultures when planning lessons. One teacher candidate wrote about her understandings in general terms, and 11 teacher candidates gave more detail about how the case helped them deepen their understanding. These teacher candidates gave examples of how the case made them "recognize," "realize," or "think deeper" about the role that culture has in instruction. For example, one teacher candidate wrote,

This story makes me realize how different cultures really are at times and how careful teachers must be. As a teacher, you really have to know your students and where they are coming from so that you don't end up sending the wrong message to them.

The 6 teacher candidates who spoke about cultural change described how the case made them “reconsider” or “think differently” about culture and instruction. For example, one teacher candidate wrote, “This makes me reconsider the way I view a group of learners and how to best accommodate them. I feel like I should make fewer assumptions and make sure I understand different views based on culture.” Another teacher candidates wrote,

This makes me feel differently about my own teaching. I cannot always assume that all of my students come from the same culture or background. I will need to spend some critical time getting to know each of the students personally. Then, once this occurs, I can introduce different backgrounds to the entire class.

These responses do not reveal how teacher candidates are defining culture. However, they do indicate that reading and discussing the “Goodnight Moon” case supported them in developing more understanding about the ways that teachers’ and students’ cultures can differ. By reading the case, they saw how cultures could clash in the classroom and lead to misunderstandings. Some teacher candidates recognized that they had made assumptions about students, expecting them to share the same experiences, values, and beliefs as themselves. One of Ms. Pratt’s goals for the course was to help teacher candidates recognize and understand how the hidden curriculum operates in schooling. She also wanted them to recognize that the cultural capital that children have is not necessarily the cultural capital that is privileged in schools. By reading and discussing the “Goodnight Moon” case, teacher candidates began to develop an awareness that differences in beliefs and values can lead to unintended outcomes in classrooms. They recognized that teachers needed to be careful not to make assumptions

about their students when teaching. They also saw that it's important for teachers to consider students' backgrounds when planning instruction.

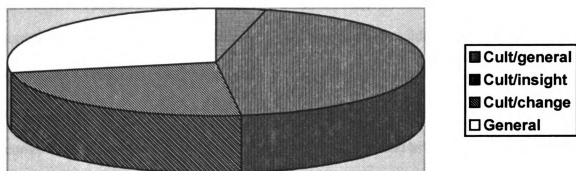


Figure 3. Proportion of “Goodnight Moon” case reflections that represented general understandings, deepened and insightful understandings, or changed understandings about culture.

The teacher's role when including children. Reading and discussing written cases encouraged teacher candidates to view the role of the teacher in new ways. When teacher candidates discussed the “Goodnight Moon” case, they began to recognize that it's important for teachers to consider children's cultural backgrounds when planning lessons. As one teacher candidate illustrated, “Culture really *does* exist!” Reading and discussing the case supported teacher candidates in recognizing some of the responsibilities that they will have when they become teachers. Discussing Christine's case helped teacher candidates recognize some of the challenges that teachers face as they strive to make their classrooms inclusive learning communities. When teacher candidates first responded to Christine's case, the majority agreed with inclusion and gave personal examples that supported it. However, after engaging in conversations with their peers and hearing

different perspectives, they began to develop a fuller understanding of the challenges that teachers face when including special education students in the general education classroom.

Some of teacher candidates' post survey responses revealed how course activities assisted them in thinking about the role of the teacher when children are included in classrooms. Field experiences and case activities supported some teacher candidates in thinking about issues of equity and equality in the classroom and developing a commitment to include all children during instruction. Pre and post survey questions¹⁸ that asked teacher candidates to rank their level of agreement to seven statements did not reveal significant differences in responses; however, some of the comments that teacher candidates wrote to support their ratings revealed how they were thinking about the role of the teacher. Responses that proved to be the most informative came from the statements, "Teachers often expect less from students from the lower socioeconomic class," and "Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds typically have fewer literacy opportunities than their middle-class peers." Ratings for these statements, like the others, did not reveal significant patterns or changes. However, some comments from post survey responses revealed that teacher candidates were aware that teachers have a responsibility to teach all children and that teacher decision-making can impact the learning opportunities that children do or do not have in the classroom. Some teacher candidates even wrote comments to support their ratings that revealed how their experiences in ED 222 impacted the ways in which they thought about teachers and

¹⁸ See chapter 2 for a more detailed description of the survey and for why only parts of it were useful during data analysis.

teaching. However, only a small percentage of the class wrote comments that referred back to classroom activities or assignments.

When responding to the statement, “Teachers often expect less from students from the lower socioeconomic class,” one teacher candidate responded to the question by mentioning RCE video clips. She wrote, “Video clips, especially the Harlem clip, showed otherwise. My field work also showed that teachers expect success from all.” A second student stated, “Maybe in some areas [students have fewer literacy opportunities]. The Harlem video suggests otherwise.” A third teacher candidate wrote, “After being in my field experience, I have noticed that my CT does not treat any students differently because of SES.” Another teacher candidate wrote, “I think teachers believe modifications might be needed at times for students of lower SES, but that quality of work is expected to be the same.” A fifth student wrote, “I think teachers (most teachers) try to accommodate students abilities rather than socioeconomic class.”

These responses revealed that some teacher candidates believed that teachers could create inclusive learning environments where they hold similar expectations for all students. Comments like these reflected a belief that teachers should have high expectations for all students and can provide equal opportunities for a diverse range of learners. These comments also reflected an awareness that teachers sometimes need to make modifications to instruction to support student learning. All teacher candidates did not provide comments for their rankings, and I cannot use these responses as evidence that all teacher candidates formed new understandings about the role of the teacher in inclusive learning environments. However, the responses that are illustrated here provide further examples, supporting what was learned from written cases, that some teacher

candidates were beginning to think about the role of the teacher in new and more complex ways. References made to field placements and to RCE videos and clips indicated that course activities and field experiences had an impact on how teacher candidates were thinking about the role and responsibilities of the teacher when creating inclusive learning communities. Class discussions and written responses to the “Goodnight Moon” case and Christine’s case revealed that teacher candidates were developing a deeper understanding of what it meant to teach diverse students. Responses reflected that some teacher candidates were thinking about issues of equity and equality in the class and revealed a commitment to teach all students.

It’s much easier to trace how focus students’ views about the role of the teacher changed throughout the semester than follow how the other 20 teacher candidates’ views changed. Post survey responses, when studied by themselves, do not provide evidence of change. However, there is evidence that teacher candidates began to think about the teaching of diverse students in more complex ways. When considering what was *not* written at the beginning of the semester versus what was written at the end of the semester, one can see that teacher candidates may have formed more complex understandings of what it meant to include all students in the classroom. Written comments showed that teacher candidates began to develop a broader definition for inclusion and began to recognize the challenges that teachers might face when including special needs students in the classroom.

Data collected on the entire class indicated that many teacher candidates were writing about issues at the end of the semester that they had not been writing at the beginning of the semester. Some began to question the role and responsibilities of the

classroom teacher and stated how teachers can modify instruction while maintaining high expectations for all. Comments made by teacher candidates, both in class discussions and in writing, revealed that there were others, and not just focus students, in the course who began thinking differently about the role and responsibilities of the teacher.

End of the semester reflections. One important goal that Ms. Pratt had for her class, in addition to learning about the teaching of literacy, was to help teacher candidates learn about what it means to have an inclusive learning community. She wanted her students to examine themselves as learners, teachers, and as literate cultural beings. She planned activities with the intention of helping teacher candidates recognize and understand what drives their decisions and how experiences and beliefs influence who they are as teachers. At the end of the semester, teacher candidates were given a take-home self-assessment and were asked to comment on their learning and growth throughout the semester. They were asked to provide examples from artifacts in their portfolios that supported comments that they made about their growth. Data were collected on 24 of the 25 final self-assessments. One student was late handing in her self-assessment, and her self-assessment was incomplete. Because I did not collect her self-assessment, I did not include this student's responses in the final self-assessment analysis. Responses to self-assessment questions revealed that teacher candidates believed both field and course experiences contributed to their growth and learning. They gave examples of how they developed deeper understandings of what it meant to create inclusive learning communities and provided examples of how making personal connections to course and field activities supported their learning.

On the final self-assessment, teacher candidates were asked to describe one instance, a *critical incident*, experienced during the semester that helped them strengthen their understanding of the importance of creating inclusive learning communities. They were asked to provide sufficient detail for their responses and give reasons why they experienced change. In response, 50% of the teacher candidates described how field experiences and observing interactions in real classrooms helped them better understand what inclusion might look like. They explained how viewing real issues in the field helped them understand what teachers face when trying to create inclusive learning communities.

Two teacher candidates described how reading and responding to Christine's case, *A Case of Freedom to Learn* (Peacock et al., 1999), served as a critical incident in their learning, and a third mentioned how both Christine's case and field experiences were critical turning points for her. The remaining 9 students, just over 37% of the class, described critical incidents that came from other course activities that were not based on a particular case that they read or on an incident that occurred in the field. For example, some mentioned how participating in group discussions and book club activities were particularly enlightening. It's important to note that these critical incidents are significant because teacher candidates gave examples of how both the field and the course served as critical learning moments for them. Teacher candidates gave examples of critical incidents that occurred in the course just as frequently as they gave examples from the field. It's also important to note that some teacher candidates, when they could have chosen any experience from ED 222, selected the Christine case activity for their critical

incident. Figure 4 illustrates the proportion of the class that selected field, course, or case-related activities for their critical incidents.

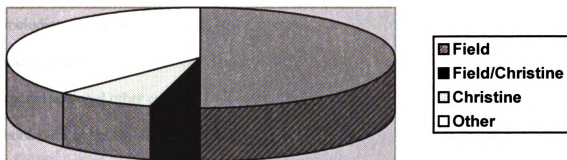


Figure 4. Proportion of self-assessment critical incidents that were related to field experiences, the Christine case, or other course-related activities.

In a second question on the final pre-assessment, teacher candidates were asked to write about the changes in knowledge and/or beliefs that they experienced in relation to how to teach literacy in an inclusive learning community. Ms. Pratt told teacher candidates that in order to analyze their growth throughout the semester, they needed to read through the contents of their portfolios and look for patterns, contradictions, or changes in how they had thought about issues throughout the semester. In response, 20 out of 24 students (83%) made reference to reading cases and described how activities around these cases helped them better understand issues of inclusion. Their responses reiterated many of the new understandings that they had previously described in the “Goodnight Moon” and Christine case quick-writes and reflections.

Some teacher candidates mentioned how cases in general helped them better understand issues of inclusion, see issues from multiple perspectives, and redefine what it

means to work with diverse learners. Ten out of 24 teacher candidates, however, made explicit reference to the “Goodnight Moon” case and how it impacted their understanding of inclusion and the role that culture plays in classrooms. Seven others made explicit reference to the Christine case and how it impacted their views and beliefs about including special needs students in the classroom. One teacher candidate explicitly mentioned both the “Goodnight Moon” case and Christine’s case. The remaining teacher candidates cited other course activities in their responses. Some examples came from book club and class discussions that were not directly related to field experiences or case activities. Figure 5 illustrates the proportion of teacher candidates who referred to cases when describing their growth and learning throughout the semester.

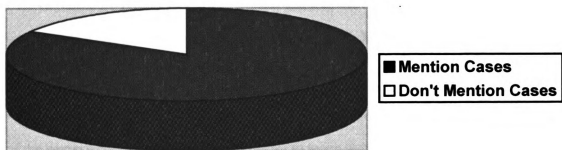


Figure 5. Proportion of self-assessment responses that highlighted learning from cases.

Relationships between focus student and class findings. Teacher candidates’ responses to written cases, pre and post surveys, and end-of-the semester self-assessments provide examples that reading and discussing written cases supported teacher candidates in developing understandings of what it means to have an inclusive

learning community. As they read and discussed cases, teacher candidates recognized the impact of culture on teachers, redefined inclusion, and began to understand the roles and responsibilities of teachers when creating inclusive learning environments. Teacher candidates' responses on the final self-assessment also showed that field-based experiences supported their learning. These experiences assisted teacher candidates in learning about how to create inclusive learning communities. These experiences and new understandings also reflected what focus students learned throughout the semester. Each focus student, however, highlighted a different aspect of her growth in the final self-assessment.

In their final self-assessments, Mallory and Lydia both provided examples of how field experiences and case activities helped them gain new understandings about how to create inclusive learning communities. Their experiences and understandings reflected what was learned from the general class findings. Both Mallory and Lydia highlighted and gave examples of how their attitudes and beliefs had changed over the semester. Mallory provided examples of how she had narrowly defined diversity at the beginning of the semester when she expressed a desire to teach only English and Spanish speaking children. When describing her growth at the end of the semester, she revealed how she began to recognize why she felt uncomfortable when children talked about difference. This realization helped Mallory begin to face her own fears about working with diverse groups of children. It also helped her see that teachers cannot avoid the issue and need to talk with their students about difference.

Lydia also provided examples of how both Christine's case and experiences in the field helped her better understand what it meant to create inclusive learning

environments. Throughout the semester, Lydia was very critical of including special needs students in the general education classroom. At the end of the semester, however, she began to recognize that she needed to change her attitude and take more responsibility for learning how to teach diverse children. She began to see the role of the teacher in a new way, understanding that teachers, even the most experienced, do not always have the answers.

Lizz, Sadie, and Jackie also provided examples of how their understanding of inclusion had either deepened or changed throughout the semester. They provided examples of early written work that revealed limited knowledge about inclusion and diversity. Lizz revisited an assignment where she described her ideal classroom and recognized that she, too, had narrowly defined inclusion. She had not considered how students could be culturally and linguistically diverse. Jackie and Sadie did not describe *changes* in their attitudes and beliefs about inclusion, but they did provide examples that revealed deeper understanding of the issues. When she revisited an assignment where she described her k-12 experiences with diverse students, Jackie recognized how limited her own experiences were and wrote that she still had much to learn. Sadie provided examples of how reading one of the cases and observing her CT in the field helped her understand what an inclusive learning community might look like.

All focus students provided examples in either quick-writes or final assessments an understanding that their initial definitions for diversity and inclusion had been quite narrow. Like many others in the class, focus students gave examples of how written cases supported them in reaching these new understandings. These various experiences and understandings illustrated the similarities between focus student and general class

findings. General class findings reinforced what was already learned from following 5 individual students in the class. However, the personal stories and connections that appeared in much of the focus student data was difficult, and sometimes impossible, to identify and analyze with the rest of the class.

Developing Knowledge and Skills for Teaching Literacy

During the first few weeks of ED 222, Ms. Pratt spent a lot of time helping teacher candidates think about what it meant to be literate and what it meant to create inclusive learning communities. She had teacher candidates read about different theories of learning and asked them to begin thinking about their own philosophy of literacy instruction. She wanted teacher candidates to think critically about the role of the teacher and consider how a person's prior experiences, understandings, and beliefs impact who they are as teachers before introducing them to the literacy content of the course. By beginning the semester in this way, Ms. Pratt hoped that teacher candidates would be more critical of what they were learning and would continually ask who gains and who loses when teachers make instructional decisions. Ms. Pratt also began the semester by focusing on issues of inclusion because it was an overarching theme of the course that could be linked to the concepts of the hidden curriculum, cultural capital, and equity vs. equality.

Another goal that Ms. Pratt had for the course was to provide teacher candidates with an overview of the knowledge and skills that are needed to teach literacy to diverse students. Since ED 222 was the first literacy methods course for teacher candidates, they were expected to develop an awareness and understanding of the literacy concepts and

pedagogical approaches used to teach literacy but were not expected to be able to implement all of the approaches by the end of one semester. Because Ms. Pratt began the semester by focusing on what it meant to create an inclusive learning community, she hoped that teacher candidates would consider issues of inclusion as they were introduced to the literacy content of the course. Activities that were based on written cases were successful in helping teacher candidates think about issues of inclusion; however, data collected from these activities provided few examples of how written cases supported teacher candidates in learning about the pedagogy of teaching children to read and write. Data collected from RCE activities, however, indicated that the hypermedia program supported teacher candidates in developing these knowledge and skills.

In the following section, I provide examples to illustrate how RCE videos and clips supported teacher candidates in developing literacy content and pedagogical knowledge. I describe the various ways in which RCE cases were integrated into the course and provide examples of what was learned from RCE activities. I begin by explaining how Ms. Pratt used RCE to assist teacher candidates' in understanding the ways that teachers create learning opportunities for emergent readers and writers. Then, I illustrate how RCE supported teacher candidates in thinking about the ways in which all children can be included in instruction. Finally, I describe how pre and post survey responses revealed teacher candidates' increased knowledge but limited understanding of how to design literacy instruction for inclusive learning communities.

Creating Learning Opportunities for Readers and Writers. Ms. Pratt introduced teacher candidates to RCE in the sixth week of class. Previous to this class, teacher candidates had already read a chapter in their textbook on emergent literacy and viewed

some clips of classroom instruction through a CD-Rom that came with their course textbook. In the sixth week of class, Ms. Pratt showed an entire RCE video, which lasted approximately 40 minutes. The video introduced Ms. Hemmeter and her kindergarten class in San Antonio, Texas. The majority of the students in the video were native Spanish speakers but appeared to speak fluent English. Before showing the video, Ms. Pratt told teacher candidates to keep in mind the various emergent literacy concepts and strategies that had been introduced in their textbook. Teacher candidates had previously received a study guide to go with the emergent literacy chapters and referred to the guide when viewing Mrs. Hemmeter's case. When the video was over, Ms. Pratt had teacher candidates form small groups to discuss what they observed in the video. Each group then reported back to the entire class. At the end of class, teacher candidates reflected on the RCE video and wrote a quick-write that described what they learned that day and what stood out to them in Mrs. Hemmeter's class. Quick-writes were analyzed to see what aspects of the video and literacy instruction were mentioned.

An analysis of teacher candidates' quick-writes revealed that all teacher candidates provided examples of how viewing the video of Mrs. Hemmeter's class helped them learn new things about teaching literacy to children. Some teacher candidates gave general examples of how the case helped them better understand different aspects of literacy instruction and ways to create inclusive learning communities. Some of the general instructional insights that were mentioned included the following:

- Teachers can make classrooms more inclusive by offering students choice in activities.

- Teachers can make literacy a part of the entire day and can create environments where reading and writing are everywhere.
- Teachers should make instruction relevant to the real world and should relate it to students' lives.
- Teachers can make classrooms more inclusive by allowing students to work at different levels.
- Teachers can incorporate different types of reading, such as paired reading and guided reading, during literacy instruction.
- Teachers can use literature to support emergent readers and writers.

Other teacher candidates described what they learned in more detail and described specific instructional strategies that Mrs. Hemmeter used to include all students in learning. Some of the specific instruction strategies that were mentioned include the following:

- Mrs. Hemmeter showed how teachers can incorporate the family and community. She had students write letters to her husband and to the owner of a local grocery store. She also had them write personal stories.
- Mrs. Hemmeter demonstrated how to create an environment where literature is all around. In one example she used word walls.
- Teachers like Mrs. Hemmeter can create more literacy opportunities by incorporating reading and writing into play centers. For example, students in the video read from menus in their “pretend” restaurant.

- Mrs. Hemmeter incorporated more opportunities to read and write when students wrote in their journals describing and illustrating things that they made from Leggo blocks.
- Mrs. Hemmeter gave a student an opportunity to succeed when she asked a girl to locate the letter “N” in the morning message. The girl’s first name began with “N.”

In the following two class sessions, Ms. Pratt had teacher candidates work with RCE hypermedia program in groups so that they could search for clips that supported the lessons that they were going to teach in the field. These RCE activities were less structured than the Mrs. Hemmeter video activity, and teacher candidates were able to view clips from other schools. After spending time viewing clips, groups selected their favorite clip and posted a message on the discussion forum describing why they liked it. Ms. Pratt and I had arranged to have another ED 222 class respond to teacher candidates’ messages, but the other class did not consistently post responses. In the end, Ms. Pratt encouraged her students to respond to one another’s message.

Responses to postings were very sporadic, and teacher candidates had mixed feelings about the effectiveness of using the forum. However, a number of teacher candidates later reported in an e-mail to Ms. Pratt that they acquired teaching ideas from the RCE clips and planned to incorporate them into their literacy lesson plans. In their final self-assessments, teacher candidates had differing opinions about the effectiveness of the discussion forum conversations. However, all teacher candidates wrote that

viewing literacy instruction on RCE was beneficial and helped them understand the literacy practices that were being introduced in the course.

Including all children in instruction. Responses to RCE activities indicated that case activities reinforced teacher candidates understanding of teaching literacy and assisted them in looking critically at instruction. However, responses also revealed that a number of teacher candidates still held superficial views of inclusion. In week nine, teacher candidates discussed an article that they read on teaching reading comprehension strategies and formed groups to select RCE clips that, according to Ms. Pratt, “demonstrated some aspect of comprehension.” Groups identified clips that illustrated such strategies as predicting, using prior knowledge, and questioning. The following week, groups presented their favorite comprehension strategy clip to the entire class and explained why they selected the clip.

In their examples, one group showed a clip of a teacher and students working together to create a story. The clip illustrated how the activity assisted children in developing awareness of character, setting, and plot. When reading an article titled, *Effective Practices for Developing Reading Comprehension* (Duke & Pearson, 2002), teacher candidates read that having knowledge of story grammar could assist children’s comprehension of stories. The RCE clip illustrated one of the strategies that was introduced in their reading. In another clip, teacher candidates showed how a teacher asked students to make predictions and confirm their predictions while reading. Teacher candidates identified that having children make predictions and confirm predictions while reading could support their understanding of the text.

A third RCE example illustrated how a group of children assisted one another in comprehending a text by asking each other questions and clarifying statements. Using open-ended questions to support reading comprehension was another strategy that was introduced to teacher candidates when they read the article on teaching reading comprehension. By selecting clips in groups and presenting and discussing these clips, teacher candidates demonstrated that they were becoming more aware of reading comprehension strategies and were able to identify these strategies in practice.

While groups presented their clips to the entire class, Ms. Pratt asked teacher candidates to think about how the clips did or did not support an inclusive learning community. She gave everybody a chart to write down ideas as they viewed the clips and told students that they could add to their charts as the class discussed the clips. Charts and field notes that were collected from this day indicated that all teacher candidates were able to describe at least one way that instruction could be supportive of an inclusive learning environment.

Teacher candidates who presented the story grammar clip explained that the clip demonstrated how a teacher could include all students in a lesson while teaching about the plot, setting, and characters that make up a story. The teacher took ideas from children and used these ideas as the class created a story together. The clip also showed how the teacher had children tell their ideas to a partner, creating an opportunity to include all children in the sharing of ideas. A group that presented a journal-writing clip explained that the teacher in the clip created a more inclusive learning community by using journals and allowing students to write in their own ways.

Teacher candidates gave mixed responses when they compared the prediction clip with the clip that showed children discussing a story together. The prediction clip was very teacher-centered where the teacher initiated all questions. The second clip was student-centered, and the teacher wasn't even shown. When asked whether these two clips supported inclusive learning communities, some teacher candidates thought that if a lesson were teacher-led, then it would be easier to include all students in various activities. Other teacher candidates, however, pointed out that some of the clips that showed student-led groups were also very inclusive, and the teacher was not leading the instruction. One teacher candidate commented that in the student-led group, one child seemed to dominate all of the discussion. Her observation prompted a class discussion on what teacher candidates were seeing in their field placements and how instruction can be made more inclusive.

These conversations between teacher candidates demonstrated that they were beginning to view classroom instruction with a more critical eye towards whether instruction favored some students over others. When discussing the first clips, teacher candidates appeared to dichotomize instruction as being either inclusive or not inclusive. However, when discussing the student-centered and teacher-centered clips, teacher candidates made comments that indicated they were beginning to look at classroom instruction in a manner that was not so "black and white."

When Ms. Pratt and I met after class, she stated that she was pleased with how class went and with the conversations that students were having. It appeared that not only were they demonstrating an understanding of specific reading comprehension strategies, teacher candidates were also demonstrating an awareness of how instruction might or

might not support an inclusive learning environment. Ms. Pratt was pleased because we had struggled for weeks to come up with strategies that would assist teacher candidates in integrating issues of inclusion with the literacy content of the course. Teacher candidates' homework assignments, however, revealed that they had developed understandings about inclusion that were not evident in their class discussions. For this assignment, teacher candidates were asked to reflect upon their field experience and describe the inclusion that they were seeing in the field. All of the teacher candidates, except for one, described how their classrooms were very inclusive. The teacher candidate who stated that she hadn't seen much inclusion was a special education student that defined inclusion as having special needs students integrated in the regular education classroom. Since she did not observe special education students in her classroom, she felt that neither inclusion nor exclusion was taking place.

When describing their field placements, very few teacher candidates provided examples of exclusion. When they did, examples were usually based on children being excluded from instruction because of behavioral problems. These comments appeared to indicate that a number of teacher candidates were not recognizing that "built into the fabric of schools are curricular, pedagogical, and evaluative practices that intentionally or unintentionally" privilege some students over others" (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p. 30). Some of the comments written by teacher candidates indicated that they were still thinking about inclusion and exclusion in superficial ways.

In other examples on the same homework assignment, Ms. Pratt and I noticed that teacher candidates were providing examples of inclusion that only illustrated a child's active involvement in the class. For example, if a child could voice an answer to a

question, then he or she was stated as being *included*. If the child was inattentive, didn't engage in the activity, or didn't respond, then he or she was *excluded*. After reading a number of such examples, I realized that teacher candidates seemed to be defining inclusion as whether or not students had a fair opportunity to participate in class activities. In order to provide evidence for how children are included in their classrooms, teacher candidates wrote such comments as the following:

- All have a fair chance to participate.
- All went on a field trip.
- The teacher includes all students in daily activities.
- The teacher calls on all.
- Most of the time the classroom experiences many instances of inclusion.

Usually all lessons are directed at the entire group and every child is given the opportunity to respond or comment.

- When the whole class is together as a large group everyone participates.

These responses indicated that when teacher candidates thought about inclusion and instruction, they were taking into consideration issues of equity and equality and giving all children equal opportunities to participate in class. However, they did not take into consideration the concepts of cultural capital and the hidden curriculum that had been implicitly embedded throughout ED 222. Ms. Pratt seldom used these terms while teaching, but she did have her class engage in conversations throughout the semester about who gains and who loses during classroom instruction. She wanted teacher candidates to recognize that some children are inherently at a disadvantage when they

come to school not having knowledge or experience of the ways of thinking, believing, and acting that are privileged in schools. Ms. Pratt wanted teacher candidates to recognize that just by selecting one type of activity over another, regardless of whether or not all students actively engage in the activity, teachers instantly privilege some children over others. Teacher candidates' homework responses indicated that they were thinking about issues of inclusion but were not thinking about inclusion at this deeper level.

Responses to pre and post surveys. Throughout the semester, teacher candidates had demonstrated through RCE activities, written assignments, and class discussions that they were developing an understanding of how to teach literacy to diverse students. This growth was also evident when I compared the open-ended responses that teacher candidates wrote to two pre and post survey questions. In the first example, teacher candidates were given a scenario that stated they were teaching in an inner city, public school in Detroit. The paragraph asked teacher candidates to imagine that they were teaching in a very diverse classroom and described some of the students that were in this classroom: gifted students, students struggling to work at grade level, students with attention deficit disorder, and students from single parent and low-income homes. After reading the description of the students, teacher candidates were asked, "What considerations and accommodations will you need to make when planning literacy lessons for this group of students? Please explain."

In a second example, teacher candidates were given a scenario that introduced them to Nian Nian, an English as a Second Language (ESL) student who recently immigrated to the United States. The scenario told teacher candidates to imagine that they were a classroom teacher who just received Nian Nian in their class. The scenario

explained that Nian Nian appeared to be able to understand very general conversation that occurred in the classroom; however, her English reading and writing skills were very poor. Teacher candidates were told to describe how they thought they could best support Nian Nian in acquiring English skills and the kind of literacy instruction that they thought would best support her learning. Teacher candidates responded to both scenarios in pre and post surveys. Ms. Pratt never returned the surveys to her students, and the scenarios were never discussed in class. Ms. Pratt and I did not want the scenarios to be discussed in class because we wanted to try and assess how individual responses varied from the beginning to the end of the semester. If the scenarios had been returned and discussed in class, teacher candidates might have written responses that represent Ms. Pratt's or other students' ideas.

Analyzing the Detroit and ESL scenarios. Data collected on focus students revealed that personal writing and case activities assisted them in beginning to acquire the knowledge and skills that are needed to teach literacy to diverse students. Responses to pre and post surveys indicated that others in the class gained similar knowledge throughout the semester. However, survey responses also revealed that some teacher candidates lacked knowledge and had misconceptions about teaching ESL students. Pre and post survey responses were analyzed for the number of suggestions that teacher candidates provided, the degree of detail that was provided for each suggestion, and whether or not suggestions were appropriate. Responses were coded as either *general* or *expanded* to describe their level of detail. A response was labeled as general if teacher candidates described how they would provide instruction but didn't provide a discussion, rationale, or explanation for their response. For example, one teacher candidate wrote,

“You should use a variety of different strategies and monitor their success and then adapt or mold your strategies.” In this response, the teacher candidate provided three suggestions. “Use a variety of different strategies” was one response. “Monitor their success” was a second. “Adapt or mold your strategies” was a third. “Adapt” and “mold” are not listed as two separate ideas because I interpreted them as being the same. These responses would all be labeled as general responses because no explanation or further discussion was given about why these ideas or strategies are being used.

An expanded response was one that provided more information and a possible rationale or explanation for why a specific suggestion was given. For example, one teacher candidate wrote,

I will choose books with many levels of complexity so individual assignments can be modified. For example, I may ask a learning disability child to just try and re-tell me the story and then reflect on it whereas I may ask a gifted and talented student to discuss the symbolism they found in the book.

This response would be labeled an expanded response because the student went into further discussion and provided further examples that supported her statement, “I will choose books with many levels of complexity...” In this response, “choose books with many levels” is one suggestion. “Ask a learning disabled child to just try and retell” is a second suggestion. “Reflect on it” is a third suggestion, and “ask a gifted and talented student to discuss the symbolism” is a fourth suggestion. This student would be labeled as giving four different suggestions for instruction, and the first suggestion is expanded. The rationale for choosing books with many levels of complexity is so that the teacher can modify individual assignments.

Responses were also coded as *acceptable* if they seemed appropriate for the question and reflected goals that Ms. Pratt had for the class. For example, one of the goals for the course was to encourage teacher candidates to think about how teachers can make their classrooms inclusive learning communities. Ms. Pratt wanted teacher candidates to consider ways that literacy instruction can occur to promote learning for all students in a classroom. In all of the pre and post responses to the Detroit scenario, only one teacher candidate gave an inappropriate response. Instead of offering ways that a teacher could modify or adapt instruction for diverse learners, this teacher candidate suggested that the gifted students be sent to another program or another school. She also responded to the question by stating that she would “assess and provide more instruction for the others.” This teacher candidate’s suggestions were counted and added to the overall suggestions that were given by the entire class; however, her response to send the gifted students to another classroom or school was flagged as not supporting the kind of instruction that was being promoted in ED 222. Therefore, this response was labeled as inappropriate.

After responses were coded for number, detail, and appropriateness, I again revisited pre and post responses to determine how individual’s responses differed from the beginning of the semester to the end of the semester. For example, some teacher candidates listed very general responses in their pre survey and listed very similar, general responses in their post survey. The only difference in some of these pre and post survey responses was that more general responses were sometimes listed in the post survey. In other examples, the quality of pre and post responses differed. For example, in the pre survey one teacher candidate responded that she would consider different ability

levels and provide additional support; however, no specific suggestions were given for what this support might look like. In the post survey, this same student provided more specific examples and explained *how* she would use a variety of specific grouping strategies to provide more support for struggling students. This teacher candidate's post survey response provides an example of how more specific strategies were given at the end of the semester when compared to the beginning of the semester.

Findings from the Detroit and ESL scenarios. Teacher candidates provided more instructional suggestions and more suggestions that were expanded in their post survey Detroit responses in comparison to their pre survey responses. In the pre survey, a total of 154 instructional suggestions were offered, whereas 174 suggestions were offered in the post survey. In the pre survey, 26 expanded responses were given whereas 37 expanded responses were given in the post survey. In addition, one teacher candidate provided an inappropriate response for both the pre and post survey. The differences between pre and post survey responses reflected what was learned from other data sources that were collected throughout the semester. Scenario responses revealed that teacher candidates were developing an understanding of the kinds of strategies that support literacy instruction and were able to provide more explanation for why they were selecting specific strategies at the end of the semester compared to the beginning of the semester.

When comparing the pre and post responses of individual teacher candidates, 16 out of 25 teacher candidates, or 64%, gave specific and detailed suggestions in the post survey responses that were not mentioned in the pre survey. Eight out of 25 students, or 32%, gave general post survey responses that were very similar to their pre survey responses. In the post survey responses, however, more overall suggestions were given.

In summary, 24 out of 25 teacher candidates provided appropriate instructional suggestions in both pre and post survey responses. Teacher candidates, however, provided more specific suggestions and more rationales for these suggestions in responses that were written at the end of the semester. Figure 6 illustrates these findings.

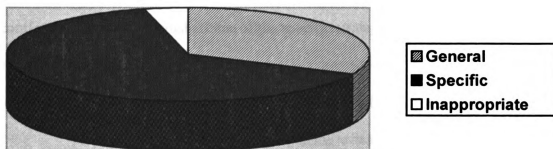


Figure 6. Types of suggestions given for teaching literacy to diverse learners on the Detroit post survey scenario.

In general, pre and post survey responses to the ESL scenario were similar to the Detroit scenario in that more suggestions were provided in the post survey than in the pre survey. However, the quality of the responses for these two scenarios was quite different. Less than half the class, or 10 out of 25 students, gave specific, appropriate strategies in the ESL post survey responses that were not mentioned in the pre survey. Almost the same number of students, 9 out of 25, provided general responses in both their pre and post surveys, and these responses frequently reflected the same ideas both at the beginning and end of the semester. What is most interesting, however, is that at the end of the semester, 6 teacher candidates, or 24% of the class, provided responses to the ESL scenario that were inappropriate or questionable. These responses indicated that teacher

candidates might not have understood some of the issues that needed to be considered when working with ESL students.

In the general responses, many teacher candidates wrote that they would involve Nian Nian in more class activities, would pair her up with a partner, and would try to get her parents to use more English at home. Common responses also focused on the importance of creating a safe environment for Nian Nian so that she would feel more comfortable speaking English. Some of the specific strategies that were provided in the post survey included:

- Reading done in class should be given to her ahead of time so she has time to prepare in advance; work on recognizing words that go with pictures;
- She may be able to participate with the class in a book club if the book is read to her. She may understand more English than she can speak or write;
- Select books carefully which include basic vocabulary words. I would also look for books which support the text strongly with illustrations which are not reliant on language.

Some of the teacher candidates who provided inappropriate or questionable responses focused their suggestions on having Nian Nian practice phonics and letter/sound relationships and did not provide suggestions for how she might improve her English comprehension. One teacher candidate suggested that Nian Nian work on phonics skills and workbooks while the rest of the class was engaged in literacy activities. Another suggested that Nian Nian take phonics workbooks home and practice doing the pages in the workbooks. All of these responses emphasized phonics instruction

and did not suggest other ways that Nian Nian could improve her English skills. The ESL scenario explained that Nian Nian had a limited understanding of spoken English and struggled with reading and writing. This description would indicate that in addition to learning about the English phonetic system, Nian Nian would benefit from instruction that supported vocabulary development and fluency. A more appropriate response might have described how a teacher could support Nian Nian by relating her native language to English and building upon what Nian Nian already knew. Instead of focusing all instruction on phonics, a more appropriate response would have suggested a more balanced approach to literacy instruction. A balanced approach, one that integrated a variety of instructional strategies, was an approach Ms. Pratt advocated in her course.

Another teacher candidate provided an inappropriate response because her response did not reflect Ms. Pratt's goal for building an inclusive learning community. This teacher candidate did not offer ways in which a teacher might modify instruction to accommodate a learner like Nian Nian. Instead, this particular teacher candidate stated that Nian Nian, a fourth grader, should be sent back to kindergarten because of her limited English skills. This teacher candidate wrote that even if Nian Nian "was up to par in mathematics, science, and history," the teacher should still send her back to kindergarten if Nian Nian struggled to communicate. This response did not take into consideration the social and psychological implications of moving Nian Nian to a kindergarten class and did not support the course goal of building of inclusive learning communities.

Significance of findings. Ms. Pratt integrated RCE into her course on the days when literacy concepts such as emergent literacy and reading comprehension strategies

were being introduced to teacher candidates. She designed RCE activities so that they would support what teacher candidates were reading and discussing in the course. Data collected during class sessions and from pre and post surveys revealed that a number of teacher candidates were able to identify and describe ways in which teachers could provide literacy instruction to children. However, there were times when teacher candidates responded to activities by giving very general suggestions for literacy instruction. Suggestions were appropriate, but sometimes they were so general that it was difficult to judge how well teacher candidates really understood the literacy concepts that were being introduced in the course. Teacher candidates were able to identify, name, and list strategies that supported reading and writing instruction; however, they did not always provide further descriptions and rationales for why they choose to focus on particular strategies over others. Considering that one of Ms. Pratt's goals was to provide teacher candidates a broad overview of literacy concepts and strategies for teaching literacy to diverse students, these findings support that goal. However, it appeared that there were times when teacher candidates demonstrated a superficial understanding of what it meant to provide instruction that supports inclusive learning communities.

Responses from the Detroit scenario show that over half the class provided not just more responses, but more specific responses that suggested how teachers could modify and adapt instruction to meet the needs of students of varying abilities. Responses to Nian Nian, however, indicated that less than half the class was able to provide specific strategies that would support a non-native English speaker, and some of these suggestions reflected limited knowledge of literacy instruction that supports the needs of nonnative English speakers. When we consider that no class sessions were specifically focused on

how to provide instruction to ESL students, these findings might not be surprising.

However, the majority of the class had field placements that were in diverse classrooms and that included non-native English speakers.

One reason why teacher candidates might have given more inappropriate responses to the ESL scenario in comparison to the Detroit scenario could be because more explicit discussion and conversation took place on modifying instruction for those children who have no difficulty communicating in English. For example, in one of the RCE videos, teacher candidates saw how Mrs. Hemmeter accommodated instruction for a group of kindergarteners of varying abilities. Even though this class contained many non-native English speakers in the video, all children appeared to have no difficulty communicating in English. Ms. Pratt and teacher candidates discussed various strategies that a teacher could use to accommodate different reading and writing abilities, but they did not enter into any discussions that focused on what one should do when children are struggling with the language that is used for instruction.

Understanding Inclusion

Collecting data on focus students and others in the class provided much information on the various ways that teacher candidates responded to personal writing and case activities. Teacher candidates' responses shed light on the types of pedagogical practices that supported them as they began to acquire the knowledge, skills, and beliefs that are needed to teach diverse learners. Responses also revealed the different ways that teacher candidates understood inclusion. In this section, I briefly describe the definition of inclusion that was constructed by teacher candidates throughout the semester. I also

highlight the pedagogical approaches that appeared to support teacher candidates as they began to form an understanding of inclusion and how to create inclusive learning environments. I end the chapter by reflecting on the insights that I gained after analyzing and comparing focus student and general class data.

Defining inclusion. Teacher candidates' definitions of inclusion evolved, grew, and changed through course and field experiences. One of the first concepts that teacher candidates wrestled to understand was defining *who* is included in inclusive learning communities. Some teacher candidates defined inclusion as acceptance of others, regardless of their skin color, cultural background, language, or ability. Teacher candidates also defined inclusion as giving all children a fair chance to learn, but their image of what this looks like in inclusive learning communities varied. For instance, some teacher candidates defined inclusion as giving all students equal opportunities to physically engage in classroom activities. Some defined inclusion as treating children fairly, but recognized that treating them fairly did not always mean treating them the same. Teacher candidates also began to recognize ways to adapt and modify instruction in ways that would meet the needs of diverse learners. Teacher candidates began to recognize that including all children meant having the responsibility and moral obligation to teach all children. They began to see how differences between teachers' and students' backgrounds could impact classrooms and learning. Some also recognized that creating inclusive learning environments meant talking freely about difference in ways that honor all children's backgrounds.

Pedagogical insights. The ways in which Ms. Pratt designed and provided support for activities influenced teacher candidates' understandings of inclusion. Sometimes Ms.

Pratt provided scaffolding and support that assisted teacher candidates in developing complex understandings. However, when this support was missing, activities sometimes reinforced superficial interpretations of inclusion. Analyzing data that were collected on focus students and others in the class indicated that some pedagogical approaches appeared to support teacher candidates' understandings better than others. For example, introducing cases that presented different perspectives and ways of teaching helped teacher candidates expand their own perspectives and views.

Giving teacher candidates time to discuss cases and hear alternative views prompted more teacher candidates to question their own assumptions and encouraged them to analyze cases more critically than when they simply read or viewed cases without having discussions. Even when they discussed cases, however, some teacher candidates still needed additional scaffolding and support to move beyond basic and rudimentary understandings. One example of how Ms. Pratt provided such support occurred when teacher candidates read *Peace Takes Practice* (Peacock et al., 1999). When teacher candidates read this cases, Ms. Pratt assisted them in considering instruction from a students' point of view and pushed them to think about issues of equity and equality when she asked teacher candidates to consider who gained and who lost when Lourdes made different instructional decisions.

Ms. Pratt assisted teacher candidates in acquiring the knowledge and skills that are needed to teach literacy in inclusive learning environment by introducing teacher candidates to RCE videos and clips. These cases of classroom teaching provided teacher candidates with images of the instructional approaches that were being introduced in the course. Ms. Pratt supported teacher candidates in becoming familiar with the hypermedia

program by showing entire video cases and providing suggestions for searching through clips. She also assisted teacher candidates in knowing what to observe when viewing clips by providing them with prompts and questions for RCE activities. She also had students use their textbook and articles to guide their discussions around clips. Having teacher candidates discuss videos and clips, both in class and online, encouraged some teacher candidates to critically view cases. However, data collected at the end of the semester revealed that those teacher candidates who valued the discussion forum were usually those who posted messages and received responses. When using both written and RCE cases, Ms. Pratt discovered that using small groups, dialogue journals, and a fishbowl activity encouraged teacher candidates to share views and opinions that they were sometimes hesitant to share.

Data collected on focus students and others in the class also reflected that written cases and RCE videos and clips appeared to support teacher candidates' learning in different ways. For example, teacher candidates' responses to written cases revealed that reading and discussing cases helped them develop awareness of inclusion, diversity, and the ethical and moral issues that surround inclusion. Reading and discussing written cases also encouraged some teacher candidates to question their assumptions and beliefs about inclusion. However, responses to RCE activities revealed that video and hypermedia cases prompted fewer emotional responses than written cases. RCE cases also prompted more discussion on specific instructional approaches rather than general awareness and beliefs. The activities, prompts, and scaffolding that were provided for these cases could have impacted the ways in which teacher candidates' responded. However, these differences could also be a result of differences that emerged from reading about

classroom dilemmas compared to actually seeing progressive teaching approaches being applied in a real classroom.

Reflections on focus student and class data. Data collected from class sessions, case activities, pre and post surveys, and teacher candidates' self-assessments reflect that focus students and others in ED 222 shared common experiences and gained new insights about what it means to teach literacy to diverse students. Focus students and others in the class provided many examples of how reading and responding to written cases encouraged them to redefine their understanding of inclusion and recognize the impact that culture can have on instruction. Both groups of teacher candidates also reported various ways in which RCE case activities assisted them in acquiring the knowledge and skills that are needed to teach literacy to diverse students. When analyzing the ways in which teacher candidates came to reach these new understandings, it became apparent that engaging in conversations with others helped many teacher candidates view cases in new ways. Hearing different interpretations and perspectives from others encouraged many to look critically and question their own knowledge and beliefs about teaching diverse students. Data collected on both groups of students also revealed that field experiences had an impact on many teacher candidates' learning experiences.

As I gathered and analyzed data from the entire class, I learned things that were not discovered when I only studied what was happening with focus students. First, I did not realize the many ways in which teacher candidates were defining inclusion until I read the homework assignment that they turned in on the day Ms. Pratt used RCE to introduce reading comprehension strategies. I knew that focus students had different understandings for inclusion, but I didn't realize that the class, as a group, was defining

inclusion in ways that Ms. Pratt had not intended. Second, I did not realize that so many teacher candidates felt that the “Goodnight Moon” case had supported their learning until after I read all teacher candidates’ final self-assessments. Because some of the focus students responded so negatively to the case, claiming that the teacher was crazy, I felt that the overall activity had not been successful. Third, I was fascinated by the Detroit and ESL scenario responses. During class discussions, it appeared that teacher candidates were developing an awareness and understanding of what it meant to teach literacy to a wide range of learners. However, I was surprised at how the Detroit and ESL responses differed. I realized that teacher candidates had much to learn about teaching ESL students and was surprised at some of the misconceptions that they held.

Analyzing class data also brought about frustrations that did not appear when I was analyzing focus student data. I was surprised that it was so difficult to identify the personal connections that teacher candidates, those other than focus students, were making to various case activities by using the quick-writes, surveys, and self-assessments that I collected and analyzed at the end of the semester. Data collected on focus students revealed rich stories that allowed me to see many of the personal connections that students were making with field and course experiences. Following focus students in class, getting to know them personally, and having the opportunity to meet with them various times throughout the semester allowed me to learn about the actual process in which they were reaching new understandings. I did not have such detailed and personal data from others in the course.

Reflecting upon what teacher candidates learned as a class was extremely valuable; however, I can’t help wonder what I would have done differently if I had

designed this study with the knowledge that I now have. It might have been easier to see how the class in general was making sense out of various ED 222 experiences if they had more opportunities to do personal writings and reflect upon their experiences.

Restructuring the dialogue journals might have helped. I wonder if dialogue journals could have been used to create a space for more teacher candidates to write about the connections that they were making in the course. During focus student interviews, I asked a lot of why questions, encouraging focus students to explain how they were rationalizing and making sense of things. This kind of information was missing from the class data, and so I am still left with many unanswered questions. In the following chapter, I discuss the significance and implications of this research and offer suggestions for how future studies might further explore the use of personal writing activities and case activities in teacher education.

Chapter 6 Discussion and Implications

This study investigated how teacher candidates responded to written and hypermedia cases and how their personal stories and experiences interacted with these cases. This study also investigated what teacher candidates' responses to cases revealed about their views of teaching diverse learners. Data collected throughout the semester revealed that teacher candidates constructed different meanings for inclusion and creating inclusive learning environments when they engaged in a combination of personal writing activities, case activities, and field experiences. Engaging in these various activities surfaced and challenged some of the prior assumptions and beliefs that teacher candidates held about teaching diverse students. According to Lundeberg and Sheurman (1997), most case-based pedagogy with preservice teachers has "focused on the reasoning process rather than the pedagogical knowledge gained from case discussion" (p. 784). This study is significant because it investigated how teacher candidates' responded to case activities in a literacy methods course and how personal writing and case activities supported them in acquiring the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are needed to teach literacy to diverse students. This study revealed some of the definitions of inclusion that teacher candidates' held, illustrated the ways that these definitions surfaced, and demonstrated how a combination of course and field experiences influenced teacher candidates' knowledge and perceptions of teaching literacy to diverse learners.

In this chapter, I describe the significance of the study and discuss the implications that it has on teaching and research. I begin by describing the definitions and understandings of inclusion that teacher candidates constructed over the semester. I then

revisit the role that conceptual change had in teacher candidate learning and illustrate how teacher candidates' responses to personal writing and case activities revealed that describing their learning as a process of conceptual change was limiting. Next, I explain how Ms. Pratt scaffolded learning for teacher candidates as they engaged in case based activities, and I make connections between this scaffolding and cognitive flexibility theory. Finally, I end the chapter by introducing the different roles that narrative had in the study and provide concluding thoughts and suggestions for the directions that researchers might pursue while investigating the use of cases and narrative as pedagogy in teacher education.

Defining Inclusion

Having limited experiences with diverse groups of people, teacher candidates began the semester defining inclusion based on their experiences, and these definitions sometimes revealed superficial understandings of what it means to teach literacy in inclusive learning environments. When differences between teacher candidates' definitions and teacher educators' definitions go unrecognized, according to Holt-Reynolds (1992), critical definitions and concepts can go left unexplored in teacher education courses, resulting in teacher educators and students arguing their case and "neither side dealing with the argument presented by the other" (p. 341). Ms. Pratt's definitions of inclusion sometimes differed from students' definitions, and these differences were not always recognized. However, when teacher candidates encountered different images and interpretations of inclusion through reading, viewing, and discussing cases, some of them began to develop more complex definitions and understandings. At

the beginning of the semester, teacher candidates defined inclusion in a number of ways. Some definitions that emerged were including special needs students, students with different academic, and students from ethnically diverse backgrounds in the general education classroom. As teacher candidates read and discussed cases like “Goodnight Moon” and Christine’s case, cases that introduced different forms of diversity, teacher candidates began to expand their definition of who is included in inclusive learning communities.

Teacher candidates’ responses to case activities, personal writing assignments, and field experiences uncovered different ways that they were interpreting inclusion and revealed how these definitions changed over time. Some teacher candidates began the semester with definitions of inclusion that were based on what one could observe in the classroom. For example, some explained that inclusion meant giving all children equal opportunities to participate in class activities and share ideas. They explained how giving children a fair chance to learn meant including them in class activities, but they did not acknowledge how children could be excluded from learning opportunities in ways that are not observable to the teacher.

Preskill (1998) stated, “Students planning to pursue a career in teaching frequently have little sense of how racism, miseducation, and bureaucratic insensitivity have plagued schools” (p. 347). According to Preskill, a lack of knowledge of these “behind-the-scenes” organizational and political processes can contribute to the maintenance of ways in which schools and teachers marginalize those who do not come from white, middle-class backgrounds. This study revealed that reading and discussing cases like “Goodnight Moon” and Christine’s case introduced teacher candidates to other

perspectives and illustrated that children can become marginalized in ways that are not always apparent to those who belong to the dominant culture privileged in schools. Considering how perspectives in these cases differed from their own encouraged some teacher candidates to consider the ways that differences between students and teachers can unintentionally contribute to the marginalization of children. These new understandings prompted teacher candidates to construct new definitions of inclusion.

These new ways of thinking also encouraged some teacher candidates to consider the moral and ethical implications of including all children in the general education classroom. As teacher candidates constructed new understandings of inclusion, they also developed new understandings of the ways teachers create inclusive learning environments. For some, these new understandings influenced how they defined inclusion. For example, observing inclusive practices in the field assisted Lydia in redefining inclusion and what it means to treat children fairly. Lydia began to see that treating students fairly and equally did not necessarily mean that teachers had to treat them exactly the same.

One might use a social constructivist perspective to describe how teacher candidates' understandings of inclusion emerged and changed over time. Gavelek and Raphael (1996) stated that proponents of a social constructivist perspective "suggest that knowledge is constructed collaboratively by individuals as they discuss and argue a particular perspective or interpretation" (p. 183). Gavelek and Raphael claimed that instead of viewing knowledge as immutable, "those who adopt a social constructivist perspective suggest that what we accept as knowledge is based on conventions that we, as a community, have constructed and agreed on" (p. 183). Teacher candidates' responses to

Christine's case and the "Goodnight Moon" case could be used to illustrate how the social settings and group conversations in the classroom were a means by which teacher candidates came to acquire and construct new understandings of diversity and inclusion. In these examples, teacher candidates' interactions with one another and with Ms. Pratt encouraged them to think about issues of inclusion more critically. These interactions also influenced the ways in which they came to redefine inclusion.

Since most of the teacher candidates grew up in small, mostly white, middle-class towns, they did not have experience or knowledge of what an inclusive learning community looks like or sounds like. McDiarmid and Price (1993) stated that for some educators, the "answer to diversity is, ironically, individualization. When faced with learners who bring diverse interest, backgrounds, and capacities, many teachers appear to segregate students from one another during opportunities to learn" (p. 47). Teacher candidates' responses to course and field activities revealed that some of this individualization could be due to a lack of knowledge about how to select, modify, or adapt instruction for diverse learners. For example, one focus student, Jackie, had only experienced learning in classrooms where children were grouped and taught by ability. Since her knowledge of teaching was based upon these prior learning experiences, she began the semester lacking knowledge of how teachers can modify instruction while maintaining an inclusive learning environment. This study revealed, however, that Jackie and others began to form new understandings of inclusion when they were able to see progressive, learner-centered teaching approaches in the field or through RCE videos and clips. They began to understand how teachers can provide equitable learning

opportunities and hold high expectations for all students by selecting, adapting or modify instruction to meet various learners' needs.

It is important to recognize the knowledge and beliefs that teacher candidates' have of inclusion because these knowledge and beliefs serve as filters through which teacher candidates come to understand their educational experiences (Calderhead & Robson, 1991). When teacher educators and their students recognize the different understandings and perspectives that each brings to teacher preparation courses, they can begin to explore these differences in ways that are not possible if differences in understandings remain unrecognized (Holt-Reynolds, 1992). Researchers have discovered that it is difficult to change teacher candidates' beliefs (Tillema & Knol, 1997), yet educators and scholars continue to seek ways to alter teacher candidates' traditional views of teaching and deficit views of diverse learners (Ladson-Billings, 1999; Nieto, 2002; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

Villegas and Lucas (2002) created a curricular framework for preparing culturally responsive teachers and recommended that teacher education programs use the framework as they design a programmatic approach to preparing teachers. Ladson-Billings (1999) argued that a programmatic approach that cuts across coursework and field experiences has proven to have more success in altering teacher candidates' knowledge and beliefs than single courses. Villegas and Lucas illustrated and described multiple aspects of their curricular approach and acknowledged that preparing culturally responsive teachers is a process that evolves over time. However, even when using this framework, teacher educators are still confronted with how to incorporate it into content-specific courses and knowing what can be reasonably achieved in a single course.

This study is significant because it illustrated the ways that personal writing and case activities in a literacy methods course could support teacher candidates in becoming culturally responsive teachers. It extends our understanding of how teacher candidates' conceptions of teaching diverse students were constructed or changed over time and revealed the ways that some teacher candidates learned from personal writing and case activities. This study also revealed how making connections between personal, course, and field experiences helped alleviate some of the tensions that emerged as teacher candidates struggled to make connections between knowledge and awareness of inclusion and classroom literacy instruction.

Revisiting the Idea of Conceptual Change

As stated in Chapter 1, I considered different perspectives and theories on the ways people come to learn and know when I designed this study. The concepts of conceptual change theory, cognitive flexibility theory, and narrative ways of knowing influenced how I conceptualized and designed this study. These ideas also impacted how I collected and analyzed data. Findings from this study both support and expand our understanding of the ways teacher candidates' concepts developed or changed and the role that narrative had in the process of preparing them to become culturally responsive teachers. In this section, I revisit the theory of conceptual change that guided this study and illustrate how it does not fully explain the process in which teacher candidates learned from written and hypermedia cases. In the following section, I describe how Ms. Pratt supported teacher candidate learning and describe how cognitive flexibility theory

provides insight into the ways that teachers can support novices when using personal writing and case activities.

According to conceptual change theory (Posner et al., 1982), learning is a process where students' conceptions change under the impact of new ideas and new evidence. If students are going to modify their strongly held beliefs, according to conceptual change theory, new concepts and ideas must be introduced in ways that create cognitive dissonance and are discrepant to the images and beliefs that novices already hold.

According Posner and his colleagues, if people are going to replace their old ideas with new ones, they need to experience their existing conceptions with some dissatisfaction. This study provided examples of how personal writing and case activities encouraged teacher candidates to change or reconstruct their conceptions of teaching and themselves. This study revealed which concepts changed and the process in which change occurred; however, teacher candidates' experiences bring into question whether this was a process of *change* or one where concepts were *constructed* over time. Based on data that were collected on teacher candidates, I argue that the process that was presented in this study illustrates a complex view of teacher candidate learning that cannot be fully explained by a single theory or perspective on learning.

Wideen, Mayer-Smith, and Moon (1998) described how many studies on learning to teach focus on changing the beliefs of beginning teachers; however, they claimed that seeking to change teacher candidates' beliefs seems pointless if evidence supports their enduring quality. Wideen and his colleagues (1998) argued that a less problematic approach might be to take the perspectives of others such as Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann (1989) and Calderhead and Robson (1991) where an "alternative to changing

beliefs is to build on the beliefs that already exist” (Beginning teachers and their beliefs section, para. 11). This study provided examples of how teacher candidates both built upon and changed their prior conceptions of teaching and learning. Instead of attempting to decipher the difference between whether concepts were changed or constructed, I am going to highlight the process that led to deeper understandings. I will use the ideas of Posner, his colleagues, and others to illustrate different aspects of this learning process.

Focus students’ responses to personal writing assignments, case activities, and field experiences revealed that for some, feelings of tension and dissonance played a role in the process of learning to teach literacy in inclusive learning environments. It appeared that feelings of dissonance prompted some teacher candidates to reflect upon their understandings and beliefs. When this occurred, some teacher candidates became dissatisfied with these understandings and beliefs and changed or reconstructed their understandings. For example, when Lydia, Mallory, and Sadie described how they came to reach new visions of themselves or of teaching and learning, they described moments where they struggled to understand something and felt tension and dissonance. For instance, Sadie’s dissonance and tension occurred when she was in the field and struggled to keep herself from yelling at students. She did not like how she became irritated with children and struggled to keep from yelling at them. For Lydia, such tension occurred when she felt pressure to find “the answer” and continually struggled with *how* teachers create inclusive learning communities.

In these two examples, teacher candidates responded differently to cases. For Sadie, relating her feelings and struggles to Lourdes’ experiences in *Peace Takes Practice* (TTP, 1997) helped her resolve her question of why she was struggling so much

in the field. With Lydia, however, reading Christine's case appeared to heighten her frustration. Mallory's experienced tension and dissonance when children in her field placement talked about difference in ways that were unexpected. At one time, a child shocked Mallory when she asked, "What color am I?" A combination of experiencing this tension in the field, discussing cases in class, and revisiting her personal writing assignments helped Mallory recognize that she was uncomfortable with children's openness because it countered her childhood experiences where she was taught that one does *not* talk about difference.

When some teacher candidates experienced tensions, frustrations, and dissonance, they described going through a process that resulted in new understandings. This process reflected similarities with Posner's and his colleagues' (1982) conceptual change theory. For example, Lydia formed new conceptions of the teacher when she realized that teachers do not always have to have the answer. Sadie gained a new awareness that her way of communicating at home did not support the creation of an inclusive learning environment. She began to form a new conception of herself and of teaching when she made connections to her family, realized that her past influenced who she was as a teacher, and decided that she needed to confront herself and her past if she wanted to develop the kind of patience that her collaborating teacher had. Throughout the semester, teacher candidates provided examples of how reading and viewing cases, discussing cases, reflecting upon past experiences, and observing interactions in the field heightened feelings of tension and frustration. However, not all experiences created dissonance for all students, and not all students responded to these experiences in the same way.

Many teacher candidates' learning experiences reflected a process of conceptual change where cognitive dissonance prompted reflection and dissatisfaction with their own assumptions and beliefs. A number of times this process resulted in deepened or new understandings. One might use the process of conceptual change to interpret and understand these learning experiences; however, this process does not help illustrate why some teacher candidates grew from dissonance and others resisted it. It does not illustrate why one teacher candidate responded to the experience by questioning her assumptions and beliefs while another held onto her original beliefs even more strongly. The process of conceptual change does not shed light on how the same case or same experience might prompt frustration and confusion in one teacher candidate while inducing realization and understanding in another.

This study revealed how some teacher candidates resisted change when they encountered dissonance. For example, Lydia became more and more frustrated as the class discussed inclusion of special needs students in the general education classroom. When some teacher candidates read Christine's case and heard other classmate's perspectives, they became more open to the idea of inclusion and advocated the inclusion of special needs children in the classroom. However, when Lydia read and heard these same perspectives and viewpoints, she continued to be critical of inclusion and adamantly stated that she did not want to deal with the issue.

In another example, no matter what perception and perspective was given in class, Mallory maintained her position that Kae, the teacher in the "Goodnight Moon" case, was crazy. Reading the case caused dissonance for many in the class; however, when they read the second page and learned why children cried to the story *Goodnight Moon*, they

looked at the case and Kae in a new way. For example, one teacher candidate realized she had been quick to judge Kae. Others became more sympathetic to Kae's situation when they realized that there were other perspectives that they had not considered. Mallory's views on Kae, however, did not change. She continued to blame the teacher for creating a situation that frightened the children.

In these examples, it appeared that some teacher candidates moved forward, learned, and grew when dissonance occurred while others did not. When confronted with a problem or a challenge, some teacher candidates tried to resolve the problem and diminish the dissonance. Others, however, did not experience dissonance or resisted it. This study illustrated the complexities that are involved when personal writing and case activities challenged teacher candidates' conceptions of teaching and learning. Understanding how focus students like Lydia, Mallory, Lizz, and Sadie responded to these activities revealed that preparing teacher candidates to become culturally responsive teachers was more complex than changing their conceptions of diverse students and traditional views of teaching.

Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986) offered an interesting perspective on the role that conflict and cognitive dissonance have on learning. In their study, Belenky and her colleagues conducted a series of interviews with women to examine their ways of knowing. In their book *Women's Ways of Knowing*, they described "five different perspectives from which women view reality and draw conclusions about truth, knowledge, and authority" (p.3). They stated that in the psychological literature concerning "the factors promoting cognitive development, doubt has played a more prominent role than belief" (p. 227). They explained, "People are said to be precipitated

into states of cognitive conflict when, for example, some external event challenges their ideas and the effort to resolve the conflict lead to cognitive growth” (p. 227). Belenky and her colleagues did not deny that cognitive development and growth can emerge from cognitive conflict; however, they stated that during their interviews with women, “On the whole, women found the experience of being doubted debilitating rather than energizing” (p. 227). Belenky and her colleagues explained how women did tell of occasions when teachers challenged their ideas, but “they did not describe them as occasions for cognitive growth” (p. 227). Belenky and her colleagues added,

None of the women we interviewed wanted a system in which knowledge flowed in only one direction, from teacher to student... The kind of teacher they praised and the kind for which they yearned was one who would help them articulate and expand their latent knowledge. (Belenky et al., p.217)

These comments made me realize how using cases like “Goodnight Moon” might make teacher candidates feel as if knowledge were only flowing in one direction and as if the instructor were expecting them to find the “correct answer.” For example, teacher candidates read the case and then brainstormed for all the various reasons why children might have cried when hearing the story. Upon reading the second page of the case, however, all of the teacher candidates discovered that their various reasons were not the “correct” reasons. This was reflected when a number of teacher candidates read the second page of the case and made the comment that they had never thought children’s response of fear could have been due to culture. In their study, Belenky and her colleagues (1986) discovered that women’s “epistemological assumptions were central to their perceptions of themselves and their worlds” (p. xiii). If we apply this idea to this study, then how teacher candidates viewed knowledge and the construction or

transmission of this knowledge could impact the ways that they responded to written, case, and field experiences. Considering this perspective is useful when thinking about the variety of ways that teacher candidates responded to cases and considering how teacher candidates' epistemological assumptions might have influenced the ways that they responded to case activities. For example, believing that knowledge comes from the teacher might have contributed to Lydia's frustration for not finding "the answers" when Christine's case was discussed in class. Also, viewing knowledge as something that is constructed and based upon personal experience might explain why some teacher candidates did not judge the teacher in the "Goodnight Moon" case and tried to brainstorm various reasons why the children cried when hearing the story.

This study revealed not only the different ways that teacher candidates responded to personal writing and case activities, it depicted the kinds of pedagogical approaches that supported teacher candidates in the different stages of their learning. This study supports the process of conceptual change because it illustrates how dissonance prompted some teacher candidates' conceptions to change; however, it contributes to furthering our understanding of this learning process by showing what supported teacher candidates' learning when resistance to dissonance occurred. It also illustrated the different kinds of scaffolding and support that assisted teacher candidates in moving forward in their learning.

Scaffolding Learning Experiences

Teacher candidates responses to written and hypermedia case activities reflected the challenges of working with novices that Carter (1993) described when discussing uses

of story in education and that Spiro and his colleagues (1988) described in cognitive flexibility theory. Carter (1993) stated that stories convey “the multiplicity of ways actions and situations intertwine and thus accurately represent the complex demands of teaching” (p. 10). At the same time, stories can also

confuse and frustrate novices, who lack the situated frames within which such stories are interpretable at all, who often presuppose that one learns best from clear and direct statements that are true, and who normally have well-developed conceptions of what it means to teach, conceptions that may or may not match the view represented in a particular story. (Carter, (p. 10)

Spiro and colleagues (1988) used cognitive flexibility theory to describe the process in which novices acquire advanced knowledge in ill-structured domains like teaching and also described the challenges that confront novices when learning. They described how novices tend to oversimplify the complexities found within the structures of complex domains like teaching. They also offered suggestions for how to support novice learning, stating that teachers need to provide instruction in ways that prevent oversimplification and provide multiple representations if people are going to overcome the difficulties of acquiring the cognitive processes that are necessarily to transfer knowledge flexibly. Spiro and his colleagues also argued that teachers need to cover content material in different ways and at different times if they want to support their students in transferring knowledge flexibly. This study provided examples of how presenting teacher candidates with multiple perspectives on teaching assisted them in creating more complex understandings of what it meant to teach literacy to diverse students. These examples support cognitive flexibility theory.

Teacher candidates' responses to various case activities revealed that reading and viewing different cases, hearing alternative perspectives, and revisiting cases throughout the semester assisted them in acquiring the knowledge and skills that are needed to teach literacy to diverse learners. However, there are examples that not all teacher candidates gained deeper and more complex understandings when they were introduced to these various perspectives. Teacher candidates' responses to these activities provided an opportunity to investigate the kind of scaffolding that some teacher candidates needed in order to learn from these experiences. Data collected on teacher candidates supported the concepts that have been presented in cognitive flexibility theory and enhanced our understanding of the kinds of support that helped prevent novices from making broad generalizations or oversimplifications when learning from written and hypermedia video-based cases.

Understanding the process of how Ms. Pratt used cases and how teacher candidates responded to these cases illustrated ways that Ms. Pratt supported novices in learning from case activities. This study provided examples of the kinds of support that assisted teacher candidates in this learning process. For example, teacher candidates' responses to Christine's case revealed that discussing cases with others encouraged some teacher candidates to view the cases more critically and from alternative perspectives than when they simply read the case without discussing it. According to Spiro and his colleagues (1988), one of the ways that novices deal with complexities of advance knowledge acquisition is to respond by applying a single, encompassing representational logic "to complex concepts and phenomena that are inadequately covered by that logic" (p. 376). This phenomena was seen when Mallory read Christine's case and made

comments that “clumped” together different groups of learners and made broad generalization that all children should be included in the classroom. She made comparisons between teaching Down Syndrome children and children who have lesbian parents without acknowledging the different needs of these children. Mallory also did not seem to grasp the moral and ethical dilemmas that surround including severely handicapped children in the general education classroom. Her comments reflected an over reliance on the idea to “include all” without acknowledging the complexities and multifaceted issues that surround inclusion and that might be unique to including different types of students. However, after discussing Christine’s case and hearing other perspectives, Mallory began to move forward and develop a deeper understanding of inclusion.

Using discussions to support teacher candidates’ learning did not come without its challenges. There were examples throughout the semester when teacher candidates were hesitant to share ideas that differed from the group or did not feel comfortable sharing personal thoughts and opinions. There were also examples when teacher candidates’ conversations remained at a superficial level where they did not explore the complexities of cases that they viewed or read. Ms. Pratt provided support for these occasions in a number of ways. First, she assisted teacher candidates in creating communities of trust where they could openly talk with one another by having students work in small groups that met regularly throughout the semester. This group structure helped create a more comfortable space for some teacher candidates to share ideas. Ms. Pratt also provided similar open spaces for discussion by having teacher candidates communicate with one another through dialogue journal entries and allowing them to select their journal partner.

In a third example, Ms. Pratt used a fishbowl activity to model discussions and assist some teacher candidates in making their views and ideas more public.

These examples of Ms. Pratt's scaffolding illustrate how she assisted students in socially constructing an understanding of what it means to teach literacy to diverse students. They illustrate how Ms. Pratt assisted teacher candidates in "moving from using new meanings or strategies publicly and in interaction with others to individually appropriating and transforming these concepts and strategies into newly invented ways of thinking" (Gavelek & Raphael, 1996, p. 185). Gavelek and Raphael (1996) described language and literacy education using Harré's (1985) *Vygotsky Space*. According to Gavelek and Raphael, this model "illustrates the relationship between the public discourse that occurs... and individuals' subsequent ability to think, feel, and act" (p. 185).

Harré's Vygotsky Space represents how "the movement from what is taught and learned as part of the classroom's social setting to what eventually becomes an individual's personalized learning" is an ongoing process that is evolving and changing "over time and with experiences" (Gavelek & Raphael, 1996, p. 187). Harré's model illustrates how the construction of knowledge occurs through a non-linear movement between public, private, individual, and social dimensions. By forming small groups and engaging students in a fishbowl activity, Ms. Pratt provided opportunities for teacher candidates to publicly share ideas and learn from one another. She created a space for students to go public with their ideas. Through the use of dialogue journals and reflective writings, however, she also created a space for teacher candidates to work through these ideas in individual and private ways. As teacher candidates moved between these private-

public and social-individual dimensions, they had various opportunities to engage in, individualize, and internalize issues and topics that were introduced in the course.

In another example, Ms. Pratt provided support by having teacher candidates revisit their work at the end of the semester and specifically asked them to look for evidence of how their knowledge and beliefs had changed or grown. For some teacher candidates, like Sadie, new understandings and awareness did not occur immediately after reading and discussing cases. Understanding alternative perspectives and experiencing growth did not occur for some until after revisiting cases and their writings later in the semester. Revisiting cases and assignments provided some teacher candidates with a new perspective that they did not have the first time they did these assignments.

For example, when Sadie revisited her work at the end of the semester, she had new understandings from reading *Peace takes Practice* (Peacock et al., 1999) and from her field experiences that she did not have when she first completed her assignments. When she returned to her original work at the end of the semester, she had new understandings and insights that encouraged her to see her work in a new way. This knowledge of other experiences and perspectives helped Sadie view one of her personal writings in a way that challenged her to think about how her family's ways of communicating were impacting her experiences in the field. This example illustrates how one teacher candidate needed support that went beyond reading and discussing multiple cases. Being asked to purposely go back, revisit cases and personal writings, and look for signs of growth assisted Sadie in developing new and more complex understandings of herself and inclusion. In Sadie's example, revisiting and reflecting upon course and field experiences assisted her in moving from Harré's public and social dimensions to more

individual and private dimensions. This movement assisted her in personalizing what had been taught and discussed throughout the semester and assisted her in reaching new levels of understanding. Sadie's experiences illustrate the recursive way in which such learning can occur.

For some teacher candidates, frustration and dissonance were related to feeling unprepared to teach children and not knowing what teachers actually *do* to create inclusive learning communities. Viewing and discussing RCE cases assisted teacher candidates in developing knowledge of various instructional approaches and teaching strategies that could be used in the classroom. Ms. Pratt provided different kinds of scaffolding and support for teacher candidates when they were engaged in RCE activities. She helped make the complexities of teaching less complex and confusing when she had teacher candidates read articles and chapters in their textbook to assist them in making meaning out of the instructional approaches that were introduced on RCE. She assisted them in using RCE and making meaning from what they saw by showing full videos to introduce the content of the program, providing suggestions for how to find clips, and providing students with opportunities to engage in discussions about clips. She provided different structure for these conversations by having students engage in large group, small group, and on-line conversations.

Exploring teacher candidates' wide range of responses to case activities and examining closely the scaffolding that was provided for these activities provided a deeper level of understanding of the various ways teacher candidates learned from written and hypermedia cases. These examples reflected the different ways that teacher candidates understood inclusion, the misconceptions that they held, and the pedagogical approaches

that supported them in developing more complex understandings of inclusion and teaching literacy in inclusive learning environments. These examples also illustrate how the contexts in which cases were presented and the kinds of scaffolding that were provided influenced how teacher candidates responded to and learned from written and hypermedia cases. Teacher candidates' responses to cases revealed that the power of these activities did not always come from what was written on paper or presented through video. This study illustrates a more complex view of cases and shows how a combination of personal experiences, course activities, field experiences, and interactions with others influenced how teacher candidates interpreted and made meaning from case activities.

These examples of how Ms. Pratt scaffolded learning for students enhance our understanding of how teacher candidates can learn from personal writings and case activities. These examples, however, do not explain why teacher candidates responded in different ways to the same case activities. Data collected on focus students revealed that some of the greatest growth and learning occurred when teacher candidates made personal connections to cases and field experiences. Exploring these teacher candidates' experiences provided an understanding of the process of learning that occurred when they engaged in personal writing and case activities. This process illustrated why some teacher candidates responded to personal writing, case, and field experiences in a particular way. It also revealed that understanding teacher candidates' narrative ways of knowing and the role that narrative had in this study could provide further insight into why teacher candidates responded to cases in specific ways.

In the next section, I illustrate the role that narrative had in this study and explain how connecting personal, field, and course experiences assisted teacher candidates in

beginning to acquire the knowledge and skills that are needed to teach diverse learners. Making these connections also encouraged some focus students to reflect upon themselves and their assumptions of teaching, learning, and students. Understanding the role that narrative had in this study provides further insight into the ways that teacher candidates responded to case activities and how making connections between personal, course, and field experiences supported them in their learning.

The Changing Roles of Narrative

In this section, I explain how I conceptualized the role of narrative during the design of the study and explain how narrative extended into the methodology of how the study was conducted and how data were analyzed. I then describe how four focus students' narrative ways of knowing produced storylines that illustrated how personal writing and case activities supported them in learning to teach diverse students. Next, I provide an example of how data on one focus student did not reveal a storyline and offer suggestions for why this particular student's experiences appeared to be different from other focus students. I end the section by discussing how narrative can be used as pedagogy in teacher education courses and describe the implications that this has on teacher education.

Narrative as inquiry. I designed this study taking into consideration how narrative could be used in teacher education courses and how narrative ways of knowing could support preservice teacher learning. However, as the research process unfolded, the role of narrative expanded into other areas of the study that I had not expected. Narrative impacted how the study was designed and influenced how data were collected and

analyzed. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) defined narrative inquiry as “a process of collaboration involving mutual storytelling and restorytelling” as the research process proceeds (p. 4). They described how narrative could be both the “structured quality of experience to be studied” and “the patterns of inquiry for this study” (p. 2). I first realized that narrative was becoming a method for collecting, analyzing, and making meaning from data when teacher candidates began to write and talk about personal experiences and tell stories from when they were young. According to Connelly and Clandinin (1990), interviews, journal entries, storytelling, and autobiographical writing can all be sources of narrative data. As I began to collect and analyze these forms of data, I realized that narrative was becoming a powerful way to know focus students and their learning experiences. Narrative inquiry became one of the methodologies that I used to investigate research questions and revealed how focus students reached new understandings and insights when they made connections between personal experiences, course activities, and field experiences.

Behar-Horenstein (1995) stated, “One of the fundamental assumptions underlying narrative inquiry is that teachers’ personal biographies interact with particular situations that help them understand their use and application of practical knowledge” (p. 146). The process of narrative inquiry “attempts to explicate an understanding of the events that occur in specific educational contexts under investigation” (Behar-Horenstein, 1995, p. 146). Wideen, Mayer-Smith, and Moon (1998) explained that sometimes a detailed interpretive analysis of individuals’ writings and interviews could reveal the process of change, whereas comparisons using statistical techniques can often mask this process. It

was through narrative inquiry and following and documenting the experiences of focus students that I gained insight in the process of learning from personal writing and cases.

When Lydia, Mallory, Lizz, and Sadie described their greatest changes and growth throughout the semester, they illustrated how they made connections between these personal experiences and course and field activities. As I analyzed focus student data, distinct stories emerged from all of the focus students except Jackie. These stories revealed that for four of the focus students, narrative acted as a way of making meaning from their experiences in the course. Understanding how teacher candidates used narrative as a way to make meaning from their experiences is significant because following narrative storylines provided the most insight into the ways that personal writing and case activities supported some teacher candidates in developing the knowledge and skills that are needed to teach literacy to diverse students.

Narrative as a way of making meaning. When I originally designed this study, I was interested in how teacher candidates responded to narrative written cases and hypermedia video cases. I also wanted to investigate how teacher candidates' personal stories and experiences interacted with their interpretation and understanding of these cases. Since narrative cases have the potential to draw in the emotions of the reader (Laframboise & Griffith, 1997), I hypothesized that making personal connections to cases could encourage teacher candidates to internalize, embrace, and take ownership for the issues and ideas that were presented in them. According to Connelly and Clandinin (1990), "life's narratives are the context for making meaning of school situations" (p. 3). By following the narrative stories of individual students, I was able to investigate how they responded to and learned from case activities. The personal experiences that were

described by Mallory, Sadie, Lizz, and Lydia illustrated how narrative served as an organizing structure for their learning experiences.

This study revealed that all focus students followed different paths in their learning; however, four focus students constructed storylines as they engaged in course and field experiences. Laurillard (1998) explained that a storyline provides “an internal structure for presentation” which enables learners to derive an “overall meaning” from their educational experiences (Introduction section, para. 1). It is in this way, she commented, that narrative performs “an essential organizing function for the learner” (Laurillard, 1998, Introduction section, para. 1). Laurillard’s research investigated the storylines that support learning from multimedia; however, her discussion of narrative can also apply to other aspects of learning, such as learning from ones’ own stories or from written and hypermedia cases. The storylines of Mallory, Lydia, Lizz, and Sadie provide examples of how narrative served as an organizing framework that assisted them in moving “from what is taught and learned as part of the classroom’s social setting” to what eventually became a personalized learning process “of internalizing and personalizing what had been taught” (Gavelek & Raphael, 1996, p. 187).

Early in the semester, Mallory and Lydia described and told stories of personal experiences that formed the beginnings of narrative storylines that connected some of their learning experiences throughout the semester. Mallory and Lydia revisited these stories, or aspects of these stories, at various times. I first noticed the beginnings of these storylines when Mallory and Lydia were given an assignment to reflect upon and write about their K-12 experiences with diverse groups of people. Mallory wrote about her lesbian aunts and her childhood experiences feeling uncomfortable around children with

special needs. Lydia also wrote about her prior experiences with children who had special needs. She described a classroom incident that occurred with Nick, a handicapped child who attended one of her elementary school classes. Both focus students referred to these experiences in their dialogue journals, quick-writes, and class discussions. When they engaged in case activities and field experiences, some of the issues that were brought up in their personal writings again reappeared.

In one example, Lydia wrote about Nick's outbursts in the classroom and explained that she and others felt uncomfortable in the class, unsure how to respond to Nick. Lydia explained that she also felt the teachers did not know what to do with Nick. She revisited her concerns about not knowing what to do with special needs students when she discussed Christine's case and expressed critical views of including special needs students in the general education classroom. Lydia stated that a big turning point for her was when she read Christine's case and decided that she wanted to confront issues and feelings that she had about including special education students in the classroom.

Lydia revisited these issues during a large group discussion when Ms. Pratt used the fishbowl activity. During this activity, a comment made by one of Lydia's classmates prompted her to think about the role and responsibilities of teachers. A classmate commented that teachers really do not have a decision in whether they teach handicapped children, and this comment supported Lydia in thinking about a teacher's obligation to teach all students. After the fishbowl conversation, however, Lydia was still frustrated because the activity did not resolve her question of what do teachers do when they have special needs students in their classrooms.

At the end of the semester when Lydia made connections between her field experiences, her responses to Christine's case, and her feelings of frustration and not knowing what to do, her attitude towards teaching special needs students began to change. She began to recognize that teachers need to take the responsibility to seek out resources and help if they have special needs students in their classrooms. Lydia began to view the teacher as somebody who does not always have the answers. In these various experiences, the theme of not knowing what to do and not knowing how to respond when including special needs students in the classroom was a reoccurring theme that surfaced when Lydia responded to personal writing assignments, case activities, and field experiences.

In another example, a storyline emerged when Mallory wrote about a K-12 experience when a teacher yelled at her and her friend when he overheard them use the word *retarded*. In this personal writing assignment, Mallory described how she was always scared to talk about handicapped children because she was always worried that she would say something wrong and offend somebody. Throughout the semester, Mallory wrote about her field experiences and explained how she was shocked at how easily and naturally children in the field spoke about difference. Even though Mallory did not retell the experience that occurred with her and her friend, she did revisit and write about her uncomfortable feelings when children asked her questions or spoke about difference.

Mallory began to question how she really felt about teaching diverse students when she reflected on field experiences, discussed Christine's case, and revisited a writing assignment where she explained that she wanted to teach English and Spanish speaking children. When she reflected upon these experiences, Mallory realized that she

had been narrowly defining diversity and recognized that she had a fear of working with students who were very different from herself. Mallory, like Lydia, began to form new understandings about herself and inclusion when she made connections between her personal experiences, field experiences, and issues of inclusion that were introduced in class.

Storylines also emerged from the data that were collected on Lizz and Sadie. For example, Lizz wrote about her early literacy experiences in one of her personal writing assignments and stated that she never remembered reading and writing being taught together. Later in the semester, she used these prior experiences to make meaning from RCE clips and wrestled with which approach was the best approach to use. After being introduced to new teaching strategies, Lizz had the opportunity to implement some of them in her field placement. Viewing RCE clips, reflecting upon her own experiences, and trying out new strategies in the field supported Lizz in developing a new conceptualization of literacy instruction. Sadie's storyline emerged at the end of the semester when she described how her biggest growth throughout the course was related to what she had learned about herself. She described in her self-assessment how revisiting *Peace Takes Practice* (Peacock, 1999), her personal writing assignment that described her home literacy experiences, and her experiences in the field made her realize that her family's communication style influenced how she responded to behavioral problems in classrooms.

Some focus students' storylines became clear early in the semester, while other storylines were not as evident until later in the semester. Lydia and Mallory were very articulate students who frequently shared their thoughts and feelings in class. Both

expressed early in the semester a desire to “figure something out.” Mallory investigated why she felt uncomfortable talking about difference with children in the field. Lydia explained that reading Christine’s case made her want to confront her feelings and uncertainties about working with handicapped children. Lizz’s and Sadie’s storylines, however, were not as easy to follow. Lizz’s questions about the teaching practices that were being introduced in ED 222 did not become apparent until her first interview. Lizz, unlike Mallory and Lydia, did not share her doubts and concerns openly with others in the class. Sadie’s storyline was being constructed throughout the semester, but the connections did not become clear until the end of the semester. Sadie struggled to figure out why it was so hard for her to have patience with children in the classroom.

These four examples are similar in that each of the focus students were trying to resolve some kind of dilemma. These four examples also illustrate how narrative served as an organizing framework for making meaning of course and field experiences. When each of these focus students described their greatest growth and change throughout the course, they made connections back to their personal stories and experiences that surfaced earlier in the semester.

Missing storyline. Jackie’s responses to personal writing and case activities are unique from other focus students because a clear storyline did not appear to emerge from data that were collected. In her response to Christine’s case, Jackie wrote that it made her think of a third grade classroom where she volunteered. She also stated that she could relate to the issues in the case, but she did not expand on these personal experiences or connections. Jackie also wrote that she wasn’t sure how she felt about mainstreaming special education students into the general education classroom. When she wrote about

her k-12 experiences with diverse groups of people, she described how her school was not very diverse and wrote that she never really had a “problem” with people of different backgrounds. Jackie’s work revealed little personal connections to course and field activities, and I struggled to identify themes and issues that reappeared throughout the semester.

When describing her growth throughout the semester in her self-assessment, Jackie wrote that learning about teaching in inclusive learning communities was a process. She explained that when she began the semester she did not have many ideas about how to teach literacy lessons. She described how the course gave her knowledge about how to act upon her ideas. When I interviewed Jackie at the end of the semester and asked her to describe her greatest change or growth, she explained how her beliefs were “about the same” as when she started the course. When describing her growth, she again commented on how she now had knowledge of specific strategies that she could use when teaching literacy. When the semester was over, I shared my findings with Jackie and explained how some focus students seemed to experience times throughout the semester where they struggled to figure something out or resolve some kind of dilemma. Jackie responded to this comment by stating that she was the kind of person who was comfortable with uncertainties and did not feel that there were always answers that existed.

The experiences of Sadie, Mallory, Lydia, and Lizz demonstrated how they were reaching new understandings and insights throughout the semester by making connections between their own personal experiences and case and field activities. Jackie, however, did not appear to share the same kind of experiences. Thinking about Jackie’s

experiences raises some important issues and questions about the study, its limitations, and the role of narrative in preservice teacher learning. Behar-Horenstein (1995) stated, "The relationship between story and reality as defined by the experiences of an outside observer does not necessarily portray a one-to-one correspondence" (p. 148) She added, "Interpretation of narratives are influenced by belief systems that are a product of one's own cultural framework." (p. 149). As I reflected upon Jackie's experiences, I considered a number of reasons why her experiences did not reflect those of the other focus students.

First, I considered that a storyline might have existed, and I could have missed noticing the significance of Jackie's comments and experiences. Storylines were not always easy to identify, and sometimes the patterns and connections between teacher candidates' experiences became clearer over time. Even though teacher candidates were engaged in various activities throughout the semester, there were limited opportunities to assess their growth and learning throughout the semester. If teacher candidates did not write about or talk about their course experiences or what they were learning, I had few ways of knowing what meaning they were making from the course. I cannot make the assumption that teacher candidates were not making connections simply because these connections were missing from the data. There is the possibility that different kinds of assignments and different kinds of prompts might have provided more opportunities for Jackie to express how she was making meaning from her course and field experiences. Data revealed that some teacher candidates did not like talking about themselves or reflecting upon their pasts. Some did not feel comfortable sharing their ideas in groups. There is the possibility that if more data had been collected on Jackie and if other forms

of data collection had been used, I might have noticed that she, too, used narrative as a way to make meaning from her experiences.

Second, I considered how the dynamics of the classroom discourse might have contributed to Jackie's missing storyline. Gee (1992) explained that the "social practice or on-going activities and interactions that are associated with a group of people" is called *Discourse*. People who share a common Discourse can share similar values, beliefs, ways of thinking, and ways of doing things. Gee stated that the Discourse of school often privileges those students who begin their academic careers already having white, middle class values while at the same time marginalizing those students who have not grown up sharing these same experiences and values. Gee's discussion of Discourse made me consider how the activities in Ms. Pratt's class privileged a particular way of thinking, speaking, or knowing. Activities relied on teacher candidates' abilities to express themselves in speaking and writing. A number of activities asked teacher candidates to reflect upon personal experiences and talk about growth and change. These types of activities favor those students who are verbal and reflective. They also favor those who are comfortable speaking about themselves and sharing opinions, feelings, beliefs, and doubts. There is the possibility that these kinds of classroom norms could have conflicted with Jackie's ways of knowing, expressing, and learning.

Considering the discourse and cultural norms of the classroom also reminded me of Holt-Reynolds' (1992) study and her discussion of how difference in understanding concepts and definitions can go unrecognized between instructors and students. If these differences occurred in Ms. Pratt's course, there is the possibility that different interpretations existed when Ms. Pratt asked teacher candidates to *reflect* or write about

growth. For example, one might interpret *reflect* as reflection upon personal experiences, while another might understand it to be a reflection upon factual knowledge that was presented in the course. These differences in understanding could explain why Jackie's storyline appeared to be missing and why she didn't share how she was making personal connections to course and field experiences.

A third explanation for a missing storyline takes into consideration how my own values and beliefs could have impacted the study. When this study began, I had a clear agenda. I wanted to know how teacher candidates responded to personal writing and case activities. In addition, based on what I had learned from prior research and my own teaching experiences, I had hypothesized a number of ways that I had thought teacher candidates might respond to case activities. So, when I collected data, interviewed students, and observed the class, there were particular things that I was drawn to more than others. For example, considering the process of conceptual change, I hypothesized that some teacher candidates would respond to cases with some kind of dissonance and questioning of their own assumptions and beliefs. Because of these assumptions, there is the possibility that I noticed more of these kinds of responses than others.

There may have been other ways of responding to cases that I had not anticipated and therefore might have overlooked. Occasionally when Jackie did not write or talk about growth, change, or new ways of thinking, my first reaction was that growth and change had not occurred and that she was not learning. Sometimes I had to remind myself not to make such assumptions as I analyzed data. I feel confident that many different storylines and interpretations of stories existed; however, I know that I favored responses that appeared to have a connection to my research questions. However, Lizz's and

Sadie's experiences revealed that these connections are not always easy to see and can appear over a period of time.

A fourth explanation for why Jackie appeared to have a missing storyline is related to issues of power and the politics of the classroom. Gee (1989) described how the practices within and across Discourses are political. He explained how a cultural model "not only defines what is normal and to be expected but also sets up what counts as non-normal and threatening" (pg. 9). When analyzing Jackie's case, I cannot ignore the context and politics in which conversations were occurring in class and during interviews. Both Ms. Pratt and I are university faculty, and we are older and more experienced than the teacher candidates who participated in the study. I cannot ignore power relations, implicit messages, and the hidden curriculum that are relayed to students as they engaged in various ED 222 activities. There is the possibility that teacher candidates produced responses that they thought Ms. Pratt or I wanted to hear. There is also the possibility that if teacher candidates felt there was only one way to respond, one "correct" way, they might have been hesitant to share ideas in fear that they were wrong. This could be especially true in instances where Ms. Pratt assessed teacher candidates' knowledge and understanding in the course by asking them to reflect upon and write about their learning and growth throughout the semester.

As stated earlier, teacher candidates' epistemological assumptions could have had an impact on the ways that they respond to course activities. As seen from the study conducted by Belenky and her colleagues (1997), viewing knowledge as something that is handed down from the instructor and fearing their ideas might be doubted could have had a debilitating effect on some students preventing them from sharing what they really

thought. Also, teacher candidates might have responded differently to cases if they viewed knowledge as something that was supposed to come directly from the case or Ms. Pratt rather than something that they constructed and built upon prior knowledge and experiences.

A final explanation for Jackie's missing storyline, but certainly not the final possible explanation, surrounds the pedagogical approaches that were used in the course and the kind of scaffolding that was provided when teacher candidates engaged in personal writing and case activities. There is the possibility that the structure of the activities and the writings did not support Jackie in showing and representing what she learned. There is also the possibility that Jackie did not develop or maintain a storyline. This leads to the next section where I describe how narrative acted as pedagogy in the course and illustrate how teacher educators can assist students in developing and maintaining storylines that support learning.

Narrative as pedagogy. Narrative served as a form of inquiry in this study, and some teacher candidates used narrative as a way to make meaning from course and field experiences. Narrative also existed as pedagogy, and considering narrative as pedagogy has implications for teacher educators. Some of the pedagogical approaches that Ms. Pratt used in her course involved reading narrative cases, writing about personal experiences, and retelling childhood stories. By designing activities in this way, Ms. Pratt created instances where she used narrative activities to assist teacher candidates in learning how to teach literacy to diverse students. Using narrative stories and writings in this way contributed to narrative being used as pedagogy in the course. Ms. Pratt specifically designed activities where teacher candidates read and wrote about narrative experiences

to support their learning. According to Carter (1993), one of the first issues that teacher educators confront when using narrative as pedagogy and when story is viewed as curriculum is deciding upon which stories to tell. A number of challenges can arise when using narrative as pedagogy, and this study illustrated some of the challenges that teacher educators might face when using narrative in this way.

First, this study illustrated that it can sometimes be difficult to find and decide upon narrative stories and activities that best support the goals and content of a course. Second, as we saw from Ms. Pratt's experiences, using narrative as pedagogy in a content-based course like ED 222 can create challenges for balancing the tensions that exist between covering specific literacy concepts and having time for students to reflect upon, write, and discuss narrative stories or personal experiences. Third, using narrative can present difficulties when teacher candidates do not value reading, responding, or writing narrative stories and did not understand how these experiences support them in learning how to teach. Fourth, a narrative pedagogy has the potential to privilege some students over others, especially those who were articulate and enjoy reflecting upon themselves and their personal experiences. This study revealed some of the challenges of using narrative as pedagogy in a literacy teacher education course, yet it also revealed ways that teacher educators might support student learning as they write about personal experiences, read narrative cases, and reflect upon their experiences in the course.

Laurillard (1998) claimed that interactive multimedia resources are essentially non-narrative in form, and she conducted a study that investigated how a non-narrative medium can support meaningful learning. Her discussion on storylines and her investigation of how people respond to non-narrative mediums is helpful when

considering how teacher educators can support student learning and the implications that using narrative as pedagogy has on teacher education. She claimed that instructors or multimedia programs needed to support learners in the process of maintaining storylines for the academic learning process to occur. According to Laurillard (1998), the structure of storylines is similar to the following: “where are we going? what do we need to get there? how do we do that? what do we get when we do it? how far does that help us? where have we got to?” (Interpretation section, para. 1).

Laurillard (1998) argued that students needed to ask themselves questions that enable them to maintain their storylines as they are engaged in learning. She explained that in order for the academic learning process to occur where students achieve “full understanding of the ideas being put across by the teacher,” students “must be able to experience them [these ideas] through interaction on the real world, reflect on this experience to inform their dialogue with the teacher, and use this dialogue to adapt the way they operate on the world” (Affordance as an aspect of learning activity section, para. 6). For students in ED 222, real world interactions occurred in their field placement. Also, Mrs. Pratt used hypermedia video-cases and narrative cases that were written by others to bring real world issues, sometimes ones that students weren’t experiencing in their field placements, into the university classroom. As seen from this study, however, simply presenting hypermedia video cases and written narrative cases to students did not always contribute to new insights and understandings.

Laurillard (1998) stated that in order to maintain a storyline during learning, students need support for the various stages that follow the guiding questions of storylines. She also claimed that it is the responsibility of the teacher (or designer of multimedia) to

“create the environment that makes it possible for them [students] to maintain a focus on the development of the argument” (Conclusion section para. 1). In her article, *How Can Interactive Multimedia Enhance Learning?*, Laurillard (1998) listed some ways that instructors or multimedia designers can support learners in maintaining a storyline. These suggestions provide a useful framework for teacher educators who want to support teacher candidates’ narrative ways of knowing. She suggested that teachers can support the maintenance of students’ storylines in the following ways: (a) clarify the overall goal, (b) provide continual reminders of the goal, (c) help learners define their own sub-goals, (d) motivate their own articulation of what they know; (e) motivate them to refine what they know, and (f) enable them to assess to the extent to which they are achieving the goal (Conclusion section, para. 1). I dedicate the remaining paragraphs of this section to illustrating ways that Ms. Pratt provided support that mirrors Laurillard’s suggestions, and I use the findings of this study to offer further ideas for how teacher educators can assist students in developing and maintaining storylines.

Laurillard (1998) wrote about the importance of continually reminding students of course goals. Ms. Pratt clarified her overall goals for the course by explicitly stating them in the course syllabus and spending time discussing these goals in class. She also communicated the purpose and goals for different activities in a number of ways. For example, she provided models and examples of the ways that students might respond to activities. When she asked them to write about a time when somebody acted out of the norm, she modeled the kind of response that she wanted from students by sharing her own personal story. In another example, when she recognized that teacher candidates were not voicing their questions, doubts, and critiques of inclusion, she used a fishbowl

activity to model the kinds of discussions that would bring these ideas out in the open for more to hear. As goals are being defined, as we saw from this and Holt-Reynolds' (1992) study, it is important that teacher educators and students become aware of the different ways that they are understanding and defining concepts and ideas that are presented in class. According to Holt-Reynolds (1992), teacher educators and students can only begin to explore these differences if they are aware that differences exist.

One of Ms. Pratt's goals was to assist teacher candidates in developing the knowledge and skills that are needed to teach literacy in inclusive learning communities. By making this a theme of her course, she had a number of opportunities to revisit the issue. One of the ways that Ms. Pratt provided continual reminders of this goal was through the prompts that she provided for case-activities and writing assignments. Ms. Pratt continually asked teacher candidates how different activities related to inclusive learning communities. She also had students reflect and write upon understandings that were gained after they engaged in case discussions. In one example, she provided a prompt that asked, "How does this relate to inclusive learning communities? How are you now thinking about inclusive learning communities?" Also, encouraging teacher candidates to write about their experiences, share these experiences, and make connections between personal experiences and cases encouraged some teacher candidates to reflect upon and critique their prior assumptions and beliefs. Providing cases that illustrated perspectives that were unfamiliar to teacher candidates also encouraged some teacher candidates to broaden their view and deepen their understanding of inclusion.

By bringing forth multiple perspectives on issues of inclusion, Ms. Pratt also provided opportunities for teacher candidates to develop their own goals and determine

the kind of teacher that they wanted to be. Teacher candidates were also encouraged to develop their own stance on literacy instruction as they constructed philosophy statements. Ms. Pratt gave teacher candidates opportunities to work on these throughout the semester, share ideas with their peers, and reflect upon the ways course discussions and activities influenced their own conceptualization of literacy instruction.

Another way that teacher educators could encourage students to identify and acknowledge their own subgoals for teaching diverse learners is by applying the questions that Laurillard (1998) used to illustrate the structure of storylines. Teacher educators could encourage students to explicitly state and develop their own goals and then guide teacher candidates' inquiries into learning. Teacher educators could encourage their students to do this by having them pursue the question of where are they going as a learner and as a teacher of diverse students. They could ask students to think about what kind of teacher of diverse learners they see themselves becoming and ask students to consider what needs to occur in order for them to be this kind of teacher. They could ask students to ask themselves what knowledge, skills, and beliefs are needed to become culturally responsive literacy teachers.

As teacher educators support students in this process, especially when working with novices who might have limited knowledge and experience of culturally responsive teaching and inclusive classrooms, it is vital that they provide students with opportunities to see the kind of practice that they are promoting. Teacher educators could do this by providing teacher candidates with classroom field experiences where culturally responsive instruction is modeled. They could also provide images of this kind of teaching through video, hypermedia, and written cases. Teacher educators would have to

assist teacher candidates, especially those who do not have knowledge of this kind of teaching, in envisioning what is possible and what culturally responsive teaching looks like. Teacher educators would also have to assist some teacher candidates in seeing value in such teaching. This study revealed that some teacher candidates questioned the teaching approaches that were being presented in class and were sometimes unsure of the value of personal writing and case activities if they did not see how they applied to classroom practice. This study revealed that teacher educators would need to provide support and scaffolding as novices read, view, and discuss these cases and assist them in knowing how to act upon their awareness of inclusion and inclusive teaching practices. Teacher candidates could also provide further support for students by finding ways to support them in making connections between their personal experiences, knowledge and beliefs and the image and stories of teaching that are presented to them.

Laurillard (1998) emphasized that students need to be given opportunities to articulate and refine what they know. Ms. Pratt did this by asking teacher candidates to make connections between cases and their own personal experiences and asking them to reflect upon and comment on these connections. She also had them reflect upon and write about their learning at various times throughout the semester. Ms. Pratt provided opportunities for teacher candidates to articulate what they were learning and encouraged them to openly share ideas with others by providing them with opportunities to get to know one another and develop trusting relationships. She did this by having teacher candidates work in small groups that met regularly throughout the semester by having them select and write to a dialogue journal partner. Ms. Pratt also provided space for teacher candidates to articulate their thoughts and ideas by introducing the “Goodnight

Moon” case in a way that allowed teacher candidates to try to figure out what was occurring before giving them the second page of the case that described why children were crying when their teacher read *Goodnight Moon*. Teacher educators could also assist their students in articulating what they know by providing other means for teacher candidates to share and express their ideas. For example, teacher candidates in Ms. Pratt’s class were involved in many activities that involved reading, writing, and speaking. Teacher educators might have their students express their understandings in other ways, such as through pictures, movement, and role-playing.

The different ways that teacher candidates articulate and refine what they know could also serve as opportunities for individuals to assess their own understandings. For example, as we saw from Ms. Pratt’s teaching, teacher candidates could assess their own learning and what they know by revisiting artifacts that were created in the course, searching for evidence of growth and learning, and articulating what they learned with others. Ms. Pratt had teacher candidates assess their learning throughout the course; however, she was the one to create the questions that guided the assessment. Teacher educators could further engage students in defining and assessing their own goals by involving them more in the assessment process and having them take part in deciding upon ways to both demonstrate knowledge and assess learning.

Concluding Thoughts

This study investigated how teacher candidates responded to written and hypermedia cases in a literacy methods course. The study sheds light on the different ways that teacher candidates defined inclusion and the pedagogical practices that assisted

them in developing the knowledge and skills that are needed to teach literacy in inclusive learning environments. Data collected on all teacher candidates revealed how a combination of personal writing activities, course activities, and field experiences assisted teacher candidates in developing more complex understandings of inclusion and ways to select, adapt, and modify literacy instruction for diverse groups of students. The combination of these experiences also influenced how teacher candidates interpreted and made meaning from case activities. These new understandings about learning from cases suggest that teacher educators need to define how one learns from cases more broadly. When using both written and hypermedia cases, teacher educators need to take into consideration the broader context in which students are introduced to and engaged in case activities.

This study revealed how various tensions emerged throughout the semester as Ms. Pratt used cases and personal writing activities to prepare teacher candidates for working with diverse students. The tensions between teacher candidates' need for subject matter knowledge and the instructor's focus on building inclusive learning communities lessened when teacher candidates began to make personal connections to the issues and ideas that were presented in the course. Teacher candidates also began to see how issues of inclusion related to the teaching of literacy when they made connections between case activities and what they were experiencing in the field. This study revealed how a teacher educator can support teacher candidates in making these connections. It also revealed the challenges that Ms. Pratt encountered as she attempted to create a balanced curriculum that focused on both subject matter knowledge and issues of inclusion and diversity.

This study demonstrated that the lens in which teacher candidates viewed cases was influenced by prompts that were given by Ms. Pratt and by interactions with others in the course. It also showed how teacher candidates began to see over a period of time more connections between inclusive learning communities and the teaching of literacy. Seeing more connections between these issues could be a result of students' increased knowledge of inclusion and literacy instruction. It could also be due to Ms. Pratt's increased understanding of the ways that teacher candidates respond to personal writing and case activities.

Data collected on four focus students illustrated how narrative served as an organizing framework and a way of making meaning from personal writing assignments, case activities, and field experiences. As Mallory, Lydia, Sadie, and Lizz made connections between these experiences, they began to reflect upon and critique their assumptions and beliefs about inclusion and formed new understandings about themselves, teaching, and learning. Such connections, however, were more difficult to identify with Jackie. Also, for some teacher candidates, these same activities appeared to reinforce prior assumptions and beliefs and sometimes led to misinterpretations of what it means to create an inclusive learning community.

Teacher candidates' responses to personal writing and case activities have implications for the use of narrative as pedagogy. This study revealed how novices might need scaffolding and support when engaged in written, video, and hypermedia case activities. It also provided insight into the ways that teacher educators might provide support for these activities when preparing teacher candidates to teach literacy to diverse students. This study advances what is currently known about the use of cases and

narrative in preparing culturally responsive teachers. However, limitations did exist in this study, and there is still much to learn about the use of written cases, hypermedia cases, and narrative as pedagogy in teacher education.

This study explored teacher candidates' responses to written and case activities; however, all of the teacher candidates in the study, except for one, were White, female and came from similar backgrounds. In order to develop a fuller understanding of how personal writings and case activities can support teacher candidates' learning, future studies need to be conducted on a more diverse teacher candidate population. Also, data collected on focus students revealed that teacher candidates began to gain new understandings and make connections between various learning experiences at different times throughout the semester. It would be informative to follow teacher candidates beyond one semester to see how their knowledge and beliefs about teaching diverse learners change over time and to investigate what contributes to these changes. Future studies also need to investigate more closely the knowledge and beliefs that teacher candidates have on teaching literacy to diverse students and how their knowledge, beliefs, and epistemological assumptions can influence the ways they respond to and make meaning from personal writing and case activities.

Little research has been conducted on the pedagogy of teacher education (AACTE, 2002, 2003), and this study is significant because it provides insight into the role of narrative in teacher preparation. Further research needs to be conducted on narrative as pedagogy and the ways that teacher educators can assist teacher candidates in developing and maintaining a storyline as they are engaged in narrative and case activities. This study revealed how teacher candidates responded differently to written

cases and RCE video and hypermedia cases. There is the possibility that different representations of cases can contribute to different kinds of learning and support different kinds of knowledge; however, more research needs to be conducted to understand if different responses are more likely a result of the instructional approach that is used with cases or the medium that is used to present images of teaching and learning.

Based on the findings of this study, it is unclear what role creating and maintaining a storyline had on teacher candidate learning. Jackie's experiences are the exception compared to other focus students. However, little is known about the kinds of personal connections that other teacher candidates made to written and hypermedia cases and whether or not making these connections supported their learning. Investigating and understanding the experiences of students like Jackie is necessary if we are going to gain more insight into the role of narrative in preparing teachers to teach diverse students. Doing a more detailed interpretive analysis on those teacher candidates' experiences that appear to be the exception rather than the norm could create a better opportunity to understand the role that narrative pedagogy and case methodology has in teacher education.

Behar-Horenstein (1995) stated, "Critics of story claim that story telling suffers from an absence of an 'authenticity judge' (Klein & Green, 1993) and an inability to '...distinguish a scholarly interpretation of a classroom event from that of a delirious observer' (Salomon, 1991, p. 10)." (p. 47). She argued that one of the criticisms of investigating learning through narrative inquiry is that researchers "reify narrative discourse, make inferences from nonobservable mental processes, and then use discourse as evidence for the existence of the inferred processes" (Behar-Horenstein, 1995, p. 151).

I believe that there is some validity to these arguments. One of the limitations of this study was that much of the data came from what teacher candidates said and wrote about their own learning in the course. I believe that we do need to hear what teacher candidates have to say about their experiences and learning in order to understand how personal writing and case activities support them in becoming culturally responsive teachers. However, this study revealed the difficulties of assessing teacher candidates' knowledge and beliefs. As we move forward and conduct more research on the role of narrative as pedagogy and as a means of knowing, we must find alternative ways to identify, assess, and analyze the knowledge and beliefs that teacher candidates bring to their educational experiences. We will also need to continue to investigate the ways that teacher candidates' knowledge, beliefs, and epistemological assumptions shape the ways that they make meaning and learn from narrative and case activities.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

List of Cases

LOURDES' CASE

Teaching Tolerance Project. (1997). Peace takes practice. *Starting small: Teaching tolerance in the preschool and early grades*. Montgomery, AL: Southern Poverty Law Center.

This case describes the challenges that a kindergarten teacher, Lourdes, faced while teaching a group of children that came from mostly low-income Haitian and African families. The case describes how many of the students in Lourdes's class had started school "having already learned that the world is an uncertain and often hostile place" (p.144). When children encountered disagreements in Lourdes's class, they frequently resorted to violence to settle their disputes. Lourdes reached a turning point in her teaching when she realized that if she kept getting upset, focusing on the negative in the class, then students' behavior wasn't going to get any better. As Lourdes began forming new ideas about teaching and her role in the classroom, she enrolled in a three-day training session offered by the Peace Education Foundation (PEF) program. The case illustrates how Lourdes continues to face a number of challenges in her classroom, but manages to turn hostile and negative experiences into ones that focus on maintaining peace and respect in the classroom.

GOODNIGHT MOON CASE (See APPENDIX D for the complete case.)

This case was written by a doctoral student and describes a real-life incident that occurred to an acquaintance of hers while supervising student teachers in a small native Alaskan village. The incident described what happened when Mary, an early childhood consultant, went to observe a young Alaskan teacher who was teaching children in the Alaskan Bush. Prior to being observed, Mary and the teacher had decided that the story *Goodnight Moon* would be a nice story for the teacher to use because it is considered a beloved book in early education settings. Mary felt that recommending this book to the young teacher would help set her up for a successful lesson. In the end, however, the soothing bedtime story became frightening to the children, and they began to cry in fear when their teacher began to ask them questions about the book. This case illustrates how children's cultural experiences can impact a teacher's instructional moves in unexpected ways.

Brown, Margaret Wise. (1991). *Goodnight Moon*. New York: Harpercollins Juvenile Books.

CHRISTINE'S CASE

Peacock, T., Keller, C., & Rallis, H. (1999). A case of freedom to learn: Balancing the needs and rights of all children. In R. McNergney, E. Ducharme & M. Ducharme (Eds.), *Educating for democracy: Case-method teaching and learning* (pp. 159-173). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

This case is told through the eyes of Christine, a teacher education student, after viewing a video in class that tells the story of a child with special needs being mainstreamed into a general education classroom. In the case, Christine writes about her thoughts and reactions when her classmates begin discussing the video and debating over the advantages and disadvantages of including special needs students in the general education classroom. Christine faces complex thoughts and reactions to the class discussion because her own sister has Down Syndrome. The case describes how Christine faces “serious personal and professional questions about who wins and who loses when children with special needs are excluded (and included) in general education classrooms” (p.159).

MRS. HEMMETER CASE

Emergent Literacy: Ann Hemmeter, Kindergarten
Neal Elementary
San Antonio, Texas

DAWN HARRIS MARTIN CASE

The Reading/Writing Connection: Dawn Harris Martin, 2nd grade
Mahalia Jackson Elementary
Harlem, New York

These two videos come from a six-part national teacher training video series and were produced by *Center for the Study of Reading*. The *Center for the Study of Reading* is located at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

These videos are accessible through the Reading Classroom Explorer (RCE) program. RCE is an online video-based hypermedia environment that helps teacher candidates gain access to classrooms with diverse student populations and teachers with diverse pedagogical approaches to literacy instruction. RCE enables teacher candidates to observe, analyze, and critique video clips and supporting materials that portray a wide variety of successful literacy practices in academically, economically, racially, and linguistically diverse classrooms. RCE users can search video clips by schools, themes, and keywords. Through the program, they can also post papers online and participate in on-line discussion forums.

RCE website: <http://eliteracy.org/rce>

APPENDIX B

Pre Survey

Name: _____ Date _____

ED 222 Fall 2002

Pre-Survey

Rate the following and write a comment or two for each.

1 Strongly agree

2 Agree

3 Neither agree or disagree

4 Disagree

5 Strongly disagree

_____ 1) Teachers often expect less from students from the lower socioeconomic class.

_____ 2) Tests, particularly standardized tests, have frequently been used as a basis for segregating students.

_____ 3) Generally, teachers should group students by ability levels.

_____ 4) Historically, literacy instruction has been monocultural, reflecting only one reality and has been biased toward the dominant (European) group.

_____ 5) It is more important for immigrants to learn English than to maintain their first language.

_____ 6) Large numbers of students of color are properly placed in special education classes by school personnel.

_____ 7) Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds typically have fewer literacy opportunities than their middle-class peers.

SHORT ANSWER:

- 8) In a school minority students and students of color consistently score less on the standardized tests. Why do you think this might occur?
- 9) What kind of experiences have you had with diverse groups of people? Please explain.
- (Please include who these people were, why they are “diverse,” and how you came to have these experiences in your response.)
- 10) Have you had any prior experiences working with or teaching children? Explain.

LONG ANSWER. PLEASE ANSWER ON THIS PAGE AND THE ATTACHED SHEET(S) OF PAPER.

- 11) Nian Nian has just recently immigrated to the United States and entered your ____ -grade (enter your preferred grade) classroom during the middle of the school year. She appears to be able to understand very general conversations that occur in the classroom, but her English reading and writing skills are very poor. You are still trying to assess how well Nian Nian speaks English; however, this is difficult to do because she doesn’t speak much in class. As far as you know, she does not use any English at home. A) How do you think you could best support Nian Nian in acquiring English skills, and what kind of literacy instruction do you think would best support her learning? B) How might this support be the same of different from instruction that other students get? Please explain.
- 12) You are teaching in an inner city, public school in Detroit and have a very diverse classroom. Some of your students are gifted; however, many of them are struggling to work at grade level. You have two learning disabled students, but you wonder if two more of your students should be tested. You believe a few of your students might have attention deficit disorder. Many of your students come from single parent, low-income families, and you have difficulty communicating with these parents because of their work schedules. You are in the first months of school and are preparing for the year ahead. What considerations and accommodations will you need to make when planning literacy lessons for this group of students? Please explain.

APPENDIX C

Post Survey

Name: _____ Date _____

ED 222 Fall 2002

Post-Survey

Rate the following and write a comment or two for each.

- 1 Strongly agree
- 2 Agree
- 3 Neither agree or disagree
- 4 Disagree
- 5 Strongly disagree

- _____ 1) Teachers often expect less from students from the lower socioeconomic class.
- _____ 2) Tests, particularly standardized tests, have frequently been used as a basis for segregating students.
- _____ 3) Generally, teachers should group students by ability levels.
- _____ 4) Historically, literacy instruction has been monocultural, reflecting only one reality and has been biased toward the dominant (European) group.
- _____ 5) It is more important for immigrants to learn English than to maintain their first language.
- _____ 6) Large numbers of students of color are properly placed in special education classes by school personnel.
- _____ 7) Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds typically have fewer literacy opportunities than their middle-class peers.

SHORT ANSWER:

- 8) In a school minority students and students of color consistently score less on the standardized tests. Why do you think this might occur?

LONG ANSWER. PLEASE ANSWER ON THIS PAGE AND THE ATTACHED SHEET(S) OF PAPER

- 9) Nian Nian has just recently immigrated to the United States and entered your _____-grade (enter your preferred grade) classroom during the middle of the school year. She appears to be able to understand very general conversations that occur in the classroom, but her English reading and writing skills are very poor. You are still trying to assess how well Nian Nian speaks English; however, this is difficult to do because she doesn't speak much in class. As far as you know, she does not use any English at home. A) How do you think you could best support Nian Nian in acquiring English skills, and what kind of literacy instruction do you think would best support her learning? B) How might this support be the same of different from instruction that other students get? Please explain.
- 10) You are teaching in an inner city, public school in Detroit and have a very diverse classroom. Some of your students are gifted; however, many of them are struggling to work at grade level. You have two learning disabled students, but you wonder if two more of your students should be tested. You believe a few of your students might have attention deficit disorder. Many of your students come from single parent, low-income families, and you have difficulty communicating with these parents because of their work schedules. You are in the first months of school and are preparing for the year ahead. What considerations and accommodations will you need to make when planning literacy lessons for this group of students? Please explain.
- 11) During this semester in TE 401, you engaged in a variety of activities that were designed to support your learning to teach literacy to diverse students. Please comment on the following and discuss in detail how they did or did not support this learning:
- a) Writing about various personal experiences that you have had in and out of school;
 - b) Reading and responding to written cases (ex. The case of Christine and her sister Alice, Good Night Moon, Peace Takes Practice, etc.);
 - c) Viewing hypermedia video-based cases (ex. Anne Hemmeter video, Dawn Harris Martin video, various RCE clips, etc.) and posting messages on the RCE discussion forum.

APPENDIX D

“Goodnight Moon” Case

A few years ago, a colleague of mine, Mary Asper, worked in the Alaskan Bush as an early childhood consultant. As part of her job, she would fly into communities and coach early childhood teachers to improve their practice. She would be in contact with the teachers in advance by phone and Internet to help them plan the lesson that she would observe on her visits. One day while having coffee with Mary, she told me about a visit she made to observe Kae, a young, native Alaskan teacher who was working towards her teacher certification. Mary said that she had been looking forward to observing Kae’s interactions with the class of all native children because it was quite rare, even in Alaska, for teachers to be native Alaskans.

Mary explained that Kae had seemed quite nervous about having her come observe. Because of this, she spent some extra time helping Kae plan her lesson. Mary has been working in Alaska for a few years and is familiar with some of the native customs. She told me that native Alaskan culture is a very old, largely oral culture. Native Alaskan elders frequently use story telling as a way to convey messages, information, and knowledge to the young, and the culture is passed on from one generation to the next through these stories. Stories, Mary told me, are viewed as a way to keep the culture in tact. Mary thought about this as she helped Kae plan her lesson, and she thought that it might be nice if Kae could base her lesson on a children’s literature story. After talking together, they selected the story *Goodnight Moon* to read to the class of preschoolers. Mary figured that since this book is one of the best beloved books in early education settings and homes all over, her young teacher would find easy success using it.

Mary arrived to Kae’s school on her scheduled date and found a lovely classroom with attentive children surrounding the visibly nervous Kae. Mary didn’t want to distract the students during the lesson, so she sat in the back of the room to observe and listen to the reading of *Goodnight Moon*. As Kae read the story, however, Mary noticed that her tone was becoming increasingly agitated. Mary realized that the teacher’s inflections had the story sounding more like it was written by Poe than the soothing bedtime story Mary was familiar with. Mary noticed that the children were looking terrified. As Kae finished reading the book, she began to ask her students questions about what she had just read. She asked, “Can you imagine going to sleep ALL BY YOURSELF? Without your parents? Without your brothers and sisters? Did you notice that it was dark? How might this little bunny feel?” To Mary’s dismay, children were all crying by the end of the lesson.

Think About

What are your initial thoughts, feelings, or reactions after reading this case?

Why might the children have reacted in this way? What didn’t Mary and the teacher consider?

What do you think a teacher should consider when planning lessons for his/her students?

Goodnight Moon Debriefing

After Mary and Kae discussed the *Goodnight Moon* lesson, they realized that they had not considered the following factors when selecting their text and planning the lesson:

- Children in this community slept in family beds where they enjoyed the comfort of being able to reach out and touch a family member at all times. They slept like “tom cod” line up in the ocean head to tail and tail to head.
- Children were never left in the dark.
- Rooms were small and snuggly not large and vacuous.
- Comfort and discomfort are culturally influenced!

Questions:

- 1) Are there any connections between this story and the quick-write you did earlier? Explain.
- 2) Does this story make you think differently about teaching diverse learners and creating an inclusive learning community? Explain.

APPENDIX E

Instructor Interview Protocol

Pre-Semester Instructor Interview Protocol

- 1) Please describe your goals this year's ED 222 class.
- 2) Explain how you plan to accomplish these goals.
- 3) Describe the major assignments that you will give your students and the purposes or goals for these assignments.
- 4) Explain how you have used narratives and cases in previous classes. Describe what you wanted to accomplish from using them.
- 5) Explain whether or not you were successful in meeting these goals.
- 6) Explain how you have or have not used technology when teaching.
- 7) When we first discussed my research it appeared to me that you were interested in using technology, or more specifically, RCE with your students. Can you explain why this interests you? What would you say is your comfort level for using technology?
- 8) Explain how you think technology can be used to support your teaching and learning and/or your students' teaching and learning.

General Prompts Related to ED 222 Students:

- 1) Describe how this particular group of students compares to previous classes that you have taught.
- 2) Describe the strengths of this particular group of students.
- 3) Describe the weaknesses of this particular group of students.

General Prompts Related to Course Activities and Sessions:

- 1) Explain what seems to be working well with this group of students as you are trying to prepare them for teaching diverse learners. Describe what has contributed to this success.
- 2) Explain what is not working with these students. Explain why this is so and what you would do differently.
- 3) Explain how you think students are interpreting and making sense of the narrative and hypermedia cases that you are using in your class.
- 4) Describe any "surprises" that you or your students have had while engaged in these case-based activities.

Mid-Semester Instructor Interview Protocol

- 1) What were some of your greatest successes last semester? Why do you think you were so successful in these areas?
- 2) What were your greatest challenges last semester? Why do you think these were your greatest challenges?
- 3) I'm going to describe some things that you said you wanted to accomplish this year in ED 222. Describe whether or not you accomplished these things and why you think you did/did not accomplish them.
- 4) You said that last year you found yourself avoiding difficult issues and questions. Did you find that happening this year? (why/why not?)
- 5) How did your use of cases this year compare to last year?
- 6) At the beginning of the semester you were hesitant to have students put together portfolios. Describe how you are now thinking about the use of portfolios in ED 222.
- 7) At the beginning of the semester you said that you saw that technology could be used as another way to model an inclusive learning community. You liked the idea that students can follow their themes and interests when watching videos instead of your own. What are your thoughts and impression on how technology can be used in ED 222? What were your struggles & successes?
- 8) Do you think RCE impacted the way you think about technology/ teaching/ learning?
- 9) Talk about your first impression of RCE and how these impressions may or may not have changed throughout the period of its use.
- 10) Describe the impact, if any, that RCE had on your teaching.
- 11) Describe what you think the greatest limitations are for using RCE.
- 12) Is there anything that you plan to change or do the same in next year's ED 222 class? (Why?)

APPENDIX F

Teacher Candidate Interview Protocol

Mid-Semester Interview Protocol

- 1) Tell me a little about your early literacy experiences in school
- 2) Tell me how things are going for you in ED 222.
- 3) Describe which things in ED 222 seem to have had the most impact on you and your learning and your learning about teaching diverse learners.
- 4) Describe the class activities or assignments that have influenced this learning.
- 5) Describe any people who have influenced your thinking and learning in this course.
- 6) Dialogue Journals: Tell me how your dialogue journal writing is coming along and what that experience is like.
- 7) Response Groups: Tell me about your response group and how work on your philosophy / conceptualization of literacy is coming along.
- 8) Goodnight Moon: Tell me about the Goodnight Moon case and your thoughts about doing activities with the case
- 9) Hemmeter Video - Tell me about the Hemmeter Video and your thoughts about doing the activities in class.
- 10) Tell me about your field placement and your experiences in this classroom.
- 11) Revisit and ask questions about coursework.

End of the Semester Interview Protocol

- 1) What has made the **largest impact** on your learning this semester?
- 2) Where have you experienced the **greatest growth**?
- 3) Where have you experienced the **greatest change**?
- 4) Ask for further explanation/discussion on self-assessment responses.
- 5) Select written work and comments that are related to case activities and ask teacher candidates to provide further explanation and detail.

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