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Inclusion in physical education for students with severe disabilities

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Ph.D. DISSERTATION

**INCLUSION IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION FOR
STUDENTS WITH SEVERE DISABILITIES**

BY

Michelle Anne Grenier
(BS) University of Massachusetts, 1978
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DISSERTATION

Submitted to the University of New Hampshire in Partial Fulfillment of
Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
In
Education
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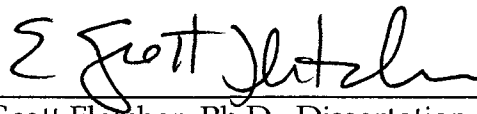
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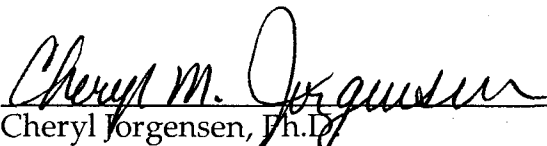
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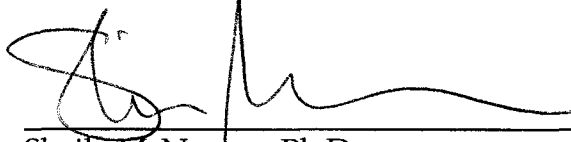
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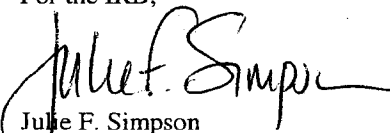
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For my mother, Micheline, a driving force and constant source of motivation. She believed when I myself doubted. She supported when I had little to give.

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Finally, to "Sue" and her exceptional work as a teacher. Her classroom continues to serve as a laboratory and source of knowledge. This work would not be if not for her.

INCLUSION IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS WITH SEVERE DISABILITIES

By Michelle Grenier

University of New Hampshire, May, 200

This qualitative case study investigated the effectiveness of inclusive physical education for two third grade students with severe disabilities utilizing a social constructionist framework. In the first class, one student was identified as having significant language based challenges. The second class included a child with severe cerebral palsy.

Four levels of relations were identified: systemic relations, group relations, conjoint relations and internal others. Each focused on specific areas within the school and the classroom that contributed to the construction of disability. Data were collected from three primary sources: interviews, participant-observer, and document review. Boyzaitis's (1998) five-step process was utilized in the data analysis through the constant comparative method of coding the multiple data sources in developing the emerging theory (Merriam, 1998; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

At the systemic level, administrators expressed views of disability and displayed practices grounded in the legal changes of PL94-142 and ensuing processes that occurred as students with disabilities were integrated into the public schools. Teachers and paraprofessionals within the group relations of the classroom expressed social, environmental, and academic constructions of disability. Students' constructions of disability were conditioned by group membership, adaptations and accommodations, and their ability to successfully complete the learning tasks. The physical education teacher's construction of

disability was grounded in her sensitivity to difference and an ability to make learning accessible for her students with disabilities.

As a theoretical framework, social construction refocused disability in the inclusive setting as a process of active engagement through forms of teacher and classroom relatedness (Kozub, Sherblom, Perry, 1999). This perspective provided an alternative to the individualistic discourse of difference embedded in special education to accommodate the challenges of the inclusive classroom. In the physical education setting, this emerged as the students in relation to their peers and teachers, the curriculum, and instructional methods.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: THE PARALLELL OF TWO BODIES

Several years ago while at a conference, I awoke early for my daily run. Minutes into my journey, I found myself on the bridge crossing the Connecticut River. Deliberately placing myself at the center of the bridge to access the full wonder of the river, I marveled at the aftermath of a recent storm. Almost immediately, the surface of the swirling waters caught my eye. Differences and anomalies drew me to the sources of disruption. The water dipped, curved and collected, forming vacuous pools only to disappear in an instant. Shifting my gaze to another spot, the water flattened out temporarily, as yet another disturbance changed the flow and direction of the water.

The combined effect of sight and sound imbued a sense a wonder for the magnitude of nature. Aesthetically, there was an intrinsic acceptance of its variability, and a reverence for its purity. The river had its own ability to form patterns of movement well beyond the controls of human hands. I reflected on the capacity of humankind to accept nature for its vast and unqualified power to capture what is unique and momentary, transcending the bounds of predictability.

My eyes continued to gaze over the shifting textures and the abundant beauty. Where at one location the river is calm, rapids churn around the next bend. Yet, the differences of an overflowing river and the violent force of its current trigger an apprehensive response. I stand back, afraid of engulfment.

Teachers display similar emotions to their students with disabilities. There is the tendency to dismiss students whose disabilities make them noticeably different, compelling them to the periphery of educational standards. One particular student comes to mind. Jay is a handsome young man with the face of a vital seventeen-year-old, yet he is paralyzed from the neck down as a result of an accident. The change between face and body is disconcerting. Oftentimes, I expect to see him bound out of his chair speaking in a language once familiar to him. Yet he remains still, his body confined to his chair while his eyes seek a life outside his restricted existence.

Jay spends much of his day sitting listlessly in front of the television. Trauma to the spinal cord resulted in severe brain damage. He is fed through a tube inserted into his abdomen and his communication skills are limited to eye movements and facial expressions.

Jay has, on occasion, displayed remnants of his past life as an athlete, particularly with the undergraduate students who serve as assistants in the class. The students arrived weekly, engaging him in sport activities that comprised a large part of his life. He enjoyed their company and a zest for life. One young woman, Kristy, was exceptionally effective as a teacher. She would race him around the gymnasium in his wheelchair, turning him quickly or stopping abruptly with a jolt. She would throw balls at him fully expecting him to return the favor. Jay's response was immediate and exuberant. He began demonstrating

a range of physical and emotional responses that few teachers in his school had witnessed. He was using his legs to kick a soccer ball and was tracking the ball by turning his head. He laughed as he methodically lifted his hand to high-five his peers after a goal. He was emotive, revealing an unusual aliveness and vitality. The pair created responsiveness to each other through the language of movement and their coordinated efforts to communicate. Kristy was not trying to “fix” Jay. She was simply doing with him what he enjoyed most in his life: playing sports.

My thoughts return to the river and the parallels of the two bodies; Jay as a human, physical body and the river as a body of water. The similarities strike me. The river too, is omnipresent. Jay's physical characteristics immediately catch your attention when you walk into the room. The river absorbs my thoughts, taking me within the folds of its current. Jay's chair holds his body, giving it shape and form. The riverbanks provide the same supports for containment, directing the water to unknown territories.

It has been this connection between the aesthetics of nature and the aesthetics of difference that has drawn me to the study of disability, pushing me to seek a way of understanding disability as something other than a deviation. I began exploring the larger issues incurred by those identified as being disabled and their differential treatment. These included but were not limited to, the stigma associated with labels, placement practices that separated students with disabilities from their peers, and the differences in expectations by educators.

The Social Construction of Disability

Disability is socially constructed by expectations of performance and the failure or unwillingness to create an idea of ability that includes people who do not fit the "normal" paradigm (Davis, 1997; Jenkins, 1998; Wendell, 1996). In Western scientific-medical culture, it is easy to assume that nature has an accepted course of action, while a "failed" human condition is associated with pathological states. The authority of medicine to describe a person's disability affects how society supports or fails to support the individual's sufferings and struggles (Wendell, 1996).

As an educator, I am dismayed that we have not understood or accepted disability more broadly, looking deeply into the facets of disability that describe the person, rather than those facets that distinguish one disability from another. In lieu of understanding or acceptance, we diagnose and remediate. We quantify, measure, and present our results against a value or norm. The student's inability to conform to established norms becomes a deficit, a measure of incompetence. Students become outcasts, relegated to separate schools and facilities.

The authority of medicine to describe disability through a deficit discourse devalues the experiences of persons with disabilities. As in medicine, the deficit discourse inherent in many of the practices of special education generates a network of classifications through the objectification of disability (Gergen 1995). The "identified" child becomes just that, identified for his or her deficits. The deficit discourse situates the "problem" within the individual; the individual and the disability become one and the same.

Inclusive Education and Social Construction

The foundation of inclusive education is rooted in the tenets of social justice, civil rights, and the fundamental right of all to a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) as defined by the Education for All Handicapped Act (PL94-142) in 1975. As an educational philosophy, inclusion is described by the placement and education of students with disabilities in a school with his or her peers without disabilities as emphasized in the regular education initiative (REI). Inclusion challenges teachers to value and accept diversity, to collaborate with colleagues in all aspects of teaching, and to use instructional practices that have proven efficacy in heterogeneous classrooms (Lilly, 2000; Villa and Thousand, 2000; Sapon-Shevin, 1992). However, inclusion remains a contentious issue due to the social construction of disability through a deficit discourse that leads to negative attitudes and limited expectations for the performance by students, and the school's lack of skill in supporting teachers and students (Jenkins, 1998, Linton, 1998, Shogan, 1998).

In this dissertation, social constructionism will be used as the lens for understanding disability and the differences that shape the social construction of disability. The case will be made that social constructionism offers a useful perspective for understanding the educational practice of inclusion. Social constructionism examines the multiplicity of value systems that are significant for the inclusion of students with disabilities. As a conceptual framework, social constructionism treats teaching and learning as relational acts within the larger framework of the school and the forces that shape current perceptions of disability. This framework includes the child, the child's relationships, the cultural and political norms of the school, and the historical features that

characterize the disability discourses. Social constructionist practices attempt to coordinate the multiplicity of these value systems by seeking to understand alternative values and discourses while respecting other's views.

Traditional views of learning privilege the individual and the individualizing tendencies of ability and achievement. Thus, students with disabilities are subject to an exclusionary construction of disability. As an alternative, a social constructionist perspective locates learning as an event that transpires with people between their worlds. Social construction suggests a set of interrelated, relational *moves* that reconceptualizes the teaching and learning process. The challenge for the social constructionist is to move away from the individualizing discourses of disability, articulating multiple forms of discourse in conversational processes known as *intelligibilities* (McNamee & Gergen, 1999). This enables us to see difference as a familiar quality, one that threads its way through humanity. To understand, appreciate, and feel difference opens the doors of possibility and potential for engagement with others in our lives. As a theoretical framework, social constructionism validates difference as an acceptable, even necessary, staple of our lives. Differences are constituted as an elemental facet of our relations with others.

The specific research question of this current study addresses teaching and learning relationships in the inclusive physical education setting. This consideration leads to a central question: *What are the multiple ways in which relationships among teachers, students, and administrators facilitate an effective inclusive physical education classroom?* The theoretical framework and methods employed in this research, as well as the interpretation of key research issues and

the implications of the findings, will reflect the relational perspective of social constructionism.

In pursuit of an answer to this central question, this dissertation addresses the following aims:

1. To describe how disability is constructed in the physical education classroom.
2. To identify administrator and teacher perspectives of disability and the relationship of these perspectives to instruction and learning.
3. To describe teaching practices as relational acts for their capacity to enhance inclusion.
4. To portray the nature of student learning in the inclusive classroom.

This dissertation proceeds in the following fashion: In Chapter Two, I develop a social constructionist framework of disability. I introduce postmodernism, concentrating on areas that hold the most relevance in the construction of disability, including the theory of social constructionism. From there, I move into the literature in physical education, weaving postmodernism throughout in developing an alternative position for constructing disability. In Chapter Three, I discuss the rationale and use of qualitative methods adopted in this dissertation. Chapter Four provides the results of the investigation, while Chapter Five offers implications for consideration in practice as well as study.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Every year, I invite Pete to speak to my classes. Pete is a fifty-four year old male with cerebral palsy. A large man, he uses a scooter to get around and crutches for balance when he is in a standing position. He has a full-time job, drives his own car, and even manages to get away every now and then for a weekend of skiing. He is married and has two teenage daughters.

Pete has a lot to say about what it is like living and being in the world with a disability. He recounts how he spent much of his childhood watching, rather than participating with his siblings. He was the snow-bunny, the child who sat in the lodge watching his friends ski down the mountain.

Pete never had the satisfaction of playing with "normal" classmates because his schooling occurred in a separate facility designed for children with disabilities. He rarely got to play with his peers in a neighborhood game of baseball. Despite all of this, Pete feels as if he was one of the lucky ones, loved and accepted by his parents. He was not institutionalized like many other children with disabilities during the 1940's. He was given the chance to live in the world with his family, whom he considers, "the best there is" (P. Macalester, personal statement, October 23, 2002).

Pete speaks to the students about seeing the world from the perspective of being different. He breaks down their momentary defenses as he begins the

process of opening the students' minds to other possibilities. His words nudge them into unfamiliar terrain--to be different and human at the same time.

Pete's stories provide a perspective of his life and the meaning his disability has brought to bear in the world that dishonors difference. His stories resonate with bits and pieces of our own realities, threading their way into our lives. He informs us of what it means to have a disability and the ways that disability guides our pedagogical practices. He engages the students in another worldview that contests the inadequate and inaccurate conceptions of disability that dominate cultural practices (Linton, 1998).

This dissertation reflects Pete's encouragement to consider disability in ways that move beyond the deficit discourse. In this chapter, I outline the community of traditions associated with the deficit discourse and offer as an alternative, intelligibilities of action as a framework for analysis. In the second section, I situate the practice of inclusion within a social constructionist framework, identifying essential components in the classroom that contribute to a relational understanding of an effective inclusive physical education classroom.

Situating Social Constructionism in Postmodern Theory

I will represent science as one among many truth games.
(Lather, 1993, p. 89)

What are the truths we value? How did we come to know these truths? These epistemological questions frame the discussion of modernism and postmodernism, particularly as we address the issue of difference and the acceptance of differences in the American educational system.

At the core of modernism is the belief that people are able to know, understand, and capture elements of the world through scientific inquiry (Gergen, 1992). Science, regarded for its fixed and unmediated reflection of the world, is the recognized practice of uncovering the laws of nature within modernism (Polkinghorne, 1990). Postmodernists regard these universal claims skeptically, questioning the inevitability of progress and the prudence of such a rigid doctrine (Butler, 2002).

Individuals with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to the truths of scientific doctrine that maintain ideal conceptions of body and mind (Linton, 1998). Within the positivist perspective, persons with mental retardation are regarded as deficient, their identities constructed through scales of cultural intelligence (Shogun, 1998). A sub-average score specifies weakness or limitations, traits that obliquely define the person and the person's potential for social advancement within educational systems (Hahn, 1988).

Postmodern discourse suggests another worldview. Through the utilization and application of interpretive methods, truth is regarded as a highly complex and subjective matter through multiple methods that reflect the viewer's ontological and epistemological locations within a cultural tradition (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992).

Postmodernists have challenged traditional claims made by scientists of a steadfast knowledge of the world that reveals the nature of nature and the knowledge of physical laws (Butler, 2002). Truths are inscribed by what Foucault (1980) terms "effects of power," and the "subject-object opposition" (Lather, p. 90). As a legitimized doctrine, science's authoritative stance is premised on a purposeful and neutral method of control as researchers construct knowledge of

objects within the materials and values of a culture. Rational thoughts are embedded in value orientations aligned with power allegiances that maintain an ordered social hierarchy of all that is considered real and good (Gergen, 2000). These positivist forms of observation deny the dialectical between self and others and the social structures that constitute one's world view (Lather, 1993).

As we begin to think about the social practices associated with modernist epistemology, Bourdieu (1977) provides insight into the methods that enable positivism to maintain the status of neutrality and objectivity:

Objectivism constitutes the social world as a spectacle presented to an observer who takes up a "point of view" on the action, who stands back so as to observe it and, transferring into the objective principles of his relation to the object, conceives of it as a totality intended for cognition alone...This point of view is one afforded by high positions in the social structure, from which the social world appears as representation...and practices are no more than "executions"...or the implementing of plans. (pp. 96-97)

Within positivistic traditions, objectivity becomes the defining characteristic that upholds truth as an uncontaminated entity, while the subjective is assumed to be personal, wrought with human fallibility and emotion, ultimately distorting the truth (Harland, 1987). This hierarchical construction of objective and untainted knowledge endows some individuals with the right to be "truth tellers," responsible for prescribing social norms (Gergen, 1995). In effect, a moral code of standards for acceptable behavior is created through an "ideological ruse" (Lather, 1990, p. 90).

Postmodernists have been successful in adapting Foucault's arguments to illustrate the ways in which discourses of power have been used to marginalize subordinate groups in various contexts (Butler, 2002). For persons with disabilities whose physical and psychological dispositions fall outside

established codes, differences translate into handicaps or deficits (Davis, 1997). These handicaps act as social, physical, and intellectual barriers that hinder the person's ability to lead a productive life within his or her local community.

Foucault (1979) describes *disciplinary regimes*, as the domination of groups who claim to be in possession of the truth, and the "coordinated...cluster of relations" that ensue (p. 184). He argues that conceptions of the modernist body reproduced social relations of domination and subordination. A Cartesian belief of the separate, efficient body as machine has been promoted by medical, pedagogical, and architectural practices (Thompson, 1997). This view produced a "new law of modern society" and a "principle of coercion" used to measure and classify bodies (Foucault, 1979, p. 184).

Postmodernists approach science and scientists with caution, treating their truths as one among many stories that compete to regulate social interaction (Kvale, 1990). The central question about science, then, is not so much its vehement claim to truth, but the political and ethical implications of a doctrine that marginalizes selected groups of the population.

Discourses of power shape views of the individual and the nature of their subjective identity. Sampson (1993) depicts two conceptual dilemmas of modernist epistemologies. The first involves a distancing of the subject from the knower, grounded in the pretense of the uncontaminated view. The second involves the failure of the knower to attend to the activities of the subjects of study. This lack of connection separates one from the other--the knower from the subject. Within each, a *serviceable other* emerges as the object of construction for the dominant groups who give priority to their own experience and their places in the world (Sampson, 1993, p. 4).

In the domain of special education, the serviceable other emerges within the power differentials of the child with disabilities and the professionals assigned to rehabilitate or remediate the child. *Identified* students become the observed specimens of the arbitrator, their disabilities defined through a series of norms and standards that reduce their identity to the manifestations of their disability. While the biological facts of a person's disability can't be ignored, the reductionist tendencies of modernist discourse discourage the contextual complexity of handicapping conditions (Asch & Fine, 1988). The disability is essentialized as traits, enhanced through social structures that promote categorical superiority of intellectual and physical functioning (Jones, 1996).

Disablement, as an individual disease or disability, perpetuates stereotypical myths and attitudes that denigrate the person due to the presence of disability. People with disabilities are viewed as deviations from the norm with the person's disability standing at the forefront of who they are and what they may become. Sabat (1994) provides an example of an elderly woman diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease who ultimately refused the scrutiny of testing. Her reluctance to undergo evaluative procedures reflected an awareness of her medical "prognosis" and the potential relationships that would ensue. The following excerpt expresses her skepticism of medical practice and her fundamental desire to be appreciated for who she was, rather than what she was not:

...I found that I really don't like to be, uh, talking about what, what's my trouble. It's gotten, I know what my trouble is. And I think that what I would like is, uh, only if there is something that is, uh, a time, a uh, a time and with a person who there is a *real* (gestures back and forth with hands) (p.13).

For this woman, *real* implied meaningful and substantive relationships that provided enriching, rather than diminishing experiences. Her actions signaled a resistance to the medical objectifying stance towards persons with disabilities.

Within the educational domain, students are scrutinized in the same manner. The identification of disability with pathology entails an evaluative process, based on examination and diagnosis (Stainback & Stainback, 1996). The act of *coding* in special education occurs through a sorting and labeling process determined by a *professional*. This transference of the problem from adult to child, shifts the burden of learning to the difficulties inherent within the child (Soodak, Podell, Lehman, 1998).

The special education delivery system has evolved into the "official" organization charged with rehabilitating students with disabilities (Bogdan & Biklen, 1977). Linton (1998) describes the process of special education as one that "neither the child nor the education are considered desirable and that they are not thought to surpass what is common" (p. 15). Students become tracked into a system that defines their identity in relation to their disability and educational practices that attempt to normalize their needs. Competency standards and proficiency measures consistently demand an adherence to constructions of identity sustained through testing and evaluative procedures (Lipsky & Gartner, 1988). Students with disabilities are identified for their disabling conditions rather than their potential contributions. Davis (1995) reinforces this notion in stating that, "the idea of the norm pushes a variation of the body through a stricter template, guiding the way the body should be. The social construction of normalcy is what creates the disabled person's problem" (p. 24).

The manner in which students with disabilities are conceptualized in schools requires an analysis of power structures, the processes of identity construction, group identification, and the discriminatory effects of social structures that contribute to a disabling environment (Jones, 1996). The challenge for the social constructionist is to move away from the individualizing discourses of disability to an understanding of culturally derived modes of thought, words, and actions that specify constructions of disability. Social constructionism rejects the notion of truth as a direct perception of reality, arguing that no object is simply what it appears to be (Shotter and Gergen, 1994).

A Relational Understanding of Difference

To talk with a new voice is to invite others to treat one in a different way; to define oneself differently also defines the other in a new way.
(McNamee & Gergen, 1999, p. 27)

In the preceding section, I criticized modernist epistemologies for their failure to recognize differences that exist between individuals as the natural outcome of the human condition. Without fully abandoning the tradition of modernism, I move to an investigation of education grounded in cultural life with threads of both modern and postmodernist discourses. In this section, I discuss four dimensions of relatedness that emerge from the work of McNamee & Gergen (1999) as the internal others, conjoint relations, relations among groups, and systemic process that shape the relations that occur in the classroom and the school-wide community (McNamee & Gergen, 1999). Gergen (2000) defines intelligibilities as “forms of relationship and the generation of rationality within relationships” (p. 49). Intelligibilities are the ways in which individuals find out about the world, understand the world, and generate meaning in the

world through the macro and micro relationships that shape cultural patterns and traditions. "Nothing exists for us – as an intelligible world of objects and persons – until there are relationships" (Gergen, 2000, p. 48).

In this dissertation, the intelligibilities are applied to the teaching and learning relationships that sustain dialectical and emerging activity. These relationships mediate the thoughts and actions of the child, encouraging changes that result in cognitive, physical, and affective learning. Thus, disability is best understood within the contexts, relationships, and institutions that shape the meaning of experience (Jones, 1996).

Internal others is the first of the four forms of intelligibilities. Internal others challenges the fundamental assumption of a single integrated self as one expanded to include many "selves" through the permeable boundaries of the mind, mediated by others in relationships that directly and indirectly affect one's life. It is an intelligibility shaped through the intersection of multiple relationships within various degrees of influence (McNamee and Gergen, 1999).

In this study, Sue, as the physical education teacher, is the focus of my examination of internal others. Her words and actions reflect the ever changing construction of disability and its influence on her teaching practices. Throughout her day, Sue deals with many forces within her school as she continually reconciles administrative and scheduling demands, the needs of her students, and the personal issues in her life. Her internal others acquires shape through the on-going relationships that comprise her daily life.

The second intelligibility, **conjoint relations** are constituted by the patterned interactions between two or more persons. This form of intelligibility holds the most potential for examining the way students engage with one

another, as well as the discourses of learning that emerge between teacher and student. The notion of learning as a shared, cultural activity has been discussed by many, including John Dewey (1916):

The social environment...is truly educative in its effects in the degree in which an individual shares or participates in some conjoint activity. By doing his share in the associated activity, the individual appropriates the purpose that actuates it, becomes familiar with its methods and subject matter, acquires needed skill, and is saturated with its emotional spirit (p. 26).

Shotter & Gergen (1993) reinforce Dewey's emphasis on the situated, relational view of knowledge as one that transcends the passive-individualistic paradigms that dominate the study of education. Learning is viewed a momentary and transitory activity, a fusion of actions past and present mediated by the changing dynamics of the classroom. Shotter (2000) defines these multiple forms of engagement in several ways: joint-action, relationally responsive, and living/bodily activity as "the configurations of a mobile, open reality in which contradictory events are complicated in a steady, on-going conversation between all concerned" (Shotter, 2000, p. 358).

In the physical education setting, the teacher's use of instructional practices shapes the dynamic between self and others, as the children negotiate the daily learning tasks. The differential learning abilities of students requires on-going dialogue that shift from one moment to the next.

The conjoint relations between teachers and students are equally complex. Something so seemingly simple as a tag game becomes a challenge in the inclusive classroom. The space restrictions of a wall or the uneven texture of the grass may limit, change, or alter what the teacher can do. She must consider who pushes the child in a wheelchair and how he will "tag" the other children. She

observes his engagement with other children and whether he is moving sufficiently to exercise his body. How does she respond? How does she touch, speak, or prompt movement? These are the moments that emanate from the mediated responses of relationship.

Group relations are the third form of relational intelligibility. It encompasses a larger sphere of interrelatedness; it is a sort of "melting pot" of experience (McNamee & Gerger, 1999). Sue's careful planning is no guarantee of a predictable result. One learning activity produces a variety of outcomes, varying from one class to the next. In the throng of the classroom, the teacher's voice prevails throughout in her development of activities and instructional practices. Although all students contribute, some are quieter than others, their voices eclipsed by louder counterparts.

McNamee & Gergen's (1999) relations among groups examines the interrelatedness of both the teacher and her students as they strive towards their learning goals. What conversations emerge? What influences the nature of the group? How does the flow of the class change over the forty-five minute period? These are just a few of the dimensional qualities under consideration when we think about group relations.

Finally, **Systemic Process** is the most complex form of relation because of the multiple dimensions entailed within its relatedness. It is what McNamee and Gergen (1999) refer to as the "systemic swim" (p. 42), the medley of discourses that are infused in the course of everyday events. No single event is without connection to this infinitely expanded domain as patterned interactions of a broadened inquiry in which each of these practices is viewed in terms of constituents of the whole (McNamee & Gergen, 1999, p. 47).

In schools, classroom teachers are influenced by the support they get from their administrators, who in turn mirror the policies of the school district influenced by the community. Financial demands impinge on resources and materials for instruction. Standardized testing defines the content that is required, while learning outcomes insist on particularized benchmarks within American society. Students, teachers, administrators, and larger communities encompass the patterned interactions of a broadened inquiry in which each of these practices is viewed in terms of constituents of the whole (McNamee & Gergen, 1999, p. 47).

These four forms of intelligibility – internal others, conjoint relations, group relations, and the systemic process will be used as the basis for understanding the construction of disability from multiple perspective that suggest a set of interrelated moves. The development of social constructionism is not meant to dismiss modernist inquiry and the knowledge it produces; rather, it challenges the deficit discourse associated with disability that is rooted in positivist epistemological claims as the legitimate understanding of difference (Shotter, 1993a). In the next section, I use the theoretical lens of social constructionism based on the four intelligibilities, as a foundation for understanding disability. In doing so, I argue against the truth of any one perennial view regarding the nature of disability and difference.

Systemic Processes

While driving home from school recently, my son asked me what the word SPED meant. “Mom, what’s a SPED?” he asked quizzically. Unclear about his reference, I questioned him further. That day, his classmates on the playground had been taunting a child who had been “picking on” another child.

The taunters, the larger group of children, were calling the teaser a SPED. "You're a SPED, you're a SPED," repeated my child several times reiterating what he had heard. After a few moments, I realized the children were mimicking a term used by adults as a reference to the child. SPED is an acronym for a special education student, a term the children had quickly adopted to bully their classmate on the playground. Even at this tender age of nine years old, my child was learning lessons about difference, about the marginalization that occurs as schools seek out and name children whose intellectual prowess does not meet established standards. I use this example to illustrate the power with which language permeates cognition and the influence of culture on everyday behaviors and relationships. On a larger scale, it is an example of the ideologically motivated discourses that structure the lives of those living with a disability.

In this section, I present an analysis of the saturation of disability in American culture. Through the intelligibilities of systemic relations, I identify three areas in which the construction of disability as a deficit discourse has shaped the social structure for individuals with disabilities: cultural constructions of disability, the pathology of disability as expressed through language, and the institutionalization of disability in American schools.

Cultural constructions of disability. Systemic processes shape the thoughts and actions of individuals within society, mediating language in such a way that it defines, through cultural conditioning, ways of being (McNamee & Gergen, 1999). Within the boundaries of the cultural systems, coherence is created by the knowledge that people need to work together within communities that, in turn, shape their experience and identity. In this dissertation, a systemic account shifts the focus from the individualizing emphasis of current conceptions of disability,

to the relations within a cultural system that makes difference problematic, particularly as we consider the lives of individuals with disabilities within communities.

Individual differences create boundaries grounded in expectations based on perceived norms and values (Shogun, 1998). In the intelligibility of systemic relations, I draw upon literature that reveals the hegemony of institutions that, in fact, construct difference in such a way that it becomes a deficit. McDermott & Varenne (1995) provide initial thoughts:

This approach starts with the question of why any culture would develop an assumedly stable set of tasks and a theory of cognitive development against which people of named different kinds might be distinguished, measured, documented, remediated, and pushed aside. On what grounds could experts have assumed that the complex world of individuals in multiple relationships with each other would stand still enough to be characterized by simplified accounts of either their culture, their cognition, or the ties between whatever culture and cognition are taken to be? One version of the grounds for simplicity is that such theorizing is part of wider scale institutional and political agendas, in particular, that it has been handy for the governments of modern, ideologically rationalistic, class divided, industrial, and information-based states to isolate individuals as units of analysis and to record the workings of their minds for public scrutiny and control (p. 337).

Modernist traditions instill an individualized standpoint that causes persons with disabilities to feel responsible for their differences. Differences are conceived as problems, diseases, or deficits to be reconciled or changed in order for the person to manage to survive.

Bogdan and Taylor's (1982) *The Social Meaning of Retardation: Two Life Stories*, is an example of how differences sustain these boundaries between normality and pathology. The authors challenge normative conceptions of mental retardation as a cognitive deficit by describing the life stories of Ed and Patti, two adults who grew up within the walls of a mental institution. Bogdan

and Taylor expose the so-called truths of mental retardation and the implications of living with disability during a time period when institutionalization was a common practice for children considered “defective”. On a systemic level, the relationship between competence and mental functioning prohibits persons with mental retardation from assuming productive and contributing roles within communities, particularly when assigned lower levels of mental functioning through intelligence testing. For Ed and Patti, cultural perceptions of disability repositioned their lives within psychiatric institutions.

Ed's accounts are clear and lucid as he describes moments in his earlier life:

When the psychiatrist interviewed me he had my records in front of him--so he already knew I was mentally retarded. It's the same with everyone. If you are considered mentally retarded there is no way you can win. They put horses out of misery quicker than they do people. (p. 40)

Ed's words underscore his understanding of the implications of his disability and what that meant for his future. His language is strong and clear, creating a dissonance between our perceptions of disability, his own reality, and societal mistreatment. Being mentally retarded predestined him to mental incompetence.

Nora Groce (1985), in *Everyone Spoke Sign Language Here*, provides an alternative account of the cultural construction of disability. She describes life on the island of Martha's Vineyard off the coast of Massachusetts as one that developed a system for assimilation of the deaf population through the universal practice of sign language among all community members. People's deafness did not exclude them from communicating with their hearing neighbors.

Groce's work provides an example of how the community of Islanders made disability something to be worked with between members, rather than an isolating circumstance that prevented neighbors from joining together in community life. Nor did the hearing Islanders identify those with hearing impairments as disabled. Groce's work raises questions about the nature of disability that extends beyond etiology and function to the systemic shaping of disability.

When, how, and why: these are, of course, deeply cultural issues, and depending on how a physical difference is noticed, identified, and made consequential, the lives of those unable to do something can be either enabled or disabled by those around them (McDermott & Varenne, 1995, p. 328).

That voice continues to resonate today. Harriet Johnson McBride (2003), a disabled lawyer with multiple sclerosis who advocates for in-home health care services, asserts her perspective on what is fundamental to cultural membership for persons with disabilities:

We know better. Integrated into communities, we ride the city bus or our own cars instead of medical transportation. We enjoy friends instead of recreational therapy. We get our foods from supermarkets instead of dieticians. We go to work instead of day programs. Our needs become less "special" and more like the ordinary needs that are routinely met in society. In freedom, we can do our bit to meet the needs of others. We might prove too valuable to be put away.

Unlike Bogdan & Taylor's (1982) description of Ed, Harriet's intellectual skills gave her a culturally recognized power he did not possess. Where Harriet's disability remained at the forefront of who she was and what she stood for, her articulateness endowed her with privileges denied to others.

The language of pathology. Sociocultural organization is constituted by structures that shape the construction of consciousness (del Rio & Alvarez, 1995).

As I consider the influence of sociocultural conditions in education, I unearth structures within language, collective memory, and socially distributed roles that can only be understood within the events of everyday activity. In addition to behavior, these structures influence emotion, identity, and social relations (Wertsch, Del Rio, Alvarez, 1995).

Goffman's (1963) stigma theory provides a useful analysis for understanding the relationship between difference and deviance and the outcomes of pathologizing difference. The term "stigma" denotes a branding, or naming of physical or behavioral traits that separate individuals because of their differences. To have a disability characterized in this way sharpens the boundaries of difference between those considered normal and those determined "less competent" or "handicapped." Thompson (1997) reinforces this concept:

The process of stigmatization thus legitimizes the status quo, naturalizes attributions of inherent inferiority and superiority, and obscures the socially constructed quality of both categories (p. 31).

Oliver (1990) supports Goffman's stigma theory with a more individualizing, yet equally negative construction of disability. Individuals with disabilities are seen as unfortunate, as having the "bad-luck" that results from having a disability. In schools, these stereotypes abound in daily conversation about the manner in which students are able to learn. "Low functioning" and "developmentally disabled" are confusing terms at best with little reference to anything but an idealized social norm of behavior (Nader, 1993).

Disabilities such as mental retardation (MR) and Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) evoke images of incompetence and deviance (Danforth & Navarro, 1998). Medical practices nurture conceptions of illness and disability as

twin entities. As defined by The National Joint Counsel on Learning Disabilities, students with learning disabilities are considered to have "disorders intrinsic to the individual, presumed to be due to central nervous system dysfunction, and may occur across the life-span" (1988). The identification and use of the word "intrinsic" and malfunction places the ownership of the disability on the individual. Naming disability as pathology tends to essentialize these qualities and contributes to a socially constructed, handicapped identity (Jenkins, 1998). As a member of the special education delivery system, the child inherits a future predestined for remediation (Nagler, 1990).

These stigmatizing identities sustain socially embedded structures that separate persons by race, gender, socio-economics, and disability. Gergen (1994) draws on Wittgenstein's (1953) use of the term "language games" (p. 52) to describe the ways that words acquire meaning through social use. Terms such as behavior disorder, autism, and handicap are all features of the disability game embedded within larger "forms of life" (p. 53). In this life form of difference, disability is a negative attribute: an illness or lifelong condition. As a language game, disability is reinforced through modes of thinking and action embedded in rituals and traditions (Gergen, 1994).

Disability terminology also utilizes strict dichotomies through the use of pairings such as disabled/able-bodied, inclusion/exclusion, and normal/abnormal. These descriptors force us to choose between two mutually exclusive options, negating human variability and obscuring the social structures that force such choices on us. Linton (1998) identifies the use of such words as physically challenged and special populations, as those that "conveys the do-gooder mentality endemic to the paternalistic agencies that control many

disabled lives" (p. 14). Labels and documented disabilities give credibility to the power of medicine over the social conditions that permeate people's lives and serve as "tickets to services" from agencies.

These labels perpetuate a stigmatizing and debilitating cycle of academic, social, and physical failure. Labeling assumes homogeneity within the population, namely, that all students with Individualized Education Programs (IEP) are not quite capable. This is in part due to the individualism inherent in educational philosophies that focus on the primacy of knowledge acquisition and the transmission of knowledge from teacher to student. For the student with disabilities, such reductionist tendencies limit the child to his or her traits while minimizing the interactions that sustain membership in the school with the teacher and with their peers (Bruner, 2003).

The role of the law in constructing disability. Educational laws, practices, and issues related to funding have had a profound influence on contemporary constructions of disability (Rice, 2003). Efforts intended to "normalize" students with disabilities through special education services, however well intentioned, have negatively shaped the life experiences of students within school systems. The labeling process sets up an on-going series of relations that separate students with disabilities from their peers, physically and intellectually.

Prior to the 1970's, many students with disabilities were excluded from public education. As recently as 1958, Supreme Court of Illinois maintained that the state's compulsory education laws did not require a "free public education for the 'feble-minded' or children who were 'mentally deficient' and who, because of their limited intelligence were unable to reap the benefits of a good education"(Yell, 1998, p. 55).

In 1954, *Brown vs. the Board of Education* (1954) directed attention at segregation and schools' violation of the constitutional rights of Black students to equal protection under the law and applied this to educational policies. The ruling determined that separate was not equal, and that Black students received a poorer education in segregated schools.

Following *Brown*, two landmark cases established the first legal right to a free, public education for all students with disabilities. *Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Citizens v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (E. D. Pa., 1971) and *Mills v. Board of Education of the District of Columbia* (D.D.C., 1972) argued for equal rights through educational access reinforcing the importance of social skills that contribute to the students' positive sense of self.

More legislation related to students with disabilities evolved, in part due to the Civil Rights Movement and the climate of unrest in the 1960's. The most significant piece of legislation for persons with disabilities was the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA) passed in 1975 and reauthorized as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1990 and 1997. This law provided a "free and or appropriate public education" for every "handicapped" child regardless of the severity of the handicap. In addition, the law called for each child to have an individualized plan of instruction, education in the regular classroom to the greatest extent appropriate, and parental input in decision-making (Gliedman & Roth 1980, p. 174). IDEA also specified the types of disabilities falling under the legal umbrella:

- (i) with mental retardation, hearing impairments including deafness, speech or language impairments, visual impairments including blindness, serious emotional disturbance, orthopedic impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairments, or specific learning disabilities;

and (ii) who, by reason thereof need special education and related services. (20 U.S.C.A. § 1401 (a)(1)(A)(West Supp. 1992); quoted in Imber and van Geel 1995, 107-108)

The role of the law is further reflected in the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. The ADA expands on IDEA and AHA to include "all public entities" and "places of public accommodation." ADA specifies that "no qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such a disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any such entity" (42 U.S.C. §§ 120101-12213; quoted Imber and van Geel 2000, 228). These two pieces of legislation identify the need to support the rights of individuals with disabilities and the means to pursue those rights within legal and educational means.

While the law provided the guidelines for identifying and educating students with disabilities, it further articulated the school systems' responsibility for physically educating the child with disabilities. By definition, students with disabilities, as specifically named in the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, are required to have physical education:

The term special education means specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities including classroom instruction, **INSTRUCTION IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION** (emphasis added), home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions (Federal Register, August 23, 1977, p. 42480).

Lawmakers further articulated the importance of physical education:

The Committee is concerned that although these services are available to and required of all children in our school systems, they are often viewed as a luxury for handicapped children. (Federal Register, August 23, 1977, p. 42489).

The transition in schools from segregated to more inclusive teaching settings was closely allied with the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) condition contained within EHA. As a result, adapted physical education evolved as the program specified in the student's Individual Education Program (IEP). However, it has only been since the 1980's that educators have moved towards a support-based model of education that promotes human and technical assistance for students with disabilities within inclusive settings (Hutzler, 2003). While there has been some progress in physical education through legal outcomes, the construction of disability as a deficit discourse remains entrenched within the educational practices of physical education (DePauw & Doll-Tepper, 2000)

In this section, I have argued for a systemic examination of the construction of disability. This analysis helps explain historical and social influences of the deficit discourse through three avenues: cultural infusion, language and symbol systems, and educational practices. In the next section, I continue the analysis of the deficit discourse as it resides within the classroom setting, offering group relations as a way of understanding the construction of disability.

Group Relations in Physical Education

In this section, the intelligibility of **group relations** is used to analyze the competing discourses that emerge when students with severe disabilities are educated in the regular classroom setting. **Group relations** are those interactions that compose the collective unity of the classroom. In this intelligibility, I examine the differences between two inclusive classroom environments in physical education. Inclusive literature is examined in an effort to tease out

remnants of the deficit discourse that bind disability to difference. The literature is also engaged as an example of generative discourse, representing a paradigmatic shift in the changes facing education. I use the following scenario to depict the intelligibility of group relations as it exists between two classrooms.

One scenario...

It is time for physical education. As the class of third graders enters the gymnasium, the teacher greets the students, reminding them to sit at the center circle. Joining her students, she proceeds to lead the class in their routine warm-up of stretches, strengthening exercises, and cardiovascular activities.

Once the warm-up phase is completed, the students wait, some impatiently, for the next set of instructions. Among them is a young boy with cerebral palsy. Bright and alert, Joey is hunched over in his chair, his head drooping, as his eyes follow the teacher's movements. Behind him stands Chad, Joey's paraprofessional for the last two years.

In the ensuing minutes, the teacher describes and demonstrates the throwing and catching skills for the day. Once finished, the children scurry to get their foam balls, proceeding to perform self-tosses. Some children easily manipulate the balls, while others chase their untamable objects.

The children are boisterous and playful, unlike Chad and Joey, who pause to regard the situation before they begin the task. Joey has little range of motion in his arms and labors to open his tightly clenched hands. He can only throw the ball a short distance and needs to trap the ball in his lap when catching. The two weigh their options and consider what and how they need to modify the activity in order to participate in the class.

After several minutes of discussion, they secure a ball for themselves. Chad then pushes Joey to the far end of the gymnasium. Together they work on the overhand throw, an activity Joey will be doing in Special Olympics. Their routine is predictable. Joey methodically throws the ball, while Chad retrieves the object a few feet beyond his chair.

Several minutes pass and the teacher pairs the students in the class for a new activity, giving no consideration to what Chad and Joey might do. Once again, they pause to regard their options...

Another scenario...

Joey is pushed into the gymnasium by a classmate who wheels him over to a pile of equipment arranged in the corner of the gymnasium. Kiel places four cones, a few balls and beanbags in Joey's lap, moving him to the far section of the gymnasium. Marking out their space for their cooperative learning groups, Joey hands Kiel a cone at each corner, as she methodically stands the cones in square formation.

Two other members of the group join Kiel and Joey as they form a circle in the middle of their marked area. The students' face each other for the warm-up, laughing as their voices count out the stretches in unison. Joey's movements are slow by comparison to his peers, yet all seem oblivious to the goings-on outside their group.

Joey self-adapts his movements in the warm-up, leaning over in his chair as the others stretch out their lower body. He extends his hands halfway down the top part of his legs. Once the stretching is complete, a child in the group pushes Joey behind a red line in their square. Without any prompting from the teacher, Joey begins his slow journey forward, wheeling his chair to a point ten

feet away. He performs his cardio-workout while his classmates run for two-minutes, circling the outside of the cones.

Having completed the running, the students in Joey's group pick their cooperative learning folders off the floor, placing them on Joey's tray. The reader for the day describes the class activities that include a throwing and catching activity. As their designated coach, Joey reminds the others to throw, using the appropriate cues. His knowledge of the skills gives him special privilege. He enjoys the authority the role of coach affords him and his keen observational skills serve him well. Periodically, he refers to his lesson sheet to remind the students of the particulars for throwing.

Working their way through the tasks, the students come to the final activity--constructing a game using a few selected pieces of equipment. The children hunker down, brainstorming a list of possibilities. After several minutes of negotiations and compromises, the children come up with a modified game of baseball. Although his skills are limited, the children compensate by using Joey's lap as a target. When it is his turn to bat, the students will toss the ball to him and he will trap it with an oversize glove. He will then throw the ball and be pushed by a class member to the base.

The forty-five minute class has come to an end and the teacher gives the students a signal that it is time to clean up. The students respond by picking up the equipment in their areas. As equipment manager, Kiel gets help from Joey as she moves from corner to corner, dropping the cones into Joey's tray.

Although each of these classroom scenarios depict the act of including a student in physical education, they illustrate two fundamentally different approaches to teaching. In the first classroom, a command style of instruction

homogenizes the learning activities as students perform the tasks defined by the teacher. In the second class, students are asked to consider their own options, finding ways to accomplish learning tasks with all group members.

Integration and inclusion in physical education. According to Stainback and Stainback (1990), an inclusive school is “a place where everyone belongs, is accepted, supports, and is supported by his or her peers and other members of the school community in the course of having his or her educational needs met” (p. 3). As an educational philosophy, inclusion is a comprehensive, school-wide effort that encourages teachers to provide high outcomes for all students, to collaborate, to insure flexible groupings of students and developmentally appropriate curricula for all students (Villa and Thousand, 2000). Effective inclusion involves teacher collaboration, shared philosophies, and a commitment to equitable learning opportunities for all students (Thousand, Nevin & McNeil, 2000).

In physical education, there has been little, sustained investigation conducted within the inclusive classrooms. Much of the work has been intervention-based with grounding in positivist traditions. Teacher use of cooperative learning, peer support, and activity-based learning have been identified as successful strategies for achieving effective inclusive education (Houston-Wilson, Dunn, van der Mars, & McCubbin, 1997; Janney and Snell, 1996). For students with mild disabilities, inclusive physical education classrooms increased motor engagement, motor performance, and self-concept of children (Block and Vogler, 1994; Vogler, van der Mars, Cusimano, and Darst, 1992). For children with and without disabilities, Block and Zeman (1996) and Murata and Jansma (1997) found that inclusive classrooms utilizing peer and

teacher assistants increased motor engagement and sport skill performance for students with disabilities.

Attitudinal studies on students without disabilities have been mixed. Some studies have found that inclusion is perceived positively by students (Archie & Sherrill, 1989; Block, 1995; Block & Zeman, 1996; Obrusnikiva, Valkova & Block, 2003; and Vogler et al., 2000) while others have not (Ellery, Rauschenbach, & Stewart, 2000; Tripp, French & Sherrill, 1995). Attributes that affect attitudes were associated with gender (females more positive than males) and experiences with a family member or close friend (Block, 1995; Loovis & Loovis, 1997; Slininger et al., 2000).

Experiences in physical education for students with disabilities have been examined as a venue for student voice and meaningfulness of participation. Goodwin and Watkinson's (2000) study of physical education for students with disabilities described a range of experiences, from good days to bad days. During the good days, students felt a sense of belonging and participation. Bad days were marked by social isolation, questionable competence, and restricted participation. Hutzler, Fliess, Chacham and Auweele (2002) study of children with disabilities in inclusive settings found five main factors that either supported or limited participation. These included: assistive devices, physical activity, peers, important adults, and self. Although an equal distribution of supporting and limiting factors were found, the authors note that student failure was associated with feelings of empowerment. Real-life experiences in inclusive settings rather than segregated settings were recommended as the means for achieving self-determination and actualization skills.

The complexity of inclusive education extends beyond the educational placement of the student to include contextual and attitudinal differences (DePauw and Doll-Tipper, 2000). As noted in the scenarios, difference in student participation was foregrounded by the teacher's actions, or lack thereof, and the result for student participation with peers. Solmon and Lee (1991) found that experienced teachers were better able to adapt to the challenges of the inclusive classroom. Teachers were more prepared with contingency plans that responded to the needs and range of abilities.

Inclusive education advocates believe in school wide changes in curriculum, assessment, instruction, and support services that benefit all students (Villa & Thousand, 2000). Slavonic and Jordan (1998) organize the literature on effective inclusive teaching into four categories of teacher behavior. These include classroom management, organization and management of instructional time, lesson presentation, and management of student work (p. 224). Angler, Tarrant and Marriage (1992) cite the need for more information on "the quality of instruction and the nature of teacher-student interactions that affect students' academic achievement" (p. 69).

Whether a child is included or not in the classroom is not the central issue. At the heart of this analysis is what counts as meaningful participation for students with disabilities. In the first scenario, the teacher did little to engage the student, leaving the necessary curricular adaptations to the paraprofessional. The teacher provided uniform instruction with little flexibility for adaptation, locating Joey's differences outside the parameters of the teacher's responsibilities. The second classroom illustrated participation in all facets of the

classroom with cooperative learning utilized as an instructional bridge between students with and without disabilities.

As a theoretical approach to learning, social constructionism asks us to consider all forms of analysis as the products of communal relation (Gergen, 1994). Through an examination of teacher and student practices within the group relations of classroom, social constructionism recognizes the fundamental quality of relationships as essential to inclusive education.

Let us move to the world of action, and specifically to cases in which people seem to be wrestling successfully with problems of multiple and conflicting realities, and doing so without a strong commitment to either rationalist or realist premises. By examining these cases we may be able to locate conversational actions or conditions that have broad transformative potential (Gergen, McNamee & Barrett, 2001, p. 685).

Examining the research in inclusive physical education settings for students with severe disabilities provides insight into multiple perspectives. A 1998 study by LaMaster, Gall, Kinchin and Siedentop revealed four main themes from interviews and observations conducted on six elementary specialists: multiple teaching styles, differential outcomes, teacher frustration, and difference in inclusion practices. Teachers expressed a sense of guilt at their inability to teach effectively, citing inadequate preparation and lack of support. The range of abilities and skills stretched their capacity to be effective teachers. Recommendations from this study included the need for teacher support in the classroom and a focus on teacher education programs that fuse regular and adaptive philosophies.

While the honesty of the teachers' frustration and inability to effectively teach in the inclusive classroom lends credibility to the argument that support is a necessary condition of the inclusive classroom, the resonating discontent

expressed by teachers was derived from the specific institutional tendencies of modernism (Butler, 1998). The first is the overwhelming adherence to a uniform standard of performance and abilities required to meet established competencies. The second is the pedagogical practices that straightjacket learning. Constrained by the student's disability, teachers overlook possible alternative routes that could better serve the child within the context of the class. These tendencies restrict the discussion of difference, carrying with them implicit cultural biases that lead to exclusionary practices for students who do not conform to the standards of performance (Linert, Sherrill, & Myers, 2001).

In another study conducted by Vogler, Koruna, and Romance (2000), differences were bridged by the implementation of a people support model. Results indicated high levels of engagement, motor participation, and social acceptance for students with and without disabilities. The presence of an adaptive physical education teacher as a "people support model" was essential to effective inclusion.

Because success is dependent on outside support, disability is constructed in such a way that a certain kind of knowledge is necessary to teach students with developmental needs. The necessity of a people support model obviates the need for self-transcendence on the part of the teachers and students who do not need to revise their viewpoints or perspectives. As one physical education teacher noted on the need for an adapted physical education teacher in her class, "I couldn't do that class, I wouldn't want to do that class without somebody" (LaMaster et al., 1998, p. 171). Or another, who stated an emphatic dislike for the practice of inclusion:

...if you want to ask a question about how I feel about integration, with that kid coming to school, I hate it if he's there. And it's really not his fault. I mean I put a lot of blame on the teacher who comes with him because she doesn't do anything but sit there. (Liner, Sherrill & Meyers, 2003, p. 11)

In part, the teacher's inability magnified the student's disability. Differences were reinforced by an objectifying stance and fostered the development of the serviceable other (Sampson, 1993).

In this section, I described two teaching scenarios. The first identified the teacher's inability to develop positive, binding relations that joined teacher and student, and students to students. The teacher's behaviors elicited a sense of indifference in the group relations of the classroom, reflecting the long-standing assumption that student membership in the classroom is based on a norm of the capable and able body (Hall, 1996). The second scenario depicted an inclusive physical education where all students shared in class outcomes for learning. In this next section, I delve into the teacher practices that contribute to the inclusion of the student with disabilities at the level of conjoint relations.

Conjoint Relations

The intelligibility of **conjoint relations** is used to identify the competing teacher practices illustrated in the classroom scenarios. As I have done in previous sections, I propose two ways of depicting inclusion: the deficit and social views of the world. The deficit view maintains that the individual's disability is an entity that is self-possessed and clinically distinguished through normative, culturally maintained differences. The social view is by definition a historical view, predicated on the notion that learning and knowledge are evolutionary processes that link past actions to present activity as threads that

add to a larger fabric of a constructionist analysis. A social view encompasses a process of shared responsibility inherent in collaborative relationships and the processes that facilitate these relationships. For students in the classroom, this translates into an understanding of the student's disability paying attention to the types of relationships that ensue through the structured and unstructured activities of the classroom. In the next section, I identify discourses that have given rise to a few of the teacher practices in physical education.

Competing discourses of competition and cooperation in physical education. Deutsch (1949) cited three dominant goals of educational practice: individualistic, competitive, and cooperative. Direct instruction, as portrayed in the first scenario, is highly competitive in the sense that the students must assert themselves in mastery over the subject and the recognition of the teacher's attentions. Tousignant & Siedentop's (1983) use of the term *competent bystander* describes student behaviors aimed at blending into classroom activities that avoid the embarrassment associated with inadequate levels of skill and performance. Due to the competitive nature of team sports, many students are not able to compete at established levels of performance.

Jewett, Bain and Ennis (1995) have proposed five value orientations that influence the way teachers think about and develop programming in their curriculum. These include: disciplinary mastery, learning process, self-actualization, social responsibility and ecological integration. The value orientations are a useful means of clarifying the teacher's perspective on teaching and learning. However, Ennis (1996) is careful to point out that many factors influence the curricular decision making process. These include school and community resources and parent and teacher beliefs.

School physical education informs and is informed by the broader culture. Kirk's (1994) critical pedagogy provides continuity between past and present forms of physical activity. For him, it is a "useful element in theorizing sites of practices involving institutionalized forms of physical activity and specialized bodily practices" (p. 64) serving as a form of analysis between culture and the practices that constitute education.

Physical education, with its "discourse of performance" has traditionally relied on a curriculum of skill hierarchy and competition (Rovegno & Kirk, 1995, p. 451). Bain (1975) refers to the "hidden curriculum as unplanned and unrecognized values taught and learned through the process of schooling" (p. 93). Implicit values of the teachers are communicated to the students through instruction and learning. Among these, autonomy, individualism, and universalism are examples of the espoused norms through teacher behaviors and defined curriculum. Many teachers reinforce an ideology of the powerful and skilled body as culturally "representing and regulating the body" (Kirk, 1999, p. 65) through conformity in skill based, competitive content areas.

Given this, we might reasonably expect to see some degree of consistency and continuity between physical education as it is currently practiced in schools and trends of culture that reflect a spectrum of bodily conceptions and ways that inform physical culture (Kirk, 1994). However, the prevalence of curricular models and the multi-activity curriculum has resulted in a lack of clarity over the nature of physical education (Lee, 1996). The evidence suggests teachers articulate confusion over teaching goals and the means for achieving those goals (Metzler, 2000).

In order for teachers to move from the past traditions of a controlled and well-maintained body, alternative approaches to instruction and programming that enhance social and cognitive goals should be considered. Hellison's (1995) social responsibility model addresses social interactions and personal responsibility. Teaching for understanding emphasizes strategic development in conjunction with skill learning through small-sided instruction (Mitchell, Oslin & Griffin, 1995; Turner & Martinek, 1995).

Cooperative learning has also been given attention as a practice of student-centered learning (Dyson, 2002; Dyson, 2001; Smith, Markley & Goc Karp, 1997). Students with and without disabilities work together to accomplish goals grounded in the knowledge they bring to the class and the situated experience of their moment-to-moment interactions.

Cooperative learning. Social construction focuses on the continuous and interdependent relations between the child and his or her world through a comprehensive examination of the multiple factors in the classroom. Cooperative learning is an instructional model premised on the notion that human mental functioning has origins in social relationships (Johnson & Johnson, 1991).

At the heart of inclusionary philosophy is the assumption that students with a wide range of abilities and skills can contribute to classroom learning. For students with disabilities, cooperative learning provides students with the opportunity to be contributing members of the learning community (Johnson, Johnson & Scott, 1978; Putnam, 1998). Whether identified as "typical", "at-risk", or "gifted" children, cooperative learning encourages respect and learning (Marr, 1997; Sapon-Shevin, Ayres & Duncan, 2002). It has been shown to be effective in reducing prejudice among students by meeting the academic and social needs of

at-risk students (Sudzina, 1993). For students with disabilities, cooperative learning is effective in promoting equitable peer relationships through positive interdependence and shared responsibility for learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1989). The accomplishment of group goals and tasks necessitates that students work together for a common, communal interest. Cognitive and physical changes are seen as actions, rather than acquisitions, between the individual's efforts and social arrangements of the group.

To understand learning it is necessary to consider the child within his or her social world. Cooperative learning is one means for examining the mediating factors that engage the student within the day-to-day context of the classroom and the types of natural supports within the environment that promote equal relationships and minimize differences within a situated, bounded scenario. As an instructional strategy, cooperative learning sets up conditions in which the students engage with each other. A shared commitment to learning invests the student in ways that individually centered instructional formats do not provide. The rationale for cooperative learning is explained by Robert Slavin (1990), one of its principle researchers:

...cooperative structures create a situation in which the only way group members can attain their own personal goals if the group is successful. Therefore, to meet their personal goals, group members must help their group mates do what helps the group succeed, and perhaps more important, encourage their group mates to exert maximum effort (pp. 13-14).

Five essential components are necessary for cooperative learning to be effective in the classroom: positive interdependence, individual accountability, face-to-face interaction, cooperative skills, and group processing (Putnam, 1998). These elements combine to capitalize on students' skills by promoting a positive

climate of learning through active engagement of the students, encouraging a conceptual shift from the individual student capabilities to a cooperative construction of learning between students in their engaged groups.

Positive interdependence is contingent on the dependence of all group members and coordinating their actions. Individual accountability necessitates individual contributions to group goals accomplished through student or teacher evaluations. Face-to-face interactions occur through the dynamics of the small groupings among students, verbally and non-verbally. These negotiations between students encourage students to listen and work with classmates of varying abilities. Because of this, adaptations and individualized criteria for success are more easily incorporated into the group goals.

Cooperative skills are required for the productivity of the group. Students are taught the social skills through a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each student. The assigned roles within the cooperative groups enable students to hear more explanations and be exposed to a variety of strategies for problem-solving (Johnson & Johnson, 1989). Lastly, students evaluate how well their group has functioned through group processing and student reflections. Students benefit from the actions by engaging in conversations that address necessary changes for the groups' success (Putnam, 1998).

Cooperative learning is a feasible curricular model of instruction, particularly for students with disabilities who may be excluded from whole class activities. Within a well-developed program on instruction, cooperative learning nourishes a climate of support and understanding for the differences that separate students within the larger classroom context (Johnson et al., 1983;

Johnson & Johnson, 1984, 1989). Studies involving students with moderate to severe disabilities demonstrated significantly higher levels of positive verbal interactions and academic gains than those achieved in traditional methods of instruction (Eichinger, 1990; Putnam et al., 1989; Wilcox, Sbardellati & Nevin, 1987). Jones and Carter (1994) study of mixed ability pairs found that low achievers were better able to accomplish the tasks and did not impede the performance of higher achieving students. Putnam (1998) notes that higher achieving students are sensitive to the efforts of their peers and tend to value their peers in multi-dimensional and dynamic ways.

Although little research has been conducted with cooperative learning and students with disabilities in physical education settings, there is a growing body of literature focused on the typical classroom setting in physical education. Cooperative learning has been found to increase social interactions for elementary-aged students (Grineski, 1989). Because success is dependent on group success, cooperative learning has been found to improve motor skills and develop social skills in the accomplishment of group goals (Dyson, 2002; Dyson, 2001). Smith, Markley & Goc Karp (1997) found students' social interaction and participation increased for third grade students in physical education. Similarly, Dyson (2002; 2001) found students improved their social and group achievement skills while Barrett (2000) reported increased motor performances for lower skilled males and females.

Using a social constructionist framework for analysis, guiding principles of cooperative learning reflect multiple points of view through the verbal reasoning needed to complete learning goals and the physical communication of skill performance. In contrast, an individualized view of learning has as its main

principle, the student as the sole and primary agent for learning. A social constructionist view of learning invites new threads of argumentation; of understanding learning as extending beyond the acquisition of skill development that privileges physical skill over other forms of learning. While basic and fundamental skills are a necessary for performance in physical activity, they are far from the only important operations. Using this as the sole criterion for learning assumes a view of knowledge as inextricably bound to the individual.

The studies in this section were used to explain and reply to the intelligibility of conjoint relations in physical education classrooms, and to explore the interdependence of children within this environment. Because physical education has traditionally privileged didactic principles of instruction through competitive activity, cooperative learning can be viewed as an alternative instructional strategy that legitimizes the social nature of learning. For students with disabilities whose physical skills lack the proficiencies of their peers, cooperative learning encourages students to work together towards group goals and individual student contribution. Contingent upon the success of cooperative learning is the fact that teachers need an understanding of student differences and that some students require different outcomes for learning. Cooperative learning is helpful, but not sufficient, for effective inclusion.

The next step in the analysis is to look at those facets of the teacher that contribute to the construction of disability in ways that enhance and/or minimize learning opportunities. For this, I use the intelligibility of internal others as a way of gaining insight into the teacher's skills, thoughts, and actions that promote learning in the inclusive classroom.

Internal Others

In this section, I use McNamee & Gergen's (1999) intelligibility of the **internal others** to address the significance of the teacher in relation to her classroom. Internal others consist of the multiple and conflicting ideas within the individual that surround the construction of disability and teaching students with disabilities. Although I focus particularly on the teacher and the interactions between student and teacher, I want to remind the reader that the intelligibility of the internal others is also influenced by socio-cultural history of systemic and group relations. It is through an examination of this intelligibility that one is able to comprehend the multiple discourses and influences that comprise the internal others.

I use the literature on teacher attitudes to ground the pervasiveness of the deficit discourse in the construction of disability. The critical difference between the attitudinal literature and a social constructionist perspective is the notion of self as grounded in assumptions of the individual, autonomous mind (Sampson, 1993).

Individual attitudes of teachers are rooted in beliefs that maintain difference as the defining agent for exclusion (Tripp & Sherrill, 1999). For example, Triandis (1971) defines attitude as "an idea charged with emotions which predisposes a class of actions to a particular class of social situations" (p. 2). Allport (1935) defines attitudes as "not a behavior, but the precondition of it" (p. 805). Attitudes contribute to one's judgments about people, places, and things in the world. Davis & van Emmerik (1995) propose that attitudes be aligned with one's perceptual subjectivity and responsivity. Bouffard, Streat and Davis (1998) support this by stating "perception, along with cognition and affect, is appraising

the environment for affordance" (p. 256). These knowledge forms are acquired through a focus on the individual. If we assume that the person's attitudes are the result of reasoning abilities whose rationality can be measured against culturally defined standards, attitudinal predictors point to the source of these traits. What is critically neglected in the attitudinal literature is the connection between cultural constructions of disability and their historical grounding in the deficit discourse. Lacking the fundamental connection between the deficit discourse and the manner in which these discourses influence teacher practice, student identity is inextricably bound to the discourses that pervade educational ideologies. Hence, the attitudinal literature falls short of the relational embeddedness of the individual in his or her world. In effect, students with disabilities becomes the "serviceable other" (Sampson, 1993) to the teacher and their peers in the classroom. The student's differences are essentialized, self-possessed by the object, transcendent of time or the historical forces that have shaped their form. In executing these traditions of research, the deficit discourse is reified through the suppression of difference in the pursuit of a single, dominant framework in which to encase an understanding of the world and its people.

Undertaking an examination of the literature on teacher attitudes validates Sampson's conceptions of the serviceable other. What follows is a consideration of the literature on teacher perceptions of students with disabilities that reflects the social positioning of students in ways that may potentially affect their learning. Teachers had lower motor expectations for students with disabilities than their peers (Block, 1994b; Block, & Krebs, 1992; Butterfield, 1993; Craft, 1994; Karper and Martinek, 1982; Rizzo & Vispoel, 1992). Teachers had

higher social expectations for typical students than students with disabilities (Rizzo, 1984). Teachers tended to favor younger students due to the flexible nature of curriculum and fewer skill discrepancies (DePauw & Goc Karp, 1990; Minner & Knutson, 1982; Rizzo, 1984). Type and nature of disability were found to affect teachers' abilities to include students with disabilities. Hodge and Jansma (1997) Rizzo and Vispoel (1991) found that teachers held more favorable attitudes towards teaching students with learning disabilities than those with mild mental retardation or behavioral disorders. Teachers are more threatened by students with mental retardation than those with hearing impairments or behavior disorders (Soodak, Podell & Lehman, 1998). Teachers were less favorable towards teaching students with profound disabilities than those with severe disabilities (Block & Rizzo, 1995). Students with severe disabilities were viewed less favorably than students with mild disabilities (Aloia, Knutson, Minner, & Von Seggern, 1980; Rizzo, 1984; Rizzo and Vispoel, 1991; Rizzo & Wright, 1987; Tripp, 1988). These scenarios, although vastly general in their descriptions, depict discriminatory constructions of disability that locate disability as a fundamental obstacle to learning and achievement. Depending of the instructional methods, teacher action can translate into an unsupportive classroom environment faced by the student disadvantaged by both their disability and the bias' of their teachers.

Conversely, student differences position teachers in ways that limit multiple views. Inclusion is viewed more favorable in younger physical education teachers (Rizzo, 1985; Rizzo and Vispoel, 1991; Rizzo & Wright, 1988; Rizzo and Wright, 1988). Rizzo & Kirkendall (1995) found the more advanced preservice teachers held favorable attitudes towards teaching individuals with

behavioral disorders than their younger counterparts. Women were found to have significantly more favorable attitudes towards teaching students with disabilities than men (Aloia et al., 1980; Downs & Williams, 1994; Folsom-Meek, Nearing, Groteluschen & Krampf, 1999) while other studies found no significant differences between gender and attitude (DePauw & Goc-Karp, 1990; Hodge, Davis, Woodard, Sherrill, 2002; Rizzo & Vispoel, 1991). Again, Sampson's (1993) serviceable other is useful for understanding how teachers' concerns become displaced to others.

Lienert, Sherrill & Myers (2001) provided qualitative data on the cross-cultural concerns teachers face in relation to inclusion. Difference is displayed as a fear of the unknown, objectified to the student:

...when I first came here I was really scared of them. I thought, you know, some of the kids I'm not gonna know what to tell them to do. I'm not gonna know how to talk to them. And what about the rest of the class? It was hard in the beginning because some would [teachers] just send them to the gym and not give me any information. I was nervous as it was, plus I was worried about the other 55.

Other voices are conditioned by curricular and instructional practices:

And they are pretty much able to do the programs that I have for first and second graders, but as they become older and the activities become more complex, like a basketball game, they get lost and start reclusing themselves. They are not as active because they feel uncomfortable (p. 10).

And the dynamics of unknown behavioral patterns:

Teaching is much more difficult with these children. And to have three of them in a class is often, well even if you are two teachers, you reach the final limits (p. 10).

The consequences of attitudinal barriers contribute to a lack of collaborative practice between regular and special education domains. Little increase was

found in teachers' participation of Individual Education Plans (IEP); teachers continued to demonstrate a lack of knowledge of special education laws, and articulated a continued need for encouragement and support from administrators (Melograno & Loovis, 1991).

While the literature provides evidence of discriminatory practices that elucidate the pervasiveness of the deficit discourse, a social constructionist analysis focuses on the need to recognize difference as essential features of relationship. Social constructionism points to a distinctive view of the nature of the self, challenging traditional rationalism and the emphasis on personal autonomy (Butler, 2002). The self as subject draws attention to the innumerable influences within relations and the ways in which persons are constituted by the discourses that inform pedagogical practices. This form of inquiry involves acknowledging the multiple points of view that ground knowledge situationally (Kliewer & Biklen, 2001).

The literature on teacher experience and expertise provides insight into teacher competencies that contribute to the knowledge and skills necessary for inclusive physical education. Graber (1992) defines experience as "the accumulated work-related memories and dispositions that teachers acquire as they progress from pretraining throughout their careers" (p. 494). When comparing experienced teachers to novice teachers, experienced teachers possessed knowledge structures and instructional strategies that exceeded those of their less experienced counterparts (Houston & Giffney, 1985). Solmon & Lee (1991) found superior knowledge and more effective teaching skills for students with disabilities in experienced teachers. However, to say that an experienced

teacher is an expert teacher remains unclear due to a lack of theoretical framework on expertise (Dodds, 1994; Schempp & DeMarco, 1996).

It is the complex nature and dynamic composition of the classroom that makes defining expertise a difficult task. Barrett's (1998) essay on jazz improvisation provides a fitting analogy to teacher actions that integrate multiple classroom factors as "tacit rules that allow players to coordinate action whilst inviting autonomous expression, diversity, and extemporaneous responsiveness to another's gestures" (p. 606). Within the literature on expertise in physical education, several have alluded to the significance of improvisation to teaching. O'Sullivan and Doutsis (1994) use the term *virtuoso* to describe teacher's pedagogical knowledge with the social and moral agenda in education. Many have emphasized the requirement of content specificity to a teacher's level of expertise (Glaser & Chi, 1998; Seidentop & Eldar, 1989, Tan, 1997). Housner and French (1994) add to this: "Research indicates that the nature of expertise in teaching physical education is best characterized by its multidimensionality. Expertise in teaching is contingent on the acquisition and application of a complex amalgamation of knowledge and beliefs" (p. 241).

Dodd's (1994) suggests that performance is not the sole criteria for expertise. Instead, many skills are equally as important. Research on expertise rooted in psychology notes the development of more complex schemata as teachers' acquire experience (Graber, 2002). This knowledge form extends beyond rational domains of determined outcomes and disconnected behavior to an understanding of teaching as a fluid, integrated pattern of events in which teacher intuitiveness fuses with knowledge and belief. Experienced teaching,

then, involves openness to emergent possibilities that surfaces with time and an in-depth knowledge of pedagogical and content knowledge.

In this section, the intelligibility of the internal others was used to situate teachers and students among the systemic, group, and conjoint relations. I also articulate the range of skills that contribute to effective teaching practices in inclusive settings. The intelligibility of internal others unifies the other intelligibilities, demonstrating that the presumptions teachers' hold are borne of traditions located within cultural systems reflected in the deficit discourse.

The consideration of the internal others is a shift from the Cartesian perspective that privileges the individual and treats individual identity as a product of the singular, individual will. Its multi-dimensional qualities redefine the literature on teacher attitudes as an embodied knowledge, transmitted through the cultural tradition of the deficit discourse. Alternatively, the intelligibility of internal others reconstitutes the relations of the teacher to the student. It is simply not a case of the student with a disability, but rather the interaction of the student with disabilities to the teacher and his or her peers. Understanding teacher attitudes as a function of socio-cultural transmission, rather than an established truth of inclusive education, opens the potential for disability to be constructed and reconstructed through experience and time.

This analysis of the literature suggests that personal and contextual variables are constantly interacting to influence teacher attitudes and concerns. Juxtaposing empirical literature within a social constructionist framework delineates the need for alternative frameworks to understand the life experience of students and teachers in the inclusive classroom as one that evokes the potential for many discourses to emerge.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have used a postmodern approach to demonstrate the ways in which discourses of power have been used to marginalize persons with disabilities. This occurred through an analysis of the deficit discourse and modernist traditions that essentialize the individual in relation to their illnesses. As a universal remedy, medicine and the doctrines of science in this context, emerge as the champions of treatment for individual pathologies.

Through the deconstruction of the narratives of science, I confronted the boundaries of social roles and the validity of the frameworks they presupposed in their restrictive attitudes and practices. As an alternative argument to modernism and the deficit discourse, postmodernism encourages a pluralistic perspective of multiply layered relationships against the unilateral ideology of dominant traditions. A social constructionist analysis of disability in the inclusive physical education setting grounds the four intelligibilities of systemic, group relations, conjoint relations, and the internal selves and can help us understand how teachers construct disability and engage in practices that reflect those constructions. Because social constructionists believe in the constructed nature of knowledge through the daily interactions between people; social interactions, language, and movement are of great interest in the physical education setting. In the quest to understand the inclusionary classroom, the goings-on between teachers and students in their everyday lives are seen as practices that inform versions of knowledge traditionally acknowledged as the "truth." The challenge in this chapter has been negotiating the mixture of "truths" to illustrate the kinds

of actions that support an appreciation of the knowledges needed for fluency in disability.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODS

This study is driven by my desire to understand the nature of relationships as defined in the theory of social construction and how these relationships serve to facilitate effective inclusive education. Through case study methods, I investigated the systemic relations of the school, the group practices of the classroom, and the relationship of teacher practice to student learning. Ultimately, my attention was drawn toward the teaching relationships, and the multiple ways in which teaching and learning relationships take place.

This research employed a qualitative case study design. Yin (1994) defines case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p. 13). Case study is utilized to understand phenomenon, or to gain knowledge used to develop a theoretical framework (Merriam, 1998). It is a bounded, single system based on the desire to establish a sociological study that identifies social structures, interactions, and identity (Hamel, Dufour & Fortin, 1993; Stake, 1995). The following research question guided this study:

What are the multiple ways in which relationships among teachers, students and administrators facilitate an effective inclusive physical education classroom?

Entrée

As Cazden (1988) states, "Access as well as research question will influence the selection of classrooms" (p. 455). The selection of this classroom was carefully planned. In a preliminary interview with the building principal, the special education director, and the physical education teacher regarding the research, there was a mutual concern for effective inclusion and the classroom relations that facilitate inclusion. All of those interviewed were supportive of the research.

As this study involved individuals with disabilities, special care was taken to explain how the project would be conducted and permission was requested to review Individual Education Plans (IEP) from the special education director. Confidentiality and anonymity were assured for both teachers and students and it was discussed that pseudonyms would be given to all involved parties.

Permission was sought and granted from the Human Subjects Review Committee at the University of New Hampshire. Consent forms were obtained from the students' parents and any other adults in the school community involved with this research. For any students whose parent's refused permission, special care was taken to exclude them from the interviews and field note recordings. Copies of transcripts were offered to all teachers and administrators who participated in the study.

Case Selection- Participants and Setting

"Understanding the critical phenomena may depend on choosing the case well" (Stake, 1994, p. 243). Careful selection was paid to the selection of the physical education teacher, Sue (pseudonym) and her students as the primary participants for this study. Sue was an experienced physical education teacher with over twelve years of classroom teaching. Well respected by her peers and

administrator, she served as the building representative on the teacher's negotiation team. She was responsible for developing the school-wide elementary physical education curriculum and regularly consulted with other teachers throughout the state.

Patton (1990) describes purposeful sampling as the selection of "information rich cases whose study will illuminate questions under study" (p. 169). Sue and her classroom exemplified the rich case described by Patton. She and I have had a professional relationship for several years. Our collaborations began with our interest in students with disabilities and has continued with presentations at conferences. Sue has, over the years, demonstrated a strong knowledge of student disabilities and a willingness to include all students. Sue has presented at local, state and national conferences on inclusion. A fourteen-year veteran, she received her undergraduate teaching degree in physical education and completed a Master's degree in Education. She has been recognized by her administration, peers, and parents in the school as an excellent teacher who utilizes cooperative learning and has served as a cooperating teacher for students from a nearby university.

Sue attends to the educational needs of all her students, regardless of their skills or abilities. For example, she developed a one-page biographical inclusion profile for her students with disabilities in order to connect their learning goals to her overall classroom goals (Appendix 1). Unlike many other classrooms where students are placed in physical education settings for social purposes, Sue's students with disabilities are in the class to learn the skills to be a physically educated person (NASPE, 1982). For Sue and her students, learning in

the gymnasium embraces social, physical, and cognitive goals through the processes of teaching and learning (Graham, 2000).

As the physical education teacher for grades K-4, Sue instructed her students twice a week for forty-five minutes. She has developed units of instruction for her classes in each of the major skill areas of the elementary physical education curriculum (Graham, 2000). She was responsible for developing the physical education curriculum for her school district where she has worked for the past twelve years.

The Setting

The research for this study was conducted from January to June of 2002. Atlantic School (a pseudonym) in southern New Hampshire, is a K-8 fully inclusive school. The school contains kindergarten through eighth grades with one building principal. Total number of students enrolled is four hundred and eighty. Typically, there are three classrooms per grade with no more than eighteen children in each class. Student demographics include Caucasian, African-American, and Korean.

The school was selected as a research site because of the high priority placed on inclusive practices for its students with disabilities. Atlantic's school-wide mission statement maintains, "the purpose of the school is to nurture the intellectual, social, emotional and physical development of all students in a child-centered environment" (document). Its mission statement embraces a student-centered, individualized approach to learning. The administration, including both the building principal and the special education director, were very supportive of the concept of inclusion as an educational method and a placement practice. As part of a re-evaluation process, Atlantic School adopted an

outcomes-based teaching model consistent with inclusive practices (Coots et al., 1995; Falvey, Gage & Eshilian, 1995; Lipsky & Gartner, 1997; Thousand, Nevin & McNeil, 2000).

Students at Atlantic School have physical education two times a week for 45 minutes. According to Sue, the physical education teacher (personal statement, May 2001) most classes of students she teaches include a student with an identified disability who has an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). Her students have a range of mild to significant disabilities, classified in the physical, emotional, and cognitive categories. Two inclusive third grade physical education classrooms were selected for the case study, each containing one child identified with significant disabilities.

The Students

The first of the two classes included Jack, a child with cerebral palsy and a visual impairment. Cognitively very bright with above average verbal skills, Jack required the assistance of a fulltime, one-to-one aide due to his motor difficulties. He was unable to walk, transfer, and sit independently without support, or perform coordinated fine motor movements without maximal adult assistance. He was extremely distracted by both auditory and visual stimulation and startled easily with loud or unexpected noises. He processed information slowly and required "think-time." Because it is easy for adults to over assist him and easy for Jack to depend on adults, attention was focused on increasing Jack's functional independence and his self-advocacy skills.

The second class included a child named Carter. Carter was a very friendly boy who took pride in being a part of the classroom community. He was motivated by his peers and learned by modeling them. He demonstrated an

increase in his social awareness of others by maintaining eye contact, initiating conversation, sustaining conversations and preplanning arrangement with others. Carter's most recent speech and language reevaluation indicated significant language based challenges affecting all academic areas. He required prompting and/or modeling to express his own ideas. Adults working with Carter needed to keep their expressive language controlled for syntax, using simple sentences to communicate. He perseverated on the same question until redirected and quickly lost interest in an activity when it was beyond his ability to sustain attention. Carter also required the assistance of a full-time paraprofessional.

Although both students were identified as having severe disabilities, each student had very different learning needs. Jack's IEP goals included increased self-advocacy skills, interaction with his peers, and the development of functional independence. Carter's goals were academically focused. These included following multiple step directions, increasing expressive language and communication skills.

Administrators and Teachers

At the administrative level, Paul and Kate held the positions of principal and the director of special education respectively. They were the major stakeholders in the development of school policy towards students with disabilities. Their decisions influenced student placement and educational practices.

Although Paul and Kate shaped policy, the effectiveness of their actions were fundamentally dependent on the willingness of the teachers to "buy into" the collaborative model of instruction. Carter and Jack's classroom teachers were

interviewed to determine their perceptions of disability and their teaching practices. The students' paraprofessionals, Cory and Margaret, were interviewed because of their central influence on the lives of Jack and Carter.

Data Collection

Multiple data sources were collected for use in the research. As Merriam (1998) states, "understanding the case in its totality, as well as the intensive, holistic description and analysis characteristic of a case study, mandates both breadth and depth of data collection" (p. 134). The extensive amount of time spent in Sue's classroom enabled me to "find out what goes on in the heads of individuals" and to relate those thoughts to classroom activity (Shotter, 1993, p.20).

Data collection is a recursive activity in which one form of study leads to alternate and complementary sources of information (Merriam, 1998). The primary data sources for this study included field notes, interviews, and document analysis. These sources provided rich information that enabled the researcher to identify the predominant features of the complex relationships that typify this particular physical education setting (Stake, 1994). Each technique will be discussed for its feasibility in answering the research question. Data for this study were gathered through the following methods:

1. Observation
2. Interviews
 - a. Structured interviews
 - b. Informal interviews
 - c. Focus group interviews with students
3. Document analysis

Observations

I explored social constructionism through my direct involvement in the classroom as both researcher and participant. Merriam (1998) defines this as “observer-participant” in which “the researcher’s observer activities are known to the group; participation in the group is definitely secondary to the role of information gatherer” (p. 101). As a researcher, I was an observer of the classroom activities that comprised the day-to-day events of the classroom. The extensive time in the classroom involved a continuous reflection on the implications of these interactions and their specificity to the four forms of relatedness in the theory of social construction.

As a participant, I collaborated with Sue analyzing her teaching activities. As co-constructors, we shared our descriptive modes of the classroom activity. These on-going dialogues provided rich data (Anderson, 1977; Gergen, 2000).

Field notes. Field notes were critical for establishing a connection between inclusive physical education and social constructionism in describing the nature of group relations (McNamee and Gergen, 1999). The field notes identified the languages of group interaction that move the focus from the individual student to the relational sphere of the classroom. The field notes described teacher and student interactions as well as student to student interactions indicative of group relations. The field notes allowed me to make the connection between teacher thought and practice in the classroom. Most importantly, the field notes provided a personal log that kept me focused on the research question, visualizing the research development and in what direction the research should continue (Gergen, 2000; Bogdan and Biklen, 1992).

A structured method of note taking was used. Schatzman & Strauss (1973) recommend three distinct ways of organizing notes. Observational notes (ON) refer to those notes derived from watching and listening. Theoretical notes (TN) are those notes bearing on the theoretical model of social constructionism. Methodological notes (MN) are those reflective statements that serve as reminders or critiques of one's own tactics.

Observational notes comprised the majority of note taking while in the classroom. These were representations of actual occurrences with as little interpretation as possible. Detailed observational notes included a description of the students and the setting, accounts of events, reconstruction of dialogue, and a description of the activities (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984). Theoretical notes were written as connections were made between the group relations of social construction and classroom activity. These were written while observing and during the follow-up transcriptions. Methodological notes occurred in the follow-up reflections. Field notes were transcribed as soon as possible after the observations in order to gain an accurate representation of classroom events. Every attempt was made to obtain "rich field notes" that were used to make analytical sense of the data. The field notes supported data gathered through the interview process and documents (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992).

As the classroom was my primary context for gaining insight into inclusive practices, presence and attention to detail were fundamental requirements for field note recordings. I sought to capture words, emotions and actions that characterized student behavior as I moved between the students in the gymnasium. I listened to conversations between students and teachers to obtain a picture of occurring events. Periodic scanning among the groups

ensured adequate representation of classroom interactions and activities. Some of my time was spent sitting, other times I would roam freely about the classroom. I recorded my observations of students organizing themselves into groups, getting equipment, and working through the task sheets that outlined the daily group goals. I was also seeking data regarding the relationship between teacher instruction and student learning.

Students with disabilities were one of many focal points. In the classroom, these children engaged with students and adults. I described the children and their circumstance; I noted intra- and inter-child relations as well as the support required of their paraprofessionals. The presence of the physical therapist in the classroom was also described. Although students with disabilities were central to my work, I made every effort to include all of the students. My eyes roamed the classroom, shifting from group to group while attending to the “tone” of the classroom. I moved between teacher and student to record the extent and nature of these interactions.

Interviewing

Interviews enabled me to understand how teachers, administrators, and other adults in the classroom thought about the concept of disability and how it relates to the classroom. The interview process provided a foray into their lives and a record of discussions (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992).

The interview process was the primary means for exposing multiple intelligibilities of social constructionism. Through this process, I unearthed the teachers’ experiences, thoughts, and emotions, from a relational perspective. A protocol (Appendix 2) based on York-Barr and Schultz’ (1996) inclusion study was adapted for use in the initial interview process. This consisted of semi-

structured questions eliciting self-reports on individuals' beliefs and practices and the relation of these beliefs to inclusive education. There were slight variations with the questions for the administrators and classroom teachers based on the language presented in the questions. For instance, administrators were not asked questions regarding classroom activity. Interviews were conducted and audiotaped with the physical education teacher, the building principal, the special education director, the classroom teachers, the paraprofessionals, and the physical therapist in a private setting.

Informal interviews. The collaborative nature of this project made dialogue an on-going activity between the researcher and the teacher. Daily conversations, feedback, and classroom activity were an integral part of the data collection. Conversations with all staff and administration working with the students were recorded in the field notes and journal entries.

As a method of investigation, Sue and I constructed a reality predicated on the development of a dialectical process between researcher and participant. Our knowledge and understanding of the world was a genuine science of action as we reinforced our mutual interdependence through our personal experience and our knowledge of the social world (Reason, 1994). We co-constructed the curriculum in such a way that our collaborative work changed not only our life experience, but those of the students as we regarded the activity that crossed our experiences within our frame of reference.

The informal interviews occurred prior to and at the end of the day's events to establish and clarify learning goals for the students. They were an ongoing part of the day's activities and were utilized for their informative content. During these interviews, Sue and I reviewed the day's events and the

possible outcomes of her learning goals. We strategized alternative scenarios in the event that the students' skills and abilities would not meet our expectations.

Informal interviews also took the form of "on the spot" check-ins and adaptations. These were the constitutive events of interaction that stressed how social realities were constructed between Sue and I as well as the members of the classroom. These informal interviews produced a situated understanding, grounded in specific moments of the classroom influenced by our personal histories and levels of experience. Their degree of influence in shaping student action varied from day-to-day and granted a potential for social change. The informal interviews were taken as acts of applied research (Patton, 1990).

On occasion, my status as a participant superceded that of observer as I intervened in the classroom activity. If necessary, I grabbed an end to a jumprope or offered a suggestion to a group embroiled in difficulty. Sue and I were secure in each other's attentions directed at engaging students in their learning. These observational reactions were the collective generation of the social processes of meaning-making.

Focus group interviewing. Focus groups are a special form of group interview that encourage a discussion among participants (Morgan, 1988). The peer group format reduces the tendency to defer to an authoritative figure (Lederman, 1990). It also provides "rich information beyond what can be obtained by merely observing their behavior" (Peterson & Swing, 1982, p. 489).

Focus groups allow researchers to interact with respondents to gain clarification through the probing of responses and follow up questions (Stewart & Shamdasami, 1990). They were useful for bringing the researcher into the lives and thoughts of participants allowing the researcher to "get inside" the

children's heads in soliciting student perspective on the socially constructed nature of the classroom (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992; Shotter, 1993, p. 20). Focus group interviews contributed to an understanding of the intelligibilities of conjoint relations and provided a platform for students to express their thoughts and feelings.

Focus group interviews occurred at the close of each class with three to four students. After each class, a new group rotated through the interviews based on their cooperative learning groups. Each group was interviewed every second or third week. Each focus group session included questions regarding the class, what they liked or did not like, the goals of the class, and how the students interacted with each other. Interviews lasted no more than ten minutes. When necessary, arrangements were made with the classroom teacher for students to complete the interviews. Students with disabilities were interviewed according to their membership in the cooperative learning groups.

Documents. Teacher lesson plans, daily task sheets, students' Individualized Educational Plans (IEP), student assessments, and journals were analyzed.

The lesson plans indicated outcomes and learning goals for students. They provided necessary evidence of the connections between teacher thought and classroom activity. Individualized Educational Plans (IEP) were used to identify the alignment of long and short-term goals to classroom practice. The IEP's were also reviewed as a source of data regarding evaluation methods, adaptations, and learning goals for the students with disabilities in the classes.

Over the course of the semester, Sue taught five different physical education units using cooperative learning. Each unit had its specific learning

goals and outcomes. Sue's unit plans were collected to evaluate the alignment of her unit plans to the daily lessons. Daily lesson plans in the form of task sheets were collected to evaluate the groups' ability to work through the task sheets. Sue administered several types of assessments at the end of each unit that were collected to evaluate the learning and teaching process. Some were part of the daily task sheets and others were administered in the form of a skill check sheet or a short answer quiz.

Journals. Sue and I maintained journals throughout the duration of the study by Sue and myself and were a critical part of the study. We applied Gergen's (2000) *reflexivity* as an "attempt to place one's premises into question, to suspend the obvious, to listen to an alternative framing of reality, and to grapple with the comparative outcomes of multiple standpoints" (p. 50). Our journals allowed us to express our concerns, insights, and thoughts on relationally orienting practices and how the framework influenced and shaped our thinking. For each of us, the journals were useful in eliciting the "deeper meanings" of classroom activities. It enabled us to express a piece of our life work as we grappled with the challenges witnessed in the classroom. Sue and I shared our journals on a regular basis. Lastly, the journal served as a recording device to keep track of the study and the data collected (Erickson, 1996).

Data Analysis

Data analysis began with the first observation and continued throughout the duration of the study. Boyzaitis's (1998) five-step process was utilized in the data analysis through the constant comparative method of coding the multiple data sources in developing the emerging theory (Merriam, 1998; Strauss &

Corbin, 1990). This process involved the continuous interplay of data with theory and specified the conditions of research.

The cyclical movement of data analysis also informed the on-going research direction. Emerging themes guided the direction of data collection and were instrumental in the evaluation of the participants and the setting. As themes emerged, they were shared with the primary subject and committee members leading to subsequent data collection practices (Erickson, 1996).

Field Notes

Initial cleaning occurred soon after each set of notes was recorded and served several purposes. The first was a preliminary review of the data and a return to the initial research questions to make sure essential information was being identified. Descriptions were completed through the cleaning process; gaps were filled in giving life and breadth to the text through recall. Individual quotations noted during the observations were supported with contextual information. Because notes were reviewed soon after they were collected, I had the freedom to capture unanticipated classroom incidents. This enabled me to shift my attention from the general classroom occurrences to the specified activity. These unexpected incidents provided dynamic engagements, threading the typical, daily events with the unanticipated, surprising outcomes. Close attention to these actions revealed reasons for patterns that emerged in the classroom.

Cleaning also served organizational purposes of formatting, document labeling and file sorting. Foremost, the process of cleaning afforded opportunities to note reflections on the data and the relationship of data to the theoretical framework.

Journals

My thoughts grew out of experience and the theoretical framework while Sue's writings had their origins in experience. Within the journals, we extended our relationship between researcher and participants. Her words were not merely taken as exerts but as another source of data regarding her but relationships with her students and the researcher. Unlike the interviews that were collaboratively constructed, with interplay between persons and context, the journals articulated Sue's interior life. The journals provided a freedom that encouraged a process of self-discovery. It demystified the research process while nurturing our voices as the written word allowed thoughts to materialize.

As our journals were shared on a periodic basis, I was able to glean pieces of Sue's ideological agenda demonstrated in her teaching. While I found Sue's journal to contain powerful statements about who she was and why she was teaching, Sue was less apt to respond to my thoughts. Perhaps it was her lack of comfort probing the psyche. For each of us, journal entries were analyzed and reflected upon and recurrent themes and pertinent quotes were entered into the data bank to be used in the coding categories.

Documents

The documents were reviewed concurrently with the transcribed interviews during the coding process and were used to develop the themes emanating from the coding categories.

Interviews

Every attempt was made to transcribe interviews soon after they were conducted. Semi-structured interviews were transcribed verbatim and organized

by name and date. In the next section, I describe the process of filtering the data as I continued to build on my results.

Once all the data had been collected, transcribed and labeled, the culling phase involved repeatedly sifting through the data. Strauss and Corbin (1998) describe this as both a focused and specific process forcing the researcher to consider the plausibility of the data.

The first step involved paraphrasing field notes, interviews and journals. This served as a distilling process, condensing each document into two to three paragraphs. The next phase in the condensing process was the development of outlines for each of the paraphrased notes. Beyond issues of manageability, this enabled me to gain an even deeper understanding of the data. Paraphrased notes were revisited in conjunction with the original texts to make sure that key information was being identified in the outlines.

It was during this phase that reflection played an important role in data analysis. Questions such as what, who, how, when and where, facilitated the development the coding categories. Condensing and analysis occurred simultaneously through the constant comparative method (Merriam, 1998).

The Act of Coding

The categories provided an organizational structure for the data. Field notes, interviews, journals and documents were re-examined in full text to determine how and where they fit in the categories. This was an extensive and time-consuming task. The result was a data bank that enabled the easy retrieval of information.

There were three primary coding operations. The first form of coding involved a line-by-line and phrase-by-phrase designation of data to categories.

At this level, descriptive data fit easily under the appropriate categories. For example, in *There are multiple views of disability*, adult responses to the interview question regarding perception of disability were easily identified and coded.

The second, less concrete, coding operation involved the identification of data that supported the phenomena without directly addressing the category. Strauss & Corbin (1998) describe this coding as, “the process of relating categories to sub-categories along lines of their properties and dimensions” (p. 124). This occurred under the category *Multiple views of disability*, in which the building principal and special education director both described legislation and the lack of funding as paramount issues for disability. While these were not direct statements of their views of disability, they represented a dimension of disability. The third level of coding represented actions and activities displayed by students and teachers associated with perceptions of disability. Field notes (April 7, 2002) provided a clear example of this level of operation. Due to the difficulty of negotiating a wheelchair on a grassy surface, Jack, one of the students with disabilities, was doing a related but separate activity on the hardtop while his classmates participated on the grass. In the follow-up interview, one student expressed amazement at how it was cool for Jack to be doing what he did. Within the same group, another child declared sadness for Jack and his inability to participate with his classmates. These views were included under *multiple views of disability* because they represented how students felt about their classmate as a person and less specifically about disability in and of itself.

Coding categories. In the end, six distinctive coding categories emerged from data condensing and analysis. The following list is a result of the six categories:

1. There are multiple views of disability.
2. There are many forms of student learning,
3. Teacher's belief in the development of social skills for students with and without disabilities.
4. Students and teachers use many accommodations and make adaptations.
5. Students respond in different ways to accommodations.
6. Students with and without disabilities encounter barriers to their learning.

The coding categories hinged on the initial guiding questions presented in Chapter One. The content of these questions included views of disability, socially constructed teacher practices, and student learning. In describing the significance of these categories, one must realize their relative value. For example, *Multiple views of disability* is an extensive category encompassing the social phenomena exclusive of, and within the context of the school. The second coding category, *There are many forms of student leaning* was a broad and extensive category that recognized student learning from multiple perspective. Because the acquisition of motor skill was not the sole indicator of learning, student differences and abilities generated data on student interactions, group work, and problem-solving skills.

As a physical education teacher, Sue broke beyond the bounds of traditionalism with her classroom innovations, and her fundamental belief that students should be responsible for their own learning. Number three, *Teacher's belief in the development of social skills for students with and without disabilities*

emerged as a result of student group work. Number four, *Students' and teacher's use many accommodations and make adaptations* was more specific. Data for this category was collected from field notes and interviews and pertained primarily to the classroom environment. Similarly, category number five, *Students respond in different ways to accommodations* was specific to the environs of the classroom. While there was variance in student learning, there was also a multitude of observed difficulties. These difficulties were evidenced in coding category number six, *Students with and without disabilities encounter barriers to their learning*.

Trustworthiness

Lincoln & Guba (1985) describe three activities that lend credibility to the research process. These include prolonged engagement, persistent observation, and triangulation. Prolonged engagement is the investment of "sufficient time to achieve certain purposes" (p. 301). This study lasted six months, from January to June of 2002. During that time I visited the school two times per week, observing the two physical education classes whose enrollment included students with severe disabilities.

The second, persistent observation, "identifies those characteristics and elements in the situation that are most relevant to the problem or issue being pursued" (p. 304). I moved within the classes, trying to gather details that highlighted social engagements. I addressed any uncertainties with informal interviews to teachers, therapists and paraprofessionals.

Triangulation is the third mode suggested by Guba and Lincoln (1985) for improving credibility. Multiple data sources were adopted for examination. The constant comparative method of analysis grounded theory, integrated categories and properties while writing theory. In addition, peer debriefing serve to make

explicit those “aspects of the inquiry that might otherwise remain only implicit within the inquirer’s mind” (p. 308). For this, I solicited the assistance of three selected colleagues within the field of education, physical education, and social construction to evaluate the findings.

Member checks were solicited primarily from Sue. This was an important procedure for verifying the findings and ensuring confirmability (Schwandt, 1997). Transcripts of interviews were shared, as were the development of the themes and sub-themes of social construction. These were discussed at length in follow-up conversations that elicited further articulations and developments of noted points. From these conversations, further checking was explored as I reviewed the material that highlighted Sue’s perspective. While certain sections of the text may have secured a dominant position in the findings, Sue’s “reading” of the text was one more opportunity to gather data about the integrity of my findings. It was a dialogical activity of the researcher working “with” the respondent rather than a researcher working “on” the respondent.

Schwandt considers member checks an ethical act of appreciation and recognition for those who have given time. However, I regarded these opportunities with more self-interest. Sue’s reflections provided another source of data generation and insight. Her reviews promoted a reflexivity that allowed me to adhere to my theoretical commitment of a social constructionist framework. Thus, the practice of member check was an important procedure for establishing validity.

Disconfirming Evidence

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), reality is “a multiple set of mental constructions...made by humans are on their minds, and they are, in the main,

accessible to the humans who make them” (p. 295). While social constructionism challenges assumptions that underlie established truths, Gergen (2000) reminds the reader of the relative nature of constructed knowledge and truths of research.

The question, then, is which accounts will be more accurate? (Gergen, 1994). For the constructionist, this is a moot point. Deconstructed events can't be measured and evaluated against each other, as participants in these events “develop their own practices, rituals, or patterns of relations” (p. 74). Therefore, all recordings are generative towards the establishment of a relational theory as accounts (Shotter and Gergen, 1994).

Conclusion

Case study methodology was utilized in this research. Qualitative methods were applied to provide a detailed account and interpretation of the teacher, her classroom, and her school. Specific attention was given to the two classrooms that contained students with the most severe disabilities.

Data analysis is making sense of the data in a systematic and coherent manner. The data were interpreted inductively and deductively using the constant comparative method with the conceptual framework of social construction in the gradual process of developing the emerging theory (Merriam, 1998; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an account of the socially constructed nature of disability in the school and in the physical education classroom. I accomplished this by organizing the data into McNamee & Gergen's (1999) relational intelligibilities, which provided a vehicle for clustering accounts of disability and the influence teachers, and administrators bring to bear upon the cohesiveness of a school devoted to inclusionary practices.

At the level of systemic relations, I distinguish between the deficit discourse and a social constructionist analysis of disability. Perceptions are identified accordingly, as I move between systemic and group relations, drawing a connection between the influence of the school structure and classroom practice. From there, I delve deeper, describing the teaching and learning relationships that exist in the inclusive classroom. Through the intelligibility of conjoint relations, student learning is portrayed in *scenarios* as the collective work produced by group members. Lastly, within the intelligibility of the internal others, I describe Sue's construction of disability and how it is operationalized in the classroom.

In the following section, I examine the meaning of systemic relations through interviews with the principal and the director of special education. The weightiness of the intelligibility is underscored by shared cultural constructions of disability and the difficulty locating the origins of these constructions.

Systemic relations transcends the bounds of present, momentary actions, to derivations that endured formerly. I use the Principal and the Director of Special Education in this research because they were instrumental to the functioning of the school. Their voices resonated throughout, encompassing a broadened inquiry of practices refined in the relations that existed within the smaller scales of the classroom.

Systemic Relations: The Discourses of Difference

The Principal

Paul was a thirty-year veteran of education. His early years were spent in the classroom, and over time, Paul had worked his way to the position of principal. He articulated constructions of disability informed by legal mandates and the influence of policy on the lives of students with disabilities. Having witnessed the difficult transition students with disabilities experienced as they relocated from segregated settings to the public school sector, Paul emoted a sensitivity towards students with disabilities. He voiced strong opinions on the early practices of administrators in their initial attempts at assimilation:

In the very beginning when the law first came to New Hampshire, everything was out of district. If you had a child who had any kind of disability that was recognized under the federal law, those kids were sent out of your schools. They were sent to Easter Seals, they were sent to a Moore Center...we never really saw those children. So I didn't think they were in my school, but I didn't know where they were. But they were out there somewhere. (Paul)

Labeled and identified "handicapped," students with disabilities were a ghost population. Years of institutionalization kept them out of the mainstream of society. Uncertainty shrouded their identity, their needs, and most

noteworthy, how they were educated in the schools. They were an unknown entity, marked by the differences that made them outcasts in the schools.

Paul was a part of this transition time, one in which educators had to conceptualize placement and education for students with whom they had little knowledge or familiarity. This was a new phenomena that left administrators scrambling for short-term solutions.

We were going to meetings about these kids without ever really knowing about them. Which is pretty scary. It is terrible that we were making decisions about children that we really didn't even know about. And so, it took a couple of years for us to understand it wasn't working for these kids. We needed to learn more and make sure we understood what we needed to do as a school. (Paul)

Economic constraints fueled the on-going debate between student placement and education.

... I saw schools bringing kids back that were so inappropriate and teachers had no idea. And the kids would sit in the back of the room. That was the wrong environment for them. And just to save the money. (Paul)

As an underfunded mandate, schools were left to their own devices to interpret the law, in particular the condition of the least restrictive environment (LRE).

Because in the beginning when the law passed, you had nothing in your building. In the past, somebody else was paying for them. When the law passed that the schools were going to start paying for them, we were involved in that education process. (Paul)

In the battle over resources, administrators attempted to find ways to pay for the additional educational expenses. While a legal process defined the parameters of education, there was little follow through to insure success for the students.

And then again, I was just a young, brand new principal. I had taught for six years and was new to the field. And I remember hearing how the law said that the federal government was going to pay for the whole thing. That was the other thing. It was a federal law; federal money was going to be coming to the districts. But the federal money never really came. And that was the other part. The promise was that the government was going

to pay for that education. And even today, they are not fully funding it. Not even close to fully funding the law. (Paul)

Paul expressed frustration over the underfunded, added responsibility. His discourse of disability was constructed by the imposed mandate that placed an economic burden on schools through unfulfilled promises. Sampson's (1993) analysis of the serviceable other mirrors Paul's concerns and provides an understanding of self in relation to others and the power differentials that separate persons. As a marginalized group, students with disabilities were defined by their differences and these differences kept them on the margins of what was considered normal. Sampson describes two characteristics that emerge during the encounter with difference. The first is the tendency to avoid as articulated by Paul and evidenced in the way students were brought back and placed "in the back of the room" (Paul). Their arrival in the schools was marked with confusion and commotion over where they should be placed and how they should be educated. Defined as "special," they were pressed to the perimeter of the classroom and educational priorities. The second of Sampson's analysis involves a simplification of the other. The other in this case, referred to the students with disabilities, who, prior to the PL94-142, were an unknown entity. Defined primarily through the law, they were measured and understood by their disability. Placed in the back of the classroom with minimal academic support from the school, the students faced the double bind of being viewed as a nuisance and a burden. Sampson (1993) provides insight:

The ongoing battles between the dominant forces in society (i.e. primarily white, primarily male, primarily upper and upper middle class) and its others, whether these are people of color, women, persons of differing sexual orientation or whatever, suggest that we have not yet accepted otherness as merely a different way of life. The demand to control how the

other will be constructed remains too firmly implanted. Dominant groups are not yet prepared to see themselves as simply the other (p. 153).

Sampson's account reflects the objectification of difference for students with disabilities. The result was a laissez-faire model of limited participation as administrators attempted to fill the gaps between legal mandate and financial burden.

Most schools got kids back because of financial reasons. And there was no doubt that kids got put back in inappropriate places, hiring maybe an aide to watch these kids and that whole thing is financially driven (Paul).

As a principal, Paul managed the schisms between cost, impact, and education. Special education taxed budgets and forced reconciliation between educational costs and what educators felt was important for all students to achieve.

I guess I look at it in two different ways. In terms of the state there are clear definitions from the federal government. If I'm looking as a human being I'm looking at issues that are obstacles people may have and sometimes I see those obstacles as disabilities. In some way, disabling is to fit in and do something that people say is typical. (Paul)

Caught in the systemic process between the construction of disability through social, political, and economic processes, Paul wrestled with his own beliefs. IDEA was an important piece of civil rights legislation but as such, perpetuated the notion that students with disabilities are "the other" who require additional funding. Their education posed several dilemmas. Does one follow traditions of the past by marginalizing those with disabilities, perpetuating the deficit discourse? Or do we, as Paul states, look at the child from a more humane perspective, valuing the child for his or her contributions? His intelligibility of

the internal others was nourishing the systemic relations, forging his beliefs within a larger operational sphere.

Paul's account reflects two conflicting conceptions of disability; his personal connection as a principal and his managerial role as an administrator shaped his construction of disability and challenged the truth of a singular construction of disability.

The Special Education Director

Paul worked closely with the director of special education, Kate, to effectively include students with disabilities into the regular classroom. Kate was a long-time veteran who witnessed the evolution of inclusion from mainstreaming to full access. Her perception of disability encompassed the outcomes of legal mandates and the effects of student placement on the child's well being. She was committed to the tenets PL 101-476, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1990, and students' access to the general education curriculum.

Kate was sensitive to the stigmatizing effects of displacement and separate classrooms. She understood that being different did not mean students with disabilities were not incapable of learning. She believed support and services within the classroom were fundamental to effective inclusion.

Kate's construction of disability was located within the histories of students whose educational misfortunes were defined through ill-conceived practices. She felt it was imperative that teachers collaborate and she believed that their "talking" was a way to avoid potentially damaging practices. Collaboration was essential in merging the resources between the domains of special and regular practices.

I think the term disability has really evolved in terms of its meaning for me. I've been in this business since 1978 where there was a real stigmatism to that word disability. It was generally used for kids who generally had significant learning difficulties. Those kids were housed in separate schools with substantially separate programs. I think that you look at the legislation. The people who really support this. They want their kids to access the general education curriculum within their home school with supports. And I think that's again where disability is. That term has changed dramatically. (Kate)

With the full support of her principal, Kate was a driving force in establishing school-wide inclusionary practices. She firmly believed that all students should be educated in their home school.

We need to start in the classroom. And when you can tell me that this isn't the least restrictive environment, then we'll move these children to a place that is more restrictive in order for them to receive those services. And I think that kids really learn with their peer group, kids really want to feel part of their group, they don't want to feel different (Kate).

To realize the vision of inclusion, Kate and Paul required the support of their teachers in the development of a collaborative model for service delivery and instruction. Their philosophical positions were the cornerstones in their change efforts.

And where I was, it was really a philosophical thing. We developed a philosophy of looking at kids individually and how we could meet kids needs. And so we actually did it one kid at a time kind of basis. We looked at the kids who were out of district and the kids we already had to start to come in and what it would look like to have them. Plus, we looked at our classroom environments. We were making our classroom environments open-ended. (Paul)

With change brings the need for new resources for in class support.

I truly believe that all kids should have individualized educational plans and individualized instruction. If you believe that then you would bring those resources within the classroom, for all children. I believe that money is better spent on having those folks come into the classroom because all kids will benefit from it. So, it won't be the fifteen special education kids that you suggested are in a substantially separate classroom just getting

that support. We have to determine whether those kids in the classroom, whether their needs were substantially different so that their needs could not have been met in the classroom (Kate)

Entrenched and dated views of disability perpetuated a resistance to change from some of the classroom teachers in the school making Kate and Paul's vision a long and difficult process

And I think that's scary all of a sudden. And I think that my intent was never to say that an LD specialists can do everything a speech and language therapists can do or vice versa. It was not to say that we were going to diminish their job or the nature of their job. We are saying that we value their expertise and I hope that we are upholding the integrity of their expertise. But again, not to be threatened by each other but to work collegially. (Kate)

For their model to succeed, Paul and Kate knew that everyone needed to be on the "same page." But changing teachers' views was not an easy task and many resisted the changes. Both Paul and Kate provided a perspective on this:

This is the third year of this model. I will tell you the staff was resistant at first. I would say it is not perfect in that we are still finessing and tweaking certain parts of this model as you look at what group of kids are at each grade level each year. (Kate)

I think that there are fourth grade teachers in the classroom who have this content that they want to teach kids and so when you bring a child in who is not developmentally ready for that content or needs a different way of being taught, I don't think that is where the teacher gets the motivation or is focusing on. And so, they see it as a distraction versus part of their beliefs. (Paul)

Paul and Kate voiced perceptions of disability grounded in the history of segregation to inclusion. It was a time when the "separate but not equal" movement of exclusionary policies towards African Americans and other minorities were generalized to children with disabilities (Befring, Thousand & Nevin, 2000). Reform efforts permitted students to attend public schools, yet little consideration was given the environment or the necessary supports for success.

Their construction of disability reflected a passing through of these times. Having witnessed the initial mistreatment of children in the late seventies and early eighties, Kate and Paul espoused practical, classroom friendly constructions of disability aimed at bridging differences through collaborative efforts.

In this section, the unfolding of systemic relations presented a historical account that informed sociocultural activity within this school. That history directed a particular truth of the world for students with disabilities that continues to influence educational policy. As administrators, Kate and Paul reflected patterns in their construction of disability that spliced history with contemporary inclusive practices and informed school policy. In the following section, I move to the level of group relations, discussing teachers' constructions of disability as they exist within the domain of the classroom setting. Teachers discussed views of disability that crossed between the deficit discourse and a social model of integration in their attempts to create an environment suitable for students with a wide range of abilities.

Group Relations: Fitting into the Classroom

Classroom communities sustain the dynamics of group relations as a collective unit. Narrower in scope than the systemic relations, the intelligibility of group relations provides a lens into the actions that uphold the school and the daily activities that give rise to inclusive practices. These include, but are not limited to, accommodations, the teacher's instructional and curricular format, and issues of accessibility. In this section, I use the voices of Jack and Carter's classroom teachers, Elizabeth and Terry, and their paraprofessionals, Margaret

and Cory, in describing the students' membership in the classroom as well as their actions in the gymnasium.

In describing group relations, I use the term *fitting in* to describe the inclusive setting from environmental, academic, and social vantages. *Fitting in* encompasses the complexity of the classroom and the multiple needs of educating a child with disabilities in the regular classroom. From an environmental perspective, *fitting in* refers to the physical accommodation for the person, the person's disability, and the barriers encountered. In this inclusive setting, one could consider Jack and his mobility in the classroom. How well was he able to move around in his wheelchair? Could he easily maneuver throughout the school corridors? What were the physical barriers he encountered in the gymnasium?

One could also consider *fitting in* academically. What was the extent of Carter's participation in the third grade curriculum? What were the learning differences between him and his peers? Were there sufficient and adequate accommodations made for him to participate with his peers and engage in the content?

From a social vantage, *fitting in* refers to a sense of belonging, an emotional stability within any given setting. Kunc (2000) applies Maslow's (1987) hierarchy of human need and belonging as essential prerequisites required for self-worth. Emotional security requires teachers and students to recognize diversity and differences as a part of life education.

The environmental, academic, and social components of *fitting in* are streams throughout the larger entity of the school. The triumvirate of needs is a requirement for acceptance and achievement in the classroom. Interviews with

teachers revealed that they traversed the streams, articulating constructions of disability located in personal experience, knowledge of the disability, and familiarity with educational practices. Some teachers had a keener knowledge of the child's academic needs and were better able to accommodate the child. Some were more attuned to the child's physical needs and the layout of the classroom. However, all three streams wove their way into the deficit discourse and an ecological model of practice.

McNamee and Gergen (1999) reinforce the fluidity of relations as "no principled statement regarding the boundaries of a system" (p. 16). While each view provided an account of the world, they were "both moments in the two way, interactive mode of investigation" (p. 61). Concurrently, teachers expressed views that passed between the deficit discourse and an ecological model as they reconciled their own beliefs with the requirements of teaching in the classroom.

The Social Stream

Open and friendly, Carter's third grade teacher, Elizabeth, was an experienced educator whose definition of disability included an understanding of the child, in particular the child's social world. Support was a necessary requirement to bridge the differences between the child and his or her peers.

Someone with a disability who has unfortunately a disadvantage compared to other people in the same realm and therefore needs extra and sometimes special support in order to go beyond their disability (Elizabeth).

She balanced the deficit discourse of disadvantage with personality and disposition. Fundamentally, Carter was an eight-year-old boy who enjoyed being with his friends.

I think it has actually fit it into the fact that he does need to be seen as needing different types of accommodations but that in the big picture of

things, he is a very special boy who is in third grade just like the rest of the children in the classroom (Elizabeth).

She viewed Carter and his relationships in the classroom as the interplay between his own personal psychology and the social psychology of the classroom environment. He required her to think differently about instruction and accessibility.

It has made me sort of have to stop and take into consideration how I can modify something to the best of my ability so that he can be included in that [the curriculum] when it is something typically that he would not be able to do academically. (Elizabeth)

Her previous experience as a first grade teacher provided a knowledge of differentiated learning and the skills necessary for Carter to succeed.

Right now what we are basically doing with him is using the first grade standards and benchmarks. He seems to fit that better than he fits the third grade. So we use that when it becomes grade time and we're trying to figure out how he is moving along and where he is. He does tend to fit in the realm of the first grade benchmarks. (Elizabeth)

She worked closely with Carter's paraprofessional to make the changes in order for him to be a part of the class.

She [Carter's paraprofessional] and I would work together on what was going to work... She came into the classroom already having spent two years with him and had a good sense of where he was at and what we could do as far as the curriculum goes to match what he could be participating with the children and what he would need to follow his own path so it worked well. We understood each other well enough to know that on the spot if something came up as a teachable moment that he could be part of –we could quickly figure out a way to modify it so that he could still remain with us instead of having to follow something different. (Elizabeth)

Her construction of Carter's disability and her focus on the social stream generated positive peer relations in the classroom.

Some children want to do things for him, some children understand that they want to help him so therefore they will do things more with his permission to help and talk to him. And a lot of them will give him cueing

as far as his behavior or something that we are doing. They know the expectation and he isn't solving that expectation they will cue him-he needs to stop or he needs to sit down. And some children he will accept that from, and others he will not. (Elizabeth)

The Environmental Stream

Jack's classroom teacher, Terry, was less experienced with students with disabilities. Consequently, she felt more comfortable focusing on Jack's physical needs. She described disability in this way.

[Disability is] I think unable to perform in normal way. Um, needing help in order to do the everyday things that most of the children in the classroom can do. (Terry)

She deferred to Cory, Jack's paraprofessional, and relied on him to make the necessary curriculum adaptations and changes for Jack to succeed. She displayed what Stanovich and Jordan (1998) describe as a reluctance to intervene and be involved.

I think not having enough contact with him. Having a one-on-one aide pretty much takes care of Jack. I'm not the primary role with him. As far as communication at home, Cory does most of the communication. That is probably the biggest one [issue for having a student with disabilities]. (Terry)

Perhaps it was this "disconnect" from Jack that prompted her view of disability. In her eyes, Jack was different, and those differences influenced her views of education. Terry referred to his placement as mainstreaming, a dated term that implied the existence of two separate systems for educating students with disabilities.

Jack was my only multi-disabled student that I've had. I've had learning disabilities in the past, but things have changed over the years from when I was in school. Change more in the classroom. Being able to be mainstreamed back into the classroom is probably the biggest change. (Terry)

Unlike the other children in the classroom with whom she had developed a relationship, Jack was an unfamiliar entity. This was her first experience with a student who had significant disabilities. She was challenged in this unfamiliar terrain.

I took a class this summer in disabilities just cause I don't have a background in special education. And I did my report on CP [cerebral palsy] and there was nothing out there. And the books that I was looking in were old. The Internet really didn't have anything-educational wise. I was hoping by doing that it would help me and it didn't prepare me at all. It was more needing to be real life in the situation to make a difference. (Terry)

Terry was more comfortable dealing with the environmental conditions that made learning accessible for Jack.

You know I'm always very conscious if he has enough room to get his chair from the door to you know his table and his computer. The kids don't really pick up on that and they don't push in their chairs and they don't move when they have to. (Terry)

The physical stream allowed Terry to distance herself, perhaps due to her uneasiness with Jack's disability. She provided for his needs by accommodating her classroom in a way that made it easy for Jack's mobility. Sampson's (1993) serviceable other is duly noted here. Jack's disability was unfamiliar, almost foreign to Terry. As relatively young teacher, it was her way of dealing with Jack. The distance allowed her to see and understand what was necessary for him, without too much personal investment.

The Academic Stream

While teachers expressed multiple views of disability, they were limited in their capacity to provide for the educational needs of the students with disabilities. Their relational engagement was restricted by the constraints of the classroom and their responsibility to the sixteen other children. Both Jack and

Carter's paraprofessionals had an in-depth knowledge of the student and their disabilities and were instrumental at bridging the academic differences within the group relations of the classroom.

Cory. Cory, Jack's paraprofessional discussed his relationship with Jack in this way:

Working with Jack is a continuous process of evaluating where he is, where I am, and, if you will, how we can bridge "the gap" in terms of how I can make learning the easiest for him and yet have him do the maximum amount of work that he is capable of doing. And so, right there, we can break that down into a lot of different things. (Cory)

Cory was in his second year at the school. He was in his mid-twenties with a degree in physical education but was not certified to teach. His job as a paraprofessional enabled him to be in the schools, gaining familiarity with the students and teachers, as he considered his professional options. Cory had served as Jack's primary tutor when Jack was out of school for corrective surgery during the previous fall. He was close to Jack's family and had, on several occasions, provided respite care when Jack's parents went out of town. His view of disability was multi-dimensional, encompassing several aspects of the child's needs.

When I think about disability I think about the term literally. To me that means not able. When you think about the capacity of what that means, obviously there are numerous ways that we can think about not able. The word disability, it could range from very small issues to very large issues. (Cory)

The paraprofessionals had intimate knowledge of the children, their disability and their academic needs. Effectively including their student necessitated knowledge of the material and the adaptations required for success. This required a balance between doing what was necessary, yet not doing it all.

They operationalized aspects of a deficit discourse with an ecological model of functionality.

You just have to work at it in terms of approaching what you think the person can do, in terms of what they are capable of – and what they are not able to do. To me that really makes up someone's disability. You really have to be honest and think about what they are capable of doing and then go from there. (Cory)

Initially hired with the expectation that he act primarily as Jack's "hands and feet," he quickly realized his role was much more involved.

I am supposed to be his "hands and feet." Jack needs more than that as much as I don't want to admit it. He has a weakness in terms of his academics dealing with math. So a lot of the teaching that I find myself doing has been more of a guided role. Guiding him through his academics. Here's what the assignment is and I basically have to break it down and think of well, what is he capable of doing, what can he do so that it fits the disability. (Cory)

Because his disability made manipulating objects a challenge, Jack found out about the world through his sense of vision. Cory knew what was necessary to adapt and accommodate for his weakness.

We always have to adapt. So I find myself adapting the assignment, but still teaching the information in a way that every other student is taught. So that when the project is complete, Jack has done it in a way that has been adapted for him, that best suits him. And yet, he is right with every other student in the class. (Cory)

Margaret. Margaret, Carter's paraprofessional served in a similar capacity. Having worked with Carter for three years, Margaret had a keen awareness of Carter's needs and the optimal conditions for his learning.

For Carter, I know he has to want to do it and be motivated to do it. It has to interest him. His peers motivate him. He is very social so we bring in peers and he sees them doing it so he wants to do it. If it's difficult and they are doing it, they'll help him with it. So I think it depends on what motivates the child. How you get them to work. (Margaret)

Like Cory, her view of disability encompassed the child and his or her disability, and their educational needs.

My definition of a disability hasn't changed but my definition of what can be accomplished has changed. Disability, um, how can I put this? (Pause). If you have a disability doesn't mean you can't accomplish what the other children are accomplishing. I guess I can put it that way (Margaret)

She created an emotional connection with Carter, believing that no obstacle was too great for him. The fundamental requirement was an attention to his learning needs.

Just by watching them and being with them. It never ceases to amaze me what can be accomplished. It's just takes more time and more perseverance but it is surprising what can be accomplished. (Margaret)

She challenged Carter to do more.

I think it goes with expectations. The more you expect, the more they accomplish. And the more they see they can accomplish the more they keep trying to do. (Margaret)

Cory and Margaret articulated beliefs founded on their intimate experiences with their students. This intimacy shaped their process of constructing disability and what they felt was best for their students. Clear evidence of this influence occurred when Margaret departed halfway through the semester for another teaching position. From that time to the end of school, Carter was assigned two less experienced paraprofessionals. His behavior declined rapidly, and, on several occasions he was temporarily removed from physical education. At one point, Sue became so frustrated with Carter's pushing and kicking, that she brought him directly to the special education director's office for disciplinary action.

These behavior changes marked the disruption Carter experienced as he strived to express himself in ways that were most familiar to him. Yet he was

unable to bridge these differences and struggled to find his coveted place in the classroom.

Margaret's departure created a rupture that marked his few remaining months in third grade. Not only did Carter suffer, his regular classroom teacher struggled. With sixteen students in the class, the absence of Carter's paraprofessional had a profound effect on the class. Managing Carter as well as her other students, became a daunting task.

The first few days it was sort of chaotic. They [the students] suffered in the fact I had to quickly shuffle my plans for them. . So I think it could have been a situation; if it was an extended period of time, it could have been a difficult thing to do. But in the realm that it was just a short amount of time and talking to people and saying I need help here, you have to do something here, I sort of alleviated that piece of it. (Elizabeth)

Margaret and Cory's constructions of disability were grounded in the day to day events that shaped Jack and Carter's lives. Intimately aware of their child, their efforts were aimed at establishing an educational environment that nurtured the students' abilities to fit into the classroom. In the next section, I focus more specifically on the physical education setting, moving to the relational intelligibility of conjoint other as a means of comprehending student learning.

Conjoint Actions: Instances of Complimentarity

Different people in different positions at different moments will live in different realities. Thus we begin to rethink of it as being differentiated, as heterogeneous, as consisting in a set of different regions and moments, all with different properties to them (Shotter, 2000, p. 17).

The experiences children gained from working in small groups with their peers was marked by moments that invited different kinds of actions (Burr,

1995). Students with and without disabilities created relational possibilities in their engagements with each other and the content, within the classroom environment. Through conjoint relations, talk-in-interaction or the observation of movement experiences are presented as an alternative to the traditional views of individual learning and achievement (McNamee & Gergen, 1999). This intelligibility represents the micro-level relations, regarding the momentary interactions between teacher and student and students to students in the day-to-day events of the classroom.

In these examples, children attended to events through complex actions that called forth an immediate, making-sense response (Vygotsky, 1986). Lynch and Bogden (1996) describe these as "intelligible actions performed on singular occasions" (p. 265). They are practical enactments of their encounters with others through their joint membership in the classroom. In these situations, the children's use of language, their words, actions, and gestures are to be appreciated as a mark of their social and cultural membership. They are the textual experiences through which various realities are acknowledged or discredited through relationships (Gergen, 1994).

I adopt these as deconstructive moments - not as something to be explained and put neatly in a box. These are moments of differences, the unparalleled, unrepeatable events that make a difference in students' thinking. In them, we find the potential for opening up new ways of seeing and thinking; an expression of their own realities and those constituted through their relations with peers (Shotter, 2000). They are "instructive" influences in achieving Vygotsky's (1978, 1986) psychological tool as "the child begins to perceive the world not only through his eyes but also through his speech" (1978, p. 32). One

final note. This is not to say that this form of analysis can by itself provide complete evidence of learning for a finalized program of inventory. Rather, these examples provide the means of grafting social constructionism onto inclusive education in ways that underscore the processes of learning in a physical education setting.

I begin this section through the eyes of Jack and Carter, describing how their disability structured their way of being in the world.

Like a butterfly. Dance was the first unit of instruction introduced by Sue during the course of this research. Student outcomes for the unit included an understanding and application of movement forms such as bound and free flow, the development of locomotor skills such as skipping and sliding, and the construction of dances containing these elements.

During one classroom observation, the children were exploring the movement concepts of flow and speed. While the students pranced around the gymnasium moving in concert to Sue's beat, a peer pushed Jack. Seeing his inability to move his feet, Sue offered him a drum and stick so he could "beat out" the movement. For each step the students' took, Jack banged on his drum.

Using this device, Jack was able to keep with the tempo of the class and create his own representation of the movement concept. His facial expression reflected his sense of pleasure. He smiled and was actively engaged in the class. When the group had reconvened around a central area, the teacher questioned the students' understanding of the movement concepts. "What was it like?" "How did you move?" she asked. Jack raised his hand and revealed that the movement "was like a butterfly." In a response to his peers' inquiries on how it felt, Jack stated, "my hands can feel what your legs are feeling."

Although Jack was not be able to perform the same movement as his peers, the metaphor allowed Jack to fulfill in his mind, what his body could not do. Jack's solo-construction of his dance performance was a form of sharing, as he gleaned meaning from his classmates' actions and the cues of his teacher. He made himself understood, constituting himself as a meaningful actor. Shotter (1993) describes this as an instructive act that begins outside, through others; subsequently becoming internalized through our communities of action. As well, his classmates understood the meaning of his actions as constitutive of his physical abilities.

It's neat because Jack can use his feet, but it would take a long time to unstrap his feet. And his hands are quicker. With his hands he can zig-zag and go like that (gestures) and he can do lots of things (Kara).

The test

Any speech genre, however, is not simply a manner of speaking but, most importantly, a manner of viewing and experiencing the world, including self and other. (Sampson, 1993, p. 116)

It was the end of the fitness unit, and, in addition to the activity, Sue was planning to assess the students on their knowledge by administering a four question test. The students began the class participating in an outside running activity. Carter's ease with his peers was evident as they jogged laps around the outside of the field. He enjoyed the running, sharing a constant banter with his friends, smiling and laughing all the while.

Once inside, Carter's demeanor changed. He sat down with his group while Sue passed out the assessment sheets. He incessant fidgeting suggested that he was not able to make sense of the sheet in front of him. Noting this, Sue responded by pulling him aside and working one-on-one with him,

paraphrasing each of the questions. Because Carter had difficulty writing, Sue wrote Carter's responses on the answer sheet (Appendix 3). Below are both the original questions (OQ) as written on the assessment sheet and Sue's paraphrased questions (SQ) to Carter (field note).

(OQ): Why is it important to warm-up before physical activity?

(SQ): *"What does a warm-up do for your body?"*

(OQ): Why is it important to cool down after you have been physically active?

(SQ): *"Is this a cool down"? she asks as she provides an example of a walking activity the children did recently.*

(OQ): How can you improve your personal time for jogging/ walking?

(SQ): *"Do you get better at things when you practice them Carter"?*

(OQ): What are some of the ways you can work on your endurance?

(SQ): *"What are some of the things you could get better at Carter"?*

Sue helped Carter to understand the questions by shifting from an open-ended question to an example answer. In this act, teacher and student reconstructed the meaning of the material, making it relevant for Carter.

Sampson (1993) points out that each speech genre helps shape experience, rendering a different accent to our lives. Outside, running freely with his friends, Carter was able to easily comprehend the language of movement. Inside, he found it difficult, even stressful, to decode the written word. His way of being in the world positioned him differently for experiencing himself and others. Sue acted the part of interlocutor, inferring Carter's words to the questions (McNamee & Gergen, 1999). Although he couldn't synthesize, he could name. Through Sue's actions and her observations of his response to the written material, she was able to nudge him forward, drawing connections between

what he could do and how health was important to his overall well-being. She was attuned to his social world, his level of understanding and the difference in the experiences that structured his world.

You gotta ask for what you want. Two of Jack's IEP goals were increasing his functional independence and self-advocacy skills. His disability had contributed to a dependence on adults, who over time, had come to support him in ways that typically should come from peers. In the next scenario, I illustrate Jack's socially limiting skills that challenged him in physical education.

On one particular day, the children in the class were playing a game of Knock the Pin. The idea was to throw balls at a pin placed on the floor and knock it over. Students acted in both offense and defense positions, creating throwing opportunities while protecting their cone. Sue got out Jack's bowling ramp so he could push, rather than throw the ball at the opposing team. It was expected that Jack's classmates would retrieve the balls for Jack, placing them back on his ramp.

Because the children in the class became involved in the activity, they neglected to assist Jack. In turn, Jack looked to Cory for assistance. Cory responded by stating that it was not his job to pick up after Jack and insisted that Jack specifically ask each time he wanted the ball or ask his peers for help.

Inconvenienced by the request, Jack responded unenthusiastically. He bickered and complained to Corey while the game continued in the class, the students oblivious to his needs. These requests required Jack to stretch himself, engaging more dynamically in the world. "I love it more than you can know" Cory stated, noting Jack's resistance to inviting others to work with him and the necessity of Jack's request to elicit a response. Although Cory presented this as a

playful interaction, a deeper analysis recognized the centrality of cultivating Jack's voice in a way that was socially significant. Particularly in the inclusive classroom, his social world was shaped by influences that nudged him away from his comfortable habits.

The excluded body. In this scenario, Jack used the expressiveness of his voice and body to display his frustrated disengagement from the group. On this day, Jack and his group were in their area trying to include him in an activity using long jump ropes. Jack was having a hard time hearing the instructions because his chair was positioned away from the group compounded by the noise created from others in the gymnasium. Two classes shared the gymnasium space. On the other side of the net, a seventh grade class worked on badminton skills.

Two of the children sat in chairs facing Jack, while a third group member sat on the floor. A decision was made that Jack would swing the rope for the jumpers. Jack's wheelchair and his limited range of motion make this a difficult task. He couldn't get the rope up high enough for the children to jump under. Consequently, the children were not able to jump into the swinging rope. If they did manage to jump in, they were only able to jump a few times before the rope hit their head. After several minutes and several attempts, Jack stopped. Slowly making his way off to the side, he watched as his classmates continued the activity.

Once they had completed the jumping, Jack's classmates lay on the floor, reading and recording the results from the task sheets. Jack continued to be separated from the group, the metal frame of his chair serving as a barrier for engagement. Periodically he would look up, requesting the students speak

louder, "Guys, I cannot hear you." His classmates did little to acknowledge his request. Finally, he gave up and lowered his head in resignation. Jack withdrew from the group in order to engage in his own solitary exploration of meaning within the activity. His attempts were a necessary action in his search for identity in a world designed for a physically determined body.

Constructions of Difference Between Students

When we speak of heterogeneous groups, we typically associate the term with a mixture of student races and abilities in the class. What we oftentimes neglect to consider is the manner in which inclusive classrooms influence the way children think and act when they are put in a position to experience their life with someone different from themselves.

These expressions create words, gestures, and actions that grant potential to generate a specific meaning, making one event significant and another less so (Gergen, 2003). What is created between children generates positive and negative outcomes, enhancing one voice while constraining another. Thus, direction is created, while temporarily narrowing the possibilities for others.

Follow the leader. Fitness was the third unit of instruction taught by Sue during the spring semester. Outcomes for the unit included knowledge and demonstration of fitness components including cardiovascular fitness, flexibility, and muscular strength. Through activities and discussions, students learned and applied the concepts of fitness. A total of three weeks were spent on the unit.

Sue's lesson one day included an activity that directed the children to focus on pacing and cardiovascular fitness. Groups of four ran for a specified

amount of time, one behind the other. On Sue's signals, the front person dropped back, creating a new lead runner. This went on for several minutes.

Initially, Jack had difficulty keeping a similar pace with his peers while maneuvering his wheelchair. During this time, his peers would slow down or stop, allowing him to catch-up. As if by magic, one child had the clever idea of jogging in place to fulfill the groups' goal of establishing a pace and staying together.

This action by the student allowed Jack's group to vary their pace, recovering their stamina during the slower, jogging moments. Thus, they were able to sustain their target heart rate throughout the timed run. Meanwhile, the other three groups quickly forgot the concept of pacing and quickly exhausted themselves. Some of the children in these groups were walking, while others had stopped completely. Jack's group had no such problem, continuing on their way.

During the focus group interview following the class, student reviews were mixed. Jack enjoyed the fact that everyone worked together and could do the activity as a group. Perhaps it was the sense that his classmates made a deliberate effort to work with him. "I think we did good because we worked together" (Jack). However, another student in Jack's group had a different experience. He expressed his frustration with the chronic bumping between himself and Jack's wheelchair. "We had the wheelchair and it kept on bumping" (Donovan). The slow pace proved frustrating for him.

This experience provided an example of Jack's movement potential to redirect the groups' activities. The task, the constraints of his wheelchair, and the varying speeds of the children, resulted in an unforeseen outcome that accommodated everyone's abilities. Although not all students were satisfied

with this adaptation, the overall results proved positive in achieving the learning of goal of pacing for the on-going movement. This next example provides a similar portrayal of the intrinsically shared quality of human experience, and the variety of properties that occur during these moments.

The finish line. On the third day of the fitness unit, the students were participating in an activity that demonstrated the concept of cardiovascular endurance. The task called for the students to run around the large, grassy field adjacent to the school building. With each completed lap, the students received a straw. At the end of a ten-minute time period, students counted the straws, the goal of which was to accumulate as many straws as they could possibly manage in the allotted time.

Once the students moved outside, it was clear that Jack was going to have a difficult time maneuvering his wheelchair on the grass. In lieu of trying to push him on the uneven terrain, Sue quickly got out a tape measure, marking a distance of forty feet in increments of six feet, on the hardtop next to the field. Jack's job was to push himself the distance, collecting a straw at each cone.

Methodically using his right hand, Jack slowly traveled the distance. At each cone, Sue tucked a straw between his chest and chest strap. At the end of class, Jack proudly displayed his straws to his classmates. Not only had he succeeded at completing the difficult task of moving his wheelchair, he was applauded for his efforts by his classmates. The following excerpt was taken from the focus group interview.

I want to say something about Jack. I think it's really neat how she [Sue] could think of something neat to do for Jack because you know he's in a wheelchair. And it's kind of clever that he had feet to do, that he got eight or seven straws. I think that was kind of clever. (Kara)

Within the same group of students, another expressed empathy for Jack's inability to participate with his peers.

I think if I was in Jack's shoes I would feel different because everyone else gets to do something different than I do and I'm always separated from the real class. (Julie)

In this scenario, Julie's pause, her regard for Jack's physical separation caused her to consider the experience of being different. It was as if she was in his shoes. Her classmate Kara had a different experience. She articulated an awareness of the need to adapt for difference, recognizing the physical adjustments necessary for Jack to participate. Both experiences have value as we consider the dimensions of relatedness between the children and their environment in the physical education setting.

The baseball game. This event was observed in the throwing and catching unit. The task for the day was to develop a game incorporating the elements of throwing and catching. The children were given a list of materials to be used with minimal requirements for its design.

Jack's limited ability to throw and catch required substantial changes to the typical throwing and catching games played by children. Although it took the better part of a class period, the group managed to create what they considered a game in which all members were included. The game design incorporated an oversize glove for Jack and someone who could push him to the base. As the ball was gently tossed onto Jack's lap, he trapped it with the glove. Another student in the group stood poised next to Jack, picking up the ball to "pinch" throw for him. The student then pushed Jack to the base.

The skill differences in the group did not prevent the children from working together. Ironically, it was the other, more skilled groups in the class who were challenged by the activity. Rather than focusing on including the most challenging abilities in the group, they devised games that suited the needs of the children with the highest level of skill. Baseball players dominated game play, designing tasks that were too complicated for lesser skilled members to perform successfully.

Interviewer: How did it go?

Chelsea: It got a little competitive.

Interviewer: How so?

Chelsea: We only got up to bat once and they got up twice-no more than that. And I didn't think that was very fair.

Interviewer: So how could you make it more fair?

Mark: I had an idea that we should sort of change it to, instead of three outs, one out. So then everybody will get a turn. And I think we should make the teams a little differently because a lot of people who play baseball were on that team and then the other people who don't play baseball were on the other team. So I wouldn't find that very fun.

Interviewer: Could you change it after it started?

All: No we didn't change it. I wanted to.

Chelsea: None of the players on our team [her side] plays baseball.

Interviewer: You could change the teams, right?

Chelsea: We could put two people who know how to play baseball on one team and another person who doesn't know how to play baseball on that team.

Mark: And I think we should have made Ben and Dillon on different teams.

Interviewer: Was it hard to change it once you started the game?

Ben: It's kind of hard because we both play baseball and we hit it hard.

Interviewer: Did you see that it might have been unfair?

Ben: Yeah, I saw it.

Chelsea: So why didn't you say anything?

Ben: Cause you are feeling good and you don't want to change it.

In the above group, the focus was on the imbalance of skills and the dominating actions of the baseball players. The boys drew the activity in their direction through their commanding presence and their perceived expertise with the game. The activity proved unrewarding for the less skilled members of the group.

Although Jack's group had an even larger skill discrepancy, they were able to work towards creating a balance between group members. Perhaps it was Jack's visible physical differences or the significance of the disability that encouraged students to work together. Unlike the others groups whose movement characteristics shared similarities, the marked difference in Jack's ability could not be overlooked in the challenges faced by the group.

At times, children's views of the world were vastly different. Within the groups, each child brought a history that fabricated a reality of the world. Some of these histories meshed and some did not. A few of the children in Sue's class consistently had difficulty working with other class members. Their interactions were self-centered and their sense of equilibrium was easily disrupted. They tended to "pull" the group dynamics towards their personal needs through behaviors that caused the groups to become sidetracked and fall behind in the completion of the task sheets. Throughout the duration of the research, a young boy named David consistently had a difficult time working with his group. He was young and immature for his age, demonstrating child-like behaviors more appropriate for a first grader. He would talk to himself and focus on other activities that had no bearing to the task at hand. All of his cooperative learning groups were challenged by his behavior.

Classroom learning was marked by moments precariously situated between mutual agreement and the unwarranted glitches that altered the course and dynamics of relationship. At any time, the tone of the class could change from contented engagement to hostile rejection. For example, during a throwing and catching unit outdoors, three of the four groups were having difficulty working with their members or with members of other groups. Two groups were

jockeying for space, antagonizing each other by knocking their boundary marking cones to the ground. In another group, one student was struggling to get a group member to comply with the rules by following the specified cues listed on the task sheet. His nonconformity reverberated throughout the group, fueling more bickering. What had originally appeared as a relatively stable day of physical activity, quickly changed to a series of small eruptions throughout the landscape of the field. Sue moved from group to group, helping the children work through their difficulties.

My observations noted that children dealt with these moments in many different ways. Some individuals tended to enable and make good, while others were unwilling to negotiate. Within the small groups, the dynamics were equally volatile. Some groups, who worked well together one day, found themselves at odds the following.

The broken terms of agreement. At the beginning of each new unit, Sue required the students to read and sign the terms of agreement on their cooperative learning contracts. At that time she would also review the roles and responsibilities of each member. These, along with the guidelines for negotiating group difficulties, were written out on big posters lining the wall.

During this particular event, the children were using hockey sticks to pass back and forth. There were two groups; one with three students that included a girl and two boys, and another boy-girl pair. David, the boy in the latter pair, was not happy. He sulked and refused to participate in the passing drill. He ignored his partner, preferring solitary dribbling activities. One of the members turned to Sue for help. In an unusual twist of events for the child, Sue sided with David, asking the child to consider David's needs and the fact that he was

always assigned a partner not of his choosing. Sue wanted the students to work through their differences themselves and referred the student to the rules for negotiation listed on a chart on the wall. "Have you gone through the steps?" she asked. "Yes," the student responded reluctantly, aware that he might be left with the possibility of revising his own actions.

The group's productivity was deterred by David's noncompliance. All members were affected, yet it was clear they could do little that day to change the group dynamic. In the focus group interview, Lauren, one of the girls in the group, expressed her frustration:

Every time we have this group for two times, I've always hated this group. It's not just a good combination of people. We have different points of view and Chelsea is a nice person, Dillon is a nice person, David's a nice person, I'm a nice person-at least I think so and Jonathan is a nice person. We just all have different opinions. (Lauren)

David also expressed his opinion.

Me and Jonathan were in a group and it never worked before. We fought and fought and fought. (David)

And another as well.

David doesn't like to be with girls. And I think he kind of has to get used to that. (Doug)

In these relational moves, meanings were expressed in the children's words and actions through expressive gestures that confirmed their way of being in the world. These acts generated numerous possibilities that influenced progress towards or away from each other. During these times, the students were challenged in their ability to work through the difficulties that arose.

The binding contract. Conflict within the group was emblematic of the broader linkages incurred when people come together as working groups. The

day-in and day-out interactions of the students revealed a variety of verbal interchanges and bodily actions. McNamee & Gergen (1999) inform us on these patterns:

When any two persons enter into a new relationship, they must necessarily draw on the vast and multiple resources born of these relational histories. The participants will not be drawing on identical histories of relatedness. Thus, any discursive interchange will carry multiple senses of the good or the real. Within the matrix of relationship, multiple vocabularies are interfused (p. 23).

In this excerpt, I note the disparity of responses in the students' attempts to coerce a non-compliant student to work with the group by ostracizing him.

David's immature social responses affected the group and the desire of group members to work together.

Interviewer: What were the goals of the activity?

Jim: To work together and to practice our overhand throw.

Gina: She [Sue] wanted us to roll the ball directly where we wanted it to go.

Julie: She wanted us to be able to focus because we don't really go outside for gym class.

Interviewer: Were you successful?

Jim: I think four of us did but one of us didn't.

Gina: I think we accomplished mostly what we tried and I think it worked better the way we did it (they ostracized David)

Interviewer: David, were you successful at throwing?

David: No, because they wouldn't let me.

Interviewer: Why not?

David: Cause I didn't do stretches.

Interviewer: How come?

David: I don't know.

Interviewer: Do you wish you could have been a part of the class more?

David: Yeah.

Interviewer: What could you have done differently?

David: Do the stretches.

Kendra: And it was one simple stretch that he didn't do and we were wasting our time sitting on the bench waiting for him. We could be doing better things.

Interviewer: Do you think your plan worked well.

Jim: Yes, except that the part that didn't work that we wanted to work. We wanted David to think he wanted to do stretches but come to us to ask if he could, but he didn't.

Kendra: We didn't feel bad for him because he wasn't working with us cause we were helping the team.

Interviewer: Could it have been done differently?

Gina: I would like to work with the team more.

Jenny: Since it was hotter out we could work harder and wear lighter clothes.

Jim: The thing is that I would have done differently is pay more attention to my work and less attention to what the room was doing.

David: No

Gina: We really did try.

Jenny: We read the team contract over before we were even running. It said that we should work together and try to solve our problems on our own and a few other things that we should have done as a group. And so when James told us he had sunburn on his shoulders and neck so Kendra helped him out and she said why don't you do this stretch over again to make up for the other stretch that you can't do.

The students articulated disparate constructions of what occurred in the group. Their discussions fueled a responsiveness, that in turn shaped further constructions for each student. No matter who they were, each cast their lot with a particular formation that accented their lives and their dealings with each other. These small scale operations reflect the largeness of structured relations as " processes [that] help to construct both the identities of particular subjects and also distinctive class forms at the cultural and symbolic level (Willis, 2003, p. 51).

As I regard the conjoint relations between students and teacher, McNamee & Gergen (1999) inform these negotiations that, "although all action is intelligible and warranted within some form of relationship, local idioms do not always leap their boundaries with ease" (p. 24). Given the students' existence within a multitude of relations, cooperation can be a difficult and challenging endeavor. The scenarios demonstrate that common understanding between students is precariously situated between moments of harmonious interchange and unstable action. However, the authors also remind us that the value of any relationship is depended on the network of past and present connections that fortify these moments.

The Internal Others: The Challenge of the Classroom

How can people not challenge themselves and try new and different things and ways of teaching? (Sue, journal)

In the classroom, meaning is constructed in ways that build on teacher practice and their views of the world. The intelligibility of internal others embodies a multiplicity of selves that expose the multiple domains of our constituted nature " (McNamee & Gergen, 1999, p. 12). Sue's construction of disability was relationally dependent on past experiences, yet fashioned to meet the existing conditions of her teaching.

As I turn the lens on Sue , I use McNamee and Gergen's (1999) internal others to describe Sue's process of constructing disability. It is here, within the intelligibility of the internal others, that I explore Sue's multiple and competing voices. Specifically, I focus on two of Sue's dominant voices: her *sensitivity to difference* and her *ecological acuity* as she attended to the process of relating to her students through improvisational teaching acts that bridged differences between herself and her students.

Sensitivity to Difference

In her quest to understand what it meant to teach students with disabilities, Sue had listened to and spoken with adults whose disabilities had prevented them from participating in their physical education classes. Their histories informed her teaching, shaping a *sensitivity* to their differences.

I always go back to the workshop you [researcher] had with adults with disabilities and how they felt not being with their peers in physical education. That really had an emotional impact on me I will never forget. I never want a student to feel the way these people did in their class. (Sue)

She personified these differences.

You know that every kid has their own little thing going on and those kids that are different I attach to. (Sue)

Sue believed that having students with disabilities rendered participation and an accommodating environment. She devoted time and energy to purposeful participation. Her deep sense of equality required her to actively engage in the development of an inclusive program.

For a while, we didn't have students with disabilities, and then we started getting them. Then we started getting ones with disabilities. Instead of, "Oh Gosh, I've got a problem", I thought, "what can we do?" I just started getting as much information as I could. I started attending workshops, researching the disability, talking to the school nurse, school guidance and school psychologist. Finding out all I could about the disabilities and then just looking through my catalogues and thinking, "OK, If I was going to be doing this unit and these are the outcomes" I would think, "how can I make this kid successful within the unit?" (Sue)

Sue believed that true equality for all children came through active engagement with instructional content between peers (Stainback & Stainback, 1990). Effective inclusion was dependent on meaningful and reciprocal relationships between children.

And to me especially since I've gone into the more inclusionary part of it, to me the social is so important and just the acceptance of others and their differences and everything. (Sue)

Sue openness to multiple points of view was shared with her students and the support staff who worked with Jack and Carter. Although she made her own decisions regarding what was taught, she acknowledged the perspectives of others in her approach to teaching. At one point during the previous year, she and Cory, Jack's paraprofessional, switched roles for a short period of time so she could work directly with Jack.

It is a much different interaction that I have with him working one on one. I am more in tune with him and what I can realistically expect him to do

with a particular skill. I know I am in a unique situation right now as I am having Cory teach the class for me. (Sue)

She spoke to Jack directly about the necessary modifications.

I try to be pretty creative with him and he is pretty good at letting me know. He'll say, "we'll how am I supposed to hop? How am I supposed to do that"? And we'll try and think of a creative way. We'll try tapping on his tray to the beat or I had him just counting to the beat (this was a dance unit) when we move in different ways so that I knew that he knew the beat. That's what I wanted him to get out of it and that's what the outcome of the class was that they knew how to move to a beat. Jack got that; it was just in a different way. They were actually doing it with their bodies and he was counting it. But I knew he got it. (Sue)

This voice was driven by her desire that Jack have full membership in the classroom.

My goal is more social for him and feel that PT [physical therapy] is not meeting the goal. Jack has so much therapy besides what he gets here at school that I feel that I just want him to be a part of the class than meeting PT goals for the year. To be just one of the kids is what I am looking for at this time. How can they include him in the activity of the day?

Sue's sensitivity mirrored the need to incorporate the three streams of fitting in—the social, academic, and the environmental.

No! I think it [his disability] is so profound that there are just going to be limits to what he is going to be able to do. Probably I want him to think that yeah, I can try anything and I can try to do anything. And at least, he can participate to his level and it may not always be where everybody else is. But, at least he is getting the idea. (Sue)

Her long-term relationship with Jack contributed to her sensitivity of his learning needs.

I remember when he first came and I looked at his IEP. And I saw he was going to be walking, and I thought no, I don't think that is going to be happening. That was some pretty optimistic stuff. Hopefully, someday for him that is going to happen. But...I just hope for him that he gets some enjoyment with being with his peers. You know, working on advocating and things. That's probably where I'm at with him. (Sue)

Changing expectations required her to accept Jack and his limitations.

A hard thing for me to accept this year is the fact that Jack will make very short gains and that I need to set my goals a little lower than I had originally planned. (Sue)

This reality check shifted her attention to his social needs.

I can remember one time I was trying to work on basketball dribbling skills and I thought, "What am I doing?" Then one of the kids came over and he started to do it [dribble] next to Jack and it was just that social piece of him working with another kid. And I thought, "OK, that's what counts". It's not that he can't dribble this ball. It's that he can have a friend because I think he has been so surrounded by adults. That's the world he knows. Adults are easy for Jack, kids are not easy and I think we are trying to get that kid piece in. And I had to learn and scale back with this kid and learn, what is my role with this kid? And it may not be a physical education, as some people would think. To me a physical educator does everything. The social and everything. For kids with disabilities, it's just the social acceptance piece that means more to me. I don't expect the athlete to come out of here. (Sue)

She emoted a sadness for what was not.

I guess I care more than I think I do sometimes. Than I want to think. Because just talking with you I almost start crying. And I don't know that emotion and where that is coming from. That I care so much about these kids. You know every kid has their own little thing going on and those kids that are different I attach to. (Sue)

Sue's intelligibility of internal selves was an on-going process between the events that shaped her and her students' lives. Historical precedents had informed her awareness of what it meant to be excluded, inspiring her to learn more about her students.

I'll ask the students, I'll ask the kids with the disability. We talk about the disability. So kids are pretty comfortable coming up with ideas. They'll say, we'll what are we going to do about Jack? But they will come up with ideas themselves and I'm trying to teach them that I'm not always going to be there, how are you going to figure it out? (Sue)

Her sensitivity to difference was reflected in her requirement of respect between students.

A lot of just being respectful of each other. Which is a very difficult thing for a lot of third and fourth graders to do. And we work on that all year. (Sue)

And her ability to sit down and make it happen with the students.

Well, I'll teach them to do that. Something may happen during class and I'll stop. Or somebody might say, "that was a stupid way to do that." And so I'll stop everything and say, "OK, let's talk about this. How does this feel when somebody says that to you?" We'll talk about what you could say instead of that. I try not to give them the answers and let them tell me. You know how could you be better? ...Sometimes, they need to learn how to do that nicely. I try to teach them how you always tell somebody what they are doing well first. Then tell what they are not doing well. But you start out with a positive. (Sue)

In this next scenario, I depict the specificity of those negotiations.

The value of friends. During the latter part of the semester, Carter found it more and more difficult to do what was required of him in the gymnasium. One reason was that his long-time aide, Margaret, left for another teaching position. Her replacement, an older woman with little experience in the schools, had difficulty attending to Carter's learning needs. The two of them had not satisfactorily constructed their relationship and Carter was struggling to find his way throughout his daily routines. He reverted to disruptive behaviors in the gymnasium and was repeatedly asked by Sue to sit out on the sidelines for pushing or kicking his peers. Oftentimes, she would pull him aside and encourage him to take a few minutes to regroup. She appeared to understand his frustration and attempted to redirect his actions towards ones that would prove more productive.

On this day, the students were playing a simple, small-sided tag game. Although his physical skills were sufficient to participate in the game, the back and forth transitions made it difficult for Carter to keep up with the rapid pace.

In his frustration, he kicked and pushed his classmates, forcing Sue to remove him from the group. In the following interview, Carter's classmates discuss with him, their wish for his participation.

Interviewer: They missed you.

Kira (student): Yeah-we missed you on our team.

Kyle (student): Carter would have helped our fighting.

Interviewer: Why is that?

Kyle: Cause then we wouldn't have to fight about like how we would work together and pass.

Carter: -but um, yeah they do need me in my group. They say c'mon, c'mon, c'mon.

The children articulated the need for completeness. Losing one person in the group created an imbalance. Perhaps even more powerful was the communication that enabled Carter to experience a sense of belonging. His response did not stand alone as a self-contained entity, but emerged from within the group. Despite the sparseness of his language system, he was able to engage in a rather complex language form to express his sense of belonging while utilizing the resources provided by the speech of others (Goodwin, 1995). His peers were also able to articulate a familiarity that bound them together. Carter's absence had created a void.

Sue's sensitivity to the students' differences were essential to her ability to include all students in the activities of the classroom. My observations of her featured a woman who was deeply committed to inclusion. However, this was not the sole voice within her intelligibility of the internal others. Sue's *ecological acuity* extended beyond the domain of sensitivity to the practicality of "making it happen."

Ecological Acuity

First I look at who they are and what they need. Sometimes it's the disability that gets in the way of what I want them to do or what they want to do and we figure out how we are going to minimize whatever disability they have or utilize whatever ability they have in order to be successful in class. I don't think of a kid who comes in as "Oh, here comes my CP kid. It's more, Jack's coming." (Sue)

While Sue's sensitivity to difference served as a catalyst for her inclusive practices, her ecological acuity enabled her to be an effective teacher.

Throughout the study, evidence repeatedly pointed to Sue's strong belief that children needed to be able to think for themselves, working through problems and tasks presented to them.

Over the course of years, Sue had researched and developed a curriculum grounded in the National Physical Education Standards and represented in the outcome statement for the Physically Educated Child (NASPE, 1995). Her curriculum was guided by these learning standards as set forth by the National Association of Sport and Physical Education.

Outcome-based education (OBE) establishes outcomes for students that may be achieved differently depending on student skill and ability (Falvey, Gage & Eshilian, 1998). OBE is premised on the belief that all children have the capacity to learn, provided teachers structure successful learning experiences to meet the needs of individual learners. In order to accomplish this, outcomes should be defined broadly and linked to assessments that authentically define the intended learning. Sue developed these outcomes as part of her lessons to provide students with a means to demonstrate physical education knowledge and skills.

As far as thinking about outcomes, I have been doing that for the last three years. That has changed my focus on my curriculum so that each year is different for each grade level when they come through. Each grade has a focus when they come through instead of first and second does the same thing, third and fourth etc...I'm doing a progression with them. I don't know that the kids always see it that way because they will say, "We're doing the same thing as last year" and I'll say no, "last year you used a balloon and this year you are using a trainer volleyball when you were learning this stuff in first grade." (Sue)

Her knowledge of the content coupled with outcomes based learning enabled her to design outcomes founded on the learning needs and abilities of her students with disabilities.

OK, if I was going to be doing this unit and these are the outcomes, I would think, "how can I make this kid successful within the unit?" And maybe not doing exactly what everyone is doing, say soccer for example, I could use a bowling ramp so Jack could get a goal. To him, it is like kicking a goal. He would be so excited that he actually got the ball in there. (Sue)

She adopted a problem solving approach when no immediate solution was available.

A lot of things that just happen and I come up with an idea and I go to the custodian and say, "Hey, can you make a hockey stick that will fit?" We fit it to him specifically. Just looking at a catalogue and figuring out how I can use this so that it would help. (Sue)

She imparted those skills to Jack and his peers,

I am trying to get him and the class to come up with adaptations for his participation as it helps them to accept Jack more and makes them sensitive to the fact that he can participate like they do just in a different way. (Sue)

and relished the outcomes.

I wish the kids on his team could have seen Jack's face when they were pulling him. He had an incredible look of joy on his face as they moved around the gym. I still wonder how aware Jack is of his peers and how they perceive him?

This next scenario provides a partial answer to her question regarding the students' abilities to see and understand Jack and his movement capacities.

Eyes that understand a different body. As the students progressed through the spring, Sue moved through a series of units including throwing and catching. After completing several days of throwing and catching drills, the children were to observe each other as they applied the specific learning cues outlined on the assessment sheet (Appendix 4). The movement cues for throwing included body in a T position, eyes to target, point, and release. Because Jack's movements were so different from the other children, Sue provided Chuck, his partner, with cues specific to Jack: eyes to target, straight forearm, hand to ear, release, and follow through. Partners first observed, then graded each other by circling a smiley face (good throw), a mid-range smile (average throw), or a frown (weak throw).

After Jack's first throw, Chuck reviewed Jack's performance, giving him a smiley face for a job well done. Chuck also received a smile for his first try. On the second throw, Chuck was not so successful. "You really didn't make your T. I'm going to give you a frown" says Jack. Chuck, not happy with Jack's decision replied in kind, "OK Jack, I'm going to be watching real close." Jack threw and Chuck reviewed his errors. His form was not up to par. Because he didn't bring his hand back far enough, he gave Jack a frown for his throw. Finally, on the last throw, each of them got it right and felt the success of performing the skill.

This scenario demonstrated the sensitizing nature of the heterogeneous classroom. Chuck was learning that not all children have to throw in the same way and differences do not mean exclusion. Their discussion was an instructive moment as they came to an agreement on the best manner of throwing for each.

As a class member, Jack's movements became part of a larger repertoire of skills shared by his classmates.

However, this was not always the case. At times, students found it difficult to accept these changes.

At the end of class we were debriefing and Jordan said that it was very hard to do things with Jack in the group. It really took me by surprise and I really didn't know how to respond. Then Jack shared that Karl and Alex were fooling around and they couldn't get anything done in the group. After that, Steven [another member] talked to Jack and told him that he didn't like the fact that Jack used their names when talking about his group. I don't think that Jack got the connection. Next time I will remind them that when we are talking, names are not allowed. (Sue)

It was challenging for Sue to know how to deal with the children's response to the changes.

Today Jack's group was to create a dance and I had to intervene once again to ask how Jack could be a part of the group. Alex asked me why they always have to move for Jack, why couldn't Jack move to them just once? I asked him who it was easier for and he replied that it was Jack because someone pushes him. Then they were working on their dance and had their paper on the floor. I asked if Jack was a part of this and Alex answered that he would show Jack [the paper] when he was done writing. I suggested that since Jack has a tray on his wheelchair that Alex could put the paper up there on the tray and everyone could be a part of it. Alex really balked at the idea. Not five minutes later, he comes up with a high four, for part of their dance. When I asked him about it, he said that because of the way Jack's thumb always stays towards his palm that it was very hard for him to do a high five, but he could do a high four. I am having a hard time understanding what is going on in his mind. Is it jealousy because Jack gets so much attention or does he just want things his way? Is it a lack of empathy or maturity on his part? I think it is a combination of all of the above. (Sue)

These dynamics contributed to the voices that sustained Sue's internal others, reflecting the complexities that comprised her classroom. Sue moved between these selves as she sought to resolve some of the emerging activities that surfaced in the gymnasium. Vico's (1968) use of the term 'poetic wisdom' elucidates Sue's

skills as a teacher as an adeptness with certainty and a novel perception of the ordinary world.

Sue's Invited Practice: Cooperative Learning

During her classes, Sue utilized cooperative learning as a strategy to get students involved with each other and responsible for their learning. This practice invited students to share in the construction of their learning in ways that included Jack and Carter.

Cooperative learning made sense to Sue because it encouraged peer support, connection, and heterogeneity. As a teaching strategy, cooperative learning required students to work together in small groups to complete learning tasks. The students' construction of disability was supported through student-to-student communicative acts during instructive moments involving shared activity.

Does cooperative learning allow students the opportunity to actively work on skills of cooperation/ collaboration and problem solving? I believe so, because in order to successfully complete their tasks they need to be able to do all of that-to work as a group, to work together, to cooperate, and sometimes to problem solve. (Sue)

Learning through dialogue and face to face interaction became a process of developing and acquiring culturally organized achievements that reflected the children's place in the world and supported Sue's views of learning as a social activity.

Because I always wanted to control and I am a control person anyway. But, it's more individual, which I think the trends of education are trying to go in that way. You are working in small groups. You have to work with people, which isn't always easy and work with kids you would probably never work with outside of this class. Or have anything to do with. And some kids have told me I can't work with this person have ended being able to work with that person. Maybe not being able to say,

"Gee I was able to work with them." But somehow, I think they know deep down that it worked.

She believed in cooperative learning even through it could be a time consuming process working through the task.

The first thing that comes to mind is when I had them create a game at the end of a unit. And it takes them a while to work together, to come with a game that they can all agree on; to come up with the rules, the equipment that they need, how to set it up, how to play it, how to present it to the group. It usually takes them, in the beginning, usually a whole class time to work together. (Sue)

The teacher as a facilitator of learning

You know I look at my role as not to always give them the answers and always be there because that is not always going to be the case and they need to figure things out on their own. (Sue)

Because cooperative learning provided a format for student-centered, self-directed learning, Sue saw herself as a facilitator. Students read, recorded, and discussed the skills among peers in their learning groups. From Sue's vantage, learning did not come directly through her, but through the process of co-construction among group members.

I see myself as more guiding them in their learning and giving them ideas in where to go and the avenues to take. But it is really their responsibility. Are they going to take that on and really try it and do their best? (Sue)

This in no way diminished Sue's responsibilities as a teacher. Quite the contrary. In addition to the planning, preparation, and instruction for the class, Sue took on the additional function of encouraging her students to actively engage in their learning experiences creating communal acts of understanding. She accomplished this through task sheets that clearly identified for students

their goals for the lesson. These acts permitted time for her students to engage in communal acts and supported dialogic practices.

Sue's need to step back. Fostering independence required a delicate balance between support and stepping back. This could be a difficult practice for Sue, particularly when she was working with Jack. She expressed a tension between her need to help out and her desire to let go. If she saw Jack sitting idly in his chair, she would approach the group and encourage support among his peers. Her internal others prompted her to step forward when Jack was excluded from the circle. During one observation she asked the group:

Are you forgetting someone here? How can you include Jack in the task sheet? Can you use his tray as a table? (Sue)

Her use of cooperative learning was not a guarantee for membership.

Just knowing when to go in and ask some questions, not telling them what to do is at times hard, but I couldn't just stand by and watch him just be pushed around the whole time. (Sue)

She struggled with this on-going issue.

We still need to get Jack to advocate for himself. I think it would be more powerful if he told the kids that he did not feel included...What is his definition of being included in the group? Is it that he is so used to this that he thinks it is acceptable [to not be included]. (Sue)

There were days when Jack was tired and lethargic, barely mustering the energy to swing the rope. On these days, Sue allowed Jack to participate within his own parameters. She hoped he would extend himself, but his disability and the skill requirements were an impediment. Cory, Jack's paraprofessional, understood Sue's tactics.

She has a very unique approach in terms of involving him because she is aware of his social problems. I think she has also taken it to the next level in having him advocate with his peers to be a part of his groups. It is more than just the physical...Make him work as much as possible and make

him interact with his peers. It's almost like we've combined his work and their work and brought it together. He is a part of the group. (Cory)

Sue's act of stepping back enabled Jack to open up, facilitating communication between peers as they accomplished the learning tasks.

Now that cooperative learning has been introduced, I think it is a wonderful thing. I step back completely. I rarely help him because that is what cooperative learning is. Kids are interacting, kids are taking responsibility, and they do their own thing. And so I've kind of looked at my role and said well, if kids are going to be interacting and helping and doing all that, just because someone in our group is disabled why can't the students also help them. That makes perfect sense. We're able to step back, not do a thing. The kids love it. They've been able to take over, take responsibility. They enjoy interacting; he [Jack] enjoys interacting. They are gaining social skills; he's gaining social skills. And I think, as corny as it sounds, **I think it is a beautiful thing.** It's just been a nice experience to step back and watch him interact with his peers. And of course, he's gaining social skills all the time. (Cory)

Sue accomplished what she had hoped for—a degree of success in developing sensibilities that nurtured a respect for differences. These sensibilities reflected her inclusive practices and her desire for students to be responsive to Jack and Carter.

They've learned how to include somebody who is different or who has a disability. And they have become more patient. I've seen incredible patience with Jack's groups where it is obvious that they're behind what the other groups are doing. But it doesn't seem to bother them at all. And the kids aren't like-hurry-up, hurry-up. (Sue)

I don't know. I'm kind of surprised. In Carter's group where he couldn't be with his group, they wanted him so.... When he was out the day he had his tantrums that was interesting to see that and have them ask me, "Can he be with us this time?" and then he was fine. I think just the way our school is that the kids learn to be just a little more patient. I think middle school that will be a different story. But for right now, they've learned that. (Sue)

Sue's internal others expressed concern for the range of issues and concerns that contributed to the complexity of the inclusive classroom. Her internal selves

served as a mediating voice between teacher and student in her efforts to structure a learning environment that addressed the varying needs of the students' abilities and skills. Her preparedness and forethought in developing groups and preplanning lessons allowed her to attend to the on-going events within the small groups. These were necessary traits that served functional ends. They were also artistic qualities that enabled her to "read" the classroom dynamics, fusing the multiple influences into a compositional whole.

I gained access to Sue's internal selves through multiple venues. Our mutual journals served to connect our thoughts as we read and reflected upon our experiences. Her struggles with teaching threaded through her words, marking her changing expectations for Jack and the maturity of her teaching goals to compensate for his lack of physical mobility. With Carter, Sue's reflective nature enabled her figure out how to manage Carter's behaviors. Our shared considerations engaged my world as the researcher with her world as the practitioner. This allowed us to transcend some of the momentary difficulties as we projected new possibilities.

The informal interviews that followed each class served as a brief "check-in's" to see whether Sue and I shared similar sentiments on the events that took place during the class. It was also a time when we could "brainstorm" alternative possibilities for instruction or ways to better assimilate children having difficulties. Through the practice of reflexivity or "a critical pause" (Gergen 2000, p. 50) Sue and I grappled with the complexities of multiple points and influences. This action allows us to stop and question the embedded assumptions within cultural traditions that gave rise to the thoughts and actions that shaped

classroom activity, thus enabling transformational opportunities to arise (Gergen, 2000; McNamee and Gergen, 1999).

Conclusion

Placing a strong value on relational life is a condition in which actions between individuals are coordinated within their vast surroundings. Through the intelligibilities of the systemic, group, conjoint, and internal others, I portrayed the inclusive classroom as a continuous process of comprehending and adjusting within relationship. In the intelligibility of systemic relations, the principal and the director of special education informed the reader on the significance of history in fashioning sociocultural traditions. Their commitment to inclusive practice emanated from years of experience that spanned the education of students from segregated to inclusive settings. One can only imagine the school with visions of alternative leadership not committed to inclusion and the implications of this for students with disabilities.

As we consider inclusion and what it means for students with disabilities in the physical education setting, the intelligibility of group relations described the streams that channeled a sense of belonging within the group relations of the school. These included the social/emotional stream of belonging, the environmental stream and the academic constraints of the learning task. To those closest to Jack and Carter, these streams informed school practices. Jack and Carter's teachers and paraprofessionals made it possible for them to be members of the classroom. Their practices were aimed at including the students as best they could, given their experience, knowledge of disability, and the classroom mix of students. Ultimately, the responsibility was left to Cory and Margaret, in

bridging the differences by modifying the curriculum and drawing in other children.

Acts of learning in the students' world were described within the intelligibility of conjoint relations. Students with and without disabilities negotiated their lives with each other, intermingling patterns of complementarity that invited, supported, or conflicted with their peers. Students alternatively danced with each other in flows that located the promise of a temporal friendship. As well they clashed, unaware of their own contributions to the patterns that characterized the class.

Central to these intelligibilities were Sue's internal others. Her sensitivity to difference and her ecological acuity drove her actions within the classroom and informed her curricular and instructional approaches. Her use of cooperative learning encouraged students to learn physical skills, working together in small groups. Positive interdependence between students encouraged mutual support for the group's productivity as more skilled students accommodated for Jack and Carter's disabilities. Student accountability required the participation and contribution of group members in ways that shaped the unique texture of the scenarios. Sue's classroom was the teacher for us all, illustrating that learning is not an individual, self-contained act, nor is it something contained within an individual. Rather, learning is a product of shared membership within socially organized groups.

CHAPTER V

MOVING FROM A DEFICIT TO A RELATIONAL DISCOURSE

In this dissertation, I attempted to make the connection between forms of attention necessary for a relational understanding of disability. My brother reinforced the necessity of this analysis at a recent family gathering. We were sitting around the dining room table and the subject of my dissertation came up. I explained that I was trying to understand disability from a perspective that reduces the stigma associated with having a disability. In many cases I noted, students with disabilities were identified as being not able to do certain things that resulted in isolating practices of exclusion. My intent was to encourage educators to consider the outcomes of their classroom structure on the relations that shape their students' lives. "I know exactly what you mean!" he piped in immediately. This year, Bryce [his own nine year old child with significant disabilities] has a wonderful teacher. She is making all the difference in the world for him. She includes him and asks him questions. She encourages the other children to give him a chance and let him answer the questions. She simplifies things for him and she gets him more involved in the class." "What's different about this teacher?" I asked. "She is an experienced teacher" he stated.

His words resonated with my observations of Sue and her skills as an experienced, if not expert teacher. Her sensitivity to difference made her understand the need to adapt, utilizing her ecological acuity. Her values, her

perceptual-observational skill, and her content knowledge enabled her to fit the world to the child (Dodds, 1994).

But experience is not the sole condition for the internal selves that defined Sue's skills as a teacher. I have known many teachers who have stubbornly refused to include, leaving the brunt of modifications to others assigned to the child. Perhaps it was left to the child themselves, or, if they were lucky, a skilled aide or adapted physical education teacher. The teacher's lack of forethought promoted forms of social isolation.

Sue's internal selves were not unsolicited responses; they came from the intention of wanting to make learning an instrumental part of the students overall physical education experience and the ability to coordinate the actions between the student with disabilities with those of their peers in the accomplishment of movement skills and tasks. At times, this was a spontaneous adaptation of a skill or a quick modification to a piece of equipment. At other times, it was the coordinated action between therapists, paraprofessionals, and the teacher. Fundamentally, there was the intention of change and the conscious interplay between the individual and environment.

Sue's skills as a teacher underscored her ability to coordinate the multiple events of the classroom as a sensing, thoughtful participant. O' Sullivan and Doutis's (1994) term *virtuoso* describes the expert teacher's connection to students. As an expert teacher, Sue's relations with her students were coordinated, yet spontaneous interactions that allowed for the unknown. She was connected to her classroom in a way that transcended cognitive activity to "an aesthetic that values surrender, appreciation, trust, and attunement as seeds that sprout dynamic, novel social interaction" (Barrett, 1998).

Her internal selves granted her the ability to orchestrate successful, and to some extent, improvisational acts. As a teaching act, improvisation “involves an openness to emergent possibilities” (Barrett, p. 3). Similarly, Schon’s (1998) notion of reflexive practice defines it as “on the spot surfacing, criticizing, restructuring, and testing of intuitive understanding of experienced phenomena” (p. 147). As in the improvisational jazz performance, the musician must feel comfortable with the disparate material waiting to coordinate. Like the skilled jazz musician, the seasoned teacher’s actions are marked by adventurousness and a willingness to travel into unexplored territory. An excerpt from her journal echoes this sentiment.

How can people not challenge themselves and try new and different things and ways of teaching? I ask myself that question everyday. Where would I be if not for constant growth and change? I guess it is a question of willing to be a risk taker and accept that there will be problems and failures but that there will also be great accomplishments. (Sue)

The analysis that framed this dissertation accounted for both teacher actions and student learning as a broadened inquiry of study. For too long, comparative models of analysis have defined the manner in which students with disabilities should be educated (Kozub, Sherblom & Perry, 1999). Grounded in assumptions of homogeneity, these studies provide limited insight into the relational skills necessary for teaching. Because of the tendency to describe students from a deficit discourse, “can” questions rather than “how” questions directed the investigations. As the dissertation demonstrates, appropriate actions can be taken by the teacher to minimize differences that result in social isolation.

As has been argued, one of the chief aims of constructionist scholarship is to reflect critically on the taken for granted assumptions that shape constructions

of the social world. Hodge, Yahiku, Murata and Von Vange (2003) use the term *segregated inclusion* (p. 29) to describe the solitude students with disabilities experience in physical education settings. Cothran and Ennis (1999) cite similar experiences for students without disabilities who frequently lack the willingness to engage in physical education due to exclusionary practices that fostered students' sense of isolation. "Typical" high school students failed to see the value of their physical education experiences and felt few social attachments. Inclusion then, is a term that should be generalized to include all students and the conditions of their experience.

Sue's internal selves were at the forefront of this analysis as a force that shaped the experiences of students with disabilities in physical education. According to Denzin (1984) developing empathetic and knowledgeable understanding of student differences occurs primarily in three ways. The first is learned through shared similar experiences that give rise to a mutual frame of reference. During interviews with Sue, she described this connection to her students.

I guess I care more than I think I do sometimes. Than I want to think. Because just talking with you I almost start crying. And I don't know that emotion and where that is coming from. That I care so much about these kids. You know every kid has their own little thing going on and those kids that are different I attach to. (Sue)

Conversations with Sue unearthed a difficult childhood. Her parents died in car accident when she was a teenager. She and her brother continued to live together making their way as young adults. Sue expressed feelings of isolation when recounting her childhood, suggesting a connection to her empathetic tendencies.

The second capacity for enhanced intersubjectivity is built through long-term relationships that provide a mutual ground for understanding. Sue had been Jack and Carter's teacher for the last four years. At one point, she and Cory, Jack's paraprofessional, exchanged teaching responsibilities. Sue became Jack's aide and Cory the classroom teacher for one unit of instruction lasting three weeks. Though in this intense context, Sue integrated teacher and student experience. She saw and experienced events that typically escaped the teacher such as language usage or the generalized nature of outcomes. Social understanding was generated between the two within a pattern of relationship as Sue came to know the meaning of Jack and his world. Gergen (2003) describes this process:

To communicate is thus to be granted by others a privilege of meaning. If others do not treat one's utterances as communication, if they fail to coordinate themselves around the offering, one's utterance is reduced to nonsense (p. 149).

All students with disabilities regardless of the severity, should be granted the privilege of meaningfulness.

Finally, empathy is developed through the appropriation of another's experience. Sue's skills at accommodating and adaptation enabled her to "see" changes within the environment that afforded movement opportunities. She adapted her lessons and modified the tasks to accommodate the students' learning needs. A teacher's intelligibility in adapting is more than an observational skill; it is in her experience of difference and her capacity to translate the utility of the environment to the child within the classroom. Shotter (2000) explains,

To “get” a grasp of the kinds of connections and relations between things required in a social constructionist approach, we need to embody *a new relational practice*, to change what we notice and are sensitive to (as well as what we care about, and feel are the appropriate goals at which to aim). In other words, we need to change ourselves, our *sensibilities*, the “background” practices we have embodied that make us the kind of professional we are. (p. 35)

At times, these internal selves conflicted with each other. She was particularly sensitive to Jack’s exclusion, and was not sure if she should intervene or continue to allow the children to struggle through their particular challenges. Events fashioned actions. What at one time or another may have been an appropriate response, was continuously subject to change through the multitude of influences that shaped activity.

As I consider the guiding question for this dissertation, *What are the multiple ways in which relationships among teachers, students, and administrators facilitate an effective inclusive physical education classroom?* I am struck by the fact that Sue’s construction of disability was largely shaped by adults whose lives touched her in memorable ways. Their voices resounded with her construction of disability, affecting her teaching practices. Gardamer (1990) explains:

Our historical consciousness is always filled with a variety of voices in which the echo of the past is to be heard. It is present in the multifariousness of such voices: this constitutes the nature of the tradition in which we want to share and have a part.
(p. 27)

History informs cultural constructions of disability, which in turn shape policy and programming. The systemic processes that guided this study underscored the range to which constructions of disability reverberated throughout the school. As administrators, Kate and Paul regarded Sue’s as an innovative and dynamic teacher committed to inclusion. Although their

predominate attention was focused on the way the school was managed, their constructions of disability had roots in their experiences as educators who witnessed demeaning school practices over a time span of thirty years.

Within the group relations of the school, Sue's effectiveness as a teacher was supported by Jack and Carter's paraprofessionals. Margaret and Cory exerted a persuasive influence on the lives of their students. Their in-depth knowledge secured the school environment as a place where Jack and Carter could fit into the classroom as community members. This was glaringly evident when Margaret departed during the school year. Carter fell apart, requiring long and tireless efforts by many to bolster his sense of security.

The most revealing evidence of the effectiveness of the inclusive classroom was at the level of conjoint relations. It was within this intelligibility that learning extended beyond physical skill acquisition to forms of affective and cognitive learning. Sue's description, "they've learned how to include somebody who is different or who has a disability" illustrates an expanded view of learning.

For Sue, the necessity of participation as distinct from the requirement of participation resulted in her use of cooperative learning. Member investment began at the start of every class. Long-established routines left little doubt as to Jack and Carter's participation in warm-ups. Jack understood the customs, modifying stretches to accommodate for his lack of mobility. If his paraprofessional was not there to assist him, the students took over. Carter easily found his role as well. The social cuing of the group enabled him to move automatically through the warm-up.

Their assigned roles within the cooperative learning groups granted them function and purpose. Jack's turn as equipment manager meant he was responsible for setting up and cleaning the work area. Likewise, Carter's turn at coach meant that group members would help him with the instructions on the task sheet, cuing him on the specifics of his role. Although positive interdependence was a requirement of the group's ability to accomplish the task, the children displayed a myriad of functional capacities that either hindered or contributed to the success of the group. These negotiations within the class were as wide ranging as the skills and abilities that comprised the sixteen students in Sue's class. Some days, the learning was effortless as the groups worked their way through the task sheet. Other days, progress was tediously slow. Simple instructions such as, "with a partner, toss and strike a ball" could prove fiercely challenging. Was it the task itself? Was it the structural limitations of the child and his disability? How did the other children's capacity to work together mingle with the task and environmental factors? Gergen (2003) answers simply that it is,

...in part because of the continuously unfolding nature of human relatedness. As persons move through life, the domain of relationships typically expands and the context of any given relationship typically changes. In effect, we are continuously confronted with some degree of novelty-new contexts and new challenges (p. 153).

Relationships are formed on multiple levels with the local ontologies that give meaning to the individual's experience. Because of the challenges faced by the students as they negotiated the various tasks within their working groups, learning crossed the bounds of physical skill acquisition, encompassing empathetic actions and a mutual respect for differences among the children. Absent was the pure autonomy that separated students from teachers and

students from each other. Within a social constructionist framework, social arrangements were not merely mediums through which students experienced the world; rather, they constituted a social reality. Inclusion, for the students became the social reality.

Each intelligibility had particular significance. Systemic relations underscored the transformative nature of the person-world relationship. Group relations identified the need for an extensive support system of relationships. Conjoint relations expanded the parameters of learning to include children and their social world. Internal others regarded the multiplicity and responsiveness of the self to others. Within each, experience occurred on multiple planes of existence.

Sue and her classroom challenged dualistic assumptions of a rational, traditional way of knowing. In Chapter Two, I discussed some of the literature related to inclusive education noting the reductionist tendencies constrained by notions of human skill and ability that adhere to hierarchical standards of performance. These studies portray the student with disabilities as different; an unfamiliar entity to be “educated” by the physical education teacher.

The Implications of the Research

In Chapter One, I argued that the application of social constructionism suggests a set of interrelated moves that reconceptualizes the way students with disabilities are educated in the schools. Having carried out the functions of this dissertation, I can now reflect upon the meaning of those words in a new light as I regard not only the time period that occupied this dissertation but a history that informed the questions I sought to answer in this work.

My work with students with disabilities began years before I ever considered the long process of conducting research for a dissertation. A post college job as a paraprofessional for a student with spina-bifida and a tracheotomy nourished this initial interest. I rode the bus with her, suctioned her tracheotomy and provided the necessary modifications for her to participate in a preschool classroom. Over the course of two years, I came to know her and her family closely. I was touched by their sincerity and the humility that accompanied their challenges as they struggled in the world raising a child with a significant disability.

As a physical education teacher, I brought these sensibilities to the classroom. The students' differences urged me to consider ways to rethink and alter my traditional patterns of instruction. I felt a particular affection for their idiosyncrasies and responded with attentions that made their differences recognizable in the class. It was not only this self-serving action that sustained an interest in disability; it was the practical utility of these actions and the engagements that ensued between teachers as a result of these changes. I loved the differences and relished in ways to make this public for the children and myself.

As my studies deepened, I hunted for a theoretical lens that provided a framework for my personal experience. Social constructionism offered an alternative to the traditional modes of study rooted in the deficit discourse. It promoted an awareness of the possibilities rather than an adherence to the limitations. The flexibility of multiple viewpoints allowed me to explore actions that encourage effective inclusion.

While others have proposed the use of social constructionism as a theoretical lens for the study of disability, this research supports the application of this construct within the physical education classroom (Biklen & Duchan, 1994; Jones, 1996) The intelligibilities of actions were well designed to frame and manage the specifics of this particular case. Because of the emphasis on the centrality of relationships and fusing meaning from broader to narrower social contexts, social construction was valuable for analyzing constructions of disability and the implications of these constructions to practice.

The research served a second critical purpose: to question the biases of practice and advocate a shift of developmental norms in the way teachers view their students with disabilities. The work of Evelyn Fox Keller (1985/1995) best exemplifies this relationship in her description of one scientist's search for meaning in difference. Keller discusses the work of Nobel Prize winner geneticist, Barbara McClintock and her discovery of genetic transposition. According to Keller, McClintock's contribution was her ability for empathy and the understanding of difference. Keller describes this critical trait:

The crucial point for us is that McClintock can risk the suspension of boundaries between subject and object without jeopardy to science. Precisely to her, science is not premised on that division. Indeed, the intimacy she experiences with objects she studies-intimacy born of a lifetime of cultivated attentiveness-is a wellspring of her power as scientist (p. 164).

Keller attends to McClintock's responsiveness as a way of working with living forms. She regards difference as an expansion of nature and the events in their surroundings. This openness is conducive to nature, its changes and the responsibility of science to acknowledge change as progression. Differences are striking events, calling forth possibilities for developing relationships. Keller

applies an appreciative method as a means of refinement in response to unusual events:

To McClintock, science has a different goal: not prediction *per se*, but understanding; not the power to manipulate, but empowerment—the kind of power that results from an understanding of the world around us, that simultaneously reflects and affirms our connection with the world (p. 166).

Keller's objectivity makes effective use of the teacher's internal selves and the child's way of being in the world. It is based on the continuity of experiences that recognizes differences between self and others as opportunities for deeper connections. To this end, McClintock as the scientist and Sue as the teacher, employ forms of attentional love to the natural and human world. The capacity for attention resides in a sense of self that is secure enough to tolerate both difference and continuity in the development of a dynamic autonomy that regards rather than dissociates from difference.

The recognition of division provides a starting point for an invitation of engagement. "Difference thus invites a form of engagement and understanding that allows for the preservation of the individual. Self and other survive in a structural integrity" (Keller, 1985, p. 164). Attentional objectivity was evident in the classroom within the engaged responses of the students as they accommodated Jack in the games and activities that afforded him participation. It was Sue's ability to expand the parameters of dance activities so that movement was not defined singularly by traditional locomotor patterns. It was the students' need for completeness when Carter was removed from the group and their call for his presence. It was the tension that Sue wrestled with in her interactions with Jack. A respect for difference remained content with the multiplicity of

being. The crucial point for us is that Sue and her students could risk the suspension of boundaries between subject and object without jeopardizing their learning. These are the attentional skills necessary for effective practitioners.

Implications for Teacher Practice

With a growing population of students with disabilities in our schools and legislation that requires that students with disabilities make progress within the general education curriculum, many researchers have begun to challenge traditional notions of effective physical education that reinforce a deficit discourse (Kozub, Sherblom & Perry, 1999). What is assumed is that these seemingly well-intentioned mandates do not rest on the shoulders of the students themselves as a result of ineffective teacher practices. This case study lends credibility to the importance of the construction of disability and the extent to which undergraduate programs are in a position to contribute to the knowledge base of inclusive education. This concern stems from the belief that undergraduate students' constructions of disability will directly influence their ability to provide effective instruction within the regular physical education setting.

Teacher education programs have failed at adequately preparing future teachers by not addressing teachers' constructions of disability that give rise to expectations affecting instructional practices. The outcomes of training deficiencies reside in inconsistent placement patterns situationally dependent on the school's philosophy, teacher practices and available resources (McGregor & Vogelsberg, 1998). The outcomes are also determined by the attitudes that shape teacher practice.

Teachers can't change the student, the student's disability, and what that disability means for educational practice. What can be influenced are teachers' construction of disability and the interactions that emanate from these constructions. Tinning (1992) discusses differences between weak and strong practical knowledge in physical education. Practical knowledge in the weak sense, is the ability to perform certain functions in physical education without critically reflecting on those functions. Practical knowledge in the strong sense is demonstrated by one's ability to articulate the reasons for particular practices. Undergraduate students can be expected to think critical on the reasons for their actions and the underlying assumptions that contribute to these actions. McKay, Gore, and Kirk (1990) discuss guidelines for developing knowledge in the strong sense:

Prospective teachers must understand physical education within the historical and contemporary relations of power between genders, classes, and ethnic groups. Second, neophytes must learn to question how and why physical education takes on its current form and content and be sensitive to the social construction of physical education knowledge (O'Sullivan, Seidentop & Locke, 1992, p. 273).

Teacher education programs must be called upon to focus on teacher behaviors and paradigms that address the concept of difference. Many future teachers form beliefs regarding the nature of disability and the extent to which the students should be educated in the general physical education setting before acquiring any direct experience of teaching (Hodge & Jansma, 1997; Kudlaeek, Valkova, Sherrill, Myers, & French, 2002). Undergraduate students enrolled in Kinesiology and Physical Education Programs receive inadequate course work preparation or hands on experience working directly with individuals who have disabilities (Kowalski, 1995). Typically, programs offer only one course relevant

to teaching students with disabilities, covering content on disability typology and contraindications to physical activity. The courses tend to be medically-oriented and lack a foundation in inclusive philosophies and beliefs. The gap between adapted and regular programming becomes greater due to the predominant focus on the acquisition of skill for competitive performance, precluding many of the contextual variables inherent in inclusive practices. Kozub, Sherblom & Perry (1999) describe the problematic nature of physical education for students with disabilities as the result of intense “competition [that] tends to permeate across physical education curricula” (p. 351).

Competition is oftentimes unpleasant and the source of considerable anxiety for many students. In interviews with twenty students with disabilities, Blinde and McCallister (1998) cite limited participation in activities and negative emotional responses as the two primary outcomes of participation in physical education programs. Effective programming addresses curricular design and implementation that meets the needs of a range of student skill, desires and abilities.

Roswal (1988) advocates for professional preparation programs that emphasize course work and contact experience with persons who have disabilities to instill favorable attitudinal changes. Hodge (2002) reinforces the roles these attitudes play in the development of teaching skills. Negative associations with disability may solidify into prejudices if not challenged by competing paradigms that attend to difference as an inherent component of learning. Undergraduate programs that incorporate contact with persons who have disabilities are in a position to alter or modify negative connotations through structured interactions that reduce the fears oftentimes associated with

the unfamiliar behaviors and appearances of students with disabilities.

Changing or altering undergraduate student perceptions of disability requires that teacher education programs consider the ways in which they introduce the subject of disability into the curriculum.

Curriculum infusion model. A curricular infusion based model has been advocated by many for preparing future physical education teachers (Barrette, Holland Fiorentino, & Kowalski, 1993; DePauw & Goc Karp, 1994a; Lepore & Kowalski, 1992; Rizzo, Broadhead & Kowalski, 1997). The infusion-based model consistently assesses the topic of disability throughout activity and lecture courses. In addition to the courses specifically designed to address the needs of students with disabilities, information is infused throughout methods courses at the elementary and secondary levels of instruction. The infusion model focuses on engaging students directly with the experience of disability through face to face contact and discussions within general physical education scenarios that apply to students with disabilities. This experience provides a critical opportunity for undergraduate students to engage in favorable contacts with individuals who have disabilities, resulting in positive judgments about inclusive education and teaching (Folsom-Meeks, Nearing & Kalakian, 2000; Rizzo & Vispoel, 1992; Sherrill, 1998).

The need to infuse disability throughout the curriculum can be likened to the systemic relations that permeate the intelligibilities encountered by students and teachers in the schools. Knowledge and learning are structured within the key content areas of elementary and secondary pedagogy classes as reinforcement to the attentional requirements of student differences. Developing student skill does not mean homogenizing skill; future teachers can learn the

valuable lessons of skill differences as they act upon and create opportunities for students with disabilities. Graham (1991) cites the need for a rich experience of diversity, which reduces the tendency to typecast skill competencies.

Three premises guide an infusion model. First and foremost, inclusionary philosophies must be embedded throughout the undergraduate programs and not simply within a single adapted physical education course. Whenever discussions of skills and abilities occur, the physical education faculty member should reinforce the idea that notions of ability-disability are socially constructed and it is the job of the teacher to build a classroom environment in which all students can fully participate and learn. These discussions should occur throughout elementary and secondary methods courses. Comparisons can be drawn between types of disabilities exhibited by students as compared to identified levels of proficiencies. Within Motor Development and Learning courses, the social construction of disability paradigm challenges our long held understanding of what "normal" development entails. Discussions of ability and skill can also be woven into team, lifetime and dual sports activity classes.

The second premise of the infusion approach is contact and experience working with students with disabilities. If undergraduate students are to think differently about differences as they acquire knowledge and construct new understanding, they must have the opportunity to engage in meaningful relationships with individuals who have disabilities. Maureen Connolly (1994) writes:

Difference is always present. As teachers we routinely adjust to the differences in height, weight, strength, speed, balance, and agility of our learners. The more we come to know the learner, the more adept we become at formulating strategies for this or that learner's particular limitation. The same is true for learners who exhibit more profound

differences. The more we come to know them, the more adept we become at recognizing and building on what they can do. But we do not come to know them, nor can we learn from them, if we do not include them (p. 325).

In our undergraduate program at the University of New Hampshire, the students have the opportunity to develop lessons and teach adults and students with a variety of disabilities. One of the first things they come to understand is that disability does not prevent learning. They are always surprised to find that the adults with labels of mental retardation have athletic skills and actually enjoy participating in athletic events. Perceived "severity" of disability doesn't preclude the ability to form relationships in the physical education classroom, participate in universally-designed activity, and reach personal-best milestones. Hodge and Jansma (1999) found that on-campus practicum experiences improved attitudes significantly more than off-campus experiences. Through positively structured experiences, the undergraduate students come to value each person's need for physical activity and recreation and they understand that learning takes place on multiple levels of experience. Code (1991) urges us to consider the central place that relationships hold in our lives:

In fact, knowing other people is at least worthy a contender for paradigmatic status as knowledge of medium-sized, everyday objects. Developmentally, recognizing other people, learning what can be expected of them, is both one of the first and one of the most essential kinds of knowledge a child acquires. An infant learns to respond *cognitively* to its caregivers *long before* it can recognize the simplest of physical objects (p 37).

The third component of the infusion model focuses on critical reflection. Through reflective practices and the discourses associated with disability, preconceived ideas are discussed in the context of events. These are conversations that take place within a shared community that "transform the

dominant project of the Western world, its self-celebratory, other suppressing stance, into a necessary celebration of the other" (Sampson, 1993, p 98). As central forms of engagement between human nature and human life, these processes occur between people in the social world of their lives. In this study, journals and informal interviews were critical tools in our examination of culturally generated expectations and the relationship of these to practice.

Infusing knowledge of disability through the undergraduate curriculum is a dialogic process that occurs between people in settings engaged in activities as sources of thinking that reflect alternative practices (Sampson, 1993). It is a practice grounded in constructionist propositions that resembles the intelligibilities of action guiding this study. Students learn that the very processes of how others think and reason are best grasped by examining the conversations that reflect a particular social reality. This calls for a collaborative shift in the teacher role as expert, to expert in facilitating a dialogical exchange of potentially generative meanings contributed by all students at many levels of exchange.

As I consider what the research has meant to me, in particular Sue's internal others and the selves that dominated her practice, I believe the infusion model is necessary for reconciling the differences undergraduate students face as they enter the teaching profession. In many cases, student interest in physical education stems from positive and rewarding experiences as talented athletes and the privileges that came with this status. With little conscious effort on the part of teacher education programs to alter or change beliefs, students will continue to possess attitudes emanating from the deficit discourse. If undergraduate students are to become effective and inclusive practitioners in the

physical education setting, they must be able to consider the discourses of disability through the developmental changes within their internal selves and the expression of this intelligibility through the development of their teaching practices. It is only through this systemic diffusion of knowledge that a paradigmatic shift will occur within the discourse of disability.

Finally, as I consider the implications of the research on inclusive education, it is necessary to consider multiple discourses that extend beyond traditional modes of analysis. The four intelligibilities used in this dissertation; systemic, group and conjoint relations, as well as the internal others provided a framework for understanding the school and the context of the classroom. Systemic and groups relations underscored macro level relations that influenced the more defined intelligibilities of conjoint relations and internal others while the microscopic views kindled an affirming aesthetic that nourished appreciative potentials as a tension between oneself and others (Barrett, 1995).

I close by posing a question: What would our inclusive classrooms look like if teachers were encouraged to demonstrate a poetic wisdom that engaged multiple constructions of disability? Future discussions ought consider the role of social constructionism in dialogues on the feasibility of inclusive education.

Reflections on the Process

As I consider the events of the past several years and the meaning of these events in my life, I can now reflect on the dissertation in a way that absolves me of the technicalities of research. What drew me to Sue were our kindred spirits. Here, I speak from the voice of my internal others. Within her and her students, I found an expressive niche to investigate and understand questions of disability

that had been percolating for years. I studied her sensitivity and noted her skills as an adept practitioner. Together we collaborated—I as the researcher, and she as the teacher, as we constructed a reality predicated on the notion of difference and belonging.

My years of experience as a physical education teacher enabled me to know her work, the language of the classroom, and an understanding of the events that shaped classroom activity. I put myself within the context as a way to permit the expression of my internal others and utilized the analysis to provide a framework for the expression of my internal voice. My in-depth awareness of these sensitivities through and by my history, provided the knowledge necessary for the interpretation.

The story here has always been about seeing the world relationally. It was the connection between myself, the students, and Sue that enlivened the discussion, providing a context for shaping cultural practices. Thus, through these intimacies and the intermingling of multiple voices, our “truths” were constructed as an alternative to the deficit discourse. At the same time, I have come to recognize the individual narrative that dominates educational practice. Through an appreciation and exposition of the depth of this discourse, I see the possibilities expand to include the concept of a relational perspective for inclusion.

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APPENDIX 1:
INCLUSION PROFILE

IEP/Inclusion Profile

Student: _____

Grade: _____ Teacher: _____

Disability: _____

Student follows typical PE goals and objectives: Yes No Modified
Standards: _____

Student IEP Goals:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Student goals and modifications that pertain to PE:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Student outcomes and assessment:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

OT/PT/PE concerns:

APPENDIX 2:
YORK-BARR AND SCHULTZ INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (1996)

Interview Questions

Questions to the school's administrative staff (principal and special education director)

1. What does disability mean to you?
2. How did you come to have this understanding of disability?
3. Tell me about the school's philosophy on inclusion. How does your administrative style reflect that philosophy?
4. What are some of the obstacles you face?
5. Do you feel you can meet the wide range of students' needs?
6. What are some of the positive aspects of the school's philosophy?
7. What are some of your goals for the school?
8. Does your staff share in this vision?
9. How will you meet these goals?

Questions to the teacher might include:

1. What does disability mean to you?
2. How did you come to have this understanding of disability?
3. Tell me how you plan for and teach physical education.
4. What are some of the obstacles you face?
5. In what ways do you take into account individual student abilities?
6. Tell me about _____ movement abilities? In what ways do you understand and recognize his movement abilities?
7. What learning goals do you have for _____? What goals do you have for his peers?
8. How will you meet these goals?
9. Tell me about how _____ has changed as a physically educated child since you first started working with him?
10. How do you evaluate _____ progress? His peers progress?

APPENDIX 3:
CARTER'S TEST

Name Carter
Class 3m

Grade 3 Fitness Unit



1. Why is it important to warm up before physical activity?

You want to warm up so that you don't get hurt.

2. Why is it important to cool down after you have been physically active?

You want to cool down because it's not for to just stop.

3. How can you improve your personal time for jogging/walking?

Practice.

4. What are some ways at home that you can work on your endurance?

I could walk walk my dog.

I could walk on the beach and look

I can ski in the winter

APPENDIX 4:
LEARNING CUES FOR THROWING

Recorders Name _____ Team Color _____

Lesson 3
Overhand Throw for distance

___1. Cues for the overhand throw: side to target
 non throwing hand pointed to target
 step with opposite foot
 twist body as ball is thrown
 follow through (make an X)

___2. You are going to practice throwing long distances. Get a partner. One will be the thrower and the other (the retriever) will mark where the ball lands and roll it back to the thrower.

___3. The thrower will overhand through the ball as far as they can. Where the ball first lands is where the retriever will mark it. You will have 10 tries to throw the ball as far as you can.

___4. Switch roles. The thrower becomes the retriever and the retriever becomes the thrower. Take 10 tries.

___5. Now watch each other overhand throw the ball. One pair are the observers and the other pair are the thrower and retriever. Take 5 turns each. The observers will fill in the observation sheet for each throw.

___6. Sign below when you are all ready to have Mrs. Yeaton watch you throw for distance.

