POWER/KNOWLEDGE IN AN AGE OF REFORM: GENERAL EDUCATION TEACHERS AND DISCOURSES OF DISABILITY

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ABSTRACT

POWER/KNOWLEDGE IN AN AGE OF REFORM: GENERAL EDUCATION TEACHERS AND DISCOURSES OF DISABILITY

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In this qualitative study, comprised of interviews and observations, I explore how discourses of disability circulating within the epistemologies and practices of four general education teachers at two different public elementary schools. Utilizing a Foucauldian lens, I am particularly interested in how these teachers responded to the power/knowledge claims asserted through the dominant medicalized discourse of disability institutionally employed and deployed through special education and the public school system writ large. Moreover, I have looked for acts of resistance, or in the parlance of Foucault (1983), "modes of action," recognizing that the formation of resistance is both a precondition and consequence of the exercising of power, and that power is the medium through which social change occurs.

In one of the schools, Taft, I encountered a school culture in which the institutional and discursive authority of special education and a medicalized discourse appeared deeply entrenched in the school culture encasing teachers, administrators and children within a network of power relations. This network discursively produced children identified with disabilities as unable to learn in general education classrooms,

and general education teachers as unable to teach all children. Within this environment, opportunities for interrogation and resistance were nullified. In the other school, Bedford, I encountered a school culture in which the institutional and discursive authority of special education and a medicalized discourse appeared diminished, absent the institutional authority of special education. In its stead, appeared an internal bureaucratic discourse of assessment and accountability, concerned primarily with issues of compliance. With instruction and classroom management discursively organized, teachers were produced as officers of compliance, mobilized as agents in the discursive production of docile and compliant children.

Yet, with a weak administration and in the absence of an institutionalized special education apparatus within the school, I posit that at Bedford a localized alternative discourse circulated within the school, and that opportunities for interrogation and resistance arose in particular classrooms, with particular teachers, and in particular moments of time. However, despite an apparent disassociation from a medicalized discourse at Bedford, escaping the underlying assumptions of the medicalized discourse proved unreachable, if not impossible, and it continued to shape classroom teachers, and their notions of disability and inclusion as well as their perceptions and interactions with special education.

DEDICATION

To my wife, Jennifer, who patiently endured and to my daughter, Chloe, who's laughter and hugs kept me going; to my mother for her support; and to Celia who pushed me to think more deeply.

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I – INTRODUCTION

In light of the responsibility placed on local schools and individual teachers specified by the 2003 reform of special education in New York City and the 1993 reforms in the state of Massachusetts, in this study I explore the ways in which discourses of disability circulate within the epistemologies and practices of four general education elementary teachers. Using a poststructural frame of analysis as described by Foucault (1972, 1977, 1980, 1983), I focus on discourses of disability and their relationships with power/knowledge within the context of two different public elementary schools. I am particularly interested in the role of classroom teachers and how these teachers position themselves and their pedagogical knowledge and practices within varied, and at times competing, dominant and alternative discourses. My research comprises observations and interviews that examine the processes whereby teachers operate within different disability discourses; my specific focus is on how they ignore, accept, resist, embrace, subvert, interrogate, or challenge claims to power/knowledge.

Employing a Foucualdian (1972, 1977, 1980, 1983) frame of analysis interested in the creation of knowledge and exercise of power, I situate within this study the person and practice of the classroom teacher and the teacher's pedagogical knowledge in the contested space of politically defined scientific, research-based knowledge that form the dominant discourses of disability and simultaneously constitute the teachers' potential for resistance. Teacher knowledge is often akin to hidden or disqualified knowledge, which assumes a low status in the hierarchy of power/knowledge (Foucault, 1980). However power, as Foucault (1980) maintained, is productive as well as repressive. Productive

power, "induces pleasure, forms of knowledge, [and] produces discourses" (p. 119). Moreover, the exercise of power comes at a cost, economically and politically, and relations of power always involve resistances. Such resistances formed at the point power is exercised are similarly manifold and circulatory. In the case of this study, resistances are formed within the localized universe of particular teachers and classrooms, discourses of disability, and relations of power/knowledge.

Confronting Disability: A Professional Journey

This study emerged from my experiences as a kindergarten teacher working with children with disabilities for 12 years in a general education classroom in an independent school in New York City (NYC). At various times, my classroom included children with cerebral palsy, spinal muscular atrophy, and Asperger's syndrome, as well as children labeled and categorized by the Department of Education (DOE) with attention, sensory, language, motor, and health-related disabilities. Working with these children with their diverse disabilities challenged me as a teacher and motivated me to further my own education.

As I became more knowledgeable and experienced I also developed a reputation among colleagues and families as an advocate for, in the parlance of that particular school community, children with "special needs." This position of trust further shaped my practice and profoundly influenced how I conceptualized my role as a teacher. What I learned about teaching children with disabilities occurred in the classroom and thus was situated within the relationships I developed with these children and their families. I came to appreciate how teachers and students through their day-to-day interactions jointly,

"construct classroom life and the learning opportunities that are available…[and] regardless of stance or pedagogy, inevitably negotiate what counts as knowledge in the classroom, who can have knowledge, and how knowledge can be generated, challenged, and evaluated" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1992, p. 451-452). From this perspective, I began to envision teaching and learning as a series of on-going negotiated responses, between myself and individual students, myself and the children as a group, and among the students themselves. Without yet knowing it, I quietly began to interrogate the dominant discourses of disability within the confines of my own classroom.

While continuing to teach, I entered a doctoral program at Teachers College, Columbia University. I became aware of research and critical theories that provided different lenses through which I was able to further interpret my experiences teaching children with disabilities. These critical perspectives helped me unpack the positivist epistemological assumptions of a medicalized model of disability while positing alternative models that conceptualized disability as a socio-cultural construction (Kincheloe, 1999; Linton, 1998; McDermott & Varenne, 1996; Reid & Valle, 2004).

Critical perspectives moreover offered a way to interpret and problematize the conditions, processes, and relationships in which knowledge and power are respectively produced and deployed. I was especially drawn to what has been termed, "social epistemology" (Popkewitz & Brennan, 1998). This epistemology provided a perspective in which to:

> Consider the rules and standards that organize perceptions, ways of responding to the world, and the conceptions of 'self'…[that] locates the objects constituted as the knowledge of schooling as historical practices through which power relations can be understood…[and that envisions] the statements and words of schooling…not [as] signs or signifiers that refer to and fix things, but social practices through generating principles that order action and participation (p. 9).

Employing a socio-cultural lens enabled me to see anew the classroom, children, and myself as teacher, from a different perspective, one writ-large and drenched in power.

As I relocated my concerns and reinterpreted my experiences within the frame of social epistemology, I came to question and then interrogate how the socio-historical construction of special education and disability, through the pathologizing of the individual and the legitimization of normal/abnormal binaries, has privileged some people over others. More specifically, within the independent school in which I continued to teach, where language competency was particularly valued, I came to question and then interrogate how expectations around language and the ways in which children with language-related learning problems were pathologized, reflected the larger hegemonic discourses of special education in the United States.

This questioning began early in my professional life when, at the onset of my second year as a head teacher shortly after completing my M.S., I found myself with an unusual classroom. Of the twenty children I taught that year, seven of them were eventually to be labeled by the DOE as disabled. Without any training in special education, I was forced to learn on the job. The struggles endured by Eric, John, and José, among others, were assessed within the psychological and developmentally appropriate discourses within which the school functioned (Howley, Spatig, & Howley, 1999). These discourses of developmentalism represent a form of regulatory education, "wrapped in a humanistic language of child-centeredness," (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1999, p. 238) that labels as deficient values and behaviors differing from the cultural norms of White, middle-class, able-bodied, European-Americans. These children were further assessed within the medicalized discourses of special education embodied in the expert consultant

hired by the school, as well as in the diverse voices and work of the speech and language, occupational, and physical therapists. What the medicalized discourse and the discourse of developmentalism had in common was their locating of disability within the individual.

One of the children I taught that year was a 6-year-old boy named Eric (all names referred to here are pseudonyms), who evidenced difficulties with speech and language, visual perception, and attention. Eric had been born with cerebral palsy and was unable to walk or effectively use his right arm and hand. Eric grabbed at other children's legs, which tripped them. Whenever another child took something from him he threw a tantrum. The school psychologist insisted he was angry and developmentally immature. However, I came to conclude that because Eric could not stand up straight he experienced the world around him from the level of other children's knees. In addition, his difficulties with expressive language meant it took time for him to put ideas into words, hindering his social interactions with other children. Since he could never make eye contact and struggled with spontaneous language he sought his peers' attention by other means. Making social interactions more complicated, Eric couldn't efficiently control his body or move quickly, and if someone took something from him, it was effectively lost. I had been asked to observe Eric before he was accepted into the school. At an ensuing meeting with the administration, I had fruitlessly raised questions about accessibility, about definitions of success, and about whether the school was committed to Eric's integration both in terms of curriculum and as a full and equal member of the community.

John was another of the children who challenged my skills as a teacher that year. John struggled with language processing and attentional issues. He was one of the

strongest 5-year-olds I ever met and frequently injured other children. A number of the families complained about him and wanted him removed from the classroom. As with Eric, the school psychologist insisted John was angry and developmentally immature. However, whenever he injured another child, John almost always appeared embarrassed and distressed. His assertions of regret evidenced his sensitive nature. John's physical responses, as I interpreted them, were a consequence of his frustration at not being able to effectively use language to communicate, exacerbated by impulsivity.

José was also in that class. He was bilingual and similarly struggled with language processing, which caused him great anxiety and timidity around other children. Whenever confronted by another child, José withdrew, stuttered, and almost always resignedly acquiesced to their demands. When questioned by a teacher or challenged in an activity, José responded, "I don't know," or "No thank you," as he avoided all risk-taking. Yet again, the school psychologist identified his problems through a psychological and developmental lens, failing to take into account language issues as a prominent factor. Of the seven children in my class that year who were eventually to be labeled with a disability by the NYC DOE, two years later only three remained in the school.

As I continued to work with and learn from children who had been labeled by the school with special needs and by the DOE as disabled, I became more and more uncomfortable with both the process of labeling and with how the school addressed the needs of these children. Disability labels, as I saw employed by the school and the DOE, located failure within individual children while at the same time objectified them through the reifying of categorizations that envisioned them as amalgamations of the

characteristics of their assigned disability (Hehir, 2002). Such disability designations have the potential to negatively impact children (Bogdan & Knoll, 1995; Linton, 1998; Meyen, 1995). When embracing a medical model of disability in which disability signifies something "material and concrete," such designations "casts human variation as deviance from the norm, as pathological condition, as deficit, and, significantly, as an individual burden and personal tragedy" (Linton, 1998, p. 10-11). Consequently, I became concerned by how these children were first labeled and then defined by their disability.

The negative impact of a disability designation was exemplified in the schooling experiences of Sophia, another student of mine whom I taught for two years. I had known her as a 5-year-old who was confidant, energetic, engaging, who enthusiastically embraced school despite difficulties processing language and developing basic skills. When Sophia's mother initially sought additional support services through the DOE, she was told that Sophia didn't qualify, although everyone involved in the review agreed she was struggling. The explicit message was that the family should petition again once Sophia was failing. Eventually when this occurred, Sophia was labeled and categorized with a language disability and began receiving support services. As she continued to fall behind, her learning difficulties appeared magnified in a school setting that privileged language proficiency: where curriculum was frequently enacted through meetings and other spoken and written language-based activities and modalities. As she grew older, Sophia appeared to become hesitant and anxious when challenged, then dispirited by a school environment that had labeled, categorized and pathologized her, as it located failure within the bodies of children.

Sophia's experience of school raises profound questions concerning the process through which she began to develop a negative attitude toward herself as a student. How have the school and the DOE served her needs? How has being labeled and categorized as disabled defined her participation in school? Moreover, how has the school and the DOE's definitions of success and processes of assessment constituted Sophia as disabled? These questions forced me to specifically reflect on, reinterpret, and confront my own role in this process as one of Sophia's teachers, and more generally, to reconsider the function and meaning of disability as defined within schools through the medicalized discourse of special education.

My experiences working with Maria, another child with language issues, finally led me to realize how my questions and concerns had continued to occur within a deficit discourse of disability. I had envisioned Maria as socially disconnected. Inhibited by the language and social pragmatic demands of play, she engaged in parallel play, comforted by familiar themes and repetition. Then one day I noticed her eyes, how they darted back and forth as other children spoke, following closely the sounds of voices. It was then that I began to appreciate her level of concentration and to see it as a consequence of what I interpreted as her deep-seated desire to participate socially.

As I reflected back on my prior beliefs about Maria, I begin to grasp how deeply ingrained in my language, thinking, and pedagogy were the dominant medicalized, psychological, and developmental discourses of disability. Before, all I saw was how Maria's difficulty with language processing inhibited her play. I understood that play at this particular age or stage of development involved language-based social interactions. Consequently, I believed the parallel play Maria appeared to engage in signified a

younger stage of development and I read as anxiety Maria's apparent social detachment. Within these discourses, I had interpreted Maria's participation through a deficit lens. It was from this deepening recognition of how my work with children with disabilities has been shaped by the dominant discourses of disability that I began to conceive of this study. It was then that I began to interrogate, challenge and resist these same dominant discourses.

Interpreting the Pilot Study

During the 2005-2006 school year, I conduced a pilot study for this dissertation at the independent school in which I worked. The methods employed in the present study were informed by that experience (Appendix A). My interpretation of the data collected during the pilot study showed how the school had reformulated and shifted its perspective on disability from the discourse of deficit to the discourse of difference and diverse learning styles. The school however, had simultaneously continued to assume neurological, physiological, and medicalized discourses of disability (Kincheloe, 1999; Krievis & Anijar, 1999; Linton, 1998).

Some years earlier, along with a number of other teachers in the school, I had participated in the Schools Attuned program, which was developed by Dr. Mel Levine (1987) and based on neuro-developmental and information processing models. The school embraced this new discourse based on the language of strengths and weaknesses that muted the binary distinction between able and disabled children. On the surface, disabilities were no longer pathologized and thus no longer served as a potential source of social stigma. However, this re-formulation appeared only to be partial in that it co-

existed with the reality of educational practices that required children to be identified and categorized with a disability in order to receive DOE support services.

Although disabilities within the school continued to be construed within a scientific-medical-psychological framework that located disability within the individual (Heshusius, 1989; Reid & Valle, 2004), the partial reformation of the disability discourse so as to emphasis difference and diverse learning styles served to narrow and shift the focus and responsibility from the school to the classroom and teacher. The discourse of support services and the realities of diagnosis however effectively worked to de-value teachers' knowledge as compared to more official forms of knowledge, such as knowledge possessed by specialists, the administration, and university-centered knowledge (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2001). The devaluing of teacher knowledge, as my interpretation of the data collected in the pilot study suggested, contributed to the teachers' expressed belief that they were ill equipped to work with children identified with a disability.

That these children required specialized knowledge also undercut the premise of the discourse of diverse learning styles and learning differences. Although teachers in the school participated in the process through which children were initially identified as disabled, their participation became peripheral once the process was set in motion. The services, legitimized through the medicalized disability discourse espoused by the specialist bureaucracy of the DOE Department of Special Education, constituted a separate parallel education that was often divorced from the classroom and the classroom teacher.

In many cases, as depicted in the data, teachers had limited communication with the specialists even though the specialists worked within the school. Furthermore, teachers were often stymied in their efforts to coordinate learning strategies as the therapists and teachers were unable to bridge the one-on-one context of therapy with the realities of working in a classroom with twenty-three other children. For some children, this path eventually led to their removal and into special education settings, fully segregating them from general education classrooms and their peers.

Following my interpretation of the data, the pilot study showed that the process of identification and support, in line with the dominant discourses of disability, shifted the responsibility for the success of children identified with disabilities from the school to the specialist bureaucracy. This contradicted and in effect, undermined the teachers' ability to work with these children, yet continued to allow the school to locate failure in the bodies of children and by extension the classroom and teacher. In addition, the process negated any discussion of the need for larger school reform, particularly as teachers were dis-empowered from instituting changes that would reunite the classroom, school and specialist bureaucracy. Teachers were not able to address alternative forms of assessment. They did not exert control over how the school defined success nor how the specialist bureaucracy defined disability. As the school and its teachers exist within the paradigm of academic success and conceptions of disabilities embraced by the larger society, it may in fact have been difficult for either to imagine alternatives modes (Heshusius, 1989).

The 2003 NYC Reform of Special Education

The dissonances of partial reformation evidenced in the pilot study have been mirrored in the larger NYC public school system. A reform of special education begun in 2003 voiced a newfound emphasis on placing children classified as disabled in their home schools within general education classrooms (Hehir et. al., 2005). Under the reforms, responsibility for the referral and evaluation of students, the planning and implementing of Individualized Educational Plans (IEP), as well as fiscal responsibility, was transferred from the district to the school level (NYC Department of Education, Children First: A guide to special education for principals, retrieved February, 2008).

Expanding the capacity of general education teachers to meet the needs of children with disabilities was a principal component of the 2003 reforms. Proposals towards that end focused on increased opportunities for professional development that emphasized instructional strategies and the implementation of nationally recognized programs such as Schools Attuned and the Orton-Gillingham reading program (Hehir et al., 2005). In line with the philosophical goal of moving special education services closer to schools and children, the reforms imposed a fundamental structural reorganization of the special education bureaucracy, effectively shifting key personal from central offices into schools and classrooms. While schools and principals were to be held accountable, under the 2003 reforms, responsibility for teaching children with disabilities came to rest on the shoulders of general education teachers.

In 2005, a review of the reforms authorized by the DOE identified organizational and structural problems resulting from the DOE's continued reliance on a medical model of disability (Hehir et al., 2005). Hehir and his colleagues acknowledged the merit of the

medical model specifically in the cases of children who have a disability related to a medical condition such as blindness and autism, both in regards to determination and intervention. However, the authors argued that there exist other disabilities whose origins appear more opaque, such as learning disabilities and emotional disturbances.

More fundamentally, the Hehir report (2005) found that special education's continued reliance on a medical model of disability led to the assumption that children with disabilities "have a 'condition' that is intrinsic to the child and that will respond to 'treatments' such as speech therapy or resource room services" (p. 12). The adoption of a medical model, contended the report's authors, brought about "categorical placement systems in which children with similar disability types are removed from regular classes to have specialized services by category of disability" (p. 12). The privileging of a medicalized discourse on disability has undermined the ability of general education teachers to work successfully with children with disabilities as it tilts the relationships of power and knowledge towards the institution and specialists of the special education bureaucracy.

General education teachers must contend with the dominant medicalized discourse of disability in their interactions with special education. This is exemplified in the IEP process, which occurs in settings that privilege scientific positivist knowledge, particularly numerically based forms of assessments (Hehir et al., 2005; Reid & Valle, 2004). Although teacher participation in the planning of IEPs continues to be a requirement, within these settings the teachers' qualitative rather than quantitative knowledge has effectively limited and devalued their participation. This reality has undermined the ability of general education teachers to embrace alternative discourses,

including what Hehir (2005) and his colleagues referred to as "social systems" model that conceptualizes disability as, "heavily influenced and even defined by the demands of the environment," (p. 13) as well as other alternative theories and discourses of disability located within the emerging field of disabilities studies (Dudley-Marling, 2004; Linton, 1998; Reid & Valle, 2004; Varenne & McDermott, 1999).

During the 2007-08 school year, two years after the Hehir report was issued, the NYC DOE categorized as disabled 158,294 students representing approximately 14.5% of the total student population. Of these students, 126,150 were assigned to general education public school classrooms and were receiving or set to receive special education services (Council of the Great City Schools, retrieved March, 2014). The inclusion of a significant number of children who had been identified as performing outside a conventionally established normative range of expectations into general education classrooms in schools such as Bedford Academy (pseudonym) where this study was conducted placed particular demands on general education teachers. These demands were compounded where state certified teachers, devalued by the lack of specialized knowledge assumed under a medical model of disability, have been institutionally viewed as unprepared to address the needs of these children.

Parallel Changes in Western Massachusetts

The demands placed on general education teachers described above were not unique to New York City circa 2007. In 1993, the Education Reform Act was passed in Massachusetts (MA). This Act, which served as the model for the national 2001 No Child Left Behind Act, implemented standards-based curriculum in conjunction with the

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) exams. The Act also created a foundational funding formula for schools that was geared towards eliminating funding inequalities among school districts and closing the achievement gap. In a 2010 report by the Massachusetts Business Alliance of for Education, one of the key players in the passage of the 1993 reforms, the past success of the reforms was called into question in large part due to the reemergence of funding challenges and inequalities among districts across the state. Among other influences, the report cited significant increase in funding on mandated Special Education services (Enerson, 2012; Moscovitch, 2010,).

Following the 1993 Reform Act, Massachusetts' voters approved a ballot initiative in 2002 that replaced traditional bilingual education programs with a Sheltered English Immersion instructional (SEI) model (Owens, 2010). Although bilingual education was not a subject of this study, the change significantly impacted the schools across MA as it closed down bilingual classrooms and shifted children identified as bilingual into general education classrooms, increasing the demands placed upon general education teachers. This was particularly significant at Taft Elementary (pseudonym), where this study was conducted, as the school had traditionally served the bilingual population within the local school district.

With a school budget already under recessionary pressure, the increasing costs of special education in Taft's school district initiated wholesale changes within individual schools and the Department of Special Education. Beginning in 2007 and continuing through the two years of this study to 2010, a significant number of administration and special education support positions were eliminated. Similar to the reforms in New York City and in accordance with the intent of the 1993 reforms in MA, the consequence of

this shift was to further decentralize special education, pushing decision-making into the schools. In 2013, following this study, the shift was completed as the local school district eliminated the special education coordinator positions, which meant IEP meetings were forthwith chaired by special education teachers with all referral decisions made in consultation with school principals. It should be noted that alongside chairing IEP meetings, special education teachers continued to be responsible for administering special education academic evaluations as well as providing special education services to students.

Between 2007 and 2010, the percentage of students identified with disabilities in Taft's school district hovered just over twenty percent, which was approximately three percentage points higher then the state average (MA Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education, Statistical summaries, retrieved, January, 2014). At Taft, during the 2007-08 school year, ninety-two children out of a total population of four hundred and eight qualified for special education services. At the time, there were three special education teachers and three aides on staff. Under Massachusetts' state regulations, a special education teacher with one aide can work with no more than twelve children (Ahearn, 1995). With roughly one in five children receiving special education services, primarily through pull out delivery service models, general education teachers at Taft faced the same demands and challenges as their colleagues in NYC as they encountered a power/knowledge matrix that asserted the dominant medicalized model of disability. This provoked the question of how general education teachers negotiate and contend with competing dominant and alternative discourses of disability and how these discourses circulate within individual teachers' epistemologies and practices.

Conceptual Frame

As I explored the ways in which discourses of disability circulate within the epistemologies and practices of elementary teachers, I drew on a perspective of power/knowledge as developed by Michel Foucault. Foucault (1972, 1977, 1980, 1983) maintained that power and knowledge (written as power/knowledge) are inseparable, mutually productive, and together form a modern power/knowledge matrix. This matrix is enacted through discourses in which meaning and subject positions are produced and relations of power employed and deployed. Discourses function "as practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (1972, p. 49). Power circulates in discourses through instruments, strategies, technologies, and apparatuses. Discourses operate through rules, social relations and practices conferring authority and constituting what can and cannot be said, by whom, and when. Power in this conception does not exist as a binary of dominator and dominated, rather it exists within multiple relations some of which within a particular time and space can be integrated and utilized as strategies. Moreover, from this view, power is circulatory, localized, repressive and productive, and wherever power relations are exercised, resistances are formed (Foucault, 1972, 1977, 1980, 1983).

A Foucauldian perspective rejects dichotomy, meta-theorizing, and the notion of an essentializing and explanatory ideology. It is a perspective that examines how "régimes of truth" are created, disseminated, employed, and altered. This perspective assumes an anti-foundational stance. "Truth" is socially constructed and indelibly tied to relations of power/knowledge that generate and sustain it (Foucault, 1980). As Foucault (1980) wrote:

> Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true. (p. 131)

In his work, Foucault (1980) observed that in modern society "truth" has five traits. First, truth is located within scientific discourse and the institutions, which disseminate scientific discourse. Second, it is economically and politically contested. Third, it is widely disseminated and consumed as an objective reality in diverse forms, which include circulating through "the apparatuses of education." Fourth, the production and dissemination of "truth" is principally controlled by a handful of political and economic apparatuses such as the army, media, and university. Last, but for this study perhaps most important, "truth" is the site of political struggle (p. 131-132). From this vantage, schools are political and economic apparatuses that are simultaneously subject of and disseminators of "truth." In addition, they serve to control the access of individuals to particular discourses (Ball, 1990).

Statement of Purpose

In this study, I have explored the ways in which discourses of disability circulate within the epistemologies and practices of four general education elementary teachers. I situated this study within two different public elementary schools impacted by the changes in special education, initiated respectively by the 2003 reform of special education in NYC and the 1993 reforms in Massachusetts. I was particularly interested in the role of classroom teachers and how they position themselves, their pedagogical

knowledge and practices within varied, and at times competing, dominant and alternative discourses that assert claims to power/knowledge.

During this study, I interpreted through observations and interviews how discourses of disability circulate and are enacted through curriculum in specific classrooms. Curriculum here has been envisioned broadly as a set of discursive practices "through which the subjects of schooling are constructed as individuals to self-regulate, discipline, and reflect upon themselves as members of a community/society" (Popkewitz & Brennan, 1998, p. 13). Curriculum has been further understood as a reflection of competing socio-cultural epistemologies enacted through discourse, and as a means towards social and political reform as well as alternatively for maintaining the status quo and social inequality (Kliebard, 1987).

Research Questions

The following questions served as guides for this study.

1. How have these two schools responded to the changes in special education initiated by the 2003 Reform of Special Education in NYC and the Education Reform Act of 1993 in the state of Massachusetts?
    a. What competing, dominant, and alternative educator's discourses of disability circulate within the schools?
    b. How do key administrators position themselves and or act as agents of particular discourses of disability?

2. How do these particular teachers within these schools ignore, accept, resist, embrace, subvert, interrogate, or challenge claims to power/knowledge enacted through dominant discourses of disability?
    a. What personal and professional experiences do these teachers draw from in their conceptualization of disability?
    b. How do these teachers position themselves and or act as agents of particular discourses of disability?

II – LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

There are only a limited number of studies exploring the relationship between disability discourses and the philosophies and beliefs of general education teachers; none specifically investigate the changing environment of special education in situations similar with that found at Bedford and Taft (pseudonyms). In this literature review I propose an approach that informs my research questions. I begin with a description of Foucault's conception of power, knowledge, subjectivity and resistance. I next focus on literature describing the relationship between and among discourses of disability, public schooling, special and general education. This literature describes: dominant and alternative discourses of disability; the emergence of special education within public schooling; the impact of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; the exercising of disciplinary technologies within the public school system; the debate over inclusion, and the movement promoting differentiated instruction and constructivist learning theory.

In the second half of this literature review, I begin with a rationalization for re-reading and reviewing from a poststructural frame positivist-based research on the beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions of general education teachers towards children with disabilities and inclusion. This includes: general education teachers' support for inclusion; the relationship between support and the political and value-laden stances of teachers; and the holding of conflicting beliefs. In the last section of the review, I examine more exploratory qualitative research within which researchers and teachers interrogated their assumptions as examples of engaging discourses of disability.

Power, Knowledge, Subjectivity and Resistance

Essential to this study, is an understanding of Foucault's (1972, 1977, 1980, 1983, 1990) concepts of power, knowledge, subjectification, and resistance. Power as posited by Foucault, is not static, a possession, something seized, shared, or wielded by one individual over another, a binary of oppressed and oppressor. Rather, power is diffuse, dynamic, and circulatory; it exists everywhere dispersed and distributed through complex social webs and networks. Power, "*is* 'always already there'…one is never 'outside' it…[and] there are no 'margins' for those who break with the system to gambol in" (Foucault, 1972, p. 141). Power in this conception operates through individual agents, institutions, legislation, and cultural practices, not in isolation but in its epistemic totality and connectivity. Most importantly, power is relational, as asserted in Foucault's preference for the phrase "relations of power," meaning power is analyzable and open to study as it operates not in the abstract but in the interactions between and among individuals and groups.

Power, as described by Foucault, is inextricably linked with a modern recitation of knowledge, in which the exercise of power creates knowledge, which induces power. This modern form of knowledge arose discursively through the emergence of the human sciences, and institutionally through the birth of clinics, hospitals, prisons and asylums. Through the emerging fields of the human sciences a discursive individualized knowledge developed through the examination, analysis and description of the individual, the human body, "at the level of the mechanism itself" (Foucault, 1977, p. 137). This

knowledge created what Foucault described as a new "political autonomy" or "mechanism of power" that was disciplinary and coercive, where:

> Discipline produces subjected and practiced bodies, 'docile' bodies. Discipline increases the forces of the body (in economic terms of unity) and diminishes these same forces (in political terms of obedience). (p. 138)

Originating as a means to control and treat deviancy, to create "docile bodies," modern knowledge was anchored in disciplinary practices, surveillance, documentation and control. As this modern recitation of knowledge spread beyond the confines of the diseased, imprisoned and mentally ill, to factories and schools, to the general populace, institutions and governments turned their attention towards "populations," reconstituted as economic and political problems. As the intense interest in the minutiae of the human body objectified individuals, modern knowledge viewed populations as a site of statistical analysis to be similarly manipulated and controlled through the imposition of norms, or normalizing judgments (Foucault, 1977, 1990).

Joining together power and knowledge, or in Foucault's parlance, power/knowledge, are discourses, which constitute and are constituted by modern forms of knowledge, institutions, social relations, and cultural rituals and practices. As Foucault (1980) maintained:

> In…any society, there are manifold relations of power which permeate, characterize and constitute the social body, and these relations of power cannot themselves be established, consolidated nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse. There can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourses of truth, which operates through and on the basis of this association. We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth. (p. 93)

The disciplines of the social sciences, which Foucault (1980) referred to as "knowledge producing apparatuses," have gradually assumed dominion over human behavior. These

disciplines have medicalized behavior and conduct, enacting a "society of normalization," while producing new discourses of truth (Foucault, 1977). Discourses as described by Foucault (1972), simultaneously make up and describe the world and its subjects, functioning, "as practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (p. 49). Discourses regulate what can be said and what is left unsaid, who can speak and with what authority, who listens, who remains silent, and who is left anonymous (Bell, 1990; Cherryholmes, 1988; Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983; Foucault, 1972, 1980). As discourses join power and knowledge, they are as unstable and diverse as the relations of power they exercise and employ. As Foucault (1990), noted:

> We must not imagine a world of discourse divided between accepted discourse and excluded discourse or between the dominant discourse and the dominated one; but as a multiplicity of discursive elements that can come into play in various strategies. (p. 100)

Multiple, often contradictory, and situated within particular moments in time and space, discourses variously constrain the production of knowledge, and enable the production of new knowledge.

Schools, in accord with Foucault's (1972, 1977, 1980, 1983) conception of power, function within a power/knowledge matrix comprising the institution of public schooling in conjunction with the discourses of the human sciences, in particular the dominant medicalized discourse of disability. In schools, disciplinary technologies encompassing hierarchical observation and normalizing judgments join the discursive claims of power/knowledge with institutional techniques of social control to objectify, suppress and subjugate individuals, read here as teachers and children. Objectification, as a consequence of absolute surveillance, posits teachers and children as objects, to be authoritatively studied, known, defined, controlled, and in the case of children cared for.

Objectified through the exercise of power, teachers and children are simultaneously the subject of power, "not only its inert or consenting target: they are always also the elements of its articulation" (1980, p. 98). Enacted through relations of power, subjectivity is produced, negotiated, formed and reformed, as individuals, teachers and children, engage and participate in discursive and normalizing practices. As discourses are inexorably manifold and contradictory, subjectivity does not produce a unified self but rather a fragmented, oft incompatible, multiplicity of identities or subject positions, all historically constituted and reconstituted, regulated by social and cultural norms.

That individuals, teachers (of primary interest here), are produced and produce themselves as subjects, such that subjectification is not something imposed upon the teacher but in concert with her, is central to the questions posed in this study. This is not a matter of consent, for as Foucault noted (1980, 1983, 1990) intentionality is never complete, but shaped and determined by an individual's locality, the discourses available, and the institutional and cultural practices in play. Rather, it is a matter of action and choice, as individuals choose among varying and available discourses, or resist them. This "mode of action," integral to relations of power: "Does not act directly and immediately on others. Instead, it acts upon their actions: an action upon an action, on existing actions or on those which may arise in the present or the future" (Foucault, 1983, p. 220). This mode of action may be unintentional, where the path between intent and outcome is disrupted through the totality of institutionally and socially regulated effects, which Foucault referred to as "strategies." It may also be to some degree intentional, what Foucault referred to "tactics." It is through strategies and tactics, through the

actions of individuals or groups, that the potential to create change arises, where freedom is expressed, and power becomes the medium of social change.

> Power is exercised only over free subjects, and only insofar as they are free. By this we mean individual or collective subjects who are faced with a field of possibilities in which several ways of behaving, several reactions and diverse comportments, may be realized….At the very heart of the power relationship, and constantly provoking it, are the recalcitrance of the will and the intransigence of freedom. (p. 221)

This constant provocation, which Foucault (1983) also referred to as a "strategy of struggle," underlies the instability of relations of power and their propensity for change and reversal. It is also within this provocation and struggle that power and resistance are intrinsically tied together either of which has the capacity to bring about social change. Change here is understood not as it impacts the consciousness of individuals but as it effects the political, economic, cultural and institutional production of truth.

Resistances form, according to Foucault (1980, 1983, 1990), wherever there are relations of power. Resistance constitutes both a precondition to relations of power and a consequence of the exercising of power. As power works through subjectivity, resistance, including intentionality and agency, allows individuals to participate in their constitution as subjects through their choice of discursively produced subject positions. Within schools, teachers' subjectivities are produced through the discursive particularities of the school's culture as well as through the normalizing practices operating within the school. Subjectivity, localized in its manifestation, produces teachers as particular kinds of professionals, and there is an incentive to abide by the discursive subject positions enacted through the school. Teachers are rewarded for aligning with their school's cultural and community norms, for not questioning the expectations, that is the beliefs, ways of acting, and professional positioning of teachers asserted by the school. Faced

with the possibility of their marginalization, teachers oft chose not to explore new and alternative subject positions. This alignment, characteristic of what Foucault (1983) referred to as the "absence of struggle," consequently "ties the individual to himself and submits him to others" (p. 212). Yet as noted, subjectivity is at once fragmented and manifold, contradictory and in flux, as individuals, teachers, simultaneously inhabit multiple identities and subject positions. Seen here, resistance can be strategic and tactical, an act or actions involving intentionality and agency, and also a consequence of incompatible subject positions. It is finally, this definition of resistance as described by Foucault, and its association with relations of power and subjectivity, which propels this study.

Discourses of Disability and Public Schooling

As a microcosm of society-at-large, public schools in the United States have historically assumed a medicalized discourse of disability. This discourse encompasses medical, psychological, and behaviorist models as well as models and strategies of cognitive learning. The apparent distinctions between these models pales in light of their commonality, which forms the constituent parts of a common "mechanistic/reductionist heritage" (Heshusius, 1989) that asserts individuals must be reduced to be understood. Each of these models or discourses:

> (a) Assumes that the problem of not learning is within the student; (b) segments learning into pieces (be it pieces of auditory/visual processes, pieces of behavior, or pieces of cognition); (c) is deficient driven, linking directly to instruction of the perceived problems in the pieces of processes, behaviors, or cognition; (d) conceives of teaching as unidirectional; that is, the teacher gives to the student the preset tasks in a preordained sequence; e) assumes that there are correct and incorrect strategies, facts, behaviors, and processes, that is, strategies, behaviors, and so forth, that directly, linearly, and indisputably flow from the theoretical

> assumptions of the particular theory; (f) reduces life goals almost exclusively to school goals. (p. 406)

The medicalized discourse posits that disabilities are intrinsic pathological conditions that require removing children with disabilities from general education classrooms to undergo specialized therapeutic treatment based on categories of disability (Hehir et. al, 2005; Skrtic, 1995). This medicalization of disability has, "cast human variation as deviance from the norm, as pathological condition, as deficit, and, significantly, as an individual burden and personal tragedy" (Linton, 1998, p. 11). This discourse has shaped how public schools have historically responded to children with disabilities, including defining appropriate pedagogical and content knowledge, while simultaneously inhibiting the emergence and acceptance of alternative discourses.

Within the larger field of education however, there have emerged alternative discourses that conceptualize disability as socially negotiated and constructed (Bogdan & Knoll, 2005; Dudley-Marling, 2004; Hamre, Oyler, & Bejoian, 2006; Hehir et. al, 2005; Linton, 1988; Reid & Valle, 2004; Varenne & McDermott; 1999). These discourses critique the dominant medicalized discourse and its assumption of a deficit model that identifies the individual as the point of analysis. Rather, these alternative discourses recognize human variation in "behavior, appearance, functioning, sensory acuity, and cognitive processing" (Linton, 1988, p. 2) while simultaneously acknowledging medical origins for particular impairments such as blindness, deafness, and paralysis. Scholars arguing from a social model of disability perspective have contend that variation and impairment regardless of how they are biologically, culturally, or emotionally grounded, are meaningful only through how they are identified, defined, and positioned within a socio-cultural system (Varenne & McDermott, 1999).

The assumption of a social model of disability in the epistemologies and practices of general education teachers has the potential to influence how these teachers engage the dominant discourse of disability circulating within schools. Embracing a social model of disability requires general education teachers begin to recognize and unpack the binaries of normal and abnormal, and their appearance of absolutism as grounded in empiricism. It requires that they question how children are constituted as disabled by schools and how their own epistemologies and practices influence this process. It means examining the social meaning and impact of disability designations and how these designations bestowed by schools position children as subjects while at the same time confine the subject positions available. As the "power and reach" of these designations affect:

> Individuals' private deliberations about their worth and acceptability…determine social position and societal response to behavior…[and] accords to the nondisabled the legitimacy and potency denied to disabled people. (Linton, 1988, p. 24)

The assumption of a social model of disability offers general education teachers an alternative discourse that subverts, interrogates, and challenges the dominant medicalized disability discourse.

The Failure of General Education

Central to this study is the belief that the emergence of public schooling in the United States cannot be separated from the assumptions of the dominant medicalized discourse of disability. This discourse, already enmeshed in the nascent human sciences at the turn of the century, shaped the merging of the common school movement, with reform and industrial schools serving children considered delinquent, and state institutions and asylums housing people identified in the parlance of the times, as deaf,

dumb, blind, and feebleminded. Essential to the success of the common school movement was the tacit exclusion of children with physical and mental disabilities and the concurrent empowerment of schools to expel students whose behavior disrupted the functioning of the schools (Franklin, 1987; Richardson, 1994; Tyack, 1974; Winzer, 1993). This inherent failure of general education to teach all students has been re-framed as a problem of "inefficient (nonrational) organizations and defective (pathological) students" (Skrtic, 1995, p. 613). This reframing has justified the continued separation of special education within the public school system as it accords with the school system's assumption of a medicalized discourse of disability and exclusion of children with disabilities.

With special education operating as an institutional escape valve, general education has historically been spared responsibility for educating children with disabilities (Skrtic, 1995; 2005). As a result, during the first half century of public schooling and into early 1960's the needs of students identified with multiple and severe disabilities were addressed through policies and practices that placed them in self-contained special education classrooms segregated from general education. For children whose disabilities were deemed more moderate, special education maintained responsibility through services provided within the general education system. These took the form of "pull out" services in the guise of resource rooms, and the use of itinerant special education teachers who provided remedial tutoring to students and assisted classroom teachers (Meyen & Skrtic, 1995; Winzer, 1993). The institution of special education in conjunction with the public school system's imposition of a medicalized discourse of disability have historically comprised a power/knowledge matrix that has

assumed the ability to determine which children are constituted as disabled and how general education and its teachers addressed the needs of these children.

Individuals with Disabilities Act

Within public schools and society-at-large, institutional and discursive power/knowledge has been further enjoined through judicial-legal decisions and enactments (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983, Foucault, 1980, 1983). The passage of PL 94-142 in 1975 and it's ensuing reauthorizations, as the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) in 1990, and again in 2004, has served to reinforce the dominance of the medicalized discourse of disability (Bejoian & Reid, 2004; Skrtic, 1995). This legislation which replaced the term handicapped with disability, in part mandated that all children with disabilities: (a) receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE); (b) receive an individualized education program (IEP), including specific content and process requirements; and (c) be placed in the least restricted environment (LRE). IDEA also gave legal status to institutionalized categorical definitions of disability and upheld the subsequent labeling of children as the basis for eligibility and funding of services (Meyen, 1995). These disability designations, as markers of identity, constituted children as subjects within the school system and consequently in the eyes of teachers, who actively participated in this process as agents of the dominant disability discourse.

Assuming a medicalized discourse of disability that reconfirmed the separateness of special education, IDEA legislation located disability within the individual as a pathological condition that required a mechanistic/reductionist instructional approach (Reid & Valle, 2004). IDEA has consequently reinforced the idea of special education as a rationally conceived and coordinated system of services. Envisioned as such, special

education was seen to benefit diagnosed students through a rational-technical process of incremental improvements in existing diagnostic and instructional practices that are premised upon the formalization and specialization of skills (Skrtic, 1995c). This premise has inherently devalued general education teacher's knowledge and practice, as exemplified in the IEP process, which privileges scientific positivist and quantitative knowledge over the qualitative knowledge possessed by teachers (Hehir et al., 2005; Reid & Valle, 2004). Moreover, this premise undermined the LRE mandate as it sought to place children with disabilities to the maximum extent possible in the same general education classrooms that were previously deemed unable to address their needs which in turn led to their disability diagnosis (Skrtic, 1995).

The Deployment of Disciplinary Technologies

The epistemologies and practices of general education teachers have been shaped within a public school system supported by legislation that exercises power/knowledge through its propagation of a medicalized discourse of disability. Power/knowledge has been further institutionally exercised through disciplinary technologies comprising hierarchical observation, normalizing judgments and examination. Within schools, these technologies control the daily life of individuals and populations so as to create and categorize bodies that are useful and docile (Foucault, 1977,1980, 1983). Their deployment has enabled schools to constitute children as able-bodied and disabled. At the same time, these technologies have fashioned the contours of the relationship between general education teachers and children with disabilities as they have reinforced the authority of the dominant medicalized discourse of disability, supported the separation of

general and special education, and in effect confined the knowledge and practice of general education teachers.

Hierarchical observation as a disciplinary technology and means of surveillance in schools makes teachers and children, their actions and interactions, visible and controllable. Surveillance is materialized through spatial and organizational structures and enacted through gazes encompassing multi-directional webs of supervision (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983; Foucault, 1977, 1980; Gallagher, 1999). This was exemplified in the traditional conception of special education as a place rather than a (individualized) program, where children received a pre-determined set of services based upon categorizations of disability (Hehir et al., 2005). Moreover, surveillance acts as, "a machine in which everyone is caught, those who exercise power just as much as those over whom it is exercised" (Foucault, 1980, p. 156).

Participating in this surveillance, teachers act as observers in a school system that conceptualizes disability through the process of normalizing judgments. Such judgments in the guise of equality create homogeneity and conformity, as they measure, analyze, categorize, and rank individuals in increasingly finer increments (Foucault, 1980, 1983). These judgments have been historically modeled upon White, and middle-class, able-bodied, European-American cultural norms. In the classroom, these norms powerfully influenced how teachers perceived and defined children's behavior and participation as well as their academic competency (Gallagher, 1999; Hosp & Reschly, 2003).

The dominant medicalized discourse of disability has been enshrined in schools through the process of examination as these normalizing judgments created abnormality, which in turn needed to be treated and rehabilitated. This discourse legitimized schools'

ability to identify and categorize individuals (through the use of psychometrics) according to a range of normal and abnormal cognitive, emotional, and behavioral phenomena (Reid & Valle, 2004). The validity of psychometric examination has rested upon society's acceptance of an innate theory of intelligence (Gould, 1981). Thus the demarcation of normal intelligence, itself an invention, was "an enactment of power of the educational system, as an instrument of society" (Boland, 2003, p. 9) whose purpose was to differentiate, categorize, and sort children (Gould, 1981; Kliebard, 1995; Tyack, 1974). Failure, in the form of abnormality, has become a scientific technical problem requiring specialist intervention, further reinforcing disciplinary power (Bell, 1990; Foucault, 1980, 1983).

Special Education Service Delivery Models

The prevailing service delivery model for special education services utilized by public schools under IDEA legislation assumed a medicalized discourse of disability and was a consequence of the school system's employment of disciplinary technologies. The cascade or inverted pyramid model of service delivery represented a hierarchal continuum of service options moving from complete segregation in non-educational settings to full inclusion in general education classrooms (Deno, 1970; Dunn, 1973; Reynolds, 1962).

Of interest to this study were the continuum options that require the participation of general education teachers. Options available under this model in New York City (NYC) at the time of this study included the placement of children with disabilities in: (a) general education classrooms; (b) general education classrooms with related services; (c) a class-within-a-class (referred to as Collaborative Team Teaching (CTT) classrooms);

and (d) special education classrooms part-time. Related services potentially included: (a) special education itinerant (SEIT), special education teacher support services (SETSS) and Academic Intervention Services (AIS); (b) school psychologists, speech and language pathologists; (c) physical and occupational therapists; (d) social workers (Meyen, 1995; NYC Department of Education, retrieved March, 2014). Placement options in Taft's school district were similar except there were no CTT classrooms. Related services were also similar although the terminology varied, for example instead of social workers the district made reference to school adjustment counseling and behavioral support (Northampton Public Schools, retrieved March, 2014). The widespread employment of the cascade model has solidified a role for special education within general education forcing general education teachers to engage the medicalized discourse of disability through their interactions and negotiations with special education personal.

The Inclusion Debate

The current political environment within which general education teachers and special education personnel negotiate has been shaped by IDEA legislation and the debate over the concept of inclusion as a consequence of the principle of placing children with disabilities in the least restricted environment. The origins of this debate can be traced to the concept of mainstreaming and the Regular Education Initiative (REI) which raised many of the issues that continue to define the inclusion debate including: (a) who is to included, all children with disabilities or only those children whose disabilities have been deemed mild to moderate; (b) a distrust of the general education system by special educators; (c) a lack of interest and participation in the debate by general educators; and

(d) the consequences of inclusion on the allocation of funding for the needs of children with disabilities (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1995; Meyen, 1995). More importantly, this debate has involved attempts by proponents of inclusion to introduce alternative social models of disability into the public school system through their questioning of the ethical legitimacy, equality and effectiveness of maintaining the separation of special and general education.

The ongoing debate over inclusion has the potential to profoundly influence general education teachers as it challenges the authority of the medicalized disability discourse. Inclusion proponents have proposed the merging of special and general education into a single, more collaborative and adaptable institution, although there is some disagreement as to the degree of this merging as well as over the extent of inclusion for children with disabilities categorized as severe and profound (Biklen, 1985; Dunn, 1968; Lipsky & Gartner, 1992; Skrtic, 1995; Stainback & Stainback, 1992). Opponents of inclusion, operating within the medicalized discourse, have countered by arguing that general education has historically been unable to address the needs of students with disabilities. In addition, they have questioned the notion of effectively restructuring special education through its merger with general education (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1995; Kauffman & Hallahan, 1995; Kavale & Forness, 2000). While acknowledging problems with the current system of special education, inclusion opponents have continued to embrace a belief in rational science and incremental change, "based on a substantive real world empirical research foundation…[that] offers the possibility for more rational and credible solutions" (Kavale & Forness, 2000, p. 288). It is this latter approach, entrenched within the institution of special education, supported by IDEA legislation, and exercised

through disciplinary technologies that has continued to hold sway within the public school system and govern public perception as the best way to educate children identified as disabled.

Differentiated Instruction and Constructivism

Separate yet intertwined through debate over inclusion, reform, and changes in special education, a movement emerged within schools promoting differentiated instruction and a constructivist theory of learning. In NYC differentiated instruction was specified in the criteria by the Department of Education (DOE) within the New School Quality Review, which Bedford was in the process of completing during the research phase of this study. A constructivist theory of learning was concurrently becoming more prominent through curricular programs including the *Investigations* math program and the Reading/Writing Project out of Teachers College, both of which were used in the two schools participating in this study. These two movements, one pedagogical the other theoretical, developed a symbiotic relationship in their encounters with traditional transmission models of teaching and learning.

Differentiated instruction or differentiation owed its rise in part to an acknowledgement of the growing diversity of the student population within public schools. This diversity, or more precisely, diversities, reflected the changing demographics of the country alongside the movement enacted through No Child Left Behind (2001) and IDEA (2004) legislation towards including student populations that had been historically been separated from general education classrooms, including children identified with disabilities, as gifted, and as English Language Learners (Tomlinson et al., 2003).

As a pedagogical approach, differentiation emphasizes teaching to students rather then to the curriculum (as cited in, Pappano, 2011). As the most widely acknowledged proponent of differentiation, Tomlinson's work primarily influenced the NYC DOE's description and was cited by some of the teachers participating in this study. Of differentiation, Tomlinson (2004b) wrote:

> [Differentiation] is ensuring that what a student learns, how he/she learns it, and how the student demonstrates what he/she has learned is a match for that student's readiness level, interests, and preferred mode of learning. (Tomlinson, p. 188)

In practice, effective differentiation: is proactive; emphasizes mixed ability flexible small group work; varies materials and pacing; is knowledge-centered clarifying key concepts and skills; and actively engages students in learning (Tomlinson et al., 2003). In addition, differentiated instruction is assessment driven, as each informs the other, with assessment occurs through the process of planning, implementation, and evaluation (Moon, 2005).

Of particular interest for this study, is the focus of differentiation on community and the tailoring of instruction to meet the needs of individual students, an assertion specifically embedded in Bedford's mission statement. Effective differentiation rests on the establishment of a learning community, which is built on trust and high expectations and where teachers and students actively share and participate in the duel tasks of learning and managing the classroom (Brimijoin, 2005). Differentiation simultaneously requires and nurtures an "ethic of sharing" in which teachers and children together assume responsibility for learning as individuals and as a group so that "every person in the class helps shape the fate of both self and others – including the success and fate of the teacher " (Tomlinson, 2004b, p. 189). In its individualization and tailoring of instruction, differentiation theoretically addresses the needs of children regardless of

whether or not they have been identified with disabilities. This potentially negates the need for special education pull out models, while leaving a support role for special education teachers embedded in general education classrooms. It is precisely this "presumption of competence" both individually and as a member of the community that distinguishes differentiation as an inclusive pedagogy (Broderick et al. 2004).

Forming a symbiotic relationship with differentiation, constructivist fueled pedagogy similarly counters both traditional transmission models of teaching and learning and the teaching of discrete skills characteristic of special education instruction. The constructionist approach referred to here, also referred to as psychological constructivism, is distinguished from social constructivism and radical constructivism both of which broadly question the social construct of knowledge and its epistemological foundations. For the purposes of this study, constructivist learning theory follows Phillip's identification of psychological constructivism, which Richardson (2003) paraphrased as the active process of learning, involving the construction of meaning that is idiosyncratic to the learner and their background knowledge. This process occurs within a social context within which individuals share and negotiate the merits of meaning, wherein mutually agreed meanings becoming formal knowledge (p. 1625).

Although not a pedagogy *per se*, constructivism as a theory of learning implies particular pedagogical practices that emphasize process, social dialogue, and the development of a deep understanding of both subject matter and learning. Richardson (2003) identified the principals behind these practices including attention to individuals, their backgrounds, and their developing understandings of subject matter; exploratory group dialogue focusing on understanding and developing a shared meaning; purposeful

integration of “formal domain knowledge”: multiple and diverse opportunities to engage in activities exploring and challenging understandings; and a focus on meta-awareness of the learning process. Yilmaz, (2008) citing Brooks and Brooks’ work, translated these principals into practice, describing constructivist instruction as:

> (1) posing problems of emerging relevance to learners; (2) structuring learning around primary concepts; (3) seeking and valuing students' points of view; (4) adapting curricula to address students' suppositions; and (5) assessing student learning in the context of teaching. (p. 170)

The principals and practices of constructivist pedagogy mirrored those of differentiation as both supposed that children actively participate in learning, that learning was a social activity and experience, and that success was a consequence of scaffolding high expectations (Moon, 2005).

The critiques against differentiated instruction and constructivist theory evidence parallel concerns. Among other issues, the case against differentiation: questions the construct of learning modes or learning styles (Pappano, 2011), decries the perceived minimalizing of foundational skills (Garelick, 2006), and points to the unrealistic demands differentiation places on teachers (Schmoker, 2010). While the case against constructivist pedagogy questions the effectiveness of constructivism as a learning theory masked as a pedagogy, challenges the notion that transmission models of teaching and learning that lack opportunities for the construction of meaning, denounces the focus on process at the expense of content, and points to the need for strong subject matter knowledge as unrealistic for teachers at the elementary level who teach multiple subjects (Richardson, 2004). Without questioning their individual validity, taken together and seen within the context of the dominant discourses of disability, these critiques argue for maintaining the status quo.

Teacher Beliefs Concerning the Inclusion of Children With Disabilities

As stated, at the time of this writing there have appeared few empirical studies that explicitly explore the relationship between disability discourses and general education teachers' epistemologies and practices, and none within the specific context of the 2003 reforms of special education in NYC and the state of Massachusetts. Moreover, much of the empirical work exploring teacher knowledge, particularly the construction of knowledge, has employed theoretical frameworks that are incongruent with a poststructural frame of analysis. These include the substantial work done within the context of teacher education and school reform (Bolin & McConnell Falk, 1987; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Fullan, 1997; Gallergo, Hollingsworth, & Whitenack, 2001; Lieberman & Miller, 1991, 2001; Richardson, 2001; Schoonmaker, 2002). Such work has tended towards conceptualizing knowledge within one of the three modes described by Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999), which either engage or attempt to bridge the theory-practice binary.

There has been however substantial empirical research exploring the attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions that general education teachers hold towards children with disabilities. Writing from a constructionist orientation embraced within many universities, Richardson (1996) argued that beliefs exert a powerful influence on what and how students learn in teacher education programs as well as how teachers react to change. In her review of research on teacher beliefs, Richardson differentiated beliefs as a psychological concept from knowledge, which "implies epistemic warrant" (p. 104). Lumped together with beliefs, Richardson also identified research concerning the

attitudes, "conceptions, theories, understandings, practical knowledge, and values" (p. 104) of teachers.

From a poststructural perspective, any review of research on teachers' beliefs is inherently problematic. As there is no essentialized knowledge that exists separate from the knower, knowledge and beliefs cannot be distinguished. Moreover, all knowledge is discursively constructed and inseparable from the exercise of power. Although employing diverse theoretical lenses, research on teachers' beliefs can however be re-read through a poststructural frame that attends to disability discourses and views teachers as agents of particular discourses, as "elements of its articulation" (Foucault, 1980, p. 98), and as vehicles of power. With this in mind, the studies included here were all situated in general education public schools in the United States, focused on general education teachers, and published in special education and teacher education journals. The vast majority of the reviewed studies examined teachers' beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions within the context of inclusion as this constituted the intersection of the general and special education.

Re-Reading Research Through a Poststructural Frame

When grouped together, research reviewed for this study examining the beliefs, attitudes, and perspectives of teachers regarding the inclusion of children with disabilities have contended that a majority of general education teachers support inclusion to varying degrees as an indicator of a positive attitude towards students with disability (Burke & Sutherland, 2004; Cook, 2001; Garriott, Miller & Snyder, 2003; Hamre & Oyler, 2004; McLeskey, Waldron, So, Swanson, & Loveland, 2001; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996; Shippen, Crites, Houchins, Ramsey & Simon, 2005; Silverman, 2007; Wood, 1998). The

degree of support for inclusion was influenced by a number of factors including: (a) experience with and knowledge of people with disabilities (Burke & Sutherland, 2004; Hamre & Oyler, 2004; McLeskey, Waldron, So, Swanson, & Loveland, 2001; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996; Shippen, Crites, Houchins, Ramsey & Simon, 2005); and (b) differentiation of severity and the obviousness of the disability as it impacts teachers' abilities to meet the children's instructional needs and manage the classroom (Cook, 2001; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996; Silverman, 2007). To what degree the teachers included in these diverse studies supported inclusion and how they articulated this support can be read as a consequence of how they engaged disability discourses. The second factor (b) most likely affirmed the medicalized discourse through its emphasis on management, behavior, and diagnosis. While the first factor (a) appeared more open-ended, with the possibility of teachers engaging dominant and alternative discourses of disability.

The provisional support for inclusion as interpreted from these studies stemmed from teachers taking up a political and value-laden stance. This may be a necessary prerequisite for teachers who assert alternative discourses of disability. This stance emphasized: (a) equity as advocating for the rights of children with disabilities to have access to general education (Cook, 2001; Garriott, Miller & Snyder, 2003; Hamre & Oyler, 2004); (b) compassion as an expression of empathy towards students with disabilities (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996); and (c) social integration as a valuing of the social benefits of students labeled and not labeled with disabilities being grouped together (Garriott, Miller & Snyder, 2003; McLeskey, Waldron, So, Swanson, & Loveland, 2001; Silverman, 2007). This stance mirrored the civil rights discourse adopted by proponents

of inclusion and reflected prominent assumptions within legislation such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and IDEA (Meyen & Skrtic, 1995). As ADA and IDEA both assume medicalized discourses of disability this stance does not consequently signify that general education teachers were engaging alternative discourses of disability.

Despite or maybe due to the potential of a political and value-laden stance to interrogate and challenge competing discourses of disability, a number of the studies reviewed here contended that many general education teachers simultaneously held conflicting beliefs that ultimately and explicitly supported segregating children with disabilities in special education. These beliefs were justified as benefiting children with disabilities socially and academically, and framed within the context of a lack of institutional support (i.e. resources, training, and time), inadequate skills and knowledge, and a concern with maintaining order in general education classrooms. Research on general education teachers' self-professed needs and preparedness concerning inclusion supports these justifications (Buell, Hallam, Gamel-Mccormick & Scheer, 1999; Kamens, Loprete & Slostad, 2000; Singh, 2002). Such justifications echo the dominant medicalized discourse of disability and the institutional separation of special and general education.

Although there has been a profusion of research exploring teachers' beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions about inclusion and teaching children with disabilities, many of the studies reviewed appeared repetitive and narrowly focused. Methods that relied primarily on surveys and other quantifiable data, asking generalized and abstract research questions disconnected from the happenings in the classroom, often resulted in predictable findings (Cook, 2001; Garriott, Miller & Snyder, 2003; Scruggs &

Mastropieri, 1996; Silverman, 2007). This may be a consequence of the positivist tradition and technical-rational agenda within which the field of special education research has historically operated and within which researchers have been socialized (Brantlinger, Klingner, & Richardson, 2005). Lacking rich qualitative data, much of this research said as much about the researchers' own beliefs and the dominance of the medicalized disability discourse as about the beliefs of their participants. Moreover, the combination of theoretical lenses and research designs employed by many of these studies may have narrowly positioned their participants' potential to respond through their assumptions of a dominant medicalized discourse that views disability as deficit and as a pathological condition borne by the individual.

Exploring How Teachers Engage Disability Discourses

In contrast to many of the studies discussed above, were a handful of more exploratory and substantive qualitative studies embracing a disabilities studies perspective in which the participants included teachers with disabilities and where the researchers identified and interrogated their own assumptions (Ferri, Connor, Solis, Valle, & Volpitta, 2005; Ferri, Keefe, & Gregg, 2001; Gabel, 2001; Hamre & Oyler, 2004). These exploratory studies employed theoretical frameworks that acknowledged the discursive and institutional construction of disability in schools and society. Moreover, in their exploration of teachers' views, pedagogical knowledge, and negotiation of disability discourses, these studies have offered potential models of what it might look like for general education teachers to ignore, accept, resist, embrace, subvert, interrogate, or challenge claims to power/knowledge.

The studies conducted by Gabel (2001), Ferri, Connor, Solis, Valle, and Volpitta (2001), and Ferri, Keefe, and Gregg (2005), all explored the experiences and perspectives of teachers identified with disabilities and their negotiations of disability discourses. In her study, Gabel asked her participants to define disability and then explored how their understanding of disability, as encompassing their "beliefs about their sense of self and history," influenced their pedagogy. She conceptualized pedagogy, as a "reflexive relationship" constituting teaching strategies, relationships, and "the ways in which one interprets one's self and one's students during the pedagogical process (p. 36)." The participants in Gabel's study, following her interpretation, faulted schools for concentrating on categorized groups of students rather than on individual students, and for effectively creating disability by not having, "tapped into that source" (p. 37) or potential of individual students. This on-going examination of the relationship between disability and the school environment exemplified how general education teachers might interrogate and challenge the dominant discourse of disability.

The two Ferri et. al. studies (2001, 2005) further illustrated how teachers might engage disability discourses in their epistemologies and practices. The participants in the 2001 study, following Ferri and her colleagues' interpretation, questioned the discursive connection between low expectations and disability as they emphasized the importance of maintaining high expectations for students identified with disabilities alongside teaching them to help themselves. This entailed for students identified with disabilities an instructional approach incorporating different teaching styles (modalities) and curriculum modifications including alternative strategies and assistive technology, while exposing them to the same content as general education students. Echoing Gabel's (2001) findings,

Ferri et. al.'s participants similarly emphasized the relational aspect of teaching through their conceptualization of the decision to reveal their own struggles with learning as a teaching tool. Also of interest here was how challenges to the dominant disability discourse co-existed at times with practices that reinforced the status quo as, for example, none of the participants actually used assistive technology.

How teachers simultaneously challenged and acted as agents of the dominant discourse of disability was further illustrated in the 2005 study conducted by Ferri et. al.. In this study, the researchers described how one of the participants embraced the dominant discourse of disability in their professional life by asserting the authority of intelligence quotient measurements, and through the employment of professional jargon, the binary of special/general education. Conversely, this same teacher challenged the medicalized discourse by refusing to identify himself as someone with a disability within a deficit discourse. Another participant challenged the accuracy and fairness of tests and other official instruments that have been used to assess learning disabilities. Yet, embraced clinical perspectives and approaches, specifically those espoused by Mel Levine and Orton-Gillingham (the same approaches promoted by the NYC Department of Education), aligned with the medicalized discourse of disability. These examples demonstrate how the dominant discourses of disability continued to operate within teachers' epistemologies and practices even while they interrogated the assumptions of competing and alternative discourses.

The notion of teachers holding conflicting beliefs was similarly evidenced in Hamre and Oyler's (2004) exploration of how pre-service teachers learned to address the needs of a range of students including those with disabilities. The participants in this

study, following the interpretation of the researchers, critically examined the meaning of labeling as a means for receiving services as well as notions of normalcy assumed within the dominant disability discourse. At the same time, some of the participants accepted the idea of grade level norms while the issue of varying instructional practices to address the learning needs of children identified with disabilities was little discussed. In the same vein, the participants saw the issue of inclusion within an equity agenda and as a moral issue while still maintaining the authority of the medicalized discourse again echoing the language employed through ADA and IDEA. These exploratory studies have hinted at what it might look like for general education teachers to accept, resist, interrogate, embrace or challenge claims to power/knowledge asserted through discourses of disability.

III - METHODOLOGY

Introduction

I begin this chapter with a description of the research design and a discussion of my positionality and role as researcher. In the following sections, I describe the: research sites; participant selection; data collection timeline, sources and instruments; the analysis of data; and issues of value and trustworthiness. I end with a brief description of the organization of the data chapters.

Research Design

In this study I explored the ways in which discourses of disability circulate within the epistemologies and practices of four elementary teachers. Using a poststructural frame of analysis as described by Foucault (1972, 1977, 1980, 1983), I focused on discourses of disability and their relationships with power/knowledge within the context of two different public elementary schools and their responses to the reforms initiated by the 2003 reform of special education in New York City (NYC) and the 1993 reforms in the state of Massachusetts (MA). I defined each school as an intrinsic case following Stake's (2000) definition of a case as a bounded system in which behavior is patterned. I am particularly interested in the role of classroom teachers and how the teachers position themselves, their pedagogical knowledge and practices within varied, and at times competing, dominant and alternative discourses. My research comprised observations and interviews through which I examined the processes whereby teachers operate within

different discourses with a specific focus on how they ignore, accept, resist, embrace, subvert, interrogate, or challenge claims to power/knowledge.

Resistances, formed at the point power is exercised, are similarly manifold and circulatory. In the case of this study, resistances were formed within the localized universe of particular teachers and classrooms, discourses of disability and their relations of power/knowledge. For this study, I drew models of what resistance can look like from my own teaching experiences (as described in the introduction) and from the reviewed exploratory studies concerning teachers' beliefs. Resistances are potentially formed through the language teachers' employ, their interactions with their respective administrations and districts' department of education, their relationships with their students, and their pedagogy including but not limited to their instructional approaches, assessments tools, and classroom management.

Research Questions

Following a poststructural frame, I assumed in this study that society and schools are frequently structured to reinforce dominant discourses that maintain inequality within the status quo. The research questions proposed for this study were formulated to create distinct but interrelated avenues of inquiry. As a researcher, these avenues of inquiry allowed me to explore and interpret how these four teachers conceptualized disability within dominant and alternative discourses while engaging the institutional settings of general and special education. The research questions are:

1. How have these two schools responded to the changes in special education initiated by the 2003 Reform of Special Education in NYC and the Education Reform Act of 1993 in the state of Massachusetts?

   a. What competing, dominant, and alternative educator's discourses of disability circulate within the schools?
   b. How do key administrators position themselves and or act as agents of particular discourses of disability?

2. How do these particular teachers within these schools ignore, accept, resist, embrace, subvert, interrogate, or challenge claims to power/knowledge enacted through dominant discourses of disability?
   a. What personal and professional experiences do these teachers draw from in their conceptualization of disability?
   b. How do these teachers position themselves and or act as agents of particular discourses of disability?

The first set of research questions, which constituted the first stage of my research, allowed me to explore how these schools responded to the changes initiated by the local educational reforms of special education. This included identifying educator's discourses of disability and the power/knowledge claims they sustain. It also included: (a) interpreting the school culture as described by administrators, special education specialists, and other support staff; (b) exploring how these schools worked to implement curriculum that was accessible to a wide range of learners including children who were struggling and children identified with disabilities; and (c) examining what kinds of technologies, evaluations, practices, and apparatuses were deployed towards this end.

The second set of questions, which constituted the second stage of my research, allowed me to focus on the four participant teachers, two within each school. These questions were designed to examine how these four teachers within these schools conceptualized disability, their relationship with their administration, and how they ignored, accepted, resisted, embraced, subverted, interrogated, or challenged power/knowledge claims enacted through dominant discourses of disability. These questions offered me an opportunity to explore with the teachers how their conceptions of disability were shaped by their personal and professional journeys. It also allowed me to

examine how these teachers acted and positioned themselves as agents of particular discourses. This included through observations and interviews, examining how these teachers interpreted, conceptualized, assessed and addressed the needs of a wide range of learners and in particular children who were struggling and children identified with disabilities in their classrooms. This also included exploring how these teachers interpreted and negotiated their school's culture and examined the relations these teachers had with the Department of Education (DOE) and the institution of special education.

In addition, these questions offered opportunities for me to compare and contrast the two public schools. Through this interpretative process, I explored the ways in which discourses of disability circulated within the epistemologies and practices of the four elementary teachers were particular to their school setting as well as how these discourses reflected larger system-wide discourses within these two public elementary schools.

Researcher's Positionality

As a researcher, my "identity" has been integrally woven into my research (Fine, 1998, Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000). My identity is not static but involves an intersectionality of multiple identities influenced by the diverse contexts in which I've live and worked (Ellsworth, 1992, Knight, 2002). Furthermore, these identities do not confer on me an individualistic autonomy but rather as Alcoff (1991) argued, reflect my participation "in the creation and reproduction of discourses through which my own and other selves are constituted" (p. 21). It is from this stance that I have identified myself as a White, straight, middle class, Jewish man, with a M.Ed. in special education. Having identified myself thus, I would further argue that from a poststructural perspective,

categories such as these are themselves discursively constructed and always shifting in meaning and in their relationship with one another. Moreover, my personal and professional experiences with discourses of disability and individuals with disabilities have made me sympathetic to the political objectives encompassed within a disabilities studies perspective as defined by Linton (p. 1998). Conversely, I have recognized that my multiple identities have also positioned me within the dominant educational discourse as normal and not one of those "left behind."

As a professional working in the field of education for close to twenty years, I have held a variety of positions including, administrator, teacher, consultant, as well as supervisor and teacher in higher education. For the previous six years I have held leadership positions in two different schools. During the final year writing this study, I was the Head of Lower School at the Shipley School, an independent co-educational pre-K through twelve, school in Bryn Mawr, PA serving over 800 students and families. Among other responsibilities, I supervise faculty, oversee curriculum development and implementation, and manage the school's efforts to support children who are struggling. Concurrent with my administrative work, I serve as an educational consultant, which includes an on-going relationship over six years with a large public elementary school in Tampa, FL that serves an immigrant and economically disadvantaged population of students and families. Through this work, I confronted the challenges of designing and implementing professional development in a public school situated within a system implementing mandated curriculum driven and assessed by high stakes standardized test (FCATS).

Prior to Shipley and of particular interest to this study, I was the principal for five years at an independent co-educational K through six lab school in a small town in western MA associated with a local college, serving over 270 students and families. Among other responsibilities, I helped create, maintain and assess school-wide systems for supporting children who were struggling including children identified with disabilities. I also worked directly with families and teachers supporting children identified with disabilities including navigating the public school IEP process as well as privately administered evaluations.

Through this work, I directly encountered the special education bureaucracy at the Taft Street School as families of children who were struggling and who lived within the schools boundaries sought public school evaluations. As the school in which I worked was an independent school, children who were diagnosed with a disability and received IEPs did not receive support services. Consequently within the school, evaluations were construed as normed data sources that would help the school better understand and support individual children who were struggling. Within this construct, normed scores carried particular meaning and significance. Conversely, with no services and the focus to the data, IEPs as guidelines and planning tools were minimized if not dismissed as irrelevant. As the principal, I played a critical role in negotiating the meaning and impact of the IEP process among families, teachers, and school. This role also provided insight into the inner workings of the Taft Street School during the process of data collection.

Before assuming an administrative position, I spent a year at Teachers College, Columbia University, working as a supervisor in the Elementary Inclusive Education program while in the doctoral program. During this year, I supervised students in a

number of public schools in Manhattan, giving me some idea of how different public schools in the city supported students identified with disabilities in general education classrooms. I entered Teachers College after twelve years as an early childhood teacher working primarily at the Bank Street School for Children, an independent school in NYC that serves as a laboratory school associated with the Bank Street College of Education. During my time as a teacher, I worked extensively with graduate students from Bank Street College, New York University, and Teachers College, Columbia University as a mentor teacher and course instructor. I was also involved in a multi-year research project at Bank Street College funded by the Ford Foundation exploring teaching practices. The experiences of working with student teachers and participating in research exploring teaching practices while continuing to teach in the classroom instilled in me a deep belief in the value of engaging in continuous critical process of self-interpretation and reflexivity within diverse social settings.

As a general education classroom teacher I had multiple opportunities to work with children identified with physical and learning disabilities. At various times, I have taught children with cerebral palsy, spinal muscular atrophy, and Asperger's syndrome, as well as children with identified attention, sensory, language, and health-related disabilities. Working with these children has challenged my knowledge and skills as a teacher, intellectually and emotionally engaged me, and profoundly influenced the development of my pedagogical skills and understandings. It also led me to pursue a graduate degree in special education.

Over the years, my special education background has informed my practice as a teacher, but it has also caused discomfort as I have begun to recognize and question the

assumptions inherent in the dominant discourse of special education. Positioning myself as a professional special education teacher implies issues of power, as I am part of a community that may be defining, disempowering, and "othering" persons with disabilities (Asch & Fine, 1988). Reflecting on my own experiences as a child has provided me with a source of experiential empathy that I have drawn on to counter, question, and resist this positioning.

As a young child in the late 1960's, I was diagnosed with a speech and language impairment and an unspecified learning disability. The non-specification of the disability may have, at that time, reflected the lack of access to information available to families compounded by the fact that what information was available was made inaccessible through the medicalization of the disability discourse. As a young child, I exhibited a combination of weak oral motor and auditory processing skills, exemplified by how speaking, the sounds I heard differed from the sounds I produced. I also exhibited some additional but more minor visual motor difficulties, including alternating between left and right-handedness. Following the recommendation of my family's pediatric eye doctor, I received a form of early intervention based upon patterning exercises (originally developed as therapy for people who suffered accidental brain injuries). In addition, I worked with a reading specialist.

These interventions occurred outside of school and went on for almost two years between the time I began nursery school and finished kindergarten. From first grade through fifth grade, as a student in a public school, I received speech therapy as a pull out service. Twice each week, I worked with the therapist and two other students in a small windowless room in the basement of the school. I regularly left and returned in the

middle of lessons and activities and, although I do not remember any stigma being attached, the fact that I received services was common knowledge among the other students in the classroom. My parents took a pro-active stance in advocating for me within the school system, including checking all my school records at the end of each year and making sure no information was passed on that might negatively influence future teachers or label me as disabled. Their ability to negotiate the school system appeared both a consequence of their background, being White, middle class and educated with advanced degrees, and willingness on the part of the suburban public school I attended to grant them access.

My difficulties with articulation caused embarrassment outside of my social circle, particularly whenever I was required to engage in any form of public speaking. This resulted in considerable anxiety in school, which inhibited my participation and affected my self-esteem. Moreover, this at times painful experience negatively impacted my attitude towards school and learning. I have not assumed however, as an adult, the identity of an individual with a disability following Linton's (1998) distinction, as my differences do not significantly affect my daily life nor, since I was a child, have these differences caused me to be devalued or discriminated against at least to my knowledge.

Researcher's Role

This study draws upon interviews and classroom observations. In my relationship with the participants I assumed full disclosure of my research and intent (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). This included explicitly discussing my research with the principals of the two schools as I negotiated entry as well as with the participant teachers in each prior

to and during their initial interviews. I attempted to build a relationship by answering questions, expressing my feelings, and revealing my human side, and sought to lessen the dichotomies imposed by traditional research (Angrossino & Mays de Perez, 2000, Fontana & Frey, 1994, Madriz, 2000, Seidman, 1998). This concurs with the tenet that good qualitative research depends on interpersonal skills and includes a clear discussion of the researcher's role (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). These discussions were ongoing, accounting for the shifting nature of roles and relationships within the research process. When observing in the classroom I assumed a peripheral membership role, allowing me to interact with the participants so as to gain an identity and perspective somewhere between an insider and outsider, without fully joining in the setting's core activities (Adler & Adler, 1994, Merriam, 1998). Within this role I was able to respond to and engage children and teachers in an everyday manner, as opposed to creating artificial boundaries in an effort to inhibit social interaction and distance myself, as the tool of research, from participants and their settings.

From a poststructural perspective, all research is interpretative and, as an apparatus of power, all research is political. When conducting my study, I scrutinized what Rossman and Rallis (cited in Marshall & Rossman, 1999) identified as the "complex interplay of our own personal biography, power and status, interactions with participants, and written word" (p. 5). Moreover, this complex interplay has been shaped by the discourses available to me as I framed my interpretation. I acknowledge that I bring with me a set of questions, ideas, and assumptions, concerning the construct of disability, language and communication, and the potential of teachers and schools to impact all children, particularly children categorized with a disability. Consequently, I

understand that what I chose to observe may in large part be conditioned by who I "am" (Angrossino & Mays de Perez, 2000) for as Delgado Bernal (1998) wrote, "the researcher is a subject in her research and her personal history is part of the analytical process" (p. 564). Therefore in identifying and positioning myself, I understand that researcher autobiographies assert the researcher's power and, that questions of power arising from issues of representation and interpretation are always entwined in the text (Alcoff, 1991, Fine et al., 2000, Geertz, 1973). Finally, I acknowledge that the entirety of this study, including the form and structure of the resulting written text, has occurred and was shaped within the context and requirements of my participation in a doctoral program. This may constrain the choices I make in regards to issues of representation and interpretation.

Sites and Participants

In finding the two schools in which I conducted research, Bedford and Taft, I engaged in a process of convenience, random and networking methodologies. Additionally, my choices were also influenced by my move to western MA in the summer of 2008 when I accepted a position as principal of an independent lab school associated with a private small college.

I first met with April (all names used in this study are pseudonym), the principal at Bedford, during the fall of 2007, while working in the school supervising graduate students in the Elementary Inclusive Education program at Teachers College, After receiving permission to conduct research, I sent April an e-mail containing a description and tentative timeframe for my research (Appendix B). However, I wasn't able to begin

conducting research until close to the end of the 2007-2008 school year as I first defended my dissertation proposal then waited for IRB approval from Teachers College and the NYC Department of Education (DOE). As I continued to supervise student teachers at Bedford, I was able during this time to develop relationships with administrators and teachers, and to familiarize myself with the school and its culture. Once I had received IRB approval, I quickly found two teachers, Maya at the time in second grade and Kyle at the time in fourth grade, whom I felt would allow me to construct information-rich cases for this study (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, Merriam, 1998). Both teachers joined Bedford just after the school moved into its current home and had begun the transition from a separate program within a neighborhood school to a stand-alone public school. Along with April, the principal, other administrators interviewed included Irene, the school counselor, Hannah, the assistant principal in her first year at Bedford, and Tina, the former assistant principal who had joined the school with April.

Following my move to western MA in the summer of 2008, I quickly reached out to Margaret, the principal at a local public school, Taft Elementary, which of the various public elementary schools in town served the most socio-economic and ethnically diverse population of students and families. After receiving permission to conduct research from both the superintendent and Margaret, I began visiting Taft, observing in classrooms and public spaces, and interviewing key members of the administration. Along with Margaret, this included Polly, the Special Education evaluation team leader, and Judy, the school psychologist. That winter, I choose two teachers, Connie in first grade and Linda in fourth grade, to participate further in the research (I had approached another teacher

earlier who declined to participate). I had already observed in both teachers classroom when I first entered the school and began interviewing key administrators. In March 2008 I returned to their classrooms and began observing, as I moved from focusing on the school to focusing on these particular teachers.

In finding the two participant teachers within each school, I paid particular attention to teachers who: (a) were interested in issues of disability and committed to working with children with disabilities; (b) had in their classroom one or more children identified with a disability who had received an official categorization (meaning she or he had a current IEP and was receiving some form of special education support services; (c) had taught for three or more years; and (d) attended or had graduated with a master's degree from an educational institution. These criteria were necessarily flexible as the sample size was confined to teachers working in the school sites and was further limited to encompass teachers interested in working with me. As I choose participants (and they choose me), I also tried for a maximum variation sampling, looking for teachers who: (a) taught in different grades; (b) worked in classroom with diverse structures; (c) were diverse in terms of experience, socio-economic background, age, gender, and ethnicity/race; and (d) attended or had attended different colleges or graduates schools of education (Merriam, 1998).

Following Teachers College, Columbia University IRB guidelines; all participants were advised of the nature of the study, the risks involved and the possible professional benefits. Each participant, including teachers and administrators, was given written and signed guidelines that outlined my conduct during the study and her/his rights (Appendix C).

Bedford

At the time of this study, Bedford Academy was a public school of choice in New York City serving students and their families in kindergarten through fifth grade. The school was founded by a group of neighborhood families many of whom were White and among the district's more affluent families looking for an alternative to their zoned schools. Located in a district plagued by overcrowding and with limited school options, where 95% of the children were eligible for free lunch, the school was supported early on by the office of the district superintendent. With admission based on a lottery system, the founding families sought to create a racially and economically diverse population of students and families, whose educational beliefs aligned with the school's mission and vision.

Officially opened as a separate program within a neighborhood public school soon after the start of the new millennium, Bedford began with two kindergarten classrooms housed in a large neighborhood public elementary school. In its fourth year, and supporting a K-3 program having added a grade each year, the school was invited by the Office of New Schools to apply for public school status. Upon acceptance, Bedford moved to its current location. Over the next two years the school successively added a fourth and fifth grade, which due to a lack of space were housed in the original neighborhood host-school several blocks away. During the spring of the first year of this study, Bedford graduated its first class of fifth graders.

Written by the school's founding families, Bedford's mission promoted a child centered progressive educational philosophy alongside the creation of an economically and racially diverse community reflective of the surrounding neighborhood and city.

Classrooms were envisioned as "small nurturing learning communities" where children actively engaged in the construction of knowledge and were supported "as individuals with varied needs and varied learning styles." While families were seen as playing a critical role in nurturing children's "educational lives" in and out of school. Following the policies and procedures of NYC DOE, Bedford administered high-stakes standardized tests. The school had also recently implemented the *Investigations* math program and loosely followed the Reading/Writing Project curriculum from Teachers College. Taken at face value Bedford appeared committed to creating a broadly inclusive educational environment capable of supporting a range of learners including children identified with disabilities. During the 2008-09 school year, Bedford served approximately two hundred and ten students of which roughly twenty-two children were identified with disabilities and qualified to receive special education services.

Taft

Located in western MA, Taft Elementary School was one of a small number of neighborhood public elementary schools in the district serving students and their families in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade. Among the schools, Taft had historically been recognized as culturally and socio-economically the most diverse. This was in large part due to the development of subsidized public housing across the street from the school following World War II. During the time of this study, families of first and second-generation immigrants primarily populated the housing development. The majority of these families were from Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, and various Caribbean nations and many were native Spanish speakers. Although consistently populated by families of low socio-economic status, the influx of these immigrant families constituted

a long-term population shift within the development. Within the school and larger town, the families residing in the housing development appeared segregated to some degree from other families, something readily acknowledged within the school by administrators and teachers.

With its distinct population, Taft Elementary School was known as a family oriented school that embraced its diversity while prioritizing community and family involvement. While administering the MCAS, the school implemented a core curriculum and set of programs mandated by the district that followed the Massachusetts Frameworks, including the Scholastic Reading system and the *Investigations* math program. At the time of this study, Margaret, the principal, had led the school for close to twenty years. Over the course of her tenure, the school has implemented a more progressive, developmentally appropriate curriculum, embracing a perspective that asserted, "everyone belongs" and "all children can learn." During the 2010-11 school year, when this study took place, Taft served approximately three hundred students in the school in twenty classrooms with thirty-two full time teachers. In March of 2010, according to the administration over 80 children in the school were identified with a disability. That represented a higher percentage within the school population as prior to the study during the 2007-08 school year, ninety-two children out of a total population of four hundred and eight qualified for special education services.

Data - Timeline, Sources and Instruments

Data collection for this study occurred over a period of approximately two years between February 2008 and July 2010. After receiving permission to conduct research, I

spent time in each school getting to know the individual schools, their cultures and personnel. This included spending time observing in classrooms and public spaces, as well as interviewing key administrators. Through the process of getting to know the schools, I choose two teachers in each to more fully participate in my research. I spent time in the their classrooms and conducted a series of three interviews with each participant. I first conducted research in at Bedford in New York City following a professional relocation then conducted research at Taft Elementary in western MA.

In this study, I utilized multiple qualitative research methods in order to make possible, "thick description" (Geertz, 1973). Following Merriam's (1998) portrayal of data collection in qualitative research as the process of "asking, watching, and reviewing," (p. 69) this study incorporated three primary methods for gathering data typical of qualitative research: (a) spontaneous conversations and in-depth interviewing; (b) direct observation; and (c) analyzing documents and material culture (Marshall and Rossman, 1999). A detailed table of data for sources for each school, including interview logs, observational logs, and material resources, can be found provided in Appendix D.

Interviews

Interviews constitute an essential tool for exploring feelings, behaviors that cannot be observed, and the myriad ways in which other people interpret the world and their experiences. Yet we also live in a society in which the discourse of interviews have assumed a central role in helping people interpret and make sense out of their lives (Rapley, 2004). As a consequence, interviews are inherently social negotiations, "where speakers collaborate in producing retrospective (and prospective) *accounts* or *versions* of their past (or future) actions, experiences, feelings and thoughts" (p. 16). Interviews

moreover do not occur in a vacuum but rather constitute localized encounters that are historically, socio-culturally, and geographically situated. In this study, these encounters also occurred within the institutional and organizational contexts of two particular public elementary schools. From a poststructural perspective and further complicating these encounters, I must assume that interviewees speak from multiple and shifting subject positions that may ever only be partially transparent.

The role I assumed as researcher during the interview process is critical. This involved planning and designing decisions including but not limited to the choice of time, place, and structure. This role also required I demonstrate an understanding of and sensitivity towards the power relationships arising between participants and myself particularly as relating to issues involving social group identities (Fontana & Frey, 1994, Merriam, 1998, Seidman, 1998). Yet within this dynamic I recognize such identities are not essentialized and that interviewees also freely exercise power. I refer here to Scheurich's (2001) description of how during interviews he has had interviewees respond to his questions with different questions: not as a consequence of misunderstanding but rather as a means for the interviewee to interject a different question, one that she wants to answer. From a poststructural frame power is not always and necessarily exercised through the binary of domination and resistance. When interviewing, I looked for what Scheurich identified as "chaos/freedom," being a space where:

> Everything that occurs is neither dominance nor resistance: everything that escapes or exceeds this binary is chaos (because it is not encapsulated by the binary) and an openness or freedom for the interviewer and interviewee. (p. 72)

It is in these spaces that the interview participants tell stories, assume subject positions, perform, play, and embrace motivations that may have nothing to do with dominance or

with the purpose of the interview. It is alternatively also within these spaces that the participants may engage and subvert discourses of disability.

In order to address the research questions, the format of the preplanned or formal interviews were in-depth and semi-structured (Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Merriam, 1998). I used interview protocols to assure some consistency among the participants both within each school and between the two schools (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003, Merriam, 1998). However, I also recognize that qualitative interviewing is premised on the opportunity to collect diverse data on the same theme (Rapley, 2004). The protocols reflected the semi-structured nature of the interviews, consisting of some specific questions that I wanted to ask each participant, some open-ended questions, and a list of some areas, topics, and issues that I wanted to pursue. In structuring interviews, I kept in mind Rapley's (2004) basic description of interviews as *"asking questions and following up on various things that interviewees raise and allowing them the space to talk"* (p. 25). How I engaged these protocols was influenced by the insights I gained from spending time in the schools, including observations and prior interviews with the teachers, administrators, and special education specialists and other support staff. Interview protocols for each stage have been included in Appendix E. Finally, in the interview protocols and during the interviews themselves, I have at times employed the phrase "a wide range of learners" and "children who are struggling" rather than children with disabilities. The purpose of this was as much as possible to not configure my questions in a way that the participants will automatically assume a medicalized disability discourse.

The interviews conducted for this study occurred in two consecutive stages addressing the research questions. First, I interviewed key administrators including

school counselors and psychologists. Second, I interviewed the participant teachers. In addition I had spontaneous conversations with school staff as I spent time in each school. All the formal interviews were audiotape. Consequently during the interviews, I did not attempt to take extensive notes, although I did on occasion record my own feelings and ideas, as well as jot down comments or statements about which I wanted to inquire further. This allowed me to attend more fully to the participants during the course of interviews. In all interviews and social interactions with school staff, I paid close attention to the language used to describe children and disabilities, particularly the use of binaries such as normal/abnormal and how power is exercised through this language.

The first stage of interviews of key administrators informed the first set of research questions as described previously in the section detailing the research design. In these interviews, I paid particular attention to how the two schools have responded to the local reforms of special education. This interviews included: (a) descriptions of the school's culture; (b) how these schools supported teachers in implementing curriculum that is accessible to a wide range of learners; and (c) what kinds of technologies, evaluations, practices, and apparatuses including forms of assessment and service delivery models, these schools employed. The protocols for these interviews were piloted and have been included in Appendix F along with a description and discussion.

The second stage of interviews with the four participant teachers informed the second set of research questions, although they will also necessarily touch on the first question. I conducted three interviews with each of the four participant teachers, supplemented by spontaneous conversations that occurred during the observations or in other areas of the school. Each interview lasted approximately sixty minutes. All the

interviews were further informed by classroom observations, specifically the third interview in which I explicitly discussed with teachers what I have observed in their classrooms. Throughout the interview process, I engaged in an on-going exploration of how these teachers position themselves and their knowledge within their relationships with the school, special education bureaucracy, and dominant and alternative discourses of disability.

The initial interview served three purposes. First, it offered an opportunity to outline for the participants a framework for the study, which included the motive and purpose, a description of their participation (including the use of pseudonyms), my role as a researcher and author of the study, and logistical considerations (Merriam, 1998). Second, it offered an opportunity to ask general questions and gather information about the participant's personal and professional journey, their educational philosophy, and their interpretation of the school's culture. Third, it offered an opportunity to begin to explore the relationship these teachers had with their administration including how their educational philosophies aligned or diverged from those espoused by the administration. Additionally, this first interview constituted the initiation of a more intimate researcher/participant relationship, meaning my ability to be sensitive to and connect with the participants played a critical role in constructing and nurturing these relationships.

During the second interview, I focused on the first part of the second set of research questions: what personal and professional experiences do these teachers draw from in their conceptualization of disability. This entailed among other things talking with these teachers about: (a) their experiences in school as children and as adults; (b) their experiences interacting with people with disabilities inside and outside of school;

and (c) their interpretations of the portrayal of disability in the mass media. In addition, I situated the research within the localized context of each teachers' classroom as I asked them to describe their students and to talk about how they supported a range of learners, particularly children who were struggling.

The final interview focused on the particular children in their classrooms who were struggling academically, behaviorally, or had been identified with a disability. This included talking to teachers about: (a) their understanding of how these children were initially identified and the children's school histories; (b) their view of these children's participation in class including the children's social behavior and academic competencies; (c) their instructional approach for teaching these children; (d) their interactions regarding these children with school specialists and support staff, the DOE, and the children's families; and (e) their feelings about whether these children can be successful in the school. I identified children who were struggling through observations and by asking teachers directly, sometimes there appeared an intersection between children's struggles and the teachers' responses when asked which children they found most intriguing, challenging, and easy to teach.

Observations

Observations constitute crucial components of qualitative research. They offer opportunities in my role as researcher to see, hear, and thus interpret the participants' behavior as situated in the natural localized context and setting in which they work (Adler & Adler, 1994). In employing observations as a method of gathering information, I have assumed, "that behavior is purposeful and expressive of deeper values and beliefs"

(Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 107). This echoes Varenne and McDermott's (1999) interest in observation as a means to for:

> Seeing how the participants themselves reveal, *in their very behavior*, that which they cannot escape in a particular setting, that which is *always already there* when they start and remains when they end…[as well as] notice the many ways in which the people do not quite do what they might be expected to do, the ways in which they do more or do something else – at the very same time they take into account that which others have made for them. (p. 16)

In addition, through classroom observations I hope to have created the possibility of a series of shared experiences (acknowledging that all experience is an interpretation) that may potentially enrich my relationship with the participants. Moreover, these observations informed our discussions, specifically in relationship to exploring the meanings of the participant teachers' behaviors as well as their interpretations of the children's behaviors that I observe. In this way, immersion in the setting allowed me an opportunity to gain a deeper insight through my presence and participation of how the participants in the study may experience and interpret their reality (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Finally, in working from a poststructural frame, I assume that description in the process of becoming data is by always adulterated and already a consequence of interpretation and analysis (Wolcott, 1994).

For this study, I began my observations as I enter the neighborhood in which the two schools are located. Observations, in the first stage of the study, involved the whole school, including the shared spaces of hallways, playgrounds, and lunchrooms, as well as the more contained spaces of classrooms and other rooms or offices in which teachers, administrators, specialists and support staff work with students. These observations informed the first set of research questions and helped me gain a feel for each school's structure and culture as well as the population of children served. I was specifically

interested in: (a) the curriculum and teaching strategies employed in the schools; (b) the ways in which teachers and staff coped with disruptive behavior; (c) how these schools articulated their values and foster community among both children and staff; and (d) the social language used within the schools and the ways in which teachers and students interacted. In addition, these observations served as an opportunity for me to get to know the school staff. In addition, I continued to collect data about the school throughout the second stage of the study.

The second stage of the study informed my second set of research questions as I focused my observations on the classrooms of each of the four participant teachers. For each of the teachers, I scheduled multiple times in her or his classroom, which allowed me to gain a feel for the daily ebb and flow of activities. During the course of the observations, I follow a modified version of Spradley's funneled stages of observation as described by Adler and Adler (1994), looking broadly as I enter the classroom then narrowing, adjusting and fine-tuning my focus as the observations proceed.

In following the funnel metaphor, the initial observation(s) was broad and generally served as an opportunity for me to familiarize myself with the classroom environment. This observation was primarily descriptive in nature. The following observations were more focused as I direct my attention towards, "a deeper and narrower portion of the people, behaviors, times, spaces, feelings, structures, and/or processes" (Adler & Adler, 1994, p. 381). During these latter observations, I focused in part on the participation and behavior of the children who the teachers identified as of concern and or with a disability, as well as children who interested me. This included how these teachers: (a) responded to the behavior and supported the academic work of the specific children

and groups of children; (b) communicated expectations around behavior and work; (c) used language; (d) implemented curriculum including through different modalities and instructional strategies; and (e) developed and fostered relationships.

All the observations were informed by the interviews as they offered an opportunity to explore the congruence and dissonance between how these teachers describe their educational philosophies and my observation and interpretation of their practices. Moreover, the later observations informed by the second and third interviews in which teachers described how they worked with a diverse range of learners and identified the children in their classroom who are struggling academically, behaviorally, or who had received IEPs. During all the observations, I compared what I was seeing and interpreting in the classroom and how this aligned or diverged from the ways in which the teachers engaged discourses of disability during the interviews.

To record my observations, I used a notational form of free association incorporating many of the elements suggested by Denzin and cited in Adler & Adler (1994) including, explicit reference to the participants, interactions, routines, rituals, temporal elements, and social organizations. In my note taking I followed the recommendations of Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995, p. 32-34) as described:

1. Jot down details of what you sense are key components of observed scenes or interactions.

2. Avoid making statements characterizing what people do that rely on generalizations.

3. Jot down concrete sensory details about actions and talk, which show rather than talk about people's behavior.

4. Jot down sensory details which you could easily forget but which you deem to be key observations about the scene…to encourage the recall of scenes and events.

5. Jottings can be used to signal general impressions and feelings, even if the fieldworker is unsure of their significance at the moment.

While in the field, I took notes openly, primarily using a laptop computer in part to help establish my role as fieldworker (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995).

I reviewed and extended my field notes soon after each observation channeling the energy and feelings generated by my experience as well as detailing and clarifying my interpretations of my recollections (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). When reviewing and extending the field notes, I focused my elaborations on the substance of the interactions observed (Merriam, 1998). At the same time, I acknowledged that the level of detail describing any interaction is a consequence of my purposiveness (Wolcott, 1994). In writing up observations, I combined some of the different elements described by Wolcott, including: (a) chronological order; (b) researcher or narrator order; (c) progressive focusing; (d) day-in-the-life; and (e) critical or key event (p. 18-19). The elements I chose depended in part on whether I was observing the school broadly or observing specific teachers.

Documents and Material Culture

One of the benefits of collecting documents when doing research resides in the fact that documents exist independently of the research agenda and as such have not been influenced through interaction with the research process (Merriam, 1998). I have defined documents and material culture for the purposes of this study to include official school records and informal documents prepared for personal use by the participant teachers. The primary distinction between these two forms of material texts relates to power; records assert the full technology of power of the state (Hodder, 1994). I understand that

the meanings of both forms can only be ascertained within specific socio-historical contexts, and that these meanings are always open to continuous interpretation. Yet, within the moment of articulation, writing offers greater control over language and the ability to link it "to strategies of centralization and codification…the word, concretized or 'made flesh' in the artifact, can transcend context and gather through time extended symbolic connotations" (p. 394). Consequently, when reading documents there is always the potential for conflict between text and context.

For this study, documents collected included blank samples (templates) of worksheets and assessments employed by the participant teachers, curriculum descriptions and examples of classroom work. Records collected included grade level assessments and for Bedford the "New School Quality Review Summary Feedback." My interest in school records lies in the ways in which they define criteria for success for children identified with a disability and the discursive meanings they impart for the participant teachers as opposed to what they say about individual children (consequently I did not look at documents relating to individual children). With this in mind as well in recognition of the situated meanings of documents, all the records and documents collected were interpreted in collaboration with the participant teachers during interviews and observations.

Data Analysis

The processes of data collection and analysis are intricately connected and reside within a reciprocal relationship wherein each informs the other (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). In fact, the data collection process is already and inherently analytical; interviews

require both speakers to collaboratively make “meaning” and produce “knowledge” (Rapley, 2004), while observations are never merely observations (Wolcott, 1994). For this study, the analysis of data occurred on multiple levels. During the period of data collection: (a) at the level of each individual school particularly during the first stage of research and in response to the first set of research questions; and (b) at the level of the participant teachers during the second stage of research and in response to the first and second set of research questions. Following the collection of data, I repeated the initial analysis with a particular focus on identifying discourses of disability circulating within each school. I then moved on to a synthesis of each school and finally, a synthesis of both schools with an eye towards their relationship with the dominant discourses of disability.

The separation and uniqueness of the multiple levels were arbitrary as each informed the other following Wolcott’s (1994) model of analysis. Analysis occurred throughout the study beginning with the following of systematic fieldwork procedures consistent with my employment of a poststructural analytical frame. Once I had data in hand, I similarly follow Wolcott’s model by: (a) highlighting my findings; (b) displaying my findings using graphic organizers; (c) identifying patterned regularities in the data; (d) comparing the teachers and schools; (e) contextualizing the findings in a broader analytical framework including my own expectations; and (e) critiquing the research process. As I collected and analyzed data, I recorded my conjectural explorations of emerging relationships, themes, and categories among the different participants.

While analyzing data, I loosely followed the procedure described by Ferri, Connor, Solis, Valle, and Volpitta (2005). I began by separately reading and rereading the transcripts (observations, interviews), first those involving the school and key

administrators then those involving the individual participant teachers. I initially looked for relationships and connections through my interpretation of the data for (individually) each of the teachers and the schools. I subsequently re-analyzed the data with an eye towards discourses of disability as described in the literature review and how these discourses were entwined in the data. This included looking at the participants': (a) language; (b) social interactions and relationships; and (c) context including the physical environment, the people present, the activities occurring, and the time of day.

In a final rereading, I looked specifically for instances, in which the participants, ignored, resisted, subverted, interrogated, or challenged claims to power/knowledge assumed by the dominant and alternative discourses of disability. In this analysis I paid particular attention to language, instructional approaches, interactions with children, and any descriptions of the teachers' beliefs and perceptions. I also looked specifically at how power circulated within the schools institutionally through disciplinary technologies and service delivery models, again as described in the literature review.

Along with rereading, I engaged in the process of analytical looking by writing and rewriting. In analyzing the data collected at Bedford, I went through multiple distinct drafts, the first focusing on each interview participants' narrative. The second draft, although still focusing on individual participants, was reorganized around four identified discourses. In the third draft, the discourses came to the forefront subsuming the participants' individual narratives. In the fourth draft, the discourses themselves were condensed and collapsed driven by the emerging findings. In analyzing the data collected at the Taft School, I engaged in a similar process of reading and rereading, writing and rewriting, however, I purposely built upon the findings emerging from my analysis of the

data from Bedford with the intention of drafting a counter story. This process of analyzing through writing continued, shaped by a sharpening employment of my theoretical lens.

Value and Trustworthiness

In this study I embraced a poststructuralist stance that assumes knowledge and truth are always partial, contested and that there is no truth outside of power (Foucault, 1980; Lincoln & Guba, 2000). This perspective problematizes positivist notions of validity that seek to identify in accounts of research that which is true and valid. In acknowledging the holistic, fluid, and multidimensional conception of reality assumed in most qualitative research, Merriam (1998) contended that, "assessing the isomorphism between data collected and the 'reality' from which they were derived is thus an inappropriate determinant of validity" (p. 202). Consequently, I did not attempt to assess the validity of this study.

Rather, I have embraced in this study Marshall and Rossman's (1999) criteria for assessing the value and trustworthiness of qualitative research. This entails that I provide an explicit description and rationale of the research design, the collection and management of data, and the process of analysis and interpretation, as well as plans for the preservation of data. It means I must challenge myself in my role as researcher, to explain the origins of the research, to continuously explore and record my biases and assumptions, and to maintain ethical standards. In presenting findings, it requires that I clearly articulate and meticulously state the relationship and connection among the research questions, data collected, and my interpretations. In addition, I must make the

form in which this study is reported accessible to other researchers, practitioners, and policymakers.

With Marshall and Rossman's (1999) precepts in mind, I designed this study following Foucault's (1980) methodological precautions. This dictates that I analyze power at the extremities, at the regional and local levels where the circulation of power is less legal in nature. It requires that my analysis focus on the constitution of the subject in its materiality. It means that I view power as circulating, and individuals as "always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising power…not only its inert or consenting target; [but] also the elements of its articulation…[as] the vehicles of power, not its points of application" (p. 98). It is for these reasons that I chose to focus on four general education teachers who, through their epistemologies and practices, act as agents of the dominant and alternative disability discourses within their respective classrooms and schools. These precautions further require that I understand power as ascending, that my analysis concern the micro-mechanisms of power, and that I focus on the production of instruments, strategies, and technologies for the formation, accumulation, and circulation of power/knowledge. It is for these reasons that I began this study by looking at the schools and how they have responded to the changes exemplified by local special education reforms to which the schools must be responsible.

Organization of Data Chapters

In the following three chapters, I present and analyze the data collected for this study. In the first chapter, I focus on Taft, which although the second school I studied, is presented first as an example of school in which the institutional and discursive authority

of special education and a medicalized discourse are entrenched in the cultural norms and practices of the school. In this chapter, I describe and analyze the implementation of segregated special education programs in the district and school. I next look at the impact of service delivery models, paying particular attention to the use of para-professionals and pull out services. Finally, I examine how the administration, in its description of teachers, supports the discursive practices operating within the school. Throughout this chapter, I also pay particular attention to the multiplicity of subject positions taken up by administrators, teachers and children.

The second data chapter focuses on Bedford, where a weak administration and the institutional absence of special education contributed to a confused environment with no system in place for supporting children identified with disabilities or the general education teachers who worked with them. In this chapter, I show and describe a discourse of assessment and accountability, which I identified through my interpretation of the data, and explore how this discourse produced a particular kind of teacher, as an officer of compliance. I also show and describe how the school, administration and teachers, responded to the lack of a special education presence within the school, paying particular attention to the system put in place to support children identified with disabilities and the language used by the administration when discussing children who were struggling.

The third and final data chapter focuses on Maya and Kyle, two of the teachers at Bedford, as I explore how possibilities for resistance were formed, fostered in part by confusion within the school culture and environment. In this chapter, I first describe and explore respectively Maya and Kyle's avowed pedagogical philosophies and instructional

practices in relationship with the discourse of assessment and accountability. I next describe and explore how these two teachers responded to the medicalized discourse of disability, which although diminished and somewhat disorganized within Bedford, nevertheless remained the dominant discourse of disability deployed within the public school system writ large.

IV –TAFT ELEMENTARY

Introduction

In the midst of conducting research for this dissertation, I left New York City to become the principal at an independent lab school connected to a small college. When children at my new school struggled and their families and teachers, the school psychologist and myself, felt a psycho-educational evaluation was warranted, many of the children ended up at Taft, one of the local elementary public school, for testing. I thus became acquainted with the administration and members of the special education evaluation team in the school, as well as with some of the teachers. Akin to Bedford, the first school I studied, Taft hailed its progressive educational philosophy and promoted the diversity of its student population as a source of strength. As Margaret, the school's principal put it: "We have a real commitment to celebrating…where kids come from with an expectation…that everybody belongs." Unlike Bedford, Taft had a long history as a public school, with stable leadership as Margaret was entering her twentieth year at the helm. Similar yet different, Taft seemed to be a good choice for the second school in my study.

Once at Taft however, I encountered a school environment that was quite different from what I had imagined. Looking for possibilities of resistance by teachers to the dominant discourses of disability, I encountered instead a culture where the authority of special education appeared entrenched and unquestioned. Taft, seen through my Foucauldian theoretical lens, seemed to be the epitome of a school functioning within a power/knowledge matrix, as described by Foucault (1977, 1980, 1983), where the public

school system's enactment of a medicalized discourse of disability was deployed through the institutional authority of special education. Inside the walls of the school, children considered outside the norm were examined, judged and observed, with general education readily relinquishing responsibility for those deemed disabled or lacking English language proficiency. In this environment, possibilities for resistance appeared to be nullified, engulfed within a system in which all, general and special education, were complicit.

My encounters at Taft led me to pivot from an exploration of resistance to a study of the discursive practices that contributed to an environment where the subjectification of children and teachers appeared characterized by what Foucault (1983) referred to as the "absence of struggle." In the first section of this chapter, I describe and analyze the implementation of segregated special education programs in the district and school. In the following section, I look at the impact of service delivery models, paying particular attention to the use of para-professionals and pull out services. Finally, I examine how the administration, in its description of teachers, supports the discursive practices operating within the school. Throughout this chapter, I also pay particular attention to the multiplicity of subject positions taken up by administrators, teachers and children.

Segregated Special Education Programs

Taft Elementary functioned within a local public school system where the institution of special education was well established; administering multiple programs and services that separated children identified with disabilities from general education classrooms. On the district's website, following its commitment to the placing of children

identified with disabilities in the least restrictive environment (LRE) as set forth in the Individuals with a Disability Act (IDEA), there appeared a long list of programs for "children who qualify as a child with a disability." Along with programs for autism, developmental delays, and specific learning disabilities, there appeared individual programs for a variety of "impairments" including, intellectual, sensory, neurological, emotional, communication, physical and health. Margaret, the principal at Taft, coalesced the programs into four categories of disability: a life skills program "for cognitively delayed" children; a "DEP" program for children with "significant" physical disabilities; a "learning disabled classroom" for children who "used to be called dyslexic"; an alternative learning program for children with "severe" behavioral issues; and an "autism spectrum disorder" (ASD) program.

Taken together, these programs comprised the school district's response to the power/knowledge claims exercised through a medicalized discourse of disability employed and deployed through federal legislation and the institutional authority of special education (Foucault, 1977, 1980, 1983; Hehir et al., 2005; Reid & Valle, 2004). The parsing and categorizing of disability inherent in the school district's multiplicity of programs appeared consistent with what Foucault (1977) described as a modern form of knowledge articulated through the social sciences and interested in the examination, analysis, and description of the individual "at the level of the mechanism itself" (p. 137). While the medicalization of behavior and conduct, of the human body in its entirety, discursively produced the enactment of a "society of normalization," legitimized the placement of children deemed outside the norm and disabled through psycho-educational

evaluation into special education programs where they could be treated, observed and controlled (Foucault, 1977, 1980, 1983).

The ASD Program and the Entrenchment of Special Education

The multiplicity of segregated programs within the school district constituted a network of power relations supporting the institution and authority of special education, and the power/knowledge claims exercised through a medicalized discourse of disability. Within Taft, this network operated through the ASD program, which was housed inside the school and overseen by Margaret. This program appeared a source of pride within the school, as administrators and teachers brought it up a number of times as an example of the diversity of the school's student population, and of its commitment to inclusion and the education of all children. It was from this vantage that Margaret discussed the opportunities for participation in general education classrooms of children in the ASD program.

> I think the kids probably were in the classrooms more in the early years when it was easier to integrate the curriculum and the expectations weren't as high for sitting and doing work….As they've gotten older I've noticed that they are spending more time in the ASD room doing…sort of a parallel curriculum, but doing it through augmented technology, assisted technology, and needing maybe space away from other kids, as opposed to when they were able to be with other kids….But our autism spectrum disorder kids do specials with their peers, the typically developing peers, they'll be in art, music, P.E., they'll be in the lunchroom. They might be in the classroom doing sort of parallel work as much as possible because they're in the mainstream.

Margaret's assertion that the older children identified with autism assigned to the ASD program needed, "maybe space away from other kids," legitimized their separation from general education classrooms. Her further comments, "as opposed to when they were able to be with other kids…the typically developing peers," reinforced that these children

were intrinsically different from "other kids," regardless of age. These assertions aligned with a medicalized discourse that required these children be controlled, observed and treated, materially achieved thorough the utilization of a "parallel" curriculum and technology in "the ASD room," which was manifest as a place rather than a program and set of services (Hehir et. al, 2005; Skrtic, 1995). At the same time, Margaret's description appeared paradoxical as she contended that these children were, "spending more time in the ASD room," and at the same time, "in the classroom…as much as possible because they're in the mainstream." On one hand, Margaret joined with the local discursive and institutional practices within the school and district that effectively segregated children assigned to the ASD program. On the other hand, she appeared to assert the LRE construct enacted through IDEA legislation. That this appeared paradoxical demonstrated the efficiency and entrenchment of the localized discursive and institutional practices.

Conspicuously absent from Margaret's description was any mention of classroom teachers: instead the institution of special education was granted responsibility for a particular category of children identified as disabled. Similarly, Margaret's words obscured the institutional and discursive deployment of power through which children were produced as disabled, separated and placed in special education programs. Framed as an observation, her statement, "as they've gotten older I've noticed that [the children] are spending more time in the ASD room," suggested that this was somehow a choice, open to negotiation, rather than a programmatic decision. That she simply "noticed" this change appeared a contradictory statement in light of her responsibility as principal for overseeing the program. This contradiction, characteristic of the multiple subject positions Margaret inhabited, was further evident in her description of her efforts to

promote the participation of children assigned to the ASD in general education classrooms.

> It's been a developmental process as far as teachers understanding and acceptance of it. We've done some PD, our own school-based….Some teachers have had more interest and have gone for training with the ASD teacher. So in some ways we've had designated teachers…who are more receptive to having those kids in the classrooms. I think they see it as mostly a win-win, because sometimes it means there are more adults there. And with the exception of one child, the kids have been not at all aggressive or acting out.

Depicting her efforts as "a developmental process" of "understanding and acceptance," supported through professional development and reliant on the interest of general education teachers, Margaret detailed an administrative engagement that appeared geared towards greater participation. Thus her construct of participation as a "win-win," asserting the benefit to teachers of having another adult, a special education teacher, present in the classroom. This positioning was consistent with Margaret's professional background. With a master's degree in special education, she had given testimony as a teacher in one of the early test cases for Public Law 94-142 in 1977, in support of a family who advocated for the inclusion of their child, "who was profoundly cognitively delayed," in a mainstream setting. In accord with the construct of subjectivity as fragmented and manifold (Foucault, 1983), Margaret assumed multiple and contradictory subject positions as she: aligned with IDEA legislation and its enactment of a medicalized discourse; supported increased participation in general education classrooms for children assigned to segregated special education programs; and presided over a established system that maintained strict separation between special and general education classrooms and spaces.

The last statement in Margaret's description, concerning supposedly disruptive behavior, labeled as "aggressive" and "acting out," was particularly meaningful as it acknowledged the discursive rationale for separating children. It also marked the historical role of special education as a safety valve for general education, assuming responsibility for children whose behavior disrupted classrooms (Franklin, 1987; Richardson, 1994; Tyack, 1974). Although Margaret, the ASD teacher and the designated teachers, all appeared inclined towards the participation of children in the ASD program in general education classrooms to some degree, the net effect in the school was the opposite, as Margaret previously noted. According to Linda, one of the fourth grade teachers who participated in this study and was a so called designated teacher, the child assigned to her classroom from the ASD program had been in the classroom for snack three times all year, never attended a special, and did not participate, to her knowledge, in any sort of parallel curriculum. Margaret's noticing of the change in participation described earlier, rather than an obscuring of the power relations at play may have been an acknowledgment of a system resistant to change, where the institutional entrenchment of special education and the discursive authority it exercised within the school worked to maintain the strict separation of children.

Special Education Support Services within the School

Alongside the administration of separate programs, the institution of special education maintained authority and control over the system within the school for supporting children identified with disabilities. Located around the school were three resource rooms, serving two grades each and staffed by a special education teacher and

an aide. Margaret, Judy, and Polly, the Special Education Evaluation Team Leader, all described a system in which children identified with a specific learning disability were sent to the resource rooms for instruction in the core subject areas of reading, writing and math. Children identified as bilingual received support through a sheltered immersion program, although they were also regularly pulled out of the classroom, particular children who were dually labeled. Other services provided, including counseling, speech and language, occupational and physical therapy, followed a pull out service delivery model. While children whose behavior was deemed challenging, particularly in the younger grades, were assigned paraprofessional support in the classroom. This system was observed in classrooms and supported by both of the teachers, Connie in first grade and Linda in fifth, who participated more extensively in this study. This system served the purposes of both general and special education, acting as a safety valve for general education, while upholding special education's raison d'être to examine, observe, and treat deviant children (Foucault, 1977, 1980, 1983). That this system was well established within the school was evident in the number of children moving through the system: during the 2007-08 school year, ninety-two children out of a total population of four hundred and eight qualified for special education services.

In describing this system, akin to Margaret, Polly, the special education evaluation team leader, assumed multiple and contradictory subject positions. In her professional role, she facilitated the decision-making process during IEP meetings, concerned primarily with regulations and procedures, she appeared discursively produced as an actor mobilizing federal and local policies in support of a medicalized discourse of disability. At the same time, she expressed empathy towards families entering the IEP

process, including outwardly criticizing the material manifestation of the IEP, the forms families and teachers fill out: "I'm always saying to parents I'm sorry these forms are so awful, they are, they're terrible, they're so unuser-friendly and…all wrapped up in regulations." These multiple subject positions influenced Polly's description of the how special education support services are embedded in the school culture.

> Most special education services are provided outside the general education classroom. Some of that is habit, some of it is systemic, the previous special education director would tell people he didn't believe in inclusion, and that's because, and he was right, he would describe what we did for inclusion here, was we sent a teacher aide in to help the kid out. That's not really instruction and so he never wanted to go there, but as you know…there's a lot of different inclusion models….Inclusion is only what you do and how you do it, so in the system most special education services are provided outside the classroom.

Conceding that most special education services were provided outside the classroom, Polly at first criticized the notion that this constituted inclusion. Specifically, she aimed her critique at the use of aides in classrooms, who were "sent to help the kid out." Her acknowledgment that this was "not really instruction," alluded to the fact that the aide was there not to support the child educationally but to help the teacher by managing the child's behavior. Aides here were constituted as mechanisms of control mobilized by special education to bail out general education. By referencing the previous special education director, Polly's criticism appeared at once rooted in special education's historical critique of general education, and at the same time, an acknowledgment of the irrationality of the system ("system and habits") where aides, constituted as a service, provided no educational value (Skrtic, 1995).

Following her initial critique, Polly pivoted in her description, redefining inclusion as "only what you do and how you do it," while reconstituting pull out services as an inclusionary practice and model. Through this pivot, Polly assumed a subject

position that accorded with the school's narrative and identify, as a school where "everybody belongs," diversity was celebrated, and the notion of inclusion possessed a particular currency. However, the segregated nature of the services and programs in place, which reflected the institutional and discursive authority maintained by special education and through a medicalized discourse, contradicted any contention that Taft instituted an inclusion model. The conflicting positions, held by Polly and Margaret, as well as by teachers (as will be discussed), contributed to a skewed, deceptive conception of inclusion within the school that at times obscured the relations of power through which children were produced as subjects who were disabled and general education teachers as subjects who were unable to teach all children.

Para-Professionals

The use of aides or para-professionals in classrooms served as a particular example of the cultural norms and practices governing how children identified with disabilities were supported within the school, the relations of power that were exercised, and the subject positions that were available. Following her critique of the school's use of aides, as previously described, Polly specified that when she was hired, she was charged by the special education director with reducing the number of aides employed in the classrooms. The use of aides according to Polly, was embedded in the school culture:

> And some of that was learned behavior, both special ed. teachers and regular teachers, and some of it, when I talk about some of the older people…had the attitude that this is a SPED kid, he's not my responsibility and there actually hasn't been any training in the system about the fact that these kids are your responsibility…. It often comes up around kids who have attentional issues or behavioral issues, so kids who are in the classroom who can't be controlled by the teacher…the teachers want a one on one for the kid. And so this system ended up with all these para-professionals they were paying for written into education plans and everybody agreed and nobody asked why and so there's been some move to

> try and change that but it's very ingrained with the staff and with some families. It's still in flux.

Polly described here a fairly typical school culture in which children were divided and produced as subjects who were abled and disabled, with special education assuming responsibility for those children constituted as disabled. Her comment that this "was learned behavior" on the part of general and special education teachers, spoke to the institutional pressure to conform as well as to the lack of alternative discourses available to teachers (Foucault, 1983). With all in agreement, and no "training in the system" offering alternative strategies, the subjectification and production of able/disabled children, alongside the corresponding production of teachers, as unable to teach all children, appeared a normalizing practice institutionally and discursively endorsed and abetted. Faced with children whose behavior they could not control, classroom teachers acted in concert with the cultural norms and practices that required the deployment of para-professionals as a mechanism of control. That "everybody agreed and nobody asked why," simply demonstrated the discursive underpinnings of this practice, which in turn complicated any attempts to institute change, even for Polly as a representative of special education.

Meanwhile, the intrusion of special education into the classroom in the guise of para-professionals, not for instructional purposes but to control disruptive behavior, shaped how classroom teachers worked and interacted with para-professionals, which in turn further negated their participation in instruction. This was demonstrated in the first grade classroom of Connie, one of the two teachers who participated more extensively in this study. During three different observations over the course of a few months, two children each of whom was identified with a disability were observed during math

lessons working with a para-professional. The routine appeared consistent, as the boys participated during the introductory group discussions then were taken together by the para-professional to the back of the room where they remained, separated from the other children.

Throughout the three observations, Connie never interacted with the two boys or with the para-professional, despite tirelessly moving around and supporting children in the classroom. As the other children frequently worked in pairs or groups, the two boys always worked independently. The role played by the para-professional appeared primarily focused on keeping the boys on task, as her interactions encompassed attentional prompts and directives. During the observations, one of the two boys repeatedly resisted her entreaties, slouching on his chair, playing with manipulatives, regularly getting up to sharpen his pencil or walk around the classroom. Neither child finished the work that was assigned to the class nor did there appear to be an expectation that they do so as no one checked their work at the end of the period. In describing the two boys, Connie acknowledge significant academic deficits while noting more than once how both children, "needed lots of breaks, physical breaks and mental breaks," while one also, "needed space to get a hold of his emotions." Her focus on behavior was consistent with the positioning of children whose behavior was deemed disruptive within the school culture.

When asked about the presence of the para-professional, Connie stated that she worked closely with the special education teacher but never met with the para-professional, contending that the para-professional was the responsibility of the special education teacher who she assumed supervised her. Connie also noted that the para-

professional only worked in the classroom a few mornings a week and that the special education teacher occasionally took the boys out to work on math. My observations and conversation with Connie confirmed that the para-professional was assigned primarily to stop the boys from engaging in disruptive behavior, something signified by their removal to the back of the classroom and away from their peers. As confirmed by the administration, the para-professional was not trained as a teacher and had no professional background in special education. Since Connie did not interact with the children or the para-professional during the math lessons, the instructional value of the lessons appeared inconsequential. In effect, math instruction for these two children was confined to the occasionally times when the special education teacher removed them from the classroom and brought them to the resource room.

The relations of power enacted in Connie's classroom supported a system in which these two children, identified with disabilities, were produced and assumed a subject position as non-learners, relieving everyone, the institution of special education (represented by the para-professional) and general education teachers of any instructional responsibility while they were in the classroom. Instruction here was only viable when administered by the special education teacher outside the classroom in the resource room. The para-professional, denied any instructional role, was discursively constituted as a service, and as an actor mobilizing a policy of control and surveillance within the classroom. Her presence asserted special education's role as a safety valve for general education including the authority to intervene and segregate children, even within the confines of the classroom. Finally, conforming to the cultural and norms and practices instituted within the school, Connie assumed and was produced as a subject, a teacher

unable to teach all children. This discursive production, entrenched in the school culture, precluded interaction and contact between particular adults working in the same classroom, that is Connie and the para-professional. This discursive practice was acceptable as it served the needs of general and special education teachers, although at some cost to the children identified with disabilities as their instructional needs were ignored and their education undermined.

Pull Out Services

While para-professionals were deployed primarily in the younger grades, in the older grades the discursive production of classroom teachers along with the authority of special education was asserted through the imposition of a pull out service delivery model in the school. As noted earlier, this model was deceptively construed within the school as a form of inclusion, as instruction happened not in the classroom but in the resource room contradicting more traditional definitions of inclusion (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1995; Meyen, 1995). In describing the rationale and dominance of this model, Margaret again linked it to a form of inclusion.

> I think [the use of pull out services] is partly to do with class size going up, and having it harder to do in the classroom. I know that it's not the reluctance on the part of the mainstream teacher, because people I've hired are really committed to having all kinds of kids in. But the needs are such, and distractibility, and the issue for a lot of kids is really to have some sort of pre-teaching that's separate from the big classrooms. And it's been pretty successful, but if you start having pullouts that's the majority of the day, then we start looking at a substantially separate program.

In this description, the increased need for pull out services was due not to "reluctance on the part of the mainstream" teachers but to the children due to their "needs" and "distractibility." Distractibility, as a behavior associated with older children, was

governed and regulated in the school in the same way as the disruptive behavior associated with younger children, with both requiring the intervention of special education and the separation of children from their peers. Akin to the younger children, the older children were produced and assumed subject positions as non-learners within general education classrooms. That the older children required "pre-teaching" by a special education teacher in the resource room once again entailed the production of general education teachers as unable to teach all children.

Complementing Margaret's reference to "pre-teaching," Connie and Linda maintained that special education teachers were wholly responsible for the core subject areas of reading and writing, and in fifth grade, math, and in fact justified pull out services as a response to the need for specialized instruction utilizing special education programs. Margaret herself confirmed later in the interview that the job of special education teachers was primarily, "to help kids learn to read and write and compute towards their math." Special education's responsibility for content, rather than pre-teaching, was further evident as Margaret described the tension between general and special education teachers at the prospect of science and social studies being included on the MCAS and who would be responsible for teaching the content to children identified with disabilities. That the teachers believed special education should do so demonstrated how the discursive practices within the school normalized subject positions to the degree that classroom teachers were produced and chose to be produced as teachers unable to teach all students. That Margaret hired teachers who were thus "committed" maintained the production of a particular kind of general education teacher within the school.

Connie. As shown above, within Taft, the cultural norms and practices, shaped by the institutional and discursive authority of special education and a medicalized discourse, asserted that children identified with disabilities required specialized instruction in segregated special education settings. This was further demonstrated in Connie and Linda's classrooms. Although the two teachers were different - Connie was trained and influenced by her work with the Responsive Classroom program while Linda had a background in bilingual education - each believed that her own philosophy aligned with Margaret's and the school's. Like Margaret, Connie equated the school's model governing children identified with disabilities as an inclusion model. From her perspective, children identified as disabled "may still have a little bit of pull out, but generally speaking they are a full member of the class and are in the classroom most of the time." In the classroom, as earlier noted, a para-professional worked with the children a few days a week, specifically during math times, while the special education teacher pulled out for children for all reading and writing instruction. The equating of this model with inclusion, although skewed, made sense within the cultural norms and practices of the school, where only special education teachers in segregated settings were deemed capable of instructing children identified with disabilities. At Taft, "inclusion" signified the normalization of discursive practices in which all, general and special education teachers, were implicated.

Linda. The construct of inclusion as a signifier of particular discursive practices was similarly evident in Connie's equation of the school's model with inclusion, even as she viewed it through a lens shaped by her professional training as an "ELL" (English Language Learner) teacher. As Connie described it:

> Inclusion is all the ELL kids and the pushing and the sheltered emersion with the support in the classroom. Inclusion is when the SPED kids come from pull out into the classroom and then we're all aware that they're there and we're supporting them in science and social studies. We're doing heavy modifications for work, that's inclusion….A. [a child in the ASD program] is autistic and severely and so inclusion is that once a month that he's able to join us for snack. Inclusion is him going on a field trip with us, with support. So I guess for me inclusion is push-ins, and sheltered emerging.

This description lumped together diverse service delivery models and programs, while asserting a version of inclusion construed as the lowest common denominator, being physically present in the classroom for some unspecified period of time, which could be as little as once a month. Thus, "SPED" children received the majority of their instruction outside the classroom, returning for science and social studies, which were heavily modified. According to Linda, special education teachers were solely responsible for scheduling so fifth grade children identified with disabilities received special education services from 10:00 to 11:45 every day and "sometimes" in the afternoon. This schedule did not match up with the classroom schedule so these children left and returned in the middle of lessons, and were sometimes completely absent during particular content, while inconsistently present during other subjects.

The schedule described above, along with Linda's description of inclusion, made sense within the cultural practices and norms of the school, where the teaching and learning of children identified with disabilities happened only outside the classroom and with special education teacher in charge. From this perspective special education was seen as a place, rather than a set of services, exemplified by the statement: "The SPED kids come from pull out into the classroom." While the labeling of children as "ELL kids" and "SPED kids" alongside the statement that "we're all aware that they're there,"

signified that these children belonged to and were the responsibility of special education, and that their presence in the classroom was different from that of other children.

Producing Teachers as Unable to Teach All Children

As described, the institutional and discursive authority of special education and a medicalized discourse of disability within Taft contributed to the subjectification of general education teachers as unable to teach all children. This subject position was reinforced through the discursive positioning of teachers in the language and narrative of the school's administration. Language, according to Foucault (1972), is both a site and medium through which power is contested and subjectivities are produced. Language can be discursively deployed to serve and reinforce, as well as to manipulate and resist cultural and community norms. Words in this sense do not reveal some truth but rather participate in and contribute to the formation and reformation of discursive regimes of truth. Recalling early in her tenure, a push by the district to place children identified with disabilities into general education classrooms, so "that inclusion would happen unless the kids had really significant disabilities," Margret reflected:

> So we went from having substantially separate education in all of the [district's] schools, to not having any of those programs and having total inclusion with very little training on the part of the classroom teachers….And it was the veteran teachers who had enough trouble with trying to think about how your obligation as an educator is to educate all. They then also had the kids flooding in, the bilingual kids, because the district decided to also pull bilingual kids in at the same time as they pulled special ed. kids into the classroom. And so there was a tremendous amount of angst at the time for the expectations that the classroom teacher would have to educate all. It was a really rocky period. And it was hard because I was new and I was committed to it myself philosophically and educationally, but to try to help even the most willing teachers to embrace this in a classroom, let alone those who had just no clue.

Describing a particular time of change, Margaret's words nevertheless continued to ring true in the present. Facing the inclusion of children identified with disabilities, there appeared according to Margaret, "a tremendous…angst," within the school that "classroom teachers would have to educate all," while "veteran teachers" struggled with the notion that they had an "obligation as an educator to educate all, " and "even the most willing teachers…let alone those who had just no clue" struggled to "embrace" the change. This response by teachers, as described by Margaret, need be seen within the cultural practices and norms of the school, where special education historically and in the present, was granted responsibility for instructing children identified with disabilities including pulling them out of general education settings. Margaret's commitment to change, alongside the "most willing" teachers, proved insufficient when set against the institutional and discursive authority of special education and a medicalized discourse of disability localized within the school.

Paradoxically, Margaret's words reinforced the institutional authority of special education, as she described "special ed. kids" being "pulled" by the district into general education classrooms. The metaphor of force, of being "pulled," suggested that these children didn't inherently belong, that they remained "special ed. kids" and consequently the responsibility of special education. Although cloaked in a description of change, albeit an unsuccessful change, Margaret's description furthered the subjectification and production of able/disabled children, alongside the corresponding production of teachers, as unable to teach all children.

Akin to Margaret, in her role as the school psychologist, responsible for evaluating children and supporting teachers, Judy similarly participated in the discursive

production of teachers and children. Although most of her time was taken up by evaluations, which by her account numbered anywhere between eighty and one hundred a year, Judy described her efforts to work with and support classroom teachers.

> In many circumstances…they're not really looking for…feedback or advice or something, more kind of looking for someone to solve the problem for them. So that gets a little tricky in those [situations]….You can't really just barge in and it's hard to have an impact if that's not really what the teacher's looking for. But on the other hand, we have pressure to not go ahead and do a SPED referral unless other things have been tried. So we're in the position of having to try to engage.

The notion that classroom teachers were not interested in support as described by Judy but in having "someone to solve the problem for them," appeared consistent with the school's cultural norms and practices, where special education has been granted the role of solving the teachers' problems. For the teachers, Judy was the gatekeeper to special education, and her decisions materially impacted them along with the children with whom they were having problems. Seen through the culture norms and practices within the school, the teachers were in deed coming to Judy for support. Like Margaret, Judy's words appeared paradoxical as she negotiated a multiplicity of subject positions. As gatekeeper, she was mobilized as an agent in the service of special education and a medicalized discourse of disability, and played a critical role in discursive practices and relations of power that contributed in the school to the production of children as abled and disabled, and teachers as unable to teach all children. While as a psychologist and counselor, she assumed a professional stance that emphasized feedback, advice, and support. Her apparent inability to help teachers alluded to in her choice of words, "tricky," "you can't…barge in," "hard to have an impact," and "not…what the teacher's looking for," was a consequence of the discursive practices at play within the school. As

with Margaret and the teachers, Judy appeared caught in a web of power relations exercised through the institutional and discursive authority of special education and a medicalized discourse of disability.

Conclusion

What I encountered at Taft was an entrenched system of programs and services that as policy separated children identified with disabilities from general education classrooms. The discursive practices supporting this system sustained and were sustained by the production of children as abled and disabled, with those deemed disabled further produced as non-learners in general education classrooms, and the production of teachers as unable to teach all children. Within the school, cultural norms and practices shaped by the institutional and discursive authority of special education and a medicalized discourse of disability, asserted that children identified with disabilities could only be instructed by special education teachers outside general education classrooms and in special education settings.

V –BEDFORD ACADEMY

Introduction

I began my dissertation interested in how general education elementary teachers responded to the discourses of disability circulating within their schools, with an eye toward possibilities of resistance as describe by Foucault (1972, 1977, 1980, 1983, 1990). The decision to conduct research in two different schools presumably offered more and diverse opportunities for me to observe these possibilities. At Taft, as described in the previous chapter, I encountered a culture shaped by the institutional and discursive authority of special education and a medicalized discourse of disability. Teachers were rewarded for aligning with the school's cultural and community norms, for not questioning the expectations, that is the beliefs, ways of acting, and professional positioning of teachers asserted by the school. This alignment was characteristic of what Foucault (1983) referred to as the "absence of struggle." Thus, although Bedford was my first research site I chose to present the data from Taft before Bedford, as it constituted a culture where the authority of special education was omnipresent and possibilities for resistance were nullified.

At Bedford, I encountered a very different environment, one that appeared confusing and chaotic, where the administration was absent from the classroom, teachers were left to their own devices and possibilities for resistance were thus more easily formed. In this chapter, I focus on the school as the unit of analysis, while in the ensuing chapter I focus more narrowly on two teachers, Maya in second grade, and Kyle in fifth grade, each of whom participated more extensively in this study.

I begin this chapter, by showing and describing a discourse of assessment and accountability, which I identified through my interpretation of the data. I focus here on how this discourse was mobilized through the administration, in particular April the principal, and through the Quality Review Process for New Schools, as an example of an institutional discursive practice. In the next section, I show and describe how this discourse produced a particular kind of teacher, as an officer of compliance. In the final section of this chapter, I show and describe how the school, administration and teachers, responded to the lack of a special education presence within the school. I pay particular attention to the system put in place to support children identified with disabilities and the language used by the administration when discussing children who were struggling.

A Discourse of Assessment and Accountability

Operating within Bedford was a discourse of assessment and accountability that was characteristic of the New York City (NYC) public school system writ large. This discourse exercised power within an environment where the institution of special education was conspicuously absent, with no staff, programs, or services on site. While Taft displayed a stable administration and was affixed to a special education system that segregated and controlled children identified with disabilities, Bedford's administration appeared weak and inefficient, with no systematic or institutional support for children identified with disabilities maintained by the school. Consequently, the administration focused on complying with DOE polices and procedures while teachers, unsupported and unsupervised, yet given responsibility for teaching all children, were left to their own devices.

The Principal As Bureaucrat

The discourse of assessment and accountability mobilized administrators and teachers within the school, who acted in support of and as agents of the discourse. This was evident in the case of April, the founding principal, who had never run a school prior to assuming her role at Bedford. Speaking to the challenges of being a New York City (NYC) public school principal, April described spending the majority of her time in her office responding to Department of Education (DOE) policies and procedures; to the point of bragging of the friends she has made at the local office of the district superintendent due to the time she has invested talking to them. April's focus on administrative and bureaucratic work was confirmed during interviews with classroom teachers. Across the board, teachers stated that they rarely saw her, that she almost never visited their classrooms, and that when she did it was never to observe but to inform them of something. During my time at Bedford, I never observed April in a classroom and all my encounters with her were in her office.

Working within the discourse of assessment and accountability, April as the school principal was produced and assumed a subject position as a bureaucrat as opposed to an educational and school leader. Speaking to the responsibilities of her position, April commented:

> It's an overwhelming job now, it sounds all well, the principals have all the power but with all that power comes all the responsibility and all these tests you have to do everyday. I mean now I get summer school, I have to get the list of kids in and I have to see who are the hold-overs, we have to, I have to evaluate all the teachers, all that's coming up now.

April ascribed the job of public school principal as primarily responsible for the assessment of children and evaluation of teachers. Construed here as an administrative

task, exemplified by the statement, "I have to get the list of kids in," assessment and evaluation appeared disconnected from the education of children and professional development of teachers. Devoid of educational meaning, administrative responsibility was reframed as the act of complying with DOE policies and procedures. These policies as described here, required that children be assessed through standardized achievement tests and that those who did not perform according to precise norms be assembled in a list, grouped together, and sent to summer school. The worst performers, deemed "hold-overs," were potentially denied advancement to the next grade. The association in April's description of teacher evaluations with those of children located both in the same discourse of assessment and accountability. April's subject position as principal and chief bureaucrat similarly placed her within the same discursive web of power relations as the teachers and children. This exemplified what Foucault (1980) described as a technology of hierarchical observation or system of surveillance, which encapsulated, "those who exercise power just as much as those over whom it is exercised" (Foucault, 1980, p. 156). Preceded by the statement, "it's an overwhelming job," April's linking of power, which she described in the third person, and responsibility, described in the first person, contested the construct of the principal as in a position of power (much less an educational leader). This paradoxical statement spoke to her assumption of a particular subject position while reinforcing the discourse of assessment and accountability.

The Quality Review Process as a Discursive Practice

Administered by the DOE, the "Quality Review Process for New Schools," as implemented within Bedford constituted a discursive institutional practice that further sustained the discourse of assessment and accountability. During a midyear faculty

meeting discussing the review process, April focused on the inclusion of "differentiation" and "data driven instruction" as key indicators in the review's guidelines. Linking the two together, she declared that instruction in the school needed to become "data driven," meaning teachers "must be able to talk to [their] assessment." Data gained through assessment was to inform: "What we are doing to those kids at the top…[and] at the bottom, kids who need extra help." When talking about assessment and instruction, April and the teachers repeatedly focused on children labeled as "at risk," meaning those children "at the bottom." At the end of the meeting, April declared that data-driven differentiated instruction would be the focus of all upcoming professional development work.

April's directive to the teachers linked the assessment of children, in the guise of data-driven differentiated instruction, to the review process, which as a material form of institutional accountability determined the school's future. With this linkage, children were constituted as objects to be sorted and categorized through examination into ranked populations, those "at the top…[and] at the bottom," allowing the school to make decisions about, "what we are doing to those kids." Particular emphasis was placed on those children labeled as "at risk," as they potentially adversely impacted the school's evaluation and standing. Further objectifying children, teachers were tasked with talking to their assessments rather than to the children, while differentiated instruction was reframed and geared towards ability-based, ranked populations of children. This discursive framing of assessment and instruction mobilized teachers in support of and as agents of the discourse of assessment and accountability.

Reflecting on the impact of the review process in the school, Maya, one of the second grade teachers, observed:

> The only thing that…was done and completed before the end of this year, for September, is the at risk list. It's very objective. It's data…because those are the kids who…we have to look out for because that's how they're tying our money with the one years progress now, when you actually send out [school] report cards and the quality review. So the idea is to get them early because…if you don't make the one years progress the next year, then that effects our actual standing as a school, our report card grade, which eventually is whether you stay open or get closed as a school….If you're able to identify individual kids from the time they're in first grade, next to their name they get free lunch, they're ESL and they're at risk. I mean that's your data already….Like the kid [doesn't] have a learning history yet but you're already able to manipulate [and]…organize the data.

In this description, Maya appeared critical of the review process and its discursive production of children as objects, as data that can be organized and manipulated. Her words constituted a from of resistance as she connected the categorization of children with the bureaucratic needs of the DOE and school. Conversely, Maya's description demonstrated how much she had internalized the discursive linking of assessment and instruction and its production of truth, regardless of whether she agreed or not (Foucault, 1977). This was evident when Maya questioned which assessments the school used, noting that she had been given in the first half of the year four different language arts assessment tools along with a new math program, with little to no training or guidance.

> I still couldn't tell you what assessment we use as a school and we're moving kids on to the next grade. We're being asked for like promotion and doubt letters. And so, every teacher is doing their own sort of assessment to say that that child is in doubt I mean, where is the consistency?

The lack of a common assessment and of any guidance from the administration, as implied here, contributed to what I earlier referred to as a confusing and chaotic environment, leaving teachers anxious and on their own. Seen discursively and through

the eyes of the administration, however, and it did not matter which assessments Maya or any of the teachers used as the only assessments that mattered were state administered standardized achievement tests.

The focus on standardized achievement tests negated other forms of assessments in support of the reframing of assessment and instruction enacted through the discourse of assessment and accountability. This was illustrated in the reorganization of the school-based inquiry teams set up by the administration. According to Maya and Kyle, these groups were intended to be teacher-led vehicles for professional development with each teacher: developing specific goals for five "target" children; tracking their progress over the course of the year using the assessments from the *Investigations* math program; and reflectively analyzing the target children's participation in lessons and their interactions as teachers with the children.

Once the review process was initiated however, the administration assumed control over the teams folding them into the review process, which meant tracking children's progress using data from standardized achievement tests. In addition, teachers were told that the target children had to be children "who were not gonna move," and were considered "at risk." As described by both Maya and Kyle, the inquiry teams ended up focusing solely on the test scores trying to analyze if and when progress was made, leaving no time or space for any discussion regarding children's participation in lessons nor their interactions with teachers. The redefining of the teams' purpose aligned with the discourse of assessment and accountability, and its concern with DOE policies and procedures entrenched in the review processes that necessitated the sorting and categorizing of children into ability-based ranked populations. In addition, by redefining

the teams, teachers were further mobilized as actors in support of the discourse of assessment and accountability.

The Production of Teachers as Officers of Compliance

As shown above, this discourse of assessment and accountability through the use of examination in the form of standardized achievement tests sorted and categorized children into ranked populations. Through the examination children were simultaneously constituted as data that could be manipulated by the school, and as subjects, that could be controlled, observed and treated. Within classrooms this discourse organized teaching as uni-directional instruction, involving uniform assignments and tasks and that focused on completing work. This narrow organization of teaching was purposeful as it allowed teachers to focus on discipline and obedience. From a Foucauldian perspective, the discourse of assessment and accountability, as a consequence of a modern disciplinary society, was primarily concerned with the creation of compliant children (Foucault, 1977, 1980, 1983). In Bedford, this produced as a subject, the teacher as an officer of compliance, corresponding with Foucault's (1977) image of the teacher as prison guard and the school as prison.

Classroom Instruction

This discursive production and formation of the teacher, as an officer of compliance, was observed in four of the five classrooms I spent time in (not counting Maya and Kyle's classrooms). The discourse's organization of instruction as seen in the various classrooms was exemplified during a kindergarten math lesson exploring number combinations to ten using tiles. The lesson began with the teacher instructing the children

as a group what to do, demonstrating with two combinations. There was no discussion nor did any of the children ask questions, when the teacher finished the children went off to work. A short while later, responding to a child's plea for help, the teacher, seeing the boy had recorded the same combination twice with the numbers reversed, asked him to show her "something different." She then reordered the tiles herself to show a new combination ignoring the concept of equivalent equations which appeared as part of the lesson. She left without any further discussion. During the lesson, the teacher never spent more than a couple of minutes with any one child, and in her interactions her voice was the predominant if not the only voice. When the lesson was over, there was no discussion and the teacher simply collected the worksheets from the children. In this simple, short vignette, instruction was organized in line with the discourse of assessment and accountability, with the focus on compliantly completing the worksheets. In addition, this organization fundamentally conflicted with the constructivist design of the lesson as a component of the *Investigations* math program, which assumed social dialogue and the development of a deep understanding of both subject matter and learning (Richardson, 2003; Yilmaz, 2008)

This discursive framing of instruction was similarly observed during a first grade math lesson administering an end of unit assessment identifying addition and subtraction word problems. The teacher began the lesson by explaining to the children that it was an assessment. She then told "two math stories" asking after each story for children to first put their thumbs up if they thought it was about subtraction and then if it was about addition. There was no discussion or analysis of the stories themselves. After telling the stories the teacher stopped the lesson to write down the names of two children who were

quietly talking on her clipboard (where she recorded "misbehavior"), commenting, "you're on the list, I think you're talking about math but." She then handed out the worksheets, reminding children "to solve the problem, show your work, and write an equation," modeling how to write an equation. Immediately, a child approached her asking for help. She responded by reading the instructions and partially solving the first problem for him using manipulatives. A short time later, seeing he had incorrectly answered the question, she handed him an older worksheet he had completed with similar problems as a reminder, instructing him to: "Show me how you solved the problem." Left alone, the boy started arguing with another child who he claimed was "laughing at my paper." Returning, the teacher reprimanded him telling him that he was not supposed to be, "working at that table." When it was time to hand in the worksheet, the boy quickly and incorrectly answered the remaining questions, as the teacher duly collected his worksheet.

During this lesson, which was an assessment, the teacher interacted with children by explicitly showing them different ways to solve the problems, in effect what was being assessed. However, there was no discussion describing and analyzing the strategies she demonstrated, either with the group or with individual students. As regards the boy who asked for help, there was similarly no opportunity for discussion, continuing to struggle with the task, he eventually got into an argument with another child. His justification, "he laughed at my paper," appeared perhaps an acknowledgement of his confusion and frustration at not being able to answer the questions. In an effort to finish, he simply wrote down a bunch of numbers that had nothing to do with the problems on the worksheet. As this lesson was again a component of the *Investigations* math program,

the lack of any substantive interaction, with the teacher trying to gauge through dialogue the boy's understanding of the concepts being assessed, demonstrated how the teacher was following the discourse of assessment and accountability's organization of instruction rather then how it was written in the math program. Finally and in line with the discourse, was the teacher's pausing in the middle of the lesson to write down the names of two children for disruptive behavior, despite her acknowledgement their conversation might been on topic and about the math. In both of these short vignettes, instruction was geared towards compliantly completing the work negating the constructivist design and intent of the published math program, reinforcing the discursive production of teachers as officers of compliance.

Subjectivities and the Role of the Administration

As agents mobilized in support of the discourse of assessment and accountability, members of the administration modeled and normalized ways of managing children's behaviors that emphasized compliance and contributed to the discursive production of the teachers as officers of compliance. This was exemplified in Tina's description of her role as AP supporting students, primarily fourth and fifth graders, who were struggling by having them sent to her office.

> I didn't see it as well you're being sent to the quote principal's office, that I'd make them sit there. I thought more like that when kids were having a hard time which oftentimes those problems started in less structured environments like recess or something, that it was my job to help them talk it through and come to some kind of resolution sometimes have some consequences for it. I felt it was definitely my job to hold them accountable for taking responsibility for it as well as figuring out strategies not to do it again or to have the strategies to negotiate the situation a little bit differently. So I spent lots of time with groups of kids having them talk to each other doing conflict resolution or whatever. And then in certain classrooms for whatever reason there were a couple of kids who…had more problems controlling themselves. And a lot of times kids would just come in

> my office and do their work with me in my office or just take a break from the classroom or smaller groups of kids. Not that I felt like I wanted them to be punished but I wanted them to get their work done in a way, in a situation that other kids weren't distracting them or they weren't distracting other kids and they maybe just needed a break or whatever.

Tina assumed here a subject position as mediator and ally, as she described her role mediating conflicts, holding children "accountable," and providing children a space to "take a break." This subject position was tied to her interpretation of the "child-centered" philosophy of the school, which she defined as the idea of building on children's "strengths," and "really based on a constructivist model that kids learn by doing," here resolving conflicts and developing strategies.

Paradoxically and akin to the teachers, Tina assumed and was produced as an agent of compliance. The scenario, she described, of children routinely sent out of the classroom to work in the AP's office constituted the public separation of a designated group of children from their peers. The constitution of this group as children who "had more problems controlling themselves," implied that the problem was located in the individual and body of the child. As witnessed during multiple observations, the interaction between teachers and adults preceding children's separation frequently appeared disciplinary, in response to non-conforming behavior, with the separation serving as punishment. Within the microcosm of the classroom and school, this employment of power, in its quest for compliance, echoed the historical power of schools to expel students whose behavior was deemed disruptive (Richardson, 1994; Tyack, 1974; Winzer, 1993). Finally, Tina's participation in this discursive exercise of power, which resulted in the subjectification of particular children as non-compliant,

demonstrated how a discourse of assessment and accountability shaped the cultural practices and norms inside the school.

Managing Children

Given credence by the administration, the discourse of assessment and accountability, and its production of teachers, was particularly noticeable in the way in which teachers managed children. In a first grade classroom, the teacher sent children into the hallway six times during a two-hour observation because of disruptive behavior sometimes obvious, such as when a child took off his shoe during the meeting and hit a classmate, other times less obvious, such as talking quietly during a transition. Children sent into the hallway were given no instructions or work and remained there unmonitored for indefinite periods of time. When a child from another classroom at one point informed the teacher that the children in the hall were fooling around, she called them all in and publicly scolded them proclaiming that they had "interrupted the meeting…[and] waste[d] our time," before sending them out of the classroom and back into the hallway. During the entire observation, which included a meeting, a language arts activity, and a read aloud, two boys remained at the table farthest from the meeting area excluded from the activities with a paraprofessional seated between them. The boys drew, argued (at one point one of the boys kicked the other), and towards the end of the period, engaged in a sword fright using markers. The paraprofessional, also drawing at the table, mostly ignored them and occasionally yelled at them to be quiet. The teacher interacted with the boys twice, both times admonishing them to be quiet, exclaiming the second time in an exasperated voice: "I've asked you to be quiet so many times." During a side

conversation, the teacher confirmed to me that the separation of the two boys in the classroom was a routine occurrence.

Instruction in this classroom appeared secondary as the focus and culture of the classroom was framed around behavior and compliance. Children deemed disruptive were separated from their peers, sent out to the hallway or segregated inside the classroom. Discipline was not construed as a set of logical consequences, meaning the purpose was not to teach children but to control them. The discourse of assessment and accountability was mobilized through the teacher, who in turn, as the officer of compliance acted as its agent. This enactment of the discourse of assessment and accountability was repeated, albeit to a lesser degree, in the other first grade classroom where the teacher was routinely observed publically identifying children and scolding them for disruptive behavior in the middle of meetings and activities, such as talking out of turn, not paying attention, and playing with other children. She also kept a clipboard handy on which she systematically wrote down the names of children who she called out. It should be noted that there did not appear a similar clipboard for children who were compliant, reinforcing the notion of compliance as the norm as well as the discursive production of teachers as officers of compliance.

The focus on compliance was similarly observed in a third grade classroom, where the teacher was observed routinely admonishing children individually and collectively for among other things, talking when they were not supposed to, appearing off task when working, and walking around instead of staying in their seats. Moreover, she explicitly making decisions about curriculum and activities based on her interpretation of children's behavior. In the middle of explaining a math activity, for

instance, she bluntly stated: “If we can’t handle this I will give you problems in the book…I’m going to have to start keeping a tally to see how many times I say that to you.” While the teacher routinely reprimanded children for the behaviors described above, throughout the observation there also appeared disruptive behavior that she either ignored or was unaware of, including at various times, a child hitting other children with a backpack and another throwing a folder full of papers on the floor in a fit of apparent anger. Towards the end of the observation, as children were cleaning up after the lesson, she publically named individual children as disruptive and inattentive, then declared, “I think I’m going to come get you guys cause obviously it won’t be safe for you in recess…apparently that’s what needs to happen so that’s what we’ll do.” Again, as described here teaching and learning (curriculum) appeared secondary to the enforcing of compliance.

Excluding Maya and Kyle, who participated more extensively in this study (and who will be discussed in the following chapter), within the school there appeared only one classroom that I observed where the interactions between teachers and children significantly diverged from the discourse of assessment and accountability. Rather, a predominance of classrooms aligned with the discourse, including both first grade classrooms and three of the four fourth and fifth grade classrooms. The discourse’s ubiquitousness was further evident in public spaces including the lunchroom and playground. The fact that all the teachers included here interacted with children as described in my presence and, in their conversations with me assumed I was in agreement spoke to the normalization of the discursive production of teachers as officers of compliance. In this subjectification, teachers were simultaneously defined by their

behavior and participated in this defining by engaging in the behavior. This normalization of the power/knowledge of the discourse of assessment and accountability resonated with Foucault's (1972) description of discursive power: "power *is* 'always already there'…one is never 'outside' it…[and] there are no 'margins' for those who break with the system to gambol in" (p. 141). The lack of resistance on the part of teachers, this "absence of struggle," perhaps reflected the fact that teachers were rewarded for aligning with the school's cultural and community norms while they faced marginalization exploring new and alternative subject positions (Foucault, 1983). The possibility of marginalization will be explored further in the following chapter focusing on Maya and Kyle.

The Absence of Special Education

As noted, the discourse of assessment and accountability circulating within Bedford was rooted in the larger concerns of the NYC public school system and the DOE with assessment and accountability. At the same time, the discourse's organization of instruction and management of children occurred within a school where the institution of special education was conspicuously absent. Meaning, there were no special education administrators, teachers, specialists and programs on site. At Bedford, the person in charge of referrals, IEPs, and who served as the liaison to the Division of Special Education was Judy, the school's counselor, who worked three days a week. As a retired general education counselor, Judy had no background in special education or experience dealing with learning related issues. Yet, as Tina stated, the school was completely dependent on her for, "how we dealt with kids who were identified if you want to call it that way, that had IEPs."

The confusion caused by a lack of special education presence within the school was conceded by Tina during a faculty meeting, when she announced to teachers: "In terms of ESL and Special Ed. some of us aren't or weren't aware of these populations in their class…[nor] what services they should legally be getting." Consistent with the discourse of assessment and accountability, Tina constituted these children not as individuals but as "populations." The confusion was equally evident in the administration as April, the principal, maintained the that school was 100% in compliance in terms of providing services to children identified with disabilities while Tina maintained the school was "completely out of compliance." With special education absent, teachers became, in Tina's words, "responsible for teaching to all the children including children receiving IEPs." This created a kind of paradox within the school. On one hand, the discourse of assessment and accountability's focus on sorting and categorizing children through examination into ranked populations relied on the existence of special education to produce the categories and to assume responsibility for those considered outside the norm. On the other hand, the focus on standardized testing within the school combined with the lack of special education presence served to disassociate the discourse of assessment and accountability from a medicalized discourse of disability. With teachers left in charge of all children, the discursive focus on compliance assumed greater significance as special education was unable to fulfill its traditional role as a safety valve for general education.

The disassociation from a medicalized discourse and the absence of special education did not however negate the larger question of compliance meaning adherence to DOE policies and procedures, particularly those regarding disability backed by federal

legislation. In conversations, April equated compliance with the providing of services, as she put it: “Our biggest challenge is to service.” During the year I was at Bedford, April designated two classroom teachers who held special education licensure to meet with students twice a week before school to provide Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS). There were two additional groups formed for children identified as English Language Learners. These groups were organized under a provision in the union contract requiring teachers to spend thirty-seven and a half minutes four days a week doing tutoring, test prep, or small group instruction during which time the administration was not allowed to supervise or dictate curriculum. This meant the teachers running the groups received no administrative support or supervision, and there was no structure for integrating the work done in these groups with the work being done in classrooms.

In conversations, two of the four teachers involved in these groups admitted making up curriculum without referencing children’s IEPs and acknowledged they never spoke with the children’s classroom teacher. Regardless of their instructional value and the questionability of their legality as a fulfillment of IEP mandates, this “servicing” solution put in place by the administration achieved its primary purpose, allowing April to boast that the school was “one hundred percent in compliance in terms of special ed.” Moreover within the school, these groups had no impact on classroom teachers, meaning teachers remained responsible for teaching all children, which seen though the discourse of assessment and accountability and its production of teachers, meant creating and producing compliant children.

The Language of Disability

The disassociating of the discourse of assessment and accountability from a medicalized discourse was demonstrated through the language employed in the school, as administrators and teachers discussed children identified with disabilities. During multiple interviews not once was a child identified by their specific disability label. In the case of teachers, the use of "IEPs" as a signifier was universal. Oftentimes, the teachers did not know or were unsure of the specific diagnosis of children in their classrooms and either had not seen the IEPs or could not recall what was in them (even when they had some input in the writing of goals). When referring to children identified with disabilities, April used interchangeably: "our special ed. population"; "children with IEPs"; and "resource children." Moreover, she placed under the umbrella of an intervention program children with IEPs, children identified "as ESL" (English as Second Language) label, and "kids who are neither ESL, nor have IEPs but who are at risk." Irene similarly linked children at risk with children identified with disabilities, asserting the school's intent to focus more on supporting "children who don't have IEPs necessarily, before they have to get IEPs, children who are at risk." Teachers, in reference to children, regularly used the "at risk" label, including when discussing professional development as well as during the faculty meeting as part of the DOE reviews process as previously noted.

The intense focus within the school on children identified as at risk, which was a DOE label and thus not dependent on a medicalized discourse of disability, was consistent with the discourse of assessment and accountability's focus on sorting and categorizing children into ranked populations using standardized achievement tests. The employment of "IEP" as a universal disability label was similarly consistent with the

discourse of assessment and accountability as it shifted the focus from medicalized labels, which required varied responses, to a single label identifying a population of children. Employing the signifier, IEP, the discourse produced children as objects of compliance. This was evident in the school as IEPs were ignored by teachers and lumped together by administrators concerned primarily with the school's overall rate of compliance. Finally, the construct of IEPs as a possession embedded in the language employed within the school made particular sense as services for the most part were unavailable, rendering labels as simply another means for sorting and categorizing children.

Similarly consistent, was the lumping together of all labels, DOE and special education, assigned to children who were deemed to be struggling, including "at risk," "IEPs" and "ESL." At Bedford, the at risk label appeared to encompass any child who was struggling and who the school deemed deficient without having to go through the IEP evaluation process. April employed the term to indicate children who were "at risk" of retention, meaning they "were not gonna move" to the next grade. Irene used the term differently, to indicate children who were struggling somehow but who had not yet been evaluated, diagnosed and given an ESL or disability label. While teachers who were asked by the administration to identify children "at risk" appeared unsure of the term, and more specifically what assessments to base their decision. Some teachers associated it primarily with reading, while others saw it as encompassing reading and math, while others saw it as additionally connected to attendance. This confusion, unchecked by the administration, reinforced a school culture where teachers were unsupervised and unsupported. Left alone while charged with teaching all children, many of the teachers at

Bedford acquiesced and participated in a discourse that produced them as officers of compliance.

Conclusion

As I noted earlier, what I encountered at Bedford was quite different from what I encountered at Taft. Bedford appeared a confused environment where special education was absent and there was no system in place for supporting children who were struggling. In this environment, a discourse of assessment and accountability was mobilized through administrators and teachers who acted as agents in support of the discourse. Instruction and the managing of children were organized around a concern with compliance in work and behavior, the goal being to create compliant children. Consequently, through this discourse, teachers were produced and formed as subjects, as officers of compliance. Meanwhile, through the process of examination in the form of standardized achievement tests, children were sorted and categorized and constituted as populations and as data, to be controlled and manipulated. Within the school and in line with a modern disciplinary society, there was particular concern with those children considered deviant and outside the norm. With special education absent and unable to assert a particular way of thinking about difference and disability, the discourse of assessment and accountability was disassociated from a medicalized discourse. Told by the administration that they were responsible for teaching all children and then left to their own devices, many of the teachers participated in their own subjectification, becoming officers of compliance.

VI – MAYA AND KYLE

Introduction

Plagued by a weak administration, institutionally disassociated from special education, and lacking a system for supporting children identified with disabilities, I encountered at Bedford a school environment characterized by confusion in which a discourse of assessment and accountability produced classroom teachers as officers of compliance. Within this environment, discursive practices objectified, categorized and sorted children into ability-based ranked populations to be organized and manipulated by the school in concert with the Department of Education (DOE). With examination, in the guise of standardized testing, ever-present, instruction was discursively organized towards creating compliant and docile children, who were expected to obediently and uniformly complete work. Assigned responsibility for teaching all children, albeit unsupported and unsupervised, the teachers at Bedford acted within a discourse and culture that assumed compliance and rewarded conformity.

Yet Bedford, in its very confusion, fostered possibilities for resistance. Unlike at Taft, where the institutional and discursive authority of special education and a medicalized discourse were deeply entrenched, in the classrooms at Bedford, the cultural norms and practices carried less weight thereby opening spaces for interrogation. Thus, within their respective classrooms, Maya, in second grade and Kyle, in fifth grade, were able to interrogate and at times resist the cultural norms and practices as they responded to the school's uncoordinated efforts to impose a discursive organization of instruction in concert with the production of a particular kind of teacher.

I have divided this chapter into three sections. In the first two sections I describe and explore respectively Maya and Kyle's avowed pedagogical philosophies and instructional practices in relationship with the discourse of assessment and accountability. In the final section, I describe and explore how these two teachers responded to the medicalized discourse of disability, which although diminished and somewhat disorganized within Bedford, nevertheless remained the dominant discourse of disability deployed within the public school system writ large.

Philosophy, Subject Position and Resistance

In this section, I describe and explore how Maya and Kyle each asserted philosophical stances that resisted the discourse of assessment and accountability, its pedagogical organization and its production of teachers as officers of compliance.

Maya

Constructing curriculum around the inter-related conceptual themes of "reading your world and problem-solving," Maya encouraged children to look at their world, e.g. the classroom and school, and reflectively consider their social situations, identities and roles as third graders. Citing as a primary influence the work of the educational theorist Paulo Freire, Maya described her vision of teaching:

> I see my job pretty much as a facilitator…someone with more life experience who has been in different, more situations than [the children] have that can sort of give them an idea of, oh, so this is what you're thinking and this is what it's called or how it's done in the real world. Like I said before, I really come at this profession in terms of a service that I'm doing. Just facilitating dialogue and interactions I think need to take place so that individuals can, so children can grow, I mean socially. I think for me socially and linguistically first, and things sort of falling into place around it. I think if it's been my experience just explicitly teaching social skills.

In choosing a pedagogical approach that fostered dialogue and situated teaching and learning in the "real world," Maya assumed a alternative subject position, one that constituted teachers as facilitators, guiding children's social and linguistic development in service to the community. In accord with her dialogical approach, Maya described a classroom culture that explicitly positioned children as always "either learning or teaching." In this environment, children regularly assumed the role of teacher, and at the same time, were tasked with "holding each other accountable" for sharing ideas. It was a pedagogical approach that constituted knowledge as dialogically negotiated and constructed between and among teachers and children within the locality of the classroom. It was also a significant reframing of instruction that countered and explicitly resisted the discourse of assessment and accountability and its concern with controlling, observing and treating children in ranked categories measured by standardized testing and organized to affirm the protocols of the DOE and assure the school's compliance.

In line with her pedagogical approach, Maya implemented, "an emergent arts-based integrated curriculum" that employed writing, the visual arts, drama and music as vehicles for "communication" and "reading the world." This curriculum as described by Maya, incorporated and revolved around opportunities for problem solving, which was construed as a community responsibility. Enacting a subject position as facilitator, Maya saw her role as posing problems while "not putting any weight or value" on the content of the problems themselves.

> The culture of the classroom is always that, is it a problem? Yes. Okay, now how can I fix it? So Yoela actually came to me recently and said, can I do something else this really isn't challenging me? Then this is the problem. Okay. So, you need to go challenge her for Math today. And then being explicit about that to the class….[so] the kids feel comfortable to be able to just say, I have a

> problem and it is not putting any value or weight on what that problem is. Like if it is that Jackson can't write this word or Yoela needs to go to the third grade. They're both equally just a struggle that they're having, and they're learning and it's not weighted by me. I don't react. I am trying and conscious not to.

In this description of her classroom, Maya echoed a Freirean (2005) discourse that posited dialogical instruction and "problem-posing education" as an alternative to "banking education" or more traditional transmission models of instruction. Problem-posing education, as described by Freire (2005), invalidates the authority of the teacher as: "No one teaches another, nor is anyone self-taught. People teach each other, mediated by the world, by the cognizable objects" (p. 80). By asserting a Freirean discourse, Maya embraced a dialogical framing of instruction that emphasized social interaction and prioritized children's ability to articulate problems and problem-solve, that is to overcome their struggles: defining as "equally just a struggle" the efforts of a child unable to write a word and a child who wanted to be challenged.

In assuming an alternate subject position, the teacher as a facilitator fostering dialogical interactions, Maya undermined the discourse of assessment and accountability and its concern with compliance. The implementation of an arts-based integrated curriculum, she contended, fostered the development of communication and problem-solving skills through the visual arts as well as through written and oral language. This Freirean (2005) inspired curriculum opened up opportunities to facilitate dialogue within the classroom anchored in "the human-world relationship" (p. 99) where children develop and grow, as they become "subjects of the educational process" (p. 86). Problems posed within the curriculum related to the children and their world, taking on increasingly complexity as children and teachers jointly assumed responsibility for problem solving. In this construction of curriculum, teaching and learning, effort, possibly increased

competency, and engagement constituted progress. These signifiers consequently also constituted the basis of assessment. It was a form of teaching and learning that not only countered the school's dominant discourse of assessment and accountability, but also significantly shifted the focus in the classroom away from the normative sorting and categorizing of children into ability-based, ranked populations.

Kyle

Maintaining that, "every child…deserves the best education possible," Kyle proclaimed a belief in the potential of all children to learn. Citing as a primary influence the writings of the educator Carol Tomlinson, Kyle described his educational philosophy within a framework of differentiated instruction:

> We need to be reaching children where they're at and what their strengths are….part of my philosophy is that kids can do the work. If we give them the opportunities, the right opportunities and the right support, kids can learn. I don't believe…that there's a lost cause out there….That worries me because I know that for myself when I carve out whatever philosophy of my teaching is, that I really do believe that kids have tremendous potential, that their brains are ready to take on learning, that it is not their issue as much as it is…our responsibility to move those children and think about how we can do that.

In this description, Kyle posited that children have "tremendous potential" and are capable of doing "the work" of learning, refuting the notion, "that there's a lost cause out there." Through this positing of children's capabilities, he appeared to resist the static construct of ability enacted through the discourse of assessment and accountability. In doing so, Kyle shifted responsibility onto teachers to "think about" and "to move" children. Responsibility, or instruction, entailed, "reaching children where they're at," leveraging "their strengths," and creating the "right opportunities" with "the right support." This description echoed Tomlinson's (2004b) notion of differentiated

instruction, which connected how children learn, what they learn, and how they show what they learned, with their, "readiness level" (reaching children where they're at), interests (strengths), and "preferred mode of learning" (right opportunities and right support) (p. 188).

Philosophically, Kyle championed an alternative subject position, as a teacher responsive to the instructional needs of children. In accord with this subject position, he described assessment as individualized and on going, and as a tool for "leveling the playing field." This entailed utilizing children's "strengths and weakness," gleamed through assessment, to organize and structure small group work, and to create "mini-lessons." Kyle's coupling of assessment and instruction effectively rejected the static discursive assessment utilizing test scores to categorize and sort children employed within the school. Instead, he used assessment to support heterogeneously groupings, mixing together children with diverse strengths and weaknesses.

> I really enjoyed…thinking about how to get children to work in mixed ability groups. Because I always felt like I didn't want there to be, there's the high group and there's the low group. And we talk about this stuff in school, but it really happens….it's easier to probably group kids like that, but I felt like it was losing the community piece.

As described here, Kyle not only rejected the notion of ability-based grouping as a means of targeting instruction but also offered an expanded interpretation of Tomlinson (2004a; 2004b), which diverged from her three-dimensional organization of differentiated instruction. He rationalized this expansion by linking heterogeneous grouping and differentiated instruction to the construct of community. Aligning with Brimijoin's (2005) description of a "learning community" and Tomlinson's (2004a; 2004b) notion of an "ethic of sharing," Kyle's construct of community accorded with a constructivist

theory of learning as it positioned teachers and children as actively participating in the related tasks of learning and managing the classroom. Advocating differentiated instruction, heterogeneous grouping, and the situating of learning within the construct of community; Kyle embraced a form of constructivist pedagogy, and with it assumed an alternative subject position, as a teacher responsive to the instructional needs of children.

Instruction, Subject Positions and Resistance

In this section, I describe and explore how Maya and Kyle translated their respective philosophical stances in the classroom through their instructional practices. Kyle's instructional practice was not only consistent with his philosophical stance but also constituted a holistic rejection of the discursive organization of instruction and management of children assumed by standardized testing and accountability. In contrast, Maya's instructional practices variously sustained and resisted the discourse of assessment and accountability, in turn compromising, supporting and complicating her philosophical stance.

Maya

Diverging from her professed Freirean philosophical position, Maya's classroom instruction at times veered toward the discourse of assessment and accountability and its pedagogical organization, particularly when she focused on academic content. During an observed math lesson exploring the concept of multiples, Maya began the lesson by defining multiples of five as numbers that always ended in zero or five. She encouraged no further discussion. This unexplored and partial definition emphasized pattern recognition rather then the mathematical operation of multiplication underpinning the

concept of multiples. This mode of instruction persisted throughout the lesson. At the same time, Maya framed instruction through the use of a modified form of initiative, response, evaluation (IRE) questioning, privileging correct answers and the children who could most quickly and successfully respond. Her reliance on IRE as an instructional technique, negated opportunities for dialogical interaction since she posed no open-ended questions nor offered opportunities for extended discussion This approach, observed during multiple math lessons, led to the prioritizing of prior knowledge, encouraged rote learning, and rewarded cognitive processing speed.

Later, after the observation, Maya justified her instructional approach, declaring that the children understood the concepts but lacked the language to express their ideas. This statement conflicted with her expressed philosophical stance, with its emphasis on dialogical interactions that fostered the very communicative skills that she claimed the children lacked. Meanwhile, Maya's use of IRE did not appear linked to assessment, as no individual children were assessed during the lesson nor was there verification that the group as a whole understood the activity. Instead, Maya geared the lessons towards preparing children to return to their workspaces and complete worksheets. In so doing, she further negated any opportunities to support children's linguistic development and conceptual understanding reinforcing patterns of learning characteristic of the dominant discursive model, contradicting her stated philosophy as well as the constructivist design of the *Investigations* math program itself

When implementing curriculum she had designed, Maya's instructional approach similarly conflicted with her claimed philosophical position. During a portfolio writing activity where children were directed to reflect and write about "some of the things you

learned this year…to better express your ideas, thoughts, and feelings," she first asked the children to brainstorm ideas. Maya checked in with a number of children, listened to their ideas, and then chose the ones that she wanted them to write about, often reframing or altering the original idea. For example, sitting next to a boy and speaking in a voice loud enough to engage the group, Maya dismissed his initial ideas and instead instructed him to write about a conflict in the bathroom. She paraphrased for him: "The past year's made me happy, because people need to have space…I remember the time (children) were bugging me in the bathroom while I was having my space." As the boy squirmed in his seat, Maya turned to the other children at the table and explained that following the incident he had told a teacher he was having a problem and she helped solve it. Although the incident described ostensibly focused on the academic skills of communication and problem solving, Maya's interaction with the child was uni-directional, possibly insensitive to the child's feelings about the experience, and focused on completing the assigned task, over which she had assumed ownership. In this situation Maya failed to enacted a subject position of facilitator and instead assumed a contradictory subject position, far closer to an officer of compliance in accord with the school's discourse of assessment and accountability. This enactment of a subject position, perhaps, spoke to the discursive allure of creating and producing compliant children who completed work, which remained sufficiently entrenched within Bedford, despite a weak administration, to offer rewards of approval to the acquiescent teacher.

Yet, when engaged in instruction that was not academically focused, Maya was able in particular moments to successfully subvert the dominant discourse through innovative teaching and learning situations. In her description of a "theatre of the

oppressed," a classroom activity inspired and adapted from the dramatist Augusto Boal, she was able to engage Jose, a child identified with a disability who had difficulty communicating. Jose, as portrayed by Maya and confirmed during observations, frequently hid under the table, rarely interacted with other children, was prone to emotional outbursts, and was completely disoriented by any change in routine. In the theatre activity, as described by Maya, two boys had chosen to engage in a pretend tug of war, symbolizing a struggle. Jose, who had rarely if ever participated during group activities, suddenly entered the circle and pretended to cut the imagined rope. When processing with the class what had happened, there was a realization among the children that Jose had cut the rope because he didn't want the two boys, who were friends, to fight. This led children to share, question and examine their perception of Jose:

> They were able to say, we are scared of [him]. We don't understand why he is so different, and then having him be able to hear that and then go…look he really does like us and he does care about us but he is just different. And then I think that day was transformational for him and the role that the theatre had with our class. Cause me, I was in tears at first right….It was a really powerful moment because he was one of the kids who was ostracized, who didn't have any connections to anybody including myself ….It was beneficial that he didn't have this label when he came in for me. This is Jose, he's autistic…just having my class sort of define it for themselves.

As evidenced in this description, Maya utilized theatre to create a space where children could explore the relationships and social dynamics that made up the world of the classroom, in accord with Freire's (1993) description of problem posing education. The Freirean principle of children teaching each other, in this case negotiating difference through their social interactions within the localized world of the classroom, was echoed in her comment, "just having my class sort of define it for themselves."

In Maya's description, progress was construed as a consequence of Jose's acceptance and integration within the classroom community. Through this activity, the other children, the community, were able to explore their feelings towards Jose and to learn how to more effectively communicate their ideas and feelings to him. At the same time, the class successfully participated in the theatre inspired activity, solidifying its value and role as a "transformational" activity within the classroom community. Her acknowledgement of being "in tears," alongside her description of the activity as "transformational" and "powerful," spoke to the alignment in the moment of her philosophical stance and instructional practice, as she enacted a subject position that constituted the teacher as a facilitator. This implementation of a dialogically designed curriculum and reframing of progress subverted the discourse of assessment and accountability's organization of instruction and management of children. In addition, it perhaps alluded to an area of strength in Maya's own skill sets. Consistent with Foucault's (1980, 1983, 1990) description of a fragmented subjectivity and the impossibility of a unified self, as a teacher Maya paradoxically sustained and resisted the discourse of assessment and accountability, assuming and enacting contradictory discursively produced subject positions in accord with her personal predilections, strengths and weaknesses as a teacher.

Kyle

In contrast with Maya, Kyle's classroom instruction consistently aligned with his purported pedagogical philosophy and its focus on constructivist learning and differentiated instruction. In one math lesson exemplifying this alignment, children were asked to create multiplication story problems based on a series of equations. Responding

to a child who was struggling, Kyle suggested that she choose one of the three equations and create a poster. "I just want to see a visual representation [that] supports your thinking," he explained. Checking back a few minutes later, he listened as she read the word problem she had created, requesting her to slow down so he could, "make a movie in my mind." As she continued reading, he carefully repeated each sentence then asked her how she would re-read the problem if the numbers in the equation were changed. Finally, he instructed her to draw the problem, then addressing the whole class, noted that it was important to be able to both draw a pictorial representation of an idea and to verbally explain it, thereby affirming the equal value of two significantly different styles of learning.

During this interaction, Kyle adjusted to the child's level of readiness by modifying the amount of work with a suggestion that she focus on a single problem. He further encouraged her by using her preferred mode of learning, drawing, to demonstrate what she knew, while pushing her to use multiple modalities. He then introduced two strategies for reading word problems, slowing down and making a mind movie. Throughout this interaction, Kyle organized instruction so that it was knowledge centered and focused on the key mathematical skills and concepts around which the lesson was based (Tomlinson, 2004a; 2004b; Tomlinson et. al, 2003). This approach also aligned with the constructivist design of the *Investigations* math program.

This approach was evident during another math lesson on multiplication that explored the relationship within and between two tables of numbers, representing pennies in two jars with seven entries in each table. Kyle began the lesson by revealing the tables one at a time, posing for each table the question: "What can you tell me about table A (B)

just by looking at it?" He then asked them to compare the two tables, building upon their initial observations. Throughout the discussion, Kyle required children to justify and explain their observations by referring to the numbers contained in the tables. At one point, he noting a consensus among the children that the numbers were increasing while the rate of growth "remained constant." When a child noted a pattern, he responded: "We've been talking about how math shows patterns." Kyle then pushed the children to consider what the number in each table would be if there were a tenth entry stating that this involved estimation and making predications so that there was "no wrong answer."

This math lesson, lasting close to twenty-five minutes with two thirds of the class contributing to the discussion, exemplified what Richardson (2003) termed exploratory group dialogue. By using the numerical tables as a visual device to generate discussion, explore concepts, and develop a shared meaning of the subject matter, Kyle was engaging in a principal of constructivist pedagogical practice. This approach contrasted markedly with the math lessons observed in Maya's, as well as other teachers' classroom, with their brief lesson introductions, uni-directional approach, and demonstrations geared primarily towards preparing children to sit in their seats and complete the work.

Kyle's resistance to the dominant discursive organization of instruction within the school was further summarized in his seminal narrative depicting the midyear transfer of George and Maria into his classroom. Both children were moved out of the other fifth grade classroom next door as a response to the "chaotic" environment in the classroom, which the administration decided had been exasperated by their presence, in particular George who was identified with a disability. As Kyle described the process:

> I basically started with a community discussion about how we need to help the larger community out, and that we need to help Nicole [the other fifth grade

> teacher] out. The children already knew that stuff was crazy in Nicole's class. They would see all these kids out in the hallway, there's always kids walking around, kids getting in trouble. So then I figured I'd put a spin on that and just say…what can we do to help? What are we going to do to help them? Think about the stories we've read when you're the new child in the classroom. How are we going to circumvent those issues?....So I felt like rather than drop these children into the room without all the children knowing, we needed to have those community discussions.….I felt like the community at the time was really ready to invite someone in.

Acknowledging their awareness that "stuff was crazy" in the other classroom, Kyle strategically included children in the process from the onset through "community discussions." Framing the transfer as a problem requiring the children's input and participation as a community supported an ethic of sharing as the children assumed joint responsibility for ensuring a successful outcome. In addition, Kyle, in line with his philosophical stance, positioned the children as capable of welcoming a new member into the community. While the administration made the decision to move George, it was Kyle's decision to move Maria. Kyle made this decision because he knew the two children were friends, as he described it: "So I said, if you bring George in, you've got to bring Maria in, which was a huge relief to Nicole because Maria kept having a lot of issues with the girls in the classroom." In his willingness to take into his classroom two children who were deemed disruptive, Kyle rejected the discourse of assessment and accountability's production of particular children as non-compliant. Moreover, in countering and resisting the discursive organization of instruction and management of children, he enacted a subject position that constituted teachers as responsive to the educational needs of children.

Engaging a Medicalized Discourse

Although the discourse of assessment and accountability disassociated Bedford to some degree from a medicalized discourse of disability through its employment of standardized achievement tests as a form of examination, both Maya and Kyle were still forced through their interactions with special education IEPs and disability designations to engage a medicalized discourse. This engagement was influenced and shaped on one hand, by the lack of any authoritative institutional special education presence in the school, and on the other hand, by the continued dominance of a medicalized discourse within the public school system writ large (Hehir et. al, 2005; Skrtic, 1995). This created a paradox, fostering an environment in which contradictory subject positions became available, simultaneously fostering and nullifying resistance.

As described in the preceding section, both Maya and Kyle chose as seminal stories (meaning these stories were repeated during multiple interviews) narratives involving children identified with disabilities. In Maya's case, it was Jose's acceptance and inclusion in the classroom spurred by a theatre activity, while in Kyle's case, it was George's transfer from a chaotic classroom environment into one construed as not chaotic. While the choice of these stories was no doubt shaped by the teachers' participation in this study and their knowledge of my research interests, the stories nevertheless retained particular meaning for these teachers as they engaged the dominant medicalized discourse. This engagement, particularly their perception of disability, inclusion and special education, was negotiated through the landscape of their respective educational philosophies, and through the cultural practices and norms of the school shaped by the discourse of assessment and accountability.

Maya

Consistent with her philosophical stance, Maya described disability within the construct of communication and social interactions. However, her framing of disability conflicted with her professed stance, as it aligned with a medicalized discourse and supported the discourse of assessment and accountability. This confliction was evident in Maya's struggle defining disability as she vacillated between conceptualizing it as a label separate from the individual and as a condition innate in the body and person of the child.

> A label more than anything else, a label that describes someone who doesn't or that can't communicate or quote function the way the norm [does] in terms of accessibility, communication and accessibility. I think it's used to…identify a group of people outside of the norm. So whoever…the majority of things are made for, like the height of certain furniture, is made for the quote norm. The way that things are set up for communication devices, telephones, technology so, I guess the majority, not the norm. So that someone with the disability would have to either find or adapt things…in terms of like communication devices, facilitated communication things where…they need certain devices to get to the same level of communication that everybody else has, that sort of immediate accessibility to, but it might not be a service device.

In this description, Maya initially construed disability as just "a label more than anything else," that identified individuals or "a group of people outside the norm," who can't communicate and access things "at the same level." Disability arose as these individuals encountered the material world, where "the majority of things are made" either according to particular norms or for the majority. Now constituted as disabled, these individuals became responsible "to either find or adapt…or get" something to access this same level of communication of "everybody else." In this assigning of responsibility, Maya constituted disability as an innate condition located in the body and person of the individual, and as such a burden (Linton, 1998). This production of the disabled individual aligned with a medicalized discourse of disability.

In construing disability as primarily a "function" of communication and accessibility, Maya aligned it with her philosophical stance and vision of an integrated arts-based curriculum. Maya described this connection:

> Coming back to children maybe with autism who for me their disability is just their inability to communicate or express themselves the way that other people do, whether it be verbally or just dealing with emotions. I think a lot of disabilities…[are] just an issue with communication….Using arts provides another way so that…they're not like angry or they're not on edge all the time cause they can't get out what they're trying to say or that they're feeling. So when you use arts it's just like almost like a therapy…[to] bring them down to like a neutral space so they can be in a learning environment or traditional setting.

The positioning of autism as an example and exemplar of disability illustrated Maya's focus on communication and socialization, confirmed in her explicit characterization of disability as an individual's inability to express, "themselves the way that other people do…verbally or just dealing with emotions." In this second description, Maya replaced material adaptions, assisted communication devices, with therapeutic intervention, in the guise of curriculum. Art, as therapy, mediated the psychological manifestation of disability, of being angry and on "edge all the time," which Maya conceded was the consequence of not being able to communicate and cope emotionally," "the way that other people do." In a sense, individuals here were construed as doubly disabled, socially (an inability to communicate) and psychologically (an inability to cope). As described above, children identified with disabilities were included in "a learning environment or traditional setting" when able to control their emotions and behavior, which required intervention to "bring them down to like a neutral space." This association of disability and behavior, aligned with the discourse of assessment and accountability and its concern with obedience, discipline and compliance. Art, as a curriculum, was reframed here as a therapeutic tool for maintaining docile bodies, rather than a Freirean infused activity

fostering linguistic and social development, thus requiring a teacher who could function as an officer of compliance.

Consistent with her background in bilingual education, Maya maintained that the school was legally obligated to provide mandated special education support services. As she put it: "I think it is totally important that kids…whatever their individual things and needs, are recognized and you know serviced and addressed." At the same time, she found the IEP process itself "incredibly difficult" as she admitted being particularly uncomfortable with the language associated with goal setting. When asked to write IEP goals, she sought out another teacher in the school who was certified in special education and conversant with the language of IEPs. On having to write goals for Ian, a child in her classroom, Maya reflected:

> I feel like I didn't even have the access into [the] thinking…like Ian is a child who's good at so many different things but…I feel like they were asking for a very specific way to think about him and it was through that language and I didn't have that. So it was hard for me to even think about what they were asking me to describe about him.

Maya's assertion that "Ian is a child who's good at so many different things," indicated perhaps confusion around the purpose of IEP goals. Read in line with her final comment, she appeared to view goals as a description rather than a set of skills or concepts the child is working on. The inaccessibility of the "thinking" and "language" of special education embedded in IEPs, as described by Maya, appeared characteristic of the general/special education binary enacted through the medicalized discourse (Hehir et. al, 2005; Skrtic, 1995).

Recalling another instance in which she was asked by the administration to write IEP goals, Maya reiterated her exclusion as she described the process:

> I mean [IEPs] were dumb but someone had to come in and said, listen, we need to get this to the city because we are out of compliance or something. And in five minutes rewrote this kid's document that is gonna affect the way he is seen or taught…I mean who he is on paper….And see this is the thing. I'm the classroom teacher [and] I don't even give enough credit to those documents. I don't feel like they help me to serve [children].

In this description, Maya assigned some unspecified value to the IEP, as material documents that "affect the way he is seen or taught…who he is on paper." Yet, she dismissed them as a classroom teacher, denying the documents any instructional value, concluding: "I don't even give enough credit to those documents." On one hand, Maya acknowledged being uncomfortable writing IEP goals and maintained that the goals did not "help me to serve" children. On the other hand, she adamantly endorsed the provision of support services as evidenced in her oft-repeated criticism of the administration for not providing services, voiced during multiple interviews. This apparent paradox made particular sense in the context of Bedford, where special education was absent and teachers were left to independently contribute to and interpret IEPs. It also reflected her assumption and enactment of contrary and multiple subjectivities as: a Freirean facilitator; an officer of compliance; a bilingual educator and endorser of services; and a general education teacher navigating the IEP process where scientific, positivist and quantitative knowledge is privileged over the qualitative knowledge possessed by teachers (Hehir et al., 2005; Reid & Valle, 2004).

Kyle

Consistent with Foucault's (1980, 1983, 1990) notion of a fragmented identity, Kyle assumed and enacted an alternative subject position that resisted and countered the discourse of assessment and accountability, while simultaneously endorsing a conception

of disability, intelligence and inclusion that sustained and reinforced a medicalized discourse. Kyle defined disability within the context of education and learning as "an obstacle," as "something that's…preventing you from getting from one point to the other easily…that's stopping, disabling that movement." Elaborating further:

> When you're presented with a challenge, an opportunity to learn something, how you get from point "A" to point "B" is important for us as teachers to facilitate that. So you'll have children that seem to get to that point quickly and say, I got this. And then you might have a student that is slowly getting there. And that disability may be in terms of not understanding what they need to do. So I just see it as like a minor [obstacle]...because I think that all disabilities can be worked through, but I just see it as a way to get someone to get to a place of understanding in education. In the general sense I guess disability could mean a lot of other things. I guess it's movement, easy movement, easy thinking.

In this description, Kyle portrayed ability metaphorically as movement, and disability as obstacles "disabling" movement, while constituting teachers as responsible for facilitating movement. Although not overtly pathologizing disability, this metaphorical description asserted a binary of dis/ability that maintained assumptions aligned with the medicalized discourse. Children were categorized as those that "get to that point quickly," through "easy movement, easy thinking," and those that are "slowly getting there," blocked by obstacles disabling movement and thinking. Obstacles, or the problem of learning, were located in the child and construed primarily as a processing problem, of children "not understanding what they need to do." This locating of disability in the person and body of the child alongside the positioning of teachers as responsible for unblocking or moving children towards "a place of understanding" supported a deficit model of disability (Heshusius, 1989). Additionally, the employment of the metaphor of "slow movement" harkened back to earlier notions of disability that portrayed children

with mental disabilities as slow and feebleminded (Franklin, 1987; Richardson, 1994; Tyack, 1974).

Embedded in Kyle's construct of disability was a fixed, innate notion of intelligence, consistent with a medicalized discourse of disability (Boland, 2003; Gould, 1981; Kliebard, 1995; Tyack, 1974). Kyle repeatedly used the terms, "bright" and "smart," in reference to a few children who appeared academically competent as well as to a handful of children who were struggling academically. Among the children who were struggling, was George, who was a "smart child…smarter in math," but "a low, low functioning reader," who "was signed on to do the extra time in testing…because he needed time to process his thought." And Maria, who "came in with a tremendous curiosity for learning [and] was really smart, really, really smart too," but also "a very emotionally disturbed child." And finally, Madison, who "was smart…and a strong reader," whose struggles weren't "an issue of her academic ability," but who "had…a hint of Asperger's," or "might be slightly autistic." According to Kyle, of these children only George had been evaluated and diagnosed by the DOE.

Kyle's linking of the static intelligence labels of "bright" and "smart," with various disability labels, in conjunction with his construct of disability as an obstacle, invoked the rhetoric of "overcoming" disability (Linton, 1998). Assumed within this rhetoric, is the idea "of personal triumph over a personal condition" (p. 18). Thus Kyle labeled as bright and smart children he connected with, whose stories resonated with him, and most importantly, whom he depicted as struggling and succeeding. Using this rhetoric allowed Kyle to reject the notion of fixed ability asserted through the discourse of assessment and accountability, while still supporting an innate, static notion of

intelligence and ability consistent with a medicalized discourse. Yet, he detached intelligence and ability from a medicalized discourse and applied the label in instances where children had received no medical diagnosis. Furthermore, he did so in an environment where special education was absent and unable to assume responsibility for children deemed outside the norm, which left classroom teachers solely responsible for teaching all children. Kyle reconciled this apparent paradox through the rhetoric of overcoming, and by assuming within the context of Bedford and his classroom a subject position as a teacher responsive to the instructional needs of children.

Not unexpectedly, Kyle located inclusion, IEPs and support services squarely within the institution of special education and outside the confines of his classroom. In defining inclusion, Kyle admitted that the "city term, or the school term, probably has messed me up." He described inclusion as signifying when everyone, "children at all different levels of learning…even English Language Learners," are, "included in the process of learning." By singling out English Language Learners, however, Kyle indicated that he connected "different levels of learning" with DOE and special education categories, a notion consistent with his definition of disability but contrary to his philosophical stance. Expanding upon his understanding of the "school term," Kyle directly linked inclusion and special education.

> For me, inclusion has always felt like you get someone, first of all you're mandated to have, children need education, and they're brought into your room along with a lot of paperwork. And sometimes the word inclusion I have to say, it's a red flag for me. It's like okay, what does this mean? Does this mean that there's extra work to do now? Is there IEPs involved? Is there like all this other stuff that I need to be conscious of?...I guess I've never, unfortunately because of the system, seen the word used as a positive thing. So you have inclusion programs, it's almost like you start thinking there's something wrong. I think that way.

In this description, Kyle equated inclusion with a "program" legitimizing the institutional intrusion of special education into the classroom. Here special education "brought into the classroom," children accompanied by "paperwork" and IEPs, who required extra work. The notion of "something wrong," implied the intrusion of special education as a consequence of a perceived inadequacy of general education teachers, as a punishment, a "red flag." Embedded in this description was a struggle over knowledge ingrained in the binary of general and special education (Hehir et al., 2005; Reid & Valle, 2004). Kyle's opposition to special education was particularly meaningful within Bedford, where the institutional authority of special education was diminished and its lack of presence, in the classroom environment left teachers like Kyle, unsupported, unsupervised, and uniformed.

Expounding upon his opposition to special education, Kyle described special education support services as: "Kind of like a burden. It's burdensome for the child, and then I have to sit with that teacher and figure out, so how's it going?" This description accorded with his view of special education as intrusive, with services constituted as an emotional burden for the child, and extra work for the teacher. Yet, Kyle described two different IEP meetings where he argued that the children should be "taken off" their IEPs primarily because they were not receiving services. As he put it: "I was very open and honest and I said that there is no one supporting these children in the school, so I don't understand why we're putting children on an IEP." Kyle appeared here to equate IEPs solely with support services, provided by special education and outside the realm of the classroom. His justification for rejecting the IEPs in these instances however contradicted

his opposition to special education. As special education was absent and Bedford in fact provided no services, this contradiction remained intact and un-interrogated.

In sum, Kyle indicated that he paradoxically supported a medicalized discourse through his deficit-driven innate conception of disability, and undermined the discourse through his opposition to special education. Kyle navigated this discursive incongruity as a teacher through his assumption and enactment of a subject position, responsible for the instructional needs of children. This subject position required that he be capable of teaching children identified with disabilities and that the children themselves be capable of overcoming their disabilities, which he successfully co-joined through a metaphoric rhetoric of "movement" and "struggle."

Conclusion

Within Bedford, Maya and Kyle interrogated and challenged the primacy of the discourse of assessment and accountability. In Maya's case, she asserted a philosophical stance, influenced by a Freirean dialogical pedagogy that countered and resisted the discourse. Yet, in her classroom, she variously acquiesced to and subverted the discursive organization of instruction, assuming and enacting multiple and at time contradictory subject positions: in particular instances, she was able to remain true to her philosophy as she explored an alternate subject position that constituted the teacher as facilitator. Conversely, Kyle was able through his philosophical stance and pedagogy, to counter and resist the discourse of assessment and accountability, in the process exploring an alternate subject positions, as a teacher responsive to the needs of children. Both Maya and Kyle in their descriptions of disability and inclusion sustained a medicalized discourse of

disability, though discursively disassociated within the school's culture, still dominant within the public school system writ large. However, the absence of special education created a vacuum in which neither teacher was forced to think about difference and disability from a medicalized perspective in the context of their practice. Thus, simultaneously, they both rejected the institution of special education, paradoxically further disassociating the medicalized discourse within the cultural norms and practices of the school.

VII – SUMMARY AND DICUSSION

Introduction

In this study I set out to explore how discourses of disability circulated within the epistemologies and practices of four general education teachers as they negotiated an educational landscape impacted by on-going changes in the special education system. Utilizing a Foucauldian lens, I was particularly interested in how these teachers responded to the power/knowledge claims asserted through the dominant medicalized discourse institutionally employed and deployed through special education and the public school system writ large. Moreover, I looked for acts of resistance, or in the parlance of Foucault (1983), "modes of action," recognizing that the formation of resistance is both a precondition and consequence of the exercising of power, and that power is the medium through which social change occurs. As relations of power involve subjectivity, I paid attention within the two school sites, Bedford and Taft, to the discursive production and formation of subject positions, in particular those assumed and enacted by teachers. Finally, my research was organized around Foucault's (1980) contention that individuals, here teachers and children, are simultaneously the object and subject of power, as they are, "not only its inert or consenting target: they are always also the elements of its articulation." (p. 98).

As I engaged in this study, however I moved away from my original research questions in two areas. I began interested specifically in how the on-going changes in special education, exemplified by the 1993 Reform Act in the state of Massachusetts and the reforms in NYC begun in 2003, impacted general education classrooms and teachers.

Unplanned, I found myself in two different schools where the impact of these reforms appeared relatively insignificant and of less interest. As a newly designated school, change was not an issue at Bedford, while at Taft, the entrenched institutional and discursive authority of special education and a medicalized discourse negated change. Although my study shifted somewhat in focus in response to what I learned about the two schools, the reforms I had initially sought to investigate, nevertheless, provided an important context within which to understand the participating schools, administrations and teachers. As the study progressed, I also found myself focused on two teachers, Maya and Kyle, at one school, Bedford. The environment I encountered at Taft, where resistance was effectively nullified by virtue of the cultural climate, largely drove this revised focus.

In this chapter I present and discuss the findings of this research as drawn from my interpretation of the data. I begin with a presentation of the findings followed by a discussion divided into two sections. In the first section, I discuss the relationship between the cultural entrenchment of special education and a medicalized discourse, and the formation of opportunities for interrogation and resistance. In doing so, I specifically discuss the discursive production of particular kinds of teachers and children. In the subsequent section, I discuss how the two teachers at Bedford, Maya and Kyle, interrogated, resisted, sustained, and supported the discourse of assessment and accountability circulating within the school. I also discuss how these two teachers responded to a medicalized discourse circulating within the public school system writ large. Finally, I end this chapter with a discussion of the significance and limitations of this study.

Findings

Through my analysis of the data collected for this study, I have posited three findings.

1. Opportunities for interrogation and resistance arise or are nullified dependent upon the entrenchment of the institutional and discursive authority of special education and a medicalized discourse in the cultural norms and practices of the school.
2. Resistance formed in response to localized discourses has the potential to impact the education of children within the confines of individual classrooms.
3. Even when disassociated from the cultural norms and practices of the school, and in the face of resistance, there is no escape from the power/knowledge claims of a medicalized discourse, dominant within the public school system writ large.

The Assertion of Institutional and Discursive Authority

Schooling in America is at once national and local, thus both Taft and Bedford although located in different states, functioned within the same public school system within which the institutions of general and special education joined with a medicalized discourse of disability to form a power/knowledge matrix (Foucault, 1972, 1977, 1980, 1983).

Competing Discourses and the Presence of Special Education

As a school, Taft appeared to fully accept the institutional and discursive authority of special education and a medicalized discourse of disability. This authority was integrated into the cultural norms and practices of the school such that possibilities for resistance were nullified. Serving children and families in a small university town, Taft operated in a school district where multiple and varied special education programs and services constituted a protracted policy that routinely separated children deemed disabled and disruptive from general education classrooms. At the same time, the school promoted a narrative of inclusivity, obscuring this policy and the institutional and discursive exercising of power through which it was enacted. This was exemplified in the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) program, housed in Taft, which was promoted by a long-serving administration and widely supported by the teachers, as a model of inclusion. This assertion paradoxically reframed the construct of separation as harmonious with a school environment in which administrators and teaches alike proclaimed, “everyone belongs” and “all children can learn.”

Meanwhile, inside the walls of the school, the implementation of support services granted special education the power to intervene in general education classrooms. Para-professionals, constituted as a service with no instructional role, pursued a policy of surveillance on behalf of special education, as they intervened in the classroom at the behest of teachers to separate and control children deemed disruptive. These support personnel ensured the transfer of responsibility for children identified with disabilities from general education to the institutional bureaucracy of special education. At the same time, children identified as disabled were assigned to the resource room through the

imposition of a pull out service delivery model. Once there, special education teachers, again at the behest of classroom teachers, assumed responsibility for the children's education in the core subjects of reading, writing and math. That resource room schedules were based on the needs of the special education teachers, and thus disconnected from the happenings in the classroom, reinforced both the notion that children deemed disabled belonged to special education and the construct of special education as a place where children received a set of services based upon categories of disability, rather than an individualized program of services. (Hehir et. al, 2005; Meyen & Skrtic, 1995; Winzer, 1993). In sum, within Taft, special education assumed its historical role as an escape valve for general education programs (Franklin, 1987; Richardson, 1994; Tyack, 1974; Winzer, 1993). Moreover, the institutional and discursive practices separating children deemed disabled and disruptive were so deeply entrenched, long accepted, widely sustained and supported by classroom teachers and administrators that teacher resistance, or even the possibility of resistance, was largely nullified.

As a newly designated public school of choice operating in a large urban school district, with no internal history, policies and legacies to draw upon, Bedford stood in stark contrast to Taft. At Bedford, opportunities for interrogation and resistance formed in relation with the diminished institutional and discursive authority of special education and a medicalized discourse. Within the school, special education had no institutional presence measured by designated personnel, programs, or assigned spaces. Nor were special education programs and personnel, as noted by the administration, part of the discussion as the school transitioned from an academy to a public school. In fact, the school counselor, charged with overseeing the evaluation process and who served as the

liaison to the institution of special education, worked part-time and was admittedly unfamiliar with special education policies and procedures before joining Bedford.

Although institutionally decoupled from special education, Bedford struggled to reconcile and merge its founders' mission with the policies and regulations governing the New York City public school system and special education. This reconciliation and merging was understood by the administration not as an educational matter but as a bureaucratic problem. With no one in the school representing special education, the administration, inexperienced and overwhelmed, concerned itself with issues of compliance, in effect reframing special education as another bureaucratic hurdle. Thus, the administration argued over whether or not the school was in or out of compliance while children identified with disabilities were routinely denied mandated special education services.

Trying to adhere to the Department of Education's (DOE) policies and procedures, while also sustaining the school's mission, the administration at Bedford enacted and supported a discourse of assessment and accountability that echoed the concerns of the public school system writ large. Ignoring special education disability designations, the teachers and administrators at Bedford consequently turned their attention to DOE designated ability-based categories discursively produced as ranked populations of children. The enactment of this discourse disassociated the school from a medicalized discourse as it replaced psycho-educational evaluations with standardized achievement tests as a form of examination and disciplinary technology for sorting and categorizing children. Rather then treating children through specialized therapeutic instruction, the school adopted a form of differentiated instruction geared towards ability-

based ranked populations. In particular, attention was paid to the population of children categorized as at risk, which although vaguely defined within Bedford was tied directly to the school's progress and its evaluation as a new school by the DOE.

Unlike Taft, at Bedford special education was unable to fulfill its historical function as an escape valve, assuming responsibility for children deemed disabled and disruptive and moving them out of general education classrooms. In addition, with no special education infrastructure and support personnel facilitating and enforcing compliance, IEPs when sought were constituted as a possession and bureaucratic label signifying a categorical population, of children discursively produced as disabled, who could be further organized and manipulated. As such, IEPs appeared akin to an end goal rather then an educational plan and were thus routinely disregarded and ignored within the school. In sum, with special education absent and the administration focused on compliance, classroom teachers retained responsibility for teaching all children; unseen by the administration, however, a few found thus within the confines of their classrooms, opportunities for interrogation and resistance.

The Discursive Production of Children and Teachers

While Taft and Bedford functioned within different discursive environments - one dominated by a medicalized discourse the other by a discourse of assessment and accountability - both schools constituted and produced particular kinds of children and teachers. At Taft, the special education system was organized and implemented in accordance with IDEA legislation, utilizing psycho-educational evaluations to discursively examine, judge, observe, and treat children deemed outside the norm. In the year prior to this study, ninety-two children out of a total population of four hundred and

eight qualified for special education services. That close to one quarter of the children in the school qualified for support, a percentage statistically higher then the state average in Massachusetts, demonstrated the institutional integration of special education. Through the evaluation process and its aftermath, children were constituted as objects to be authoritatively studied, known, defined, controlled, and cared for. Within Taft, children were first assigned subject positions as abled and disabled, and then for those deemed disabled, further subjectified as non-learners in general education classrooms; meaning these children could only be instructed by special education teachers outside general education classrooms and in special education settings. This subjectification was accepted and sustained by general as well as special education teachers, had material implications, and came at an educational cost, as these children were largely denied instruction when in general education classrooms and excluded from full participation in the life of the classroom community.

At Taft general education classroom teachers were discursively produced, and assumed and enacted a subject position as teachers unable to teach all children, which was consistent with the school's cultural and discursive subjectivity of children. All the teachers and administrators who participated in this study aligned with and were complicit in the discursive and cultural practices producing this subject position, creating an environment characterized by an "absence of struggle." Here, classroom teachers were rewarded for aligning with the school's cultural norms and practices, for not questioning the expectations; that is the beliefs, ways of acting, and professional positioning of general education teachers, their pedagogy and knowledge, discursively asserted by the school (Foucault, 1983). As with the production of children, this subjectification came at

a cost to teachers, as their professional competency and knowledge were undermined, reinforcing the construct of teacher knowledge as disqualified knowledge and of low status in the hierarchy of power/knowledge (Foucault, 1980). In addition, their complicity nullified possibilities for resistance as everyone, teachers, administrators and children, functioned within a network of power relations institutionally exercised and maintained by special education through the employment and deployment of a medicalized discourse of disability.

While Taft adhered to IDEA legislation consistent with a medicalized discourse, Bedford enacted a discourse of assessment and accountability, decoupled from special education and disassociated from a medicalized discourse. While the number of children qualifying for IEPs at Taft appeared statistically higher than the state average in Massachusetts, at Bedford the numbers were statistically lower then the city average in New York, with twenty-two children qualifying out of a total population of two hundred and ten in the year this study was completed. The statistical variation between the two schools reflected the lack of an effective system for referring children to special education at Bedford alongside the school's enactment of a discourse of assessment and accountability. At Bedford, all children were discursively constituted as objects and data, to be categorized and sorted through standardized achievement tests into ability-based ranked populations, which could be organized and manipulated as needed by the school and DOE. At the same time, children were discursively produced as subjects, as docile and compliant children, who could be controlled, observed and if deemed non-compliant, disciplined. Within the school this discursive formation and production of children had a cost, albeit not the same as that at Taft. Instruction was geared first towards ability-based

ranked populations rather then individual children, and secondarily, prioritized the creation of compliant children, even at the expense of educational attainment.

The discourse of assessment and accountability, including its production of compliant children, was mobilized through administrators and teachers who acted as agents in support of the discourse. Instruction and the management of children were discursively organized around work and behavior, the goal being to reinforce obedience to rules, docility to tasks, and compliance in academic endeavors. This resulted in instruction that was uni-directional with uniform assignments and tasks that focused on completing work, and a mode of classroom management reliant on order, obedience and discipline.

Assigned responsibility for teaching all children, albeit unsupported and unsupervised, the teachers at Bedford acted within a discourse and culture that assumed compliance and, akin to Taft, rewarded conformity. In this environment, teachers assumed and enacted a subject position, as officers of compliance that came at a cost; diminishing their role as educators in favor of a role more closely associated with wardens and guards. Yet, unlike their counterparts at Taft, with special education absent and an ineffective administration in place, the teachers at Bedford had no institutional recourse for enforcing compliance and removing children deemed disabled, disruptive and non-compliant from the classroom. This paradox highlighted the localization of power/knowledge in the discourse of assessment and account, which was disassociated from an overt medicalized discourse and which in conjunction with the institution of special education, formed a matrix of power/knowledge (Foucault, 1980) that characterized Taft. This localization of power/knowledge created space in the classrooms

of individual teachers within which relations of power could be interrogated and opportunities for resistance could be formed.

Opportunities for Interrogation and Resistance

The exercise of power and formation of resistance, according to Foucault, entails a constant provocation; a "strategy of struggle," through which freedom, agency and intentionality, are expressed. Power thus expressed has the potential to become the medium of social change, not through people's consciousness, but in its relationship with the political, economic, cultural and institutional production of truth (Foucault, 1983). As power works through subjectivity, resistance arises through each individual's participation in their constitution as subjects and their assumption and enactment of discursively produced, available subject positions. Left alone in their classrooms, unsupervised and unsupported, the classroom teachers at Bedford participated in their own subjectivity; most, opting for the rewards of conformity chose a subject position as an officer of compliance, produced through the discourse of assessment and accountability. However, within the classrooms of individual teachers, opportunities for interrogation and resistance formed spurred on by a weak and ineffective administration, the absence of special education, and the circulation of a localized discourse lacking the institutional authority to fully realize its power/knowledge claim without the complicity of teachers.

Within their respective classrooms, Maya and Kyle, assuming and enacting multiple, contradictory, and alternative subject positions, were able to interrogate and at times resist the cultural norms and practices as they responded to the school's

uncoordinated efforts to impose a discursive organization of instruction in concert with the production of a particular kind of teacher. At the same time, these two teachers engaged and negotiated a medicalized discourse, which although disassociated within the discursive environment of the school, was inescapable, institutionally backed through special education and the DOE within the public school system writ large.

Interrogation and Resistance

As noted, the school's discursive production of teachers, organization of instruction, and preoccupation with discursively produced populations of children, came at a cost to teachers. For Maya and Kyle, these discursive practices conflicted with their pedagogical philosophies, as both teachers in particular moments assumed and enacted alternative subject positions. In the case of Maya, conflict arose through her embrace of a Freirean inspired philosophy that constituted the teacher as facilitator, implementing a dialogical and problem posing pedagogy. With learning and problem solving anchored in human relationships and situated in the real world setting of the classroom, Maya countered the discursive employment of standardized tests within the school, instead envisioning an alternative mode of assessment based on the development of social, communicative, and problem solving skills. To this end, she described an exploratory arts-based integrated curriculum, further challenging the discursive organization of instruction within the school, and its concern with completing uniform tasks and assignments.

However, as observed in the classroom, Maya oft enacted a different subject position. When implementing the *Investigations* math program, she veered from its constructivist design, instead adapting a mode of instruction aligned with the discourse of

assessment and accountability. In doing so, she supported the cultural norms and practices within the school, their concern with compliance and the corresponding discursive production of teachers as officers of compliance. Yet, within particular moments in time, Maya was also able to inhabit her preferred subject position as facilitator, and to resist the discursive production of teachers and children within the school, as exemplified in her implementation of the theatre activity. In these moments, the instruction of children and their education was impacted as the concern shifted from creating compliant children to dialogically engaging children.

Whereas Maya preferred the role of facilitator, Kyle assumed and enacted a different yet similarly alternative subject position, as a teacher responsive to the educational needs of children. This subject position resided in an espoused pedagogical philosophy emphasizing differentiated instruction, heterogeneous grouping and constructivist learning. In implementing this philosophy, Kyle fostered a classroom culture designed around the related notions of a learning community and an ethic of sharing (Brimijoin, 2005; Tomlinson, 2004a; 2004b). Underpinning this pedagogical philosophy was Kyle's stated belief in the potential and capability of all children to learn. Kyle's enactment of a preferred subject positions, albeit different from Maya's, similarly constituted a form of resistance to the discursive production of teachers and children within the school.

Moreover, Kyle was able to consistently wed his pedagogical philosophy with his instructional practice. This was evidenced during lessons, particularly math lessons where Kyle's pedagogy mirrored the design of the *Investigations* math program and countered the discursive organization of instruction within the school. This was also evident in his

description of the transferring of two children deemed disruptive, from the other fifth grade into his classroom. In this instance, Kyle subverted the school's discursive management of children, rejecting the production of docile, obedient and compliant children, and instead constituting children as having potential and being capable of learning. Through his assumption and enactment of an alternative subject position, Kyle, like Maya, impacted children's education, as in particular moments and within the confines of his classroom, the concern shifted from creating compliant children to engaging children in the related tasks of learning and managing the classroom.

The Impossibility of Evading and Escaping a Medicalized Discourse

Although disassociated within Bedford, a medicalized discourse comprised part of the power/knowledge matrix within which New York City public schools operated, underpinning the language and construct of IEPs, and the categories of disability employed by the DOE (Hehir et. al, 2005; Skrtic, 1995). As the dominant disability discourse, it shaped Maya and Kyle's respective perceptions of disability, inclusion and special education. Their perceptions were further negotiated through the landscape of their respective educational philosophies, and the discursive and cultural practices of the school. This negotiation created contradictory subject positions as both teachers aligned with the medicalized discourse yet rejected IEPs and, in Kyle's case, any intrusion of special education into the classroom.

Focusing on communication, socialization and accessibility, in accord with her pedagogical interests, Maya struggled defining disability, conceptualizing it as variously a label and as an innate physical and psychological condition consistent with a medicalized discourse. Maya anchored her description of disability in the binaries of

normal and abnormal: while acknowledging that individuals were made disabled by society, she assigned them responsibility for communicating and accessing their environment in a manner consistent with non-disabled individuals. The influence of a medicalized discourse was further evidenced in Maya's description of inclusion. Here, children deemed outside the norm were granted the privilege of participating in general education settings so long as they were not disruptive. Disruptive behavior implied, according to Maya, a psychological condition and deficit, constituting disability as both a social and psychological disorder. Exclusion was consequently re-construed as a form of punishment for disabled children who impinged upon and disrupted the happiness and safety in the classroom of the non-disabled children. As a form of therapeutic intervention, an integrated arts-based curriculum according to Maya promoted and supported inclusion. While she asserted a medicalized discourse in her descriptions of disability and inclusion, which appeared contrary to her professed pedagogical beliefs, as a teacher Maya dismissed IEPs as inaccessible and irrelevant. Yet, she continued to be highly critical of the administration and their inability to provide mandated services to children with IEPs.

Akin to Maya, Kyle displayed a fragmented subjectivity as he assumed and enacted a medicalized discourse while dismissing the institutional authority of special education to intervene in the classroom. Conceptualizing disability as an obstacle and primarily a processing problem, he assumed a deficit perspective locating disability within the body and person of the individual. Complementing this description of disability, Kyle embraced a static notion of intelligence, as both a possession and identify marker. In linking disability and intelligence, he asserted the rhetoric of overcoming,

which aligned with his belief in the capability and potential of all children to learn, yet at the same time reinforced a medicalized discourse. While asserting a medicalized discourse, Kyle simultaneously rejected the institution of special education. Inclusion and support services, according to Kyle, represented the intrusion of special education into general education classrooms, which devalued the knowledge and practice of general education classroom teachers. Like Maya, Kyle ignored and rejected IEPs, as intrusive, instructionally irrelevant, and meaningless within the context of Bedford where children were more often then not denied mandated services.

With special education absent and the administration unable to provide services or support, Maya and Kyle were able to disregard what they perceived as the intrusion of special education through IEPs and services. Yet at the same time, as evidenced in their negotiation of the constructs of disability and inclusion, they were unable to evade or escape the discursive exercise of power within the school of a medicalized discourse, even when disassociated and unenforced within the school. This paradox was consistent with Foucault's description of a fragmented subjectivity, where subjectivity, assumed and enacted though relations of power, does not produce a unified self but rather a fragmented, oft incompatible, multiplicity of identities or subject positions, all historically constituted and reconstituted, regulated by social and cultural norms (Foucault, 1980, 1983, 1990).

Significance of the Study

In this study, I explored how the power/knowledge matrix comprising the institution of special education and the public school system's employment and

deployment of a medicalized discourse of disability, impacted two schools and four teachers. In one of the schools, Taft, this power/knowledge matrix appeared deeply entrenched in the school culture encasing teachers, administrators and children within a network of power relations that discursively produced teachers as unable to teach all children. In the other school, Bedford, the power/knowledge matrix was diminished by a bureaucratic discourse of assessment and accountability, which functioned in the absence of a fully institutionalized system of special education and disassociated the school from a medicalized discourse. Working within a discourse and culture primarily concerned with Department of Education policies and procedures, teachers were here discursively produced as officers of compliance. However, and despite its disassociation within the school, a medicalized discourse proved inescapable as it continued to shape classroom teachers, and their notions of disability and inclusion, as well as their interactions with special education.

The significance of this study lies in part in this exploration of power/knowledge and its impact on schools. More importantly, the significance lies in the study's focus on the pedagogical philosophies and instructional practices of classroom teachers, who as localized "vehicles of power" (Foucault, 1980, p. 98) work at the point where power is exercised, resistances are formed, and possibilities of social change arise. As described by Foucault (1983) social change does not occur through people's consciousness, but arises in the relationship between power/knowledge and the political, economic, cultural and institutional production of truth (Foucault, 1983). As described in this study, opportunities for interrogation and resistance arise or are nullified dependent upon the entrenchment of power/knowledge matrix in the cultural norms and practices of the

school. In addition, as this study makes clear, despite localized resistance the pervasive assumptions of a medicalized discourse of disability remain influential, permeating the philosophies, pedagogies and interactions of classroom teachers.

Implications of the Study

This study may be of interest to critical theorists and researchers who hope to challenge the notion of a neutral science embedded within the dominant discourses of education shaping federal legislation and policies exemplified by the *No Child Left Behind Act* and the *Race to the Top* funding competition. Through this study, I have sought to add to a growing body of critical literature exploring the relationship between discourses of disability, relations of power/knowledge, and the production of teachers and constitution of children with disabilities as subjects within public schools in the United States. Employing a post-structural frame of analysis of power/knowledge as described by Foucault (1972, 1977, 1980, 1983), I have used this study to explore the ways in which the subject positions of teachers and to a lesser degree children are produced and negotiated, particularly in relationship to the binaries of general education/special education, ability/disability, and normal/abnormal, which have historically served as vehicles to privilege some while marginalizing others (Bejoian & Reid, 2005). Uncovering and unpacking discourses of disability and the discursive practices of general and special education may make more clear the ways in which these discourses and practices serve political interests and work to maintain the status quo. This is a necessary first step in reconstructing these discourses and discursive practices, and their exercising

of relations of power, so as to constructively impact the pedagogical practices of teachers and the education of children.

In addition, this study poses questions about the impact of the widespread employment of accountability practices. Such practices have intended and unintended consequences that shape schools and classrooms. In the case of Bedford, the discourse of assessment and accountability created a school culture in which teachers assumed a particular subject position that emphasized compliance. Rather then enhancing and targeting instruction, this discourse reorganized teaching as uni-directional instruction, involving uniform assignments and tasks and that focused on completing work. Moreover, the employment of accountability practices encouraged within the school the sorting and categorizing of children into ranked populations, and as data to be manipulated and as subjects to be controlled, observed and treated. Thus this study raises questions as to whether accountability practices serve the educational needs of children as opposed to the bureaucratic needs of the school.

Furthermore, this study may be of interest to theorists, researchers and institutions concerned with the devaluing of teacher knowledge. Within college and graduate level programs of education there is already widespread use of assignments that incorporate autobiographical and critical reflection (Bolin, & Falk, 1987; Lieberman & Miller, 1991; 2001; Richardson, 1996). I believe this work may similarly contribute to the literature exploring how teachers construct pedagogical knowledge as I examine how these teachers act as agents of dominant and alternative discourses of disability. In this study, I position teacher knowledge as a form of hidden or disqualified knowledge that has been historically given low status in the hierarchy in relation to institutional and official forms

of power/knowledge. Specifically, exploring how these teachers ignore, accept, resist, embrace, subvert, interrogate, or challenge claims to power/knowledge is an important step in granting this knowledge, renewed status. In addition, such studies comprise a response to Richardson's (1996) call for more substantive research directly connecting beliefs to actions in the classroom as well as Brantlinger, Klingner, and Richardson's (2005) call for a greater acceptance within the field of special education research employing experimental qualitative designs. Finally, this study poses a fundamental question concerning the availability of subject positions from which teachers assume and choose. In particular, is there a role for teacher education programs to introduce and promote alternative educator's discourses as a means to make available alternative to teachers subject positions?

Limitations of the Study

There are numerous limitations of this study. First, construed as a qualitative study my research was inherently limited in size and scope. Second, my employment of a Foucauldian poststructural lens denies the possibility of generalizing with the goal of making grand statements and conclusions; as this study does not purport to represent some version of reality or truth but rather pertains simply to my interpretation of the data I collected.

In addition, I understand there is a lively debate within and beyond the field of educational research as to the use of poststructuralist frames of thought, particularly as espoused in the writings of Foucault; specifically that these frames are unduly deterministic, denying individual agency (Hoy, 1986; Weedon, 2005). My employment

of a Foucauldian frame of analysis posits that agency and intentionality exist but are never complete. As I have described in this study, the poststructuralist de-centering of the individual means that individuals are at once both the subject and the site of subjectivity. Subjectivity involves: (a) the operation of the unconscious; (b) the effects of discourses, which are socially and historically situated; and (c) the multiple subject positions available and occupied by individuals (Foucault, 1983; Weedon, 2005). As it is through the process of subjectivity that political and social effects of discourses are realized, discourses must necessarily compete for the loyalty of individuals to act as their agents. Within the range of subject positions and forms of subjectivity, individuals intentionally engage in meaningful actions and behaviors making choices according to their values and desires, and in the knowledge of potential rewards and punishments (Cherryholmes, 1988). This creates a dilemma, as explained by Foucault in a personal communication with Dreyfus and Rabinow (1983); "people know what they do; they frequently know why they do what they do; but what they don't know is what what they do does" (p. 187). In this respect, I would argue that this study is potentially limited not through the denial of agency, but through my own fragmented subjectivity, including my ability as researcher to interpret "what what they do does" (p. 187).

Finally, this study is limited by my inexperience as researcher. As a doctoral thesis, this study is bounded by the requirements of the university and in part construed as a learning process. As a novice researcher, I have had to continually work to unveil and explore my own biases and assumptions, as I simultaneously strived to strengthen my ability in listening and attuning to others. The study relied on the willingness on the part of the participants to explore their conceptions of disability and reflect on how they

positioned their own knowledge in relationship to that of the institutional knowledge articulated by their administrators and embedded in the school's culture. Such willingness depended upon my ability as researcher to build a relationship with the participants based upon trust and respect. The awareness that the benefits of this study are unequally shared necessitated a particular sensitivity to the needs of the participants as the research unfolded. Although efforts were made to include participants' voices and to offer them a role in the creation of knowledge, as the researcher and final author I have inherently assumed a more powerful position (Olesen, 2000).

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Appendix A

Pilot Study

During the spring of 2006, I conducted a pilot study for this research study exploring general education elementary classroom teachers' conceptions of disability and the classroom experiences of children categorized with speech and language impairments. The study took place an independent school in NYC where I was then teaching kindergarten. The participants included three classroom teachers, one each teaching first, second, and third grade. The study encompassed a single interview with each of the participant teachers and three observations all conducted in the classroom of the second grade teacher. All three teachers had multiple children in their classroom with IEPs who were receiving related services through the DOE. During the interviews, I asked each teacher to discuss a specific child in her classroom who was receiving speech and language therapy, whom I had identified with help from the school's learning specialist. For the observations in the second grade classroom, I focused on a child who was labeled with a speech and language impediment, had an IEP, and was receiving therapeutic services from the DOE. The findings of the pilot study as I have interpreted them, have been discussed previously in chapter I. Below I detail how the pilot influenced the methods for this research study.

Research Questions

To see how the three teachers in the pilot study conceptualized disability and how children with language disabilities participated in their classrooms, I posed the following research questions:

1. How do general education classroom teachers conceptualize normalcy, disability, diversity, and difference?

2. What are the participatory experiences of children with language disabilities in general education classrooms?
    a. How does the curriculum shape children's participation?
    b. How do children with language disabilities navigate the curriculum?
    c. How do children with language disabilities navigate social interactions?

As the research proceeded, the focus of the study shifted. This occurred due to the confluence of a narrow timeframe, school vacations, and unforeseen circumstances that made it difficult to complete multiple observations. As a result, I focused primarily on the data collected through the teacher interviews. These changes necessitated refining the research questions to read as follows.

1. How do general education classroom teachers conceptualize normalcy, disability, diversity, and difference?

2. What are the participatory experiences of children with language disabilities in general education classrooms?
    a. How does the curriculum shape the participation of children with language disabilities?
    b. How do teachers address the needs of children with language disabilities?
c. How do teachers define success for children with language disabilities?

The pilot study's eventual focus on teachers has informed this research study as I realized that what I was primarily interested in was the circulation of disability discourses within general education teachers' epistemologies and practices rather than exploring the experiences of children with disabilities in the classroom.

Data Sources and Instruments

Interviews

As part of my pilot study, each teacher was interviewed a single time. For the interviews, which were semi-structured in design, I prepared an interview guide (included

at the end of Appendix A), as a series of questions and probes (Merriam, 1998). I found that in all three interviews, each of which lasted approximately 45 minutes, I was able to stick closely to my questions. Though I found some of my probes as written unnecessary with specific teachers, in all three interviews I did some additional probing. For example, after one of the teachers described her understanding of disability in terms of different learning styles I asked her to explain how she differentiated diverse learning styles from disabilities. This probing has informed this research study as it has helped sensitize me to listen for language that potentially signals different disability discourses. For the pilot study, I also frequently relied on the kinds of probes that Merriam (1998) referred to as bunched utterances and head nodding. The interview guide used in the pilot study has served as a model for the teacher interviews for this research study.

As I interviewed the teachers, I thought about how each of them approached being interviewed. For example, one of the teachers, the one whose classroom I had planned to observe, attempted to exert control over the interview. She immediately began talking about the focus child, knowing part of our conversation would be about her. She also described in detail her social studies curriculum. This differed from the other two interviews where we more closely followed the sequence outlined in the interview guide. In informing this research study, these experiences interviewing deepened my understanding of the complex dynamics between researcher and participant. They also helped me become more aware of the ways in which I introduce and discuss my research potentially affects the ways in which participants respond during the interview.

In recording the interviews, I audiotaped each interview while intermittently taking notes, focusing on important words or phrases in one column, and brief comments

concerning my feelings and thoughts, about both content and how the interview was proceeding, in another column. I transcribed the large portions of each interview following Merriam (1998)'s model of an interview log. The portions of the interviews I chose not to transcribe concerned extended discussions on curriculum content not related to pedagogy or to the focus children. Each of the teachers was e-mailed a copy of the transcription and offered the opportunity to comment, elaborate and/or clarify anything they said. Although all three teachers responded via e-mail, none chose to comment on the content of the interviews. There was some back and forth communication however about what it was like to see one's words and patterns of speech transcribed verbatim. This process has made me aware of the burden member checks places on teachers and how they tend to respond on gut level to seeing their words in print and their speech patterns rather than to the content of the transcript.

Observations

For the pilot study, following the interviews, I conducted three observations in one of the participant teacher's classroom each of which lasted approximately 40 minutes. The observations took place at different times of the day and were focused on a particular child (Sophia who appeared in chapter I) who was identified by the teacher with a speech and language impairment, had an IEP, and was receiving therapy. To record my observations, I used a notational form of free association incorporating many of the elements suggested by Denzin (in Adler & Adler 1994, p. 380) including, explicit reference to the participants, interactions, routines, rituals, temporal elements, and social organizations.

Following the suggestions of Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995), field notes from the observations were written up the day after the observations were conducted. During the observations, I assumed a peripheral membership role (Adler & Adler, 1994), balancing my familiarity with the children in the class, many of whom I had taught and my collegial relationship with the teacher, with my role as researcher. I found I was quickly accepted and easily able to blend into the environment and observe. During the observations I was able to ask both the assistant teacher and head teacher brief questions concerning curriculum and the focus child's participation.

My experience with these observations has reinforced my belief concerning the importance of combining observations and interviews during data collection for the purposes of this research study. During the pilot study, observations offered me an opportunity to see the instructional approach taken by one of the participant teacher as well as to see how she interacted with and responded to the focus child's behavior as she implemented curriculum. I was then able to compare and contrast how this teacher described both her work with this child and the child's behavior in the classroom, with my interpretation of what I saw as happening in the classroom. For this research study, I believe that spending time in observing in the participant teachers' classrooms will inform my interpretation of the data from the interviews and vice versa.

Interview Guide Used for the Pilot Study

1. Can you describe your educational philosophy?

2. Can you talk about how you understand the term disability?
    a. Diversity?
    b. Inclusion?

3. What kinds of experiences have you had working with children categorized with disabilities / with a language disability?

4. How has the school supported you in your work with children with disabilities?

5. Suppose I walked into your classroom. Describe what I would see.

6. Would you describe (the child) to be observed?
    a. How would you describe (the child's) language issues?
    b. Does (the child) receive any services?
    c. Can you describe (the child's) participation in the classroom?
    d. What do you see as her/his strengths/what is challenging?
    e. How successful is she/he in her/his social interactions?
    f. What kinds of modifications have you made to accommodate (this child) in the classroom?
    g. How do you see (this child) making her/his way through the school?
    h. What do you think would be the ideal setting for (this child)?

Appendix B

E-mail of Description and Timeframe

Proposed Research Study
Timothy Lightman
Supervisor - Teachers College
e-mail: tl2156@columbia.edu / tlightman@bnkst.edu

For my doctoral research, I'm interested in doing a case study exploring how elementary general education teachers conceptualize disability. I'm particularly interested in studying the multiple "discourses" that teachers hear about "special education students" and how these influence their classroom instruction and work with individual children.

I would like to initiate my research by getting to know the school, including administrators, specialists and teachers, then learning which teachers would be interested in the questions I'm asking and in further participating in my research. I would like two or three teachers to work with me. The actual work would be minimal, a few interviews and allowing me to observe in their classroom. The research will focus on the teachers' experiences and pedagogical knowledge; consequently I will not be studying individual children.

The timeline below describes the proposed study. I understand that I am a guest in your school and that any access I am requesting here or in the future is subject to your approval.

Jan. - Feb.

- Introduce myself and describe my research interest to staff - this can be done informally through the teachers in whose rooms I am working (i.e. introducing myself and then asking the teachers to introduce me to other teachers in their grade level) and/or through the administration more formally
- Submit paperwork for IRB approval from Teachers College and submit for DOE IRB approval

Feb. - March

- Identify two to three teachers who are interested in working with me
- Interview administrators and special education specialists (after receiving IRB approval)- this can include a range of people (i.e. principal, assistant principal, literacy specialists, learning specialists, etc. - depending on the school staff and availability) – these would be one time interviews and serve to familiarize me with the school and the structures, thinking, and practices in place for addressing the needs of children with disabilities
- Observe school meetings - this can include staff development meetings, grade level meetings, planning meetings, etc.

- Observe in non-classroom spaces – this can include specials (i.e. gym, library, art, music, etc.) and communal spaces (i.e. lunch) - the purpose of these observations are to help me become more familiar with the school

April - May

- Conduct observations and interviews with participant teachers - this would include three interviews of an hour each conducted at times and places convenient to each teacher and three to four full day observations in each classroom to be scheduled with each teacher (for the observations I will follow IRB guidelines regarding consent forms - I will not however be observing individual children)
- Continue to observe meetings - specifically with participant teachers

June

- Conduct any remaining interviews / observations with participant teachers
- Continue to observe meetings - specifically with participant teachers

Appendix C

IRB Forms

Teachers College, Columbia University

TEACHER INFORMED CONSENT

DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH: You are invited to participate in a research study exploring how general education elementary teachers think about and work with a diverse range of learners including children labeled with disabilities. The study will be situated within two different public elementary schools (your school being one) and include the collection of data from administrators and other staff in each school. This latter data will help me as the researcher to interpret the school culture.

This research will be used for my doctoral dissertation, as well as possible journal articles and conference presentations. Your participation will include three interviews of approximately one hour each, four full day observations in your classroom, and some e-mail communication. The scheduling of all interviews (including location and time) and observations will occur at your convenience.

RISKS AND BENEFITS: The possible risks associated with this study concern any potential discomfort that might arise as you talk about your beliefs, values, experiences, and feelings. If at any time you feel uncomfortable, I will discontinue audiotaping and / or exclude any material and statements from the transcripts. You may opt to terminate your participation in the study without explanation or consequence at any time.

All audiotapes and field notes taken during the course of this research will stay in my possession and remain confidential. When transcribing audiotape and taking field notes during observations and interviews, I will use code names for all involved. These code names will be used in the final report. In addition, I will use code names for the school and exclude specific information and details from the final report that may identify the school.

I hope that this study may benefit others within the field of education in thinking about how teachers and schools negotiate knowledge and beliefs as they work with a diverse range of learners including children labeled with disabilities. I also hope that our discussions may offer an opportunity for you to reflect on your own knowledge, practice and beliefs so as to further inform your teaching.

PAYMENTS: There will be no payments of any form in connection to participation in this research.

Teachers College, Columbia University

ADMINISTRATOR INFORMED CONSENT

DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH: You are invited to participate in a research study exploring how general education elementary teachers think about and work with a diverse range of learners including children labeled with disabilities. The study will be situated within two different public elementary schools (your school being one) and include the collection of data from administrators and other staff such as yourself in each school. This latter data will help me as the researcher to interpret the school culture.

This research will be used for my doctoral dissertation, as well as possible journal articles and conference presentations. Your participation will include a single interview of approximately thirty to forty-five each. The scheduling of the interview including location and time will occur at your convenience.

RISKS AND BENEFITS: The possible risks associated with this study concern any potential discomfort that might arise as you talk about your beliefs, values, experiences, and feelings. If at any time you feel uncomfortable, I will discontinue audiotaping and / or exclude any material and statements from the transcripts. You may opt to terminate your participation in the study without explanation or consequence at any time.

All audiotapes and field notes taken during the course of this research will stay in my possession and remain confidential. When transcribing audiotape and taking field notes during the interview, I will use code names for all involved. These code names will be used in the final report. In addition, I will use code names for the school and exclude specific information and details from the final report that may identify the school.

I hope that this study may benefit others within the field of education in thinking about how teachers and schools negotiate knowledge and beliefs as they work with a diverse range of learners including children labeled with disabilities. I also hope that our discussion may offer an opportunity for you to reflect on your own knowledge, practice and beliefs.

PAYMENTS: There will be no payments of any form in connection to participation in this research.

Teachers College, Columbia University

PARTICIPANT'S RIGHTS

Principal Investigator: Timothy Lightman

Research Title: Teachers, Discourses of Disability, and the Reform of Special Education in New York City

- I have read and discussed the Research Description with the researcher. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the purposes and procedures regarding this study.
- My participation in research is voluntary. I may refuse to participate or withdraw from participation at any time.
- The researcher may withdraw me from the research at his professional discretion.
- If, during the course of the study, significant new information that has been developed becomes available which may relate to my willingness to continue to participate, the investigator will provide this information to me.
- Any information derived from the research project that personally identifies me will not be voluntarily released or disclosed without my separate consent, except as specifically required by law.
- If at any time I have any questions regarding the research or my participation, I can contact the investigator, who will answer my questions. The investigator's phone number is (917) 825-9093.
- If at any time I have comments, or concerns regarding the conduct of the research or questions about my rights as a research subject, I should contact the Teachers College, Columbia University Institutional Review Board /IRB. The phone number for the IRB is (212) 678-4105. Or, I can write to the IRB at Teachers College, Columbia University, 525 W. 120th Street, New York, NY, 10027, Box 151.
- I should receive a copy of the Research Description and this Participant's Rights document.
- If audio taping is part of this research, I ( ) consent to be audio taped. I ( ) do NOT consent to being audio taped. The written and audio taped materials will be viewed/heard only by the principal investigator.
- Written and/or audio taped materials ( ) may be viewed/heard in an educational setting outside the research ( ) may NOT be viewed/heard in an educational setting outside the research.
- My signature means that I agree to participate in this study.

Participant's signature: _____ Date:____/____/____

Teachers College, Columbia University

INFORMATION LETTER TO FAMILIES

Timothy Lightman
211 West 106th St. Apt. 15D
New York, NY 10025
(212) 932-0610

[Date]

Dear Families of Room [room number],

Hi! My name is Tim Lightman and I am a doctoral student at Teachers College, Columbia University. I am writing to let you know that I will be conducting research for my dissertation in the coming weeks with the help of your child's teacher. Through my research, I am interested in exploring how general education elementary teachers think about and work with a range of learners including children labeled with disabilities. As part of this study, I will be interviewing your child's teacher and conducting a series of four observations in the classroom. In addition, I will be interviewing administrators and other school staff to help me interpret and learn about the school's culture and educational philosophy. **Although I will be observing in your child's classroom, the purpose of these observations is not to study your child's performance or behavior.** Rather, I am interested in exploring the teacher's beliefs and knowledge regarding curriculum and teaching. Your child's name, or any other identifying information about your child, will not be used in any notes I take nor in any reports I write connected to this research. In these reports, the name of your child's teacher and the school will be coded, and any details or information that might identify the school, will not be included so as to ensure confidentiality.

If you have any questions about my research and / or about the observations, please feel free to contact me by phone (212) 932-0610 or e-mail tl2156@columbia.edu. You may also contact your child's teacher and school principal. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Sincerely,

Timothy Lightman
Teachers College, Columbia University
Department of Curriculum and Teaching

Appendix D

DATA SOURCES
(Interview Logs, Observation Logs, Material)

Totals Combined Schools (Bedford and Taft)
Total Interviews: 20 - Total Time: approx. 24 hrs.
Total Observations: 86 - Total Time: approx. 79 hrs.

BEDFORD

Table 1

Interview Log (Bedford)

Participant	Number of Interviews	Duration (in minutes)	Date
Principal April	1	1 hr. 20 min.	6-9-08
Assistant Principal (current) Hannah	1	1 hr. 22 min.	6-12-08
Assistant Principal (former) Tina	1	1 hr. 15 min.	7-23-08
Counselor Irene	1	53 min.	6-3-08
Teacher 3rd Grade Maya	1	1 hr. (1) 1 hr. 12 min. (2) 1 hr. 20 min. (3)	6-9-08 6-28-08 7-3-09
Teacher 4th Grade Kyle	1	20 min. (post obs.) 1 hr. 1 min. (1) 41 min. (2) 1 hr. 10 min. (3)	6-25-08 10-14-08 4-23-09 8-3-09

Total Interviews: 11
Total Time: approx. 12 hrs.

Table 2

Observation Log (Bedford)

Participant	Number / Time	Duration / Subject	Date
K (104) 1 (204) 1 (206) 2 (304) 3 (404) Cafeteria Recess Staff Meeting	8 obs. / 7 hrs. approx.	1 hr. / math 30 min. / math 1 hr. / writing 1.5 hr. / meeting-math 45 min. / math 40 min. 30 min. 45 min.	6-4-08 6-6-08 6-11-08 6-13-08 6-4-08 6-3-08 6-6-08 2-4-08
Teacher 2nd-3rd grade Maya	10 obs. / 13 hrs. approx.	1 hr. / social studies 40 min. / field trip 1 hr. 30 min. / math 1 hr. 30 min. / social studies 2 hrs. / morning 1 hr. 40 min. / reading 1 hr. 40 min. / morning 1 hr. 15 min. / afternoon 1 hr. / math 1 hr. 45 min. / writing	5-22-08 5-23-08 5-27-08 5-28-08 6-10-08 6-9-09 6-10-09 6-10-09 6-11-09 6-11-09
Teacher 4th-5th grade Kyle	10 obs. / 12 hrs. approx.	30 min. / morning meeting 40 min. / math/transition 1 hr. 30 min / math 1 hr. / math 1 hr. / social studies 1 hr. 40 min. / math 2 hr. / math/social studies./writing 1 hr. / social studies 1 hr. 30 min. / math/social studies 30 min. / meeting	5-27-08 6-12-08 6-17-08 6-19-08 6-24-08 10-16-08 1-20-09 3-17-09 4-25-09 6-12-09

Total Observations: 28
Total Time: approx. 34 hrs.

Table 3

Documents and Material Culture (Bedford)

School	Maya	Kyle
School Records: New School Quality Review Summary Feedback Version 1 – May 2008 (DOE) Assessment Checklist – Math and Language Arts – K-5th Grade Informal Documents: Second Grade Curriculum Outline	Informal Documents: Resume Mind Mirrors Project Rubric Original Statements (dictation) Partner Review (worksheet) Class Reflection (worksheet)	Informal Documents: Investigations Assessment (worksheet)

Taft

Table 1

Interview Log (Taft)

Participant	Number of Interviews	Duration (in minutes)	Date
Principal Margaret	1	1 hr. 22 min.	3-23-09
Special Education Evaluation Team Leader Polly	1	1 hr. 1 min.	3-11-10
Psychologist Judy	1	1 hr. 8 min.	6-24-10
Teacher 1st Grade Connie	3	1 hr. 1 min. (1) 1 hr. 1 min. (2) 1 hr. 15 min. (3)	3-18-10 6-4-10 6-23-10
Teacher 5th Grade Linda	3	1 hr. 1 min. (1) 41 min. (2) 1 hr. 14 min. (3)	3-26-10 4-20-10 7-9-10

Total Interviews: 10
Total Time: approx. 12 hrs.

Table 2

Observation Log (Bedford)

Participant	Number / Time	Duration / Subject	Date
PK (105) autism		30 min. / meeting	4-13-09
E (207) autism	29 obs. / 18 hrs.	30 min. / choice	3-14-09
K (101)	approx.	30 min. / choice	3-18-09
K (107)		30 min. / choice	3-18-09
1 (112) Connie		30 min. / writing	3-8-09
1 (112) Connie		30 min. / meeting writing	3-18-09
1 (112) Connie		1 hr. / math	4-13-09
1 (109) Connie		30 min. (scope)	1-29-10
1 (109) Connie		30 min. (scope)	5-6-10
1 (116)		20 min. / transition	3-6/10-09
1 (114)		30 min. / work time	3-6/10-09
2 (110)		20 min / s.s. presentation	3-18-09
2 (113)		30 min. / reading	3-17-09
2 (115)		30 min. / math	3-18-09
2 (115)		30 min. / bingo	1-29-10
3 (208) Linda		40 min. / math	3-6/10-09
3 (208)		30 min. / writing	3-17-09
3 (208)		45 min. / writing	4-13-09
4 (202)		1 hr. / writing	3-6/10-09
4 (203)		30 min. / writing	3-16-09
4 (203)		30 min. / meeting	10-9-09
4 (204)		1 hr. / writing	3-17-09
5 (210)		1 hr. / social studies	3-16-09
5 (211)		1 hr. / writing	3-16-09
5 (212) Linda		30 min / social studies	3-6/10-09
5 (212) Linda		1 hr. / math	3-17-09
5 (212) Linda		1 hr. / math	4-13-09
5 (212) Linda		30 min. (scope)	10-9-09
School Concert		30 min.	3-6/10-09

Observation Log (Taft) continued

Teacher 1st grade Connie	9 obs. / 16 hrs. approx.	1 hr. / writing 2 hr. 30 min. / morning* 2 hr. 30 min. / morning* 2 hr. 30 min. / morning* 1 hr. / writing 1 hr. 30 min. / afternoon** 2 hr. 30 min. / morning* 1 hr. 30 min. / afternoon** 2 hr. / morning* *(morning: meeting/writing/math) **(afternoons: reading/misc.)	2-9-10 3-15-10 3-18-10 5-14-10 5-27-10 5-28-10 6-14-10 6-14-10 6-17-10
Teacher 4th grade Linda	10 obs. / 11 hrs. approx.	1 hr. / reading/math 30 min. / social studies 1 hr. / reading 1 hr. 20 min. / math/reading 1 hr. 30 min. / math/reading 1 hr. 15 min. / test prep/poetry 1 hr. / math 20 min. / test prep 1 hr. 20 min. / lang. arts/math 1 hr. / lang. arts	11-23-10 2-9-10 2-23-10 3-16-10 3-17-10 3-17-10 5-7-10 5-12-10 5-25-10 6-15-10

Total Observations: 48
Total Time: approx. 45 hrs.

Table 3

Documents and Material Culture (Taft)

School	Connie	Linda
School Records:	Informal Documents: Investigations worksheet Reading Assignments (two different groups – low/high) Alphabet and Vocabulary Charts (used by ELL teachers) Script of Lightning Thief (written by class) Test Prep – Math Graphing Instructional PowerPoint and Graph Data sheets	Informal Documents: Investigations Assessment (worksheet)

Appendix E

Interview Protocols

These protocols are meant as a set of ideas that may shape my interviews at this particular moment in time. All these interviews will ultimately be influenced by my observations in the schools/classrooms. Note – there are two levels of questions here - the lowercase letter questions are the primary questions – the small roman numeral questions are follow up questions/probes that are more specific and may or may not be necessary.

I. Principal and assistant principal interview

a. Can you tell about the school – its educational philosophy and its history?
    i. Can you talk a little bit about the children and their families?

b. The reform of special education in NYC in 2003 led to substantial changes in the DOE – How have these changes impacted your school?
    i. How has information stemming from these changes been communicated to you?
    ii. Under the reforms, responsibility for the referral and evaluation of students, the planning and implementing IEPs, as well as fiscal responsibility, was transferred from the district to the school level. How has this been implemented in your school?

c. In 2005 the DOE published a comprehensive management review and evaluation of special education known as the Hehir report – one of the recommendations in the reports reads: The DOE should engage in staff development and collaboration models that focus on how to provide effective access to the general education curriculum for students with disabilities." What are your thoughts on this?
    i. The report mentioned a few promising models that support the move towards more inclusive classrooms – these include CCT classrooms and SETSS services. What do you think about these models?
    ii. What other kinds of models or services does your school use to support children with disabilities?

d. In light of the fact that in any general education classroom there is a wide range of learners – how does the school support teachers?

e. Can you tell me about your professional background?

f. Do you have any questions for me about my research so far?

II. Special education specialists and support staff interview

a. Tell me about your professional background.
b. What is your position and role in the school?
    i. Are you full or part time?
    ii. Who do you report to (the principal, DOE, Department of Special Education)? How would you describe your relationship with (the principal, Department of Special education)?
    iii. Do you work directly with children and or with teachers? In what ways?
    iv. Are you involved in assessing children? In what ways?
c. Can you describe the school culture from your perspective?
d. How does your personal educational philosophy align with the school's culture?
e. How does your personal educational philosophy diverge from the school's culture?
f. [If the interviewee works with teachers] In thinking about your role in the school as a…as you described it, in what ways do you think your approach helps teachers reach a wide range of learners?
   [If the interviewee works primarily with children] In thinking about your role in the school as a…as you described it, and thinking about the range of learners, which students do you fine it easiest to work with?
g. [If the interviewee works with teachers] In what ways do you think your approach might be challenging for some children?
   [If the interviewee works with children] Who are the students that you find challenging?
h. How has the recent reform of special education begun in 2003 impacted your work?
    i. The reforms of special education in NYC begun in 2003 sought in part to place more children with disabilities in inclusive classrooms in general education has this impacted you work in any way?
i. Do you have any questions for me about my research so far?

III. General education teacher interview

First interview:

a. How did you decide to become a teacher? What is your personal and professional journey?
b. Tell me about your school – describe it to me.
c. What do you love about the school?
d. What do you as a teacher find challenging about working here?
e. Describe your educational philosophy. How do you see yourself as a teacher?
    i. Considering the wide range of learners in any general education classroom - how do you reach all the different children in your classroom?

ii. Can you give me specific examples from the classroom?

f. In what ways does your philosophy and the way you've structured your classroom align the schools culture?
g. In what ways does your philosophy and the way you've structured your classroom diverge with the school's culture?

Second Interview:

a. How would you define the term disability? Inclusion?
b. What are your personal experiences with people with disabilities – as a child and as an adult?
c. What kinds of professional experiences have you had working with children identified with disabilities?
d. Considering all the pressure on schools with NCLB - what are your feelings about how society depicts children who are struggling in schools?
e. What about how society depicts children with disabilities?
f. Describe the students in your current classroom.
    i. Who are the students you find it easiest to teach?
    ii. Who are the students who intrigue you?
    iii. In supporting diverse learners what do you find works for you?
    iv. In supporting diverse learners what do you struggle most with?
        1. [For each of the above questions] Can you give me an example of a specific child who…?

Third Interview:

This interview will focus on particular children in the classroom who are struggling academically or behaviorally or who have been identified as disabled and are receiving services from the Department of Special Education (building on the last question in the previous interview). I will ask teachers to talk about:

- Their understanding of how these children were initially identified and the children's school histories.
- Their view of these children's participation in class including the children's social behavior and academic competencies.
- Their instructional approach for teaching these children.
- Their interactions regarding these children with school specialists, the DOE, and the children's families.
- Their feelings regarding whether this child can be successful in the school.

Appendix F

Pilot for Interview Protocols for Non-Teaching Participants

To test out the interview protocols for non-teaching participants, I piloted the interview questions with Jane, a DOE Network Support Specialist. Jane described her position as that of a school administrator and literacy staff developer, who worked with 21 schools within her network, reporting to both her network leader and each of the schools' principals. Her work within schools varied considerably so for the purposes of this interview, at times we focused on one particular school where she has spent considerable time and where she felt her work was particularly productive. In this school, Jane described working with a literacy team, including administrators, coaches, special education specialists, and teachers, modeling literacy lessons and related staff development. Jane has a NYC supervisor certification and works closely with the Teachers College Reading Writing Program. I chose to interview Jane because her professional responsibilities bridged those of both administrators and support staff. The interview lasted roughly 45 minutes.

Interview protocol

h. Tell me about your professional background.
i. Can you describe the school culture from your perspective?
j. What is your position and role in the school?
k. How does your personal educational philosophy align with the school's culture?
l. How does your personal educational philosophy diverge from the school's culture?
m. In thinking about your role in the school as an administrator and staff developer as you described it, in what ways do you think your approach helps teachers reach a wide range of learners?
n. In thinking about your role in the school as an administrator and staff developer as you described it, and thinking about the range of learners, in

what ways do you think your approach might be challenging for some children?

o. How has the recent reform of special education begun in 2003 impacted your work?
    i. The reforms of special education in NYC begun in 2003 sought in part to place more children with disabilities in inclusive classrooms in general education has this impacted you work in any way?

Findings

Overall, I found that my questions were well balanced in terms of being focused yet open-ended enough to generate a considerable response. I actually did not use any additional prompts until the sixth question (f). I decided to switch the order of the first three questions during the interview as I found that Jane's description of her professional background led directly into her description of her role in the school. Her responses to these questions were framed sequentially as if reading from a resume. This information initially seemed less valuable as Jane chose not to interpret these professional experiences (nor did I prompt her to). What I think was most interesting here, was Jane's comments on the structural and organizational discourses (of "accountability) that influence her work. These included test scores, progress reports, and quality reviews, all themes Jane came back to in more detail later in the interview. Listening to Jane here made me think about how these initial questions potentially signal themes/discourses within which the participants frame their professional lives.

I think that the discussion of the school's culture, now the third question, sets up nicely the next two questions (d and e) concerning how the interviewee's personal educational philosophy aligns with and diverges from the school's culture. For this first question, I had to prompt Jane to think of a particular school and I used this prompt a few more times during the interview. The DOE personnel I will be interviewing for this study will most likely contextualize their comments within the particular school sites; although

they may work at more than one school, they will not work at the number of schools Jane does. Consequently, their answers to these questions will probably focus less on larger structural and organizational issues within the DOE.

Jane appeared to appreciate questions (d and e) and spent a considerable amount of time answering them. I think these questions allowed her to talk about what she loved about the school as well as the tensions she felt. Reflecting her responsibilities as staff developer, her responses focused on curriculum design and implementation. Of particular interest was her discussion of how the school's integration of literacy and social studies aligned with her belief in integrating curricular subject areas ("I try to marry them all"). I think however, in listening to Jane, there is some danger here that the interviewee sees this as an opening to tell me everything great going on in an effort to convince me (or themselves) of the great job the school and staff are doing. Conversely, in responding to how her philosophy diverges from the schools, Jane described how some schools have responded to the demand to raise test scores by either modifying curriculum to match the test or by bringing in pre-packaged literacy programs (i.e. "Reading First"). Later, Jane contrasted such pre-packaged programs with the TC model (i.e. "balanced literacy approach") when she talked about how she focuses on differentiation. Jane's responses have made me more aware of the connections, and the potential for exploring the congruence or divergence, between questions d and e, and f and g.

Of all the questions, the last three (f, g, and h) were especially relevant to this study in terms of exploring disability discourses. When I asked question f, Jane responded; "That's actually the challenge." This eventually led Jane into a description of the central role of assessment (described as "the bottom line") within the TC model as

she interprets it. Of this process, she commented, "that hopefully the teacher is teaching the lesson to most of the kids, if not all of the kids...then the kids go off to independent work and the teachers are conferring, that's when we do differentiation." In describing her own modeling, Jane explained that her conferencing "had nothing to do with the mini lesson at all but had to do with where the kids were." Her examples of differentiation however were, "a guided reading group or pulling another group over because I needed to, it was a group that didn't get the mini lesson, so there's a variety of that that happens…and that's key, that's the main thing that I'm teaching right now." Jane then went on to say, "getting teachers to adapt and modify the [TC] script…is a major challenge." In her description of differentiation as well as in her initial response to this question, Jane appeared to locate her thinking about a range of learners within discourses of classroom management (structure) and curriculum implementation (content). When I conduct the interviews for this study, I think that I may have to use some additional prompts to get the participants to define terms such as differentiation.

This focus on management became more apparent in Jane's response to question g. As she responded; "Its workshop teaching, its challenging for teachers, it challenging for kids, because if management isn't in place it's a disaster…and it relies very heavily on kids working independently and the teacher really has to be able to assess and constantly monitor and track her kids." When I prompted Jane by asking, "who are the kids who you see struggle," Jane mentioned, "ELL kids" and then talked about "CTT" classrooms, "where it is working…but that's not always the case," then went back to how it "varies teacher by teacher…it's the kids with special needs or it's the ELL kids sitting there coloring disengaged or behavior problems." As Jane shifted her focus towards

children, she seemed to shift into a behaviorist discourse of disability. If the participants in this study lapse into management and accountability discourses, I may have to do some additional. For example, asking why they think these kids are challenged and how have they and the school responded.

For the last question, I had to follow up with the probe, as Jane initially heard the question in relationship to larger political changes connected to NCLB. Even so, Jane returned here to the increased benefits of "assessment tools" and "accountability" within "NCLB." However, she seemed to separate special education and ELL ("ELL is a different subject") from general education students although she then exclaimed that for both students, "we have to modify and adapt" the curriculum. This separation has reinforced my belief that in interviewing participants I have to be careful about how I classify groups of children so not to signal a medical model of disability. Talking with Jane has made me more sensitive to the intersection of disability discourses, particularly behaviorist discourses, and management issues and that I may have to add some additional prompts, as I did with Jane when discussing differentiation, to explore this intersection. In ending, I believe these questions with the addition of the probes will serve the purpose of this interview protocol, which is to explore how the school sites have responded to the 2003 reforms and to contextualize the teacher interviews, particularly as the participants will, unlike Jane, contextualized their answers within the research sites.