Learning To Teach-Teaching To Learn:
A Case Study Of A Student Teacher

by

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LEARNING TO TEACH-TEACHING TO LEARN:
A CASE STUDY OF A STUDENT TEACHER

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Kathryn Allen Liptak

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Curriculum and Instruction

(ABSTRACT)

There is a great deal of controversy over the role that the student teaching experience plays in the preparation and development of teachers. In order to increase our understanding of the practice of student teaching, case study methodology was utilized in this study to develop a holistic description of the practice of student teaching from the student teacher's perspective. The study identified and described the internal and external factors which influence the practice of student teaching for a student teacher learning to teach. This study facilitates our understanding of the practice of student teaching and the complex interactions that occur among the individuals involved (e.g., the student teacher, the cooperating teacher, the university supervisor, etc.); the settings (e.g., the public school, the public school classroom, the university classroom, etc.); and the formal university program. The findings from this study suggest that autonomy, reflection, and formal university coursework are key components of learning to teach.

Further research which examines specific teacher education programs and specific components of those programs, in relation to the student teaching experience is necessary if we are to continue to increase our understanding of the practice of student teaching and improve teacher education.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

This study provides a comprehensive, in-depth look at how a student teacher learns to teach through the practice of teaching. The research takes the form of an intensive qualitative case study. The study identifies the various factors that interact and influence the practice of student teaching for a student teacher enrolled in a field-based teacher education program. Additionally, this study examines the nature of these factors and describes how the various factors influence the practice of student teaching. The study combines interviews with a student teacher and classroom observations to develop a holistic description of the practice of student teaching from the student teacher's perspective.

The first chapter provides a brief historical background of where teacher education has been and where it is now. During the 1960's and 1970's, positivism and effectiveness dominated the literature on learning to teach (c.f., Good & Brophy, 1987; Gore, 1987; Hartnett & Naish, 1980; Squires, Huit, & Segars, 1983; Zeichner, 1983). Little attention was given to a teacher's knowledge formation or to the various contextual, biographical, and social factors which influenced practice and helped to shape that knowledge. Recently, "reflection" and "inquiry-oriented" paradigms of teacher preparation have emerged as a means of helping student teachers understand what they do, why they do it, and how the practice of teaching is related to the larger educational scheme (c.f., Schön, 1987; Shulman, 1987; Wildman, Magliaro, Niles, McLaughlin, & Drill, 1988; Zeichner & Liston, 1987).

This chapter also examines a variety of contexts including that of schools, school systems, and the surrounding communities within which teachers and students live and
work. Additionally, the chapter discusses many social factors which structure and shape the actions and interactions between participants in the teaching/learning process. Finally, this chapter provides an overview of the study and of the student teacher involved in this research.

The Case Study

The case study provides a useful framework for examining the various influences on the practice of student teaching. It facilitates the study of the student teaching experience from the student teacher's perspective since the case study approach takes into account the individual's personal biography and enables the study of one learning to teach as a continuous developmental process. It will as Robert Bogdan (1974) put it, "describe those crucial interactive episodes in which new lines of individual and collective activity are forged, in which new aspects of the self are brought into being" (p. 4).

In the past, studies of student teachers have typically ignored the various competing, and sometimes conflicting, factors which influence a student teacher's knowledge and practice. For example, teacher education typically consists of a combination of university coursework and practical experience. Student teachers operate out of two very different contexts and must simultaneously find ways of satisfying the demands and requirements of both the university and the public school. Student teachers also enter the classroom with preconceived ideas about teaching and learning. These preconceptions are based on a variety of factors including the individual's values and beliefs; past experiences as a student; and knowledge of content, learners, and teaching strategies gleaned from teacher preparation programs. This study identifies and examines the various factors which influence the practice of a student teacher learning to teach.
Historical Background

Since the early 1960's a positivistic, technocratic approach to teaching and learning has dominated educational research and practice. In response to social and political pressure for higher test scores, more effective teaching, and greater accountability, educators and researchers applied the scientific methods of measurement, prediction, and efficiency to teaching and learning. The result was the identification of a proliferation of specific teacher behaviors which produced measurably high levels of pupil achievement (Good & Brophy, 1987; Gore, 1987; Hartnett & Naish, 1980; Squires, et al., 1983; Zeichner, 1983).

Teaching, from this perspective, is routine in nature, guided primarily by external authority within an educational and social context accepted as given. Gore (1987) notes that the emphasis on conformity and compliance becomes a way to control teachers and students by a standardized system. According to Sergiovanni and Starratt (1988), positivistic approaches to teaching and learning suggest that there are "uniform answers to problems, value-free teaching strategies, separation of teaching and evaluation processes from content, objectivity, and a uniform-technical language system" (p. 310).

Another view of teaching more consistent with the framework of this study portrays teaching as a complex process which is according to Lortie (1975), "inherently problematic." Lortie further suggests that the psychological rewards of teaching are not automatic (See also Lanier & Little, 1986). In order to be effective, teachers must be able to perceive and interpret the significant features of the situation and take actions to structure settings which are conducive to learning for a student or a particular group of students with individual personalities, backgrounds, learning styles, and other characteristics (Sanders & McCutcheon, 1986). Thus, one of the limitations of the positivist, technocratic perspective is its failure to take into account what Elbow (1986) refers to as the "the rich messiness of teaching and learning" and what Sockett (1987) terms "the gap of experience" between
learning to teach and the practice of teaching. In other words, there are no clear cut, generic rules or algorithms for teaching which when implemented produce the same results.

In an attempt to fill "the gap of experience" between learning to teach and the practice of teaching, teacher educators and teacher preparation programs attempt to combine coursework in some manner with field-based experiences. Typically, the teacher education curriculum culminates in a field-based, student teaching experience under the auspices of an experienced teacher. However, research suggests that often field experiences are ineffective in helping the novice effectively manage the classroom (Eddy, 1969; Feiman-Nemser & Floden, 1986; Lortie, 1975). It seems that most beginners merely try to "survive" problems of practice such as individualizing instruction, establishing relationships with students; planning for instruction; locating resources and materials; classroom management; and relating to colleagues, administrators, and parents (Feiman-Nemser & Floden, 1986; Lortie, 1975; Wildman, et al., 1988).

The Role of Reflection

Teacher education programs which practice and encourage critical reflection enable student teachers to examine traditional teaching practices, as well as their own knowledge and beliefs about the teaching/learning process. Such approaches to teacher education enable the student teacher to move beyond the narrow and limited perspective of teaching and learning which has historically dominated teacher education and examine the practice of teaching more clearly and extensively.

Shulman (1987) asserts that reflection and systematic inquiry play an important role in learning to teach. According to Shulman, students can learn to be effective teachers through a process of reflection and systematic inquiry which enables them to identify effective teaching practices. Shulman views teaching as a process which "begins with an
act of reason, continues with a process of reasoning, culminates in performances, of imparting, eliciting, involving, or enticing, and is then thought about some more until the process can begin again" (p. 13). Identification of a knowledge base of teaching would, according to Shulman, identify a repertoire of practices, strategies, and ideas which if learned and implemented by educators could help to improve the overall quality of education and help to legitimize the teaching profession. In an effort to establish a knowledge base for teaching, Shulman (1987) studied teachers within the social context of the public school classroom. He suggests that the key to identifying such a knowledge base for teaching:

lies at the intersection of content and pedagogy, in the capacity of a teacher to transform the content knowledge he or she possesses into forms that are pedagogically powerful and yet adaptive to the variations in ability and background presented by the students (p. 15).

Zeichner (1983) describes and discusses an inquiry-oriented teacher education model which focuses on the development of inquiry skills. These skills enable an individual to examine his/her teaching behaviors, the consequences of those behaviors, and the contextual constraints that influence both the actions and the consequences. Zeichner points out that liberation is the underlying metaphor of this approach to the preparation of teachers. Thus, the goal of this model is to develop reflective teachers who are aware of the moral, ethical, and political issues which each individual brings to the teaching/learning process.

These approaches rely heavily on the individual's (both pre- and in-service teachers) ability to apply the methods of critical inquiry and reflection to the teaching/learning process. The approaches enable individuals to critically examine the political, social, and contextual constraints which are frequently hidden in the bureaucratic organization of
schools and provide the individual with a more comprehensive perspective from which to view the world. In other words, rather than viewing the context in which teaching and learning occur as static and as reinforcing the status quo, reflective practitioners see the context as framing problems and questions which need to be systematically examined and answered. Reflective practitioners are then in a position to make informed decisions and effect changes.

Reflection involves a kind of dialectical perspective. Kemmis (1987) suggests that practitioners must consciously and self-consciously explore the social and historical nature of their relationship within the social institutions of schools, as well as explore the social and historical relationships between educational thought and the practice of teaching. This perspective of critical reflection locates teachers as participants in the social and historical process of which they are both objects and subjects. Reflection becomes a powerful tool for explaining and supporting the effectiveness of teaching practices. Reflection also empowers teachers to make knowledgeable decisions and changes within their classroom which will facilitate teaching and learning. Additionally, reflection on the practice of teaching will almost inevitably lead to some understanding of how constraints on practice are socially constructed through the organizational and bureaucratic structures of schooling in general (Elbaz, 1983; Lortie, 1975; Sarason, 1982). Reflection, then, facilitates an understanding of self, others, the actions of self and others, and the context. In short, reflection becomes a means for the student teacher to understand the practice of teaching.

The Practice of Teaching

Sanders and McCutcheon (1986) describe the nature of teaching practice as "practical work carried out in the socially constructed, complex, and institutionalized world of schooling. That world shapes action and gives it meaning" (pp. 50-51). The authors
suggest that the practice of teaching involves thoughts, values, interpretation, decisions, and commitment—all of which are manifest in a teacher’s behavior.

Similarly Carr and Kemmis (1983) define practice as "the organized expression in action of a commitment; it depends for its success on responding to the practical exigencies of the situation in which it is enacted" (p. 111).

Løvlie (1974) suggests that the practice of teaching can be conceptualized as a three-level triangle. The first level is defined as action. It includes all the observable behaviors a teacher exhibits such as asking questions, giving assignments, leading a discussion, evaluating students' work, etc. The second level of the triangle includes planning and reflection. This level includes normative questions about teaching and learning such as what and how to teach, consideration of pupils' needs and abilities, as well as analysis and critical reflection on lessons taught, what was learned by both teachers and students, etc. The third level of the triangle is the level of ethical consideration. At this level the teacher questions whether or not what and how he/she teaches is "right" or justifiable. It involves a dialectical perspective with self or with others (as cited in Handal & Lauvås, 1987).

Sanders and McCutcheon (1986) suggest that it is possible to categorize the practice of teaching in various ways. They identify and discuss three types of teaching practices including teaching practices, structuring practices, and organizational policies and operating practices. The authors define teaching practices as the actions teachers take throughout the school day such as leading a discussion of the story read by a reading group, demonstrating the correct way to light a Bunsen burner, grading a test, etc. They contend that this type of practice is interactive in nature and is thus constantly evolving.

Structuring practices provide a framework in which teaching/learning take place and create conditions conducive for both. Examples of structuring practices include devising seating arrangements, planning for instruction, the pacing of lessons, record keeping, etc.
According to Sanders and McCutcheon (1986) structuring practices such as those just described are decided upon and implemented by individual classroom teachers. There are additional structuring practices, however, which are determined and implemented on a schoolwide, districtwide, or statewide basis (e.g., determining the school calendar, curriculum planning, textbook selection and adoption, aims, objectives, etc.) which affect the practice of teaching.

Organizational policies and operating practices include such practices as scheduling which subjects should be taught and by whom; assigning students to particular classrooms; scheduling events and extracurricular activities; and screening and placement of special students. The authors note that organizational policies and operating practices often overlap with the two previous categories and thus are likely to have a direct influence on the practice of teaching in a particular classroom or school.

**The Teaching Context**

The practice of teaching takes place in the classroom which in turn, is part of a larger institution called school. Both the school and the classroom can provide opportunities, as well as pose problems for teachers. Further, institutions operate within a larger social context which has an interactive, cyclic effect on schools, classrooms, and teachers (Doyle, 1987; Feiman-Nemser & Floden, 1986; Griffin, 1987; Jackson, 1968).

The classroom in which teaching takes place is a complex, interactive environment. The teacher is frequently caught up in a tangled web of causal relationships and conflicting priorities which simultaneously compete for her time and attention. Additionally, there are many factors which lie outside of the teacher's control which constantly shape and change the teaching/learning process (Phillips, 1981).
The practice of teaching is often guided by tacit knowledge gleaned from experience. Stake (1987) suggests that knowledge gleaned from practice or experience is frequently contextual and personalistic in nature. This self-generated knowledge results in "naturalistic generalizations" when new experience is added to old. It is steeped in the beliefs, values, perspectives, and personal experience of the individual. Thus, this "professional" knowledge is a unique kind of knowing for every individual.

For these reasons, the practice of teaching is inherently problematic. The contexts in which teaching occurs might best be thought of as what Spiro and Meyers (1984) term "entangled domains". The problems encountered within entangled domains are ill-structured and resistant to disentanglement through simple, linear solutions or algorithms. The pressures of the classroom are further complicated by the larger context of the school's social and political system and that of society in general.

The nature of these complex, interactive contexts differ from classroom to classroom, from school to school, and from community to community. As suggested earlier, these differences in contexts render routine, technocratic approaches to teaching and learning as inadequate. The complexities of the classroom often require that teachers make numerous split-second decisions and apply general principles to particular classroom situations (Doyle, 1986; Good & Brophy, 1987; Sanders & McCutcheon, 1986). Research suggests that while experienced teachers are effectively able to deal with the complexities of the classroom, student teachers are often overwhelmed or frustrated by practical experience (Hartnett & Naish, 1980; Hollingsworth, 1989; Lortie, 1975; Sanders & McCutcheon, 1986). Additional research which explores the value of the student teaching experience for those just learning to teach is needed if we are to further our understanding of this process.
The Role Of Student Teaching In Teacher Development

The practice of teaching is shaped by many dynamic, interrelated social, economic, and cultural factors such as the nature of learners; the teacher's personal experiences, beliefs, and values which he/she brings to the classroom; the actions of other teachers and/or administrators; school policies; societal and community norms; and an indeterminate number of other factors. These factors interact in a cause-effect type relationship and play a significant role in shaping the immediate and long-term decisions, actions, and interpretations that teachers make (Clark, 1988; Clark & Lampert, 1986; Sanders & McCutcheon, 1986; Shulman, 1987).

Since teaching is a complex and inherently problematic activity (Lanier & Little, 1986; Lortie, 1975; Shulman, 1987), teachers are confronted with literally hundreds of decision-making situations per day. These decisions are both speculative and interactive in nature (Clark & Lampert, 1986; Feiman-Nemser & Floden, 1986). Research on interactive decision-making indicates that teachers make as many as two decisions per minute (Clark & Peterson, 1986). Thus, teachers must engage in a priori decision-making during planning, as well as make situational decisions during instruction.

Student teachers often find it difficult to manage the complexities of the classroom and the teaching/learning process. Additionally, they must simultaneously meet the requirements and demands of both the university and the public school. How then do student teachers learn to deal effectively with the complex demands of both the public school and the university? How can teacher educators help student teachers interpret and manage the complex and sometimes conflicting demands of these contexts?

Student teachers exhibit different levels of maturity in the classroom. More mature beginning teachers tend to focus on the need to be flexible and on understanding individual
students. Less mature beginners tend to hold a more traditional, restricted view of the teaching/learning process (Good & Brophy, 1987; Hollingsworth, 1989).

Student teachers also tend to move through stages of professional development. At the first stage, student teachers tend to focus on "survival". They are concerned with classroom management and discipline and whether or not their students will like them. At the second stage, beginning teachers focus on the teaching situation. They are concerned with the content they are to teach, instructional strategies, and resources. At the third stage of development, beginners focus on the students they are teaching. They are concerned with the needs and abilities of the students and with student learning (Good & Brophy, 1987).

There is a great deal of controversy over the role that the student teaching experience plays in the development of teachers (Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1984; Zeichner, 1980). Some research suggests that the effects of formal training are "washed out" by practical experience (Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1981). Others suggest that an individual's biography and pre-training experiences are key determinants in a teacher's development (Denscombe, 1982; Lortie, 1975; Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1984).

Martyn Denscombe (1982) raises critical questions about what he termed the "hidden pedagogy" and its effect on teacher education programs. Denscombe defines hidden pedagogy as "a set of aims and methods of teaching, which are tacitly understood by teachers, which stem from practical imperatives created by the organization of the classroom, and which are basic to competence as a teacher" (p. 259). Denscombe argues that student teachers encounter a conflict between the continuity of classroom experience (gleaned from years of experience as a student) and the discontinuity between their preparation as teachers and the realities of practice.
Denscombe suggests that this conflict between discontinuity and continuity is a power struggle between two socializing agencies—instiutions of higher learning and the public schools. On the one hand, the college or university has attempted to foster "warm, child-centered, humanistic, progressive, and 'open' approaches to teaching and learning" which student teachers are expected to adopt. The context of the public schools, on the other hand, tends to cause student teachers to adopt a "common sense" approach to teaching and learning which is "cold, bureaucratic, traditional...[and] custodial" (p. 251). Denscombe suggests that there are a number of factors such as an individual's past experiences as a student in the public schools; a desire to be effective and become an accepted member of the subculture of the school; school practices and policies; and a student's own conceptions of teaching and learning which lead a student teacher to adopt more utilitarian and traditional approaches to teaching and learning.

In a discussion of the preparation of teachers, Lortie (1975) similarly argued that a combination of factors (e.g. recruitment, socialization and task organization) act collectively to produce a professional perspective which he called "reflexive conservatism". Thus, he contends that teaching practices remain fairly static because the practical theories and beliefs which teachers hold are largely unexamined and untested. According to Lortie:

The preparation of teachers does not seem to result in the analytic turn of mind one finds in other occupations whose members are trained in colleges and universities. One notes, for example, that few teachers...connect their knowledge of scientific method with practical teaching matters. One hears little mention of the disciplines of observation, comparison, rules of inference, sampling, testing hypotheses through treatment, and so forth. Scientific modes of reasoning and pedagogical practice seem
compartmentalized... This separation is relevant because it militates against
the development of an effective technical culture and because its absence
means that conservative doctrines receive less factual challenge...(p. 231).

The arguments of both Denscombe and Lortie raise critical questions about the
effectiveness of teacher preparation programs, to say the least.

Denscombe's (1982) recognition and exposure of the gap which exists between the
preparation of teachers and the socialization of beginning teachers within the subculture of
the school makes the transition between preservice preparation and in-service problematic
for both teacher educators and the public schools. He notes that student teachers enter
teacher education programs with their own notions of what it takes to be a successful
teacher. These notions are based on an individual's values, beliefs, and past experiences.
Additionally, Denscombe notes that these notions are largely incomplete since they are
based primarily on the student's past experiences as a student. According to Denscombe,
"control anxiety" often results when beginning teachers are faced with the complex task of
effectively managing the classroom, teaching, and learning. Suddenly a teacher's personal
effectiveness is at risk. In an attempt to "survive", novices adopt the traditional patterns or
routines of school life.

Others argue that student teaching has a significant impact on a teacher's development
and Buchmann (1987) suggest that the student teaching experience is invaluable because it
is experiential in nature. That is, student teaching provides student teachers with an
opportunity to observe an experienced teacher (referred to hereafter as the cooperating
teacher) in action and to receive guidance while teaching under the auspices of a
cooperating teacher. The practice of teaching or the student teaching experience requires
that the student teacher also interact with a variety of individuals and groups including
students, other teachers and student teachers, public school administrators, parents, and university faculty and supervisors.

As Tabachnick and Zeichner (1984) point out, in spite of all the research on student teaching we know very little about "what takes place during the experience itself and how professional life is interpreted and acted upon as students participate in its ongoing affairs" (p. 29). The authors point out that much of the research on student teaching relies heavily on self-reported pre- and post-survey data. They suggest that in order to understand the nature and impact of the student teaching experience, researchers must supplement teacher self-reported data with actual classroom observations.

Purpose of the Study

Traditionally studies have examined the student teaching experience divorced from the individual's biography and the history of the situation. Zeichner and Liston (1987) acknowledged this missing historical perspective in studies of learning to teach. In an attempt to account for the historical perspective, the researchers have instituted what they term an "inquiry" component into the teacher education program at the University of Wisconsin. Students are required to conduct observations in various public school classrooms and then to compare and analyze what was observed. Additionally, these students must conduct an action research project, ethnographic study, or a curriculum analysis project in an effort to help them place the student teaching experience within the larger political, cultural, social, and historical context.

What is needed is a comprehensive understanding of the various factors (i.e., the context of the school, the cooperating teacher, etc.) that interact and influence the practice of student teaching. One method of accomplishing this is to study the general through the particular via a case study of a student teacher (Bertaux, 1981; Bogdan & Bilken, 1982;
Quicke, 1988; Sikes, Mesor, & Woods, 1985). In order to understand the factors that influence the practice of student teaching, it is necessary to study a student teacher and the student teaching experience in depth. We must learn about the student teacher as a person and view teaching from inside that individual’s perspective if we want to understand the factors which influence practice (Butt & Raymond, 1988; Butt, Raymond, & Yamagishi, 1988; Sikes et al., 1985).

Research Questions

The following research questions were examined in this study:

1. What are the various factors (e.g., the context of the school, the cooperating teacher, etc.) which influence the practice of teaching for the student teacher who is learning to teach?

2. What is the nature of the factors which influence the practice of teaching for the student teacher?

3. How do these factors influence the practice of student teaching?

Summary

Much of the educational literature portrays teaching as a complex, developmental process. Learning to teach typically involves formal training in a college or university setting, as well as practical experience. However, we know little about the factors which influence the practice of student teaching and about the impact these factors have on the preparation and development of teachers. Research suggests that studies involving classroom observations are necessary in order to answer these questions and to understand the effect of practical experience on learning to teach.
The purpose of this study was to identify and examine the factors which influence the practice of student teaching for a student teacher. According to Yin (1984), use of the case study facilitates the study of "the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events" (p. 14). This chapter introduced the case study as a research tool which the enables the study of the factors which influence the practice of student teaching for the student teacher.

The remainder of this study will provide the reader with an intensive and holistic description of the factors which influence the practice of student teaching for a student teacher. Wherever possible the subject's own words will be used to help create a vivid, mental "picture" for the reader and to enable the reader to draw his/her own conclusions about the factors which influence the practice of student teaching for the student teacher.
CHAPTER II
FRAMEWORK FOR THE PRACTICE OF STUDENT TEACHING

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the study and to provide the reader with a framework for understanding the setting and the role of each of the participants. In an attempt to develop a holistic "picture" of the student and the student teaching experience, a biography of the student teacher will be developed. The biography is an in-depth narrative written from the student teacher's perspective. It is concerned with the student teacher's total life, past and present, rather than a single aspect or segment of it (Ball & McDiarmid, 1988; Bogdan & Bilken, 1982; Goodson, 1989).

Data collection involved intensive interviews with the student teacher, as well as observation and interaction with the student teacher in a variety of different settings including the classroom, conferences with the cooperating teacher, planning sessions, the teacher's lounge, and the cafeteria.

The Biography

First-person biographies (or life histories as they are sometimes called) utilize intensive interviewing spread across time as a means of understanding both the student and the student teaching experience. In other words, the biography enables an understanding of the "various positions, stages, and ways of thinking" (Bogdan & Bilken, 1982, p. 61) the student teacher passes through while student teaching. The interview allows the researcher and the student teacher to interact through conversation in order to probe and reflect on the student teacher's "story". In this manner, these interviews or conversations promote what Popkewitz and Tabachnick (1981) refer to as a dialog between thought and action and
between individuals. Thus, the biography presents a comprehensive view of the student teaching experience while emphasizing the role of organizations, crucial people, and events which significantly shape the subject's evolving definitions of self, as well as her perspectives on teaching and life in general. It is historical in the sense that the biography also takes into account the dialectical relationship between the individual and the larger social and cultural contexts in which both the student teacher and researcher are participants (Goodson, 1989). Jackson (1968) suggests that biographies describe individuals "in relation to the history of their time". In other words, the biography enables insight into how an individual is influenced by the various political, social, psychological, and economic factors present in his/her world. This, in turn, facilitates an understanding of the dilemmas, possibilities, and choices confronting that individual.

The Researcher

As Kohli (1981) points out, "research acts are social acts...researchers therefore cannot create their own set of rules but are bound by the rules of everyday social action. [Consequently] the meaning of the data produced in research acts cannot be assessed without reference to their being social acts" (p. 61). In other words, just as it is important to understand the history of the participant, it is of equal importance for the reader to understand the history of the researcher. Similarly, Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) contend that the effect of the researcher is an aspect of ecological validity that cannot be ignored. They suggest that rather than trying to eliminate the effects of the researcher as is typical of quantitative research, we should also set about trying to understand the researcher.

One way of accounting for the effect of the researcher is to include a biographic sketch of the researcher in the study. Bogdan (1989) suggests that biographic sketches of the
researcher should become an accepted part of qualitative research. A description of the researcher's background and experience is included in Appendix A. Additionally, a discussion of the researcher and her effect on the practice of student teaching in this study is included in Chapter 4.

"Case" Selection.

There is some controversy over the type of subject selected for case study research. Some researchers seek to study the "exceptional" case; others strive to find a more common or "typical" case. But as Bogdan and Bilken (1982) note, what happens more often than not, is that the researcher "falls" into a setting and a subject. In this case, I chose to study a student teacher placed in a junior high school located in a county school system in a southeastern state. My rationale for placing such emphasis on the setting was twofold. First, having previously supervised student teachers placed at the junior high, I was familiar with many of the staff, the layout of the school, the schedule, and the curriculum. Secondly, the schedule at the junior high included a daily planning period or a regularly scheduled time for the cooperating teacher and the student to share, analyze, and reflect on the practice of teaching (at least in principle).

A potential subject was chosen with the help of the director of student teaching from the pool of student teachers placed at the junior high. The potential subject and her cooperating teacher were contacted by the director of student teaching. Both were given a letter from the researcher which described the study and outlined their role in data collection and analysis, as well as a tentative time frame in which the study would take place. The student teacher and her cooperating teacher consented to participate in this study. Pseudonyms for people, places, and things are used consistently throughout the study.
Framing the Setting and the Role

The subject of this study was enrolled in a four-year teacher education program at a southeastern university. Student teachers in this program completed three, ten-week assignments in K-9 classrooms during their fourth year. During the first two student teaching assignments, student teachers were placed in a public school classroom for half of the school day (from the time teachers were to arrive at school until the students go to lunch) five days a week. The student teachers were simultaneously enrolled in elementary methods courses which they attended four afternoons a week. During the third placement, student teachers were enrolled in the two five-week methods courses. The last ten weeks of the third placement student teachers spent the entire day, five days a week in the public school classroom.

Data Collection

Data collection was conducted over the course of several weeks during the Spring, 1989 semester (Table 1). During the first three weeks of the final student teaching experience, initial interviews approximately one hour in length were conducted to gather demographic information in order to develop a personal and educational history of the subject (See Appendix B for sample interview questions). Since the subject was in the public school classroom only during the morning of the first five weeks of the student teaching experience, these initial interviews were conducted outside the classroom in an effort to establish a relaxed, trusting relationship between the researcher and the participant. During the fourth and fifth week of the student teaching experience, the researcher spent at least three half-days (approximately ten hours) in the public school classroom in order to become familiar with (and to) the student teacher in her particular classroom setting. From the sixth to the tenth week of the student teaching experience, the researcher spent two or
Table 1 Weekly Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>- Selection of participant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weeks 2-4</td>
<td>- Initial interviews to develop the student teacher profile</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Each approximately 1 hour in length)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weeks 4-6</td>
<td>- Half day visits to the public school classroom</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Weekly interviews with the participant (Approximately 2 hours per week)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- On-going transcription and editing of taped interviews</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weeks 6-11</td>
<td>- Weekly visits to the public school (2 days per week)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Continued weekly interviews with the participant</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- On-going transcription and editing of taped interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>- Final edited transcripts of all interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 13 to Completion</td>
<td>- Analyses, Synthesis, and Development of the student teacher biography</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
three days per week in the public school (approximately eighty hours) with the subject. This enabled the researcher to observe the student teacher engaged in a variety of activities and contexts within the public school including classroom teaching, conversations/conferences with the cooperating teacher and/or the university supervisor, planning during specified periods, etc.

    Following these visits to the public school, unstructured interviews (approximately twenty hours spread over nine weeks) were conducted with the student teacher. That is, the nature of these interviews or conversations were determined by the problems, events, or topics which the student teacher deemed important and thus, chose to discuss. These conversations between the researcher and the student teacher were tape-recorded and served as the primary source of data for this study (Lofland & Lofland, 1984).

    Secondary biographic sources of data included the observer's field notes and written descriptions and evaluations from the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor.

Data Analysis

    Merriam (1988) suggests that data collection and data analysis should be conducted simultaneously in case study research. Analysis begins with data collection. The patterns, questions, and insights from this analysis direct the next phase of data collection and then the process begins all over again. According to Merriam, case study research is interactive. That is, case study research "is a function of the researcher's presence, the nature of the interaction between the researcher and participants, the triangulation of data, the interpretation of perceptions, and rich thick description" (p.88).

    In this instance, interviews with the student teacher were recorded, transcribed and returned to the participant for review, clarification, and/or elaboration. In order to organize the data, the transcripts were read and the researcher made notes in the margin regarding the
topic or theme. The transcripts were once again read from beginning to end. During this phase of data analysis, the researcher organized a list of recurring themes or major ideas identified from the transcripts. This was then reviewed for similarities and recurring patterns. Similar ideas and information were chunked together into categories and labeled accordingly. For example, Kate's interviews often centered around an individual or several individuals who influenced her practice in some way such as particular students, her cooperating teachers, the university supervisor, etc. These individuals were identified and placed in a category labeled significant others.

Five major categories were derived from this phase of data analysis including significant others, school setting, university coursework, self as learner, and past experiences. The researcher then focused on each category individually, rereading the transcripts and recording instances and information which pertained to the particular category. Narrative descriptions of the influences on the practice of student teaching were developed around the five categories. During this phase of data analysis, secondary data sources such as field notes were used to clarify interpretation and provide background information or details contained in the narrative descriptions.

The writing process played a significant role in data analysis and interpretation. Lofland (1971) contends that:

one does not truly begin to think until one attempts to render thought and analysis into successive sentences...One is never truly into a topic -- or on top of it -- until he faces the hard task of explaining it to someone else. It is the process of externalizing (writing) one's outline descriptions, analyses, or arguments that they first become visible to oneself as 'things' 'out there' that are available for scrutiny. When they become available as external objects -- as text -- one can literally see the weaknesses -- points
Writing of the Results

Merriam (1988) notes that there is no standard format for reporting case study research. She suggests that the data derived from on-going data collection and analysis should be organized chronologically or thematically into a smaller, more manageable case report. Rudduck (1984) differentiates between a case study and a case report. She defines a case study as "an interpretative presentation and discussion of the case, resting upon evidence gathered during fieldwork. . . . It is a subjective statement which its author is prepared to justify and defend" (p. 202). She defines a case report as "a cautiously edited selection of the full data available, the selection depending on the fieldworker's judgement as to what was likely to be of interest and value as evidence" (p. 202).

The writing of this case study was a process which evolved over time. The topical themes identified from analyzing the transcripts served as an organizer for the first draft of the case study. Using primary and secondary data sources, the researcher wrote a narrative description of Kate's practice of student teaching around the five factors (i.e., self as learner, past experiences, the school setting, significant others, and university coursework) derived from data analysis. The researcher's analysis and interpretation of the data were integrated into the discussions of each of the five factors. Excerpts from interviews with the participant were also included throughout the narrative to enable the reader to vicariously share Kate's student teaching experience at the junior high and to provide the reader with evidence to enable him to assess the researcher's analysis (Merriam, 1988).

The first draft of the case study was then shared and reviewed by various individuals including the researcher's peers, a colleague, and the researcher's advisor in order to
identify "gaps" in the case study which needed to be addressed in the final draft. The feedback from these individuals resulted in a major reorganization of the study around two broad categories—internal and external influences on the practice of student teaching. The case study presented here combines general and particular description with the researcher's interpretation of the case. Detailed discussions of the participant, the context, and of the internal and external factors which influence the practice of student teaching are supported by scenarios derived from classroom observations and quotes from the participant. The last step in the writing process was to examine the findings of the study, the implications of these findings for teacher education programs, and to raise questions for additional research.

The Subject

Kate, the subject of this study, was an elementary education major with a concentration in English and social studies. Kate completed the first ten-week student teaching experience in a third grade classroom in an open school setting at an elementary school located in the southeastern United States. She completed the second ten-week student teaching experience in a fifth grade classroom in the same school. Kate completed the third ten-week student teaching experience at a nearby junior high school. During this placement, she was responsible for teaching social studies to five classes of sixth graders.

At twenty-two years of age, Kate was a bundle of energy. She seemed to be in constant motion since she could neither carry on a conversation without gesturing with her hands nor could she teach while sitting or standing in one place. She had short, brown hair and big brown eyes that more often than not, reflected intense emotions and feelings. Kate was to be the first teacher in her family and related that she could hardly wait until she had her "own" classroom.
Kate was born in Hong Kong and lived in Taiwan during her childhood. Since her father was head of International Relations with China and the U.S.S.R. for a large agency in the United States, she had been introduced to many different cultures and had traveled extensively. Kate's mother was in charge of marketing for a computer company. She had a younger brother who was attending another southeastern university at the time of this study.

Kate was looking forward to her student teaching experience at the junior high. She contended that the junior high level was for her the most exciting and satisfying age group to teach. She said this in spite of the fact that she was teaching social studies, a content area which she did not particularly like and which she felt inadequately prepared to teach. When asked why she thought she related well to students at the junior high level, Kate responded that adolescence was a difficult time for her while growing up. She related that during adolescence, she had fought frequently with her parents and had tried "everything in the book to get out of class and out of work." Consequently, she felt like she could relate to and empathize with this age group. In Kate's words, "I mean I see myself in some of these kids doin' these things."

The Public School Setting

The junior high was part of a school system located in the southwestern portion of a county in the southeastern United States. At the time of this study, the school had an approximate enrollment of 1,025 students. The faculty and staff included fifty-five teachers, two librarians, three guidance counselors, two assistant principals, and one principal. The facility was a three-building complex which housed sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth graders. A catwalk connected the "industrial arts" building and the "north wing" to the main two-story building.
The school's administrative offices were located on the second floor of the main building, as were the library, the teacher's lounge, auditorium, and the gym. The school's cafeteria and bookstore were located on the first floor of the main building. The main building also contained twenty-three classrooms. The industrial arts building housed five classrooms including the "art" room and the "shop". The north wing contained nine classrooms and the bandroom. With the exception of the bandroom, classes taught in the north wing were sixth grade classes. Since space was at a premium at the junior high, teachers frequently had to "share" their classrooms with other teachers. As a result, teachers often had to work in the library, teacher's lounge, or teacher's cafeteria during planning periods.

Teachers were required to be at the junior high from 8:00 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. Classes began at 8:50 A.M. and ended at 3:20 P.M. The school day was divided into seven, forty-five minute periods with a five minute break in between to enable students to change classes. The first period of the day was ten minutes longer than the other class periods in order to give homeroom teachers time to take attendance and lunch count and then fill out the appropriate forms for each without cutting into instructional time. There were also four, thirty minute lunch periods which ran from 10:55 A.M. to 1:35 P.M. Each teacher at the junior high typically taught six class periods and had a planning period every day.

In an attempt to help the reader understand the day to day interaction in a junior high classroom, and in particular to understand the context of Kate's practice, the following scenarios representing a typical day are presented. The scenarios described in the following section were drawn from the researcher's field notes of Kate's experiences in the classroom. The scenarios are presented according to the class period in which they occurred (i.e., first period, second period, etc.) rather than chronologically in an attempt to provide the reader with a representative "picture" of Kate in action.
Gary, Kate's cooperating teacher did not have a first period class. Consequently, he and Kate usually spent the first fifty-five minutes of the school day in the teacher's lounge. When Kate arrived at school each morning, she usually went directly to the teacher's lounge on the second floor of the main building. However, Kate and Gary's respite in the teacher's lounge was to be short lived today as they were scheduled to meet with the principal and the mother of a student who had a history of disruptive behavior problems. Kate and Gary sipped coffee in the lounge until after the morning announcements had been read and the pledge to the flag had been recited over the school's public address system. Together, they then headed for the principal's office.

Kate was not looking forward to this meeting for two reasons. First, she had had a run-in with this parent's child and had given him in-school detention for yelling at her after she had called him down for running in the hall. Kate was afraid that the boy's mother would excuse his behavior, challenge her authority, and have the child released from in-school detention. Secondly, Kate had a lot of paperwork to do since interim reports on students' progress were due and this parent/teacher meeting cut into her work time at school.

While waiting for the parent in the principal's office with Margaret, the principal, and Gary, the discussion turned to discipline in the cafeteria during the first lunch hour. It was Gary's responsibility to monitor this lunch hour and so it was also part of Kate's responsibility as Gary's student teacher. According to Margaret, she had received several complaints about students running in the halls on their way to and from lunch, noise in the cafeteria, and students lingering in the halls long after the tone to end first period lunch had sounded. Margaret was so upset about the students' behavior that she informed Gary and Kate that she was sending one of the assistant principals to the cafeteria to help control the
students. Kate related after the meeting that the principal's decision infuriated her because Kate felt that she was "a more effective disciplinarian than [the assistant principal]."

The meeting ended when the tone sounded to end first period. Since the parent of the disruptive student never appeared for the scheduled meeting, Margaret said she would have one of the school's guidance counselors try to contact the mother and reschedule another meeting. Kate fumed about the "waste of time" the meeting had been on her way back to her classroom.

Second Period 9:50-10:35  Friday, March 3, 1989

Kate made sure that she left the teacher’s lounge and was in her classroom before the tone sounded to end first period. Leaving the lounge before first period ended meant that Kate avoided the congestion in the halls when the students changed classes. Kate related that she thought it was important to be in her classroom before the students arrived.

In the five minute interval between first and second period, the students strolled leisurely into Kate’s classroom. Most students went directly to their desks and unloaded their books, notebooks, and backpacks. Several students put their belongings down and returned to the front of the room where they crowded around the teacher perched on the edge of a lab table that was a permanent fixture in the front of the room. They conversed amicably with Kate about a variety of different topics. Several students inquired when their projects were due. After Kate was asked the same question several times, she slid off the lab table and wrote "Brochures due Monday" on the green chalkboard that ran the length of the wall behind the lab table.

The tone sounded signaling the beginning of second period and the students automatically began to return to their seats. Kate retrieved her grade book from the teacher's desk located to the left of the lab table, again perched herself on the edge of the
lab table, and waited for the students to get quiet. When all the students were seated and quiet, Kate took attendance. She recorded absences in her grade book and on an attendance slip which she then hung on a hook outside the classroom door for the office attendant to collect later during the period. Once again Kate returned to the front of the room and asked the students to raise their hands to indicate whether or not they had brought their "fact sheet" to class. Every student raised his/her hand.

Kate nodded and smiled, apparently pleased that her students had followed her directions from the day before and had brought the necessary materials to class. Kate proceeded to review the directions for making and completing the travel brochures on the country that each student had spent two days in the library researching. Kate then gave large sheets of manilla paper to four students sitting in the front of the room and asked them to make sure everyone in the room got a sheet of paper.

After every student had received a sheet of paper, Kate demonstrated for the class how they might choose to fold the paper for their travel brochure. She told the students that her example was only a suggestion and encouraged them to "be creative". She then told the class that she had an important announcement and that she would wait until she had "all eyes on me". Kate explained that beginning immediately, she was implementing a new classroom discipline policy. Students would receive extra credit points for good behavior, as well as for coming to class with paper, pencil, and books. Although Kate's explanation did not include how or when these points would be added, the students immediately and quietly went to work.

Kate hopped off the lab table and begin walking around the classroom checking students' progress. She stopped frequently to talk quietly with a student. When she noticed that Jason had a blank sheet of paper in front of him, Kate pulled out the empty student's chair at the desk beside Jason's and sat down. After questioning Jason, Kate
learned that he had not been able to finish his "fact sheet" in the two previous class periods spent in the library. Kate went to the front of the room and retrieved a book on the USSR. After locating some information in the book, Kate shared it with Jason. He smiled and nodded, then began writing and drawing diligently.

While Kate was still sitting beside Jason, another student in the front of the room blurted out, "I can't get no glue out of this junk." Kate repeated the student's statement verbatim and the student nodded affirmatively. When the student failed to recognize his grammatical error, Kate slumped in her chair with her head laid back and arms dangling as if dead. Just as she sat up and started to correct the boy's mistake, the tone sounded to end second period. Kate closed her mouth and waved her hand signaling that the students were dismissed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Third Period</th>
<th>10:40-11:55</th>
<th>Friday, March 17, 1989</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Period Lunch</td>
<td>10:55-11:25</td>
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</table>

After the tone sounded to begin third period, Kate had to tell the students twice to get quiet so that she could take roll. When attendance had been taken and the proper forms filled out, Kate told the class that they could talk quietly until lunch since they had just completed a morning of sitting quietly while taking the last battery of mandatory state tests for sixth graders. Kate's announcement seemed to be well-received as several students moved their chairs closer to neighbors and friends, while others got up and exchanged seats across the room. When the tone sounded for lunch, the students filed out into the already congested hallway. Kate followed, switching off the lights on her way out, and made her way to the cafeteria for lunch duty.

Lunch duty meant that Kate and Gary monitored and limited the number of students going to the bathroom, lockers, and pay phone. They were also responsible for keeping
the noise level to a minimum. Finally, when the tone sounded ending first period lunch, it was Gary’s and Kate’s job to dismiss the students by table and see that they didn’t run in the halls. Herein was the problem that they had discussed with Margaret, the principal, in her office earlier in the week. Either Kate or Gary would dismiss the students while the other teacher monitored the hall in the main building. The problem occurred when the students moved from the main building to the north wing. Once out of the on-duty teacher’s eyesight, the students were running, talking loudly, and lingering in the hall of the north wing. The addition of an assistant principal to the lunchroom provided an extra person to monitor the students’ behavior in the corridor of the north wing.

Both Kate and Gary ate their lunch while standing or walking around the cafeteria even though they had another free period later in the day to compensate for the extra lunchroom duty. On her rounds of the cafeteria, Kate frequently stopped to chat with the students. It was here that she learned the latest gossip about romances, relationships, break-ups, ballgames, and parties. The students seemed eager to tell Kate the latest news and consequently, she was frequently "summoned" from table to table.

When it was almost time for the tone to sound to end lunch, Kate left to take her newly assigned position in the hall of the north wing. When the last tone sounded signaling that all students should have returned to their third period class, Kate returned to her classroom and closed the door. She stood at the front of the room and waited until she had the students’ attention. Kate then instructed the students to read silently pages 272-275 in their social studies text. The students appeared to have a hard time settling down after lunch. There was lots of laughing and talking among them. Kate called them down and threatened to give the class homework over the weekend if they did not stop talking and get to work.

The students immediately ceased their chatter and appeared to be reading. Meanwhile, Kate wrote twelve new vocabulary words on the board. The students appeared to be
familiar with this routine and began taking out paper and pencils. Several flipped to the
glossary and began copying the definitions of the twelve vocabulary words.

One student went to the front of the room and asked to borrow a pencil from Kate.
She told the student that she would lend him a pencil if he left something of his as
insurance that she would get her pencil back in one piece. (Pencil fighting was a favorite
pastime of the junior high students and always resulted in a broken pencil). Joey left his ID
bracelet with Kate in return for a pencil and returned to his seat. Kate sat down at the
teacher’s desk and began writing. She looked up frequently and surveyed the room.

On one occasion she noticed Mark drawing on his tennis shoe in the back of the
room. Kate walked to the back of the room and asked to see Mark’s definitions. He
responded that he didn’t have any definitions because he didn’t know that he had been
given words to define. Kate pointed out the list of vocabulary words on the board and told
Mark to "get busy". After Kate’s admonishment, Mark appeared to go right to work.

Shortly before the tone sounded to end third period, Joey walked to the front of the
room to return the pencil he had borrowed from Kate. She then returned Joey’s ID
bracelet. When the tone sounded, Kate directed anyone who hadn’t finished defining the
vocabulary terms to complete the assignment for homework. She then dismissed the class.

Fourth Period  12:00-12:45  Wednesday, March 22, 1989

The students were in their seats and talking quietly among themselves before the tone
sounded to begin fourth period. When the tone sounded, Kate immediately called roll and
completed the necessary forms. The students waited quietly while Kate hung the
attendance sheet outside the classroom door. Kate then assigned four pages to be read
silently in the students’ social studies textbook and five vocabulary words to be defined.
The students appeared to begin reading immediately and while they were reading, Kate wrote the five vocabulary words to be defined on the chalkboard.

After several minutes, Kate began a discussion of the vocabulary words by calling on various students to define the word in his/her own words and then to use it in a sentence. Kate continued with this activity until everyone in the room had had a chance to participate. She then instructed the students to work with a partner in order to brainstorm a list of facts which the two of them could remember from the four pages they had just read. The students were not allowed to use their books for this activity. When students had had enough time to generate a list of items, Kate began a discussion of the sections the students had just finished reading. When the tone sounded to end fourth period, Kate told the class that they would continue their discussion the following day and then dismissed the class.

**Fifth Period 12:50-1:35**  
Monday, March 13, 1989

Kate breathed a sigh of relief, collected her purse, turned out the lights, and closed the door behind her on her way out of the room. Fifth period was Kate's duty free lunch period since she monitored third period lunch. Kate threaded her way through the crowded halls to the teacher's lounge on the second floor of the main building. Kate, immediately upon entering, purchased a diet Coke and bag of "Cheetos" from the two vending machines located just inside the door of the teacher's lounge. She then plopped down on one of the four sofas in the room and spent the rest of the forty-five period conversing with Gary and the other teachers in the lounge. Interestingly, the conversation never focused on school, but rather on topics such as home repairs, the cost of houses, the various teachers' plans for the upcoming spring break, etc. Kate watched the clock and once again left the teacher's lounge five minutes before the tone sounded to end fifth period in order to be in her classroom when the students arrived.
During the five minutes before class was to begin, Kate wrote the following sentence on the chalkboard: "If you are quiet when the bell rings, I will give you twenty minutes to study." The students had known for a week that they were going to be tested on the material which they had been studying for the last several weeks. When the tone sounded to begin sixth period, every student was in his/her seat and quiet. Kate took attendance and filled out the proper paperwork. She then directed the students to look over the chapter review in their textbook since the test came directly from there. She also admonished them to use their study time wisely. The students were quiet and the majority appeared to be studying. After twenty minutes had elapsed, Kate directed the students to clear their desks of all notes, books, and papers.

Kate passed out a test paper to every student and directed them to answer only the second section of the test in complete sentences and on their own paper. The students took out paper and went to work immediately. Kate walked around the room for several minutes and then returned to the teacher's desk at the front of the room. As the students completed the test, they turned in their test papers to Kate. She told each student that he/she could use the remainder of the class period to read silently or complete work for another class.

Three minutes before the tone sounded, Kate asked anyone who had not completed and handed in a test to raise his/her hand. When no one responded, Kate returned to her desk and continued grading tests. The students quietly began putting away their materials and gathering their belongings in order to change classes. When the tone sounded, Kate dismissed the class after telling the students to "Have a good weekend."
After the tone signalling the beginning of seventh period, Kate directed the students who were scheduled to present their travel brochures to the class "to look over their materials" while she completed the attendance forms. Kate reminded the class that each student was to come to the front of the room and use his/her brochure of a particular country to try to convince the other class members that they would like to visit the country depicted in the travel brochure. Finally, the brochures were to be displayed on the bulletin board which ran the length of the left side of the classroom.

After the few remaining students had shared their brochures, Kate assigned the next chapter in the students' social studies text to be read during the remainder of class. If students were unable to complete the reading during class, Kate instructed them to finish reading the assignment at home. She explained to the class that they had just one week in which to cover the next three chapters in the text because a guest lecturer was coming the week after spring break to teach a unit on China. She told the class that in order to cover that amount of information in such a short period of time, the students would be given a packet of materials the following day which they were to complete by the end of the week. While they would be given class time to work on the assignments, Kate informed the students that if they could not complete the packet during class then they must work on it at home.

**Summary**

The curricula at the junior high was organized around academic disciplines or content areas. Since one of Kate's content area concentrations at the university had been social studies, she taught social studies to five different classes of sixth graders at the junior high. The scenarios included in this chapter depict the observable behaviors Kate exhibited both
in and out of the classroom and help to familiarize the reader with the context in which she completed her student teaching. The scenarios also introduce the reader to the many individuals with whom Kate interacted daily. Finally, the scenarios illustrate the various roles and responsibilities such as record keeping, monitoring, evaluating, and counseling which were an implicit part of Kate's daily routine.

There were many factors which influenced the practice of student teaching for Kate. These influences on Kate's practice can be categorized into internal and external influences on the practice of student teaching. There were two superordinate internal influences which were derived from data analysis including past experiences and self as learner. There were three superordinate external influences which were also derived from data analysis including significant others, the school setting, and university coursework.

Figure 1 depicts both the internal and external influences on Kate's practice of student teaching at the junior high. The model provides the reader with a framework for understanding the influences on the practice of student teaching from Kate's perspective. It is important to note that internal and external influences are not separate entities, but are interactive in nature. The model depicts the interaction between and among the internal and external influences in order to help the reader conceptualize what Bogdan and Bilken (1982) refer to as the "various positions, stages, and ways of thinking" through which Kate progressed during her student teaching experience at the junior high. Within each of the superordinate influences, are subordinate factors which influenced Kate's practice.

The remaining chapters of this study will describe the internal and external influences on the practice of student teaching for Kate in greater detail. Both the superordinate and subordinate internal influences on Kate's practice will be discussed in Chapter III. Chapter IV will examine the superordinate and subordinate external influences on Kate's practice.
Figure 1. Superordinate internal and external influences on the practice of student teaching.
The last chapter of this study will examine the interaction between the internal and external influences on Kate's practice of student teaching at the junior high.
CHAPTER III
INTERNAL INFLUENCES ON THE PRACTICE OF
STUDENT TEACHING

One of the purposes of case study research is to provide what Lincoln and Guba (1985) term "thick, rich description." The purpose of this chapter is to describe the internal factors that influence the practice of student teaching for Kate from her perspective. There are two superordinate internal influences: 1) past experiences and 2) self as learner. Within each of these superordinate influences are subordinate factors which influenced Kate's practice at the junior high. Each of the superordinate influences, as well as the subordinate influences will be described in detail in the remainder of this chapter.

Past Experiences

John Dewey (1916) described experience as an active-passive process. Past experience is of no significance unless it enters into the present. According to Dewey, "it is the reconstruction or reorganization of experience which adds to the meaning of experience, and which increases ability to direct the subsequent experience" (p. 76). The value of experience is dependent upon the individual's ability to "make backward and forward connections between what we do to things and what we enjoy or suffer from things in consequence" (p. 140).

There were numerous experiences from Kate's past which influenced her practice of student teaching at the junior high. Kate frequently referred to her past experiences as a child, as a student, and as an adult. She then incorporated what she had learned from these experiences into lessons and units, and into her discussions of and with her students.
Familial Background. Kate's familial background influenced her practice. Kate's beliefs and values were integrally linked to what and how she taught. Additionally, she had travelled extensively and had experienced different cultures firsthand. She readily incorporated these experiences into her lessons and units. She shared artifacts, stories, and anecdotes from her travels with her students. Additionally, Kate had access to a variety of pictures and slides which her father had collected during his job-related travels.

For example, one of the instructional strategies that Kate implemented during her student teaching experience at the junior high revolved around slides of Africa which belonged to her father. Kate showed slides of Africa and then divided the students into small groups of two or three. After viewing the slides of people and places in Africa, the groups were to generate characteristics of the country and its people. Each group's list was then combined to form a class list which Kate recorded on the board.

Kate thought that this method of instruction was more effective than a class lecture on Africa. In her words, "You get a lot of different ideas that way. Students are more willing to talk in [small] groups...and bounce ideas off each other. And there's always someone willing to get up in front of the class from each group and share their findings."

Beliefs and Values. Another of Kate's instructional strategies which reflected her beliefs about the teaching/learning process required the sixth graders to create travel brochures depicting various countries which the students had researched. In order for her students to know what was expected of them, Kate went to a local travel agency and obtained a travel brochure of a country for each student in her class. The students reviewed these brochures and discussed their form and content. Next, Kate arranged for the students to meet in the library for two days in order to research important facts about each country. Students were then provided the necessary materials needed to develop their own brochure. Each
brochure was to contain both written material and illustrations depicting facts about the country which the student had researched. Each student shared his/her brochure with the class before Kate evaluated and displayed the brochures on a bulletin board in the classroom.

Kate’s aim was to help her students develop a global perspective of social studies. Her rationale for this project was based on her belief that students shouldn’t be expected to memorize lists of meaningless facts and statistics about a country, but rather should have a general understanding of the country’s geography, culture, and people. She also thought it important that students know how to research a topic.

I didn’t think it was important for them to know that copper was found in a certain town and that sort of thing...I just think it’s more working on the research. Finding that stuff out and then carrying it a little bit further by having to do something further with the information. That’s one thing that I want [the students] to be able to do.

These instructional strategies and activities gave the students an opportunity to identify facts and features about a particular country and culture which they thought were important to know. Kate was then able to build upon the facts and features the students identified, as well as her knowledge of the students’ needs and abilities during subsequent lessons. According to Kate,

I don’t like to lecture. I like to talk about [the content], but I want them to bring up what they remember and I’ll add things to it. Let them tell me. I might say something about what is the weather like in Central Africa and have them tell me. Then I’ll say it back to them again, ‘Well remember when we talked about Central Africa. You know there are rain forests there;
therefore, it's not desert land.' You know, try to draw the information out of them rather than me standing up there lecturing.

When discussing the African "bush" with the sixth graders, Kate realized that not all of her students would understand the concept of "bush" since it was far removed from their immediate experiences. After defining the concept and showing the students pictures of the "bush", Kate shared the following example of how she tried to help her students internalize the concept:

With my low classes when I was talking about Africa and if we were looking from the center of the city, you would see bush everywhere. Then I would relate it more to them. For example, when you're in the city or up at the star and you look out, all you see is development. There are no suburbs in Africa. We're in the suburbs here and we talked about that making it more on their level. Where with the gifted class, they don't need to have that personal experience as much.

On another occasion when Kate's goal was to familiarize the students with the geography of Asia and its various countries, she purchased paint, markers, and individual sheets of plastic for the students' maps. The students were to work in small groups of four and make a large map on the plastic sheets which depicted important mountain ranges and rivers, as well as the countries of Asia. The students were responsible for dividing themselves into groups and for ensuring that every member of the group contributed to the map. At the students' urging, the completed maps were used to "paper" the ceiling of the classroom.

Kate related that her rationale for such an activity was two-fold:

I wanted the students to learn about the continent of Asia. And I figured it would be more fun for them to be able to work in groups and do something
big. I do a lot of this different kind of stuff. When they finish we are going
to hang them up on the ceiling...So it's Asia all over the ceiling!

Originally, Kate had planned to let the students make one big map of Asia, but after
thinking about the assignment and her goal she decided to let the students make several
maps. In Kate's words,

We were just going to make one big one but I thought that that wouldn't
give [the students] enough credit in the map if every child did one little thing
on there. So I just had them do several.

Past Studenting Experiences. Kate's "studenting" experiences also influenced her practice.
She talked about her attitudes and behaviors as a university student enrolled in methods
courses. Kate suggested that trying to teach a class to student teachers must be "every
teacher's nightmare." She related that she and the other student teachers often talked
among themselves during class when the instructor was trying to teach and even went as
far as to shoot rubber bands at some unsuspecting classmate.

Kate recalled her own experiences as a junior high school student and suggested that
as an adolescent she "had tried every trick in the book to get out of work and out of class."
However, she suggested that as an adolescent she was not as sophisticated as were the
sixth graders in her classes. Kate remembered playing with dolls when she was in the
sixth grade and laughingly noted that the girls in her classes wouldn't be caught dead
playing with dolls. She contended that much of the difference between the sixth graders
today and the sixth graders when she was an adolescent could be attributed to the fact that
the sixth grade was housed in the junior high school. She suggested that sixth graders
were "still kids" and recalled that when she was in the sixth grade, it was housed in the
elementary school. Kate felt that when sixth graders were placed in a junior high school
setting they were exposed to older students and influences which weren't always appropriate or beneficial.

In her words,

I think that’s part of the problem with today’s children at that age [sixth grade]. They are being put with kids that are so much older and [the sixth graders] look up to them and the decisions they are making and [the sixth graders] do the same thing when they're not ready to. [The sixth graders] today are more exposed to sex, and drugs and smoking.

Past Field Placements. Kate’s past field experiences also influenced her practice at the junior high. Kate's previous field experiences at the elementary school helped her to realize the importance of reteaching a concept or skill using a variety of instructional strategies.

Kate shared the following example,

When I was teaching one-day lessons for thirty minutes [at the elementary school] I never had a good positive feeling of how it went. I realized that just because I think something is easy doesn’t mean that it will be easy for the kids. I need to be consistently thinking of different ways that I can teach the same materials if I don’t get it across the first time.

Kate's past experiences carried over into her student teaching at the junior high where she tried to incorporate a variety of instructional strategies and activities into each lesson in an attempt to reach every student.

Kate learned much about herself from her previous experience in elementary field placements which in turn influenced her practice at the junior high. What she learned, who she learned about, and how she learned will be examined in greater detail in the last half of this chapter.
Kate's past experiences were integrally woven into her everyday experiences at the junior high. These past experiences included her familial background, her past "studenting" experiences, and field placements. Her beliefs and values about life in general and the teaching/learning process in particular were linked to Kate's past experiences. They were manifest in her day to day actions and interactions in the classroom. It is impossible to determine which factor, if any had the most influence on Kate's practice.

Perhaps a word of caution is necessary here. The fact that the three factors were singled out in this chapter does not mean that these were the only past experiences that influenced Kate's practice. Nor does it mean that all of Kate's past experiences can be codified into neat categories of influence. It is likely that Kate's past experiences had a collective influence on her practice and that these categories were closely intertwined and overlapping.

It should also be noted that although beliefs and values were singled out as a subordinate influence on Kate's practice, more than likely it is a superordinate influence that pervades both the internal and external influences on her practice. Kate's beliefs and values are the result of her years of experience as a contributing member of her family and of society. Additionally, Kate's beliefs and values are the result of all she is and has been. Her beliefs and values have a direct effect on her practice. Her beliefs and values affect her planning and instruction--how she interprets classroom interactions and episodes, and how she acts and reacts. For the purpose of this study, the discussion of Kate's beliefs and values was included under past experiences. However, the reader should keep in mind that Kate's beliefs and values are an integral part of both the internal and external influences on her student teaching practice at the junior high.
Self As Learner

Kate viewed her student teaching experience at the junior high as a learning process. Student teaching provided her with an opportunity to learn about her students, the content she was teaching, the context in which she was teaching, as well as to learn about herself as both a student and a teacher.

Learning About the Context of the Curriculum. Kate talked about the context of the curriculum during one of the interviews with the researcher. She suggested that the social studies curriculum which she was to teach at the junior high was "pretty much cut and dried. This is what I have to cover and this is the time I have to cover it in." Kate's comments suggest that at the junior high, departmentalized instruction and scheduling determines to a large extent the depth and breadth of particular topic or subject that can be covered in a specified amount of time. She seemed very aware of the amount of material that was to be covered during the school year, as well as the daily schedule and the fact that she had only fifty minutes a day with a particular group of students.

Kate was also aware of the fact that she was not the "regular" teacher and was in fact a guest in another teacher's classroom. Even though Gary, her cooperating teacher, had given her complete freedom to cover the prescribed curriculum however she saw fit, Kate was aware of how Gary taught. Gary typically had the students read a chapter in the text, define vocabulary words and answer the questions at the end of that chapter, discuss the assigned readings, and then he tested the students on the material covered in class. Kate, on the other hand, strove to cover the same content in a way that involved the students in something other than paper and pencil tasks. For example, instead of having students write out the answer to review question at the end of the chapter, Kate often played a "Who am I?, What am I?, or Where am I?" game with the entire class. Kate was able to use an oral,
whole group activity to reinforce or review the material which the students had read and discussed in class in a way that the students seemingly enjoyed. However, she worried that some of the students' learning might suffer if she deviated too far from the "routine" which Gary had established. According to Kate,

[The students] are used to reading the material, doing the vocabulary, discussing [the material], and doing a workbook page. That's the way they do it. I don't want to stir everything up for [the students] because a lot of them are comfortable with the way things are.

Kate indicated that if she were the "real" teacher given the same curriculum to cover, she would proceed differently:

I would skip around a lot more. I wouldn't go in order [according to chapters in the social studies text]. I don't know that I would take each country separately like they do. I think that I would take the ancient history and cover that. Then cover the present in all the different countries. I think when you give [the students] the ancient and the present, it's hard for them to distinguish between the two. They're not getting a whole perspective and that's what I want to teach...Going from say Africa--ancient Africa to Africa present, they're not getting that global perspective. I think if you explain what's happening all over the world, then [the students] can understand what it was like in ancient times with each country, continent, and all over the world. Then they can relate it to each other and to what's going on in each country and all over the world. Whereas now they can't really think back and say, 'Oh well, in Africa it was like this. Because of this, this is why things are happening in Europe at this time.'
Learning About the Context of Student Teaching. Reflecting on her student teaching experience at the junior high, Kate noted:

It's caused me to grow up a lot. It's given me major responsibilities. I think for me it caused me to do a lot of soul searching on what I wanted. [Student teaching] made me really look into my beliefs in why I actually felt the way I did about certain things and putting those beliefs into practice.

When asked what she expected from her student teaching experience, Kate confided, "I expected to be a lot more terrified than I was. I didn't expect that I would be able to do it...I thought how am I going to get up in front of the class and teach them and be effective?" Kate went on to elaborate that classroom management and discipline were areas that caused her a great deal of consternation. According to Kate,

I didn't think that discipline was that big of a deal to me at first. And then I realized that yes, it is. I didn't realize that I would spend as much time on it as I do--thinking about it. [I'll say to myself] did I handle that the right way or I don't like the way this happened. I thought it would be more a fear of teaching. It's everything else-the administration, new responsibilities, liability, everything to do with that bothers me; not the actual teaching of a lesson.

Learning About the Content. However, Kate had not always felt that way. At the beginning of her student teaching experience at the junior high, Kate was very concerned about the content area that she would be teaching and her perceived "lack of knowledge" in the social studies content area. She fretted that her lack of knowledge would be viewed by her students as incompetence. According to Kate, "I don't want [the students] to think when I'm up there that I don't know what I'm talking about."
Kate related that she often spent the evenings that she was not waitressing and Saturday afternoons reading supplementary materials in order to learn more about the culture, people, and geography of the countries that her sixth graders were studying. Kate related, for example, that while reading about Africa and African culture, she discovered that polygamy was an accepted practice. However, she decided that this information was not appropriate to share with sixth graders. Kate went on to elaborate that she knew things like "where all the oceans and the seas were, but if [the students] asked me why something happened or is the way it is, I don't think that I could have told them." According to Kate, if she didn't know something she didn't have a problem with telling the students, "Hey, I don't know. But let's find out." However, Kate reiterated, "I don't want [the students] to be up there thinking she [referring to herself] doesn't know what in the world she's doing."

Sometimes Kate was amazed at how much she had learned about the content she was teaching. Kate related,

And I surprise myself too. Like the one little boy in second period. J.J. hadn't really done anything and so I gave him a [fact] sheet [to fill in]. And when I was talking to him, I'm pulling all of this information that I didn't know that I knew about Africa. It was just coming to me. That made me feel a lot better, especially after all the time I've spent reading and rereading it.

*Learning About Others.* The students in Kate's classes had a significant impact on her practice. Kate focused much of her time and attention on her students. She was aware of the complexities of adolescence and of the various physical, social, and psychological factors that can affect the teaching/learning process. Kate strove to get to know her
students as individuals, to learn about their strengths and weaknesses, and their needs and abilities in order to reach as many students as possible through instruction.

Throughout her ten weeks at the junior high, Kate and Gary frequently exchanged information about their students. Kate and Gary shared information about the students' familial and past academic performance. Kate learned much about her students from informal conversations with them before and after class and in the cafeteria. She often recounted the contents of these conversations with Gary and noted that the topics were both "shocking and depressing." For example, one student shared with Kate the fact that her father was a drug addict, another sixth grader talked about his smoking and stealing habits, and still another confided that she was interested "in the process of making a baby."

Kate talked knowledgeably about her students' personal and academic lives. Particular students were frequently the focus of her discussions during interviews with the researcher. Kate talked about individual students who were having personal problems, struggling academically, or who presented particular management problems such as cheating, forged parental signatures, tardiness, etc. Kate also expressed concern about the effects of the peer group, the curriculum, and the school setting on sixth graders. Detailed descriptions of the individual students that Kate discussed and the external influences on her practice will be presented in the following chapter.

*Learning About Self.* Kate learned about herself through her students. She frequently solicited verbal and written feedback from her students. Following what Kate thought was a bad day because the students didn't perform as she thought they should, Kate would have a "heart to heart" talk with each of her classes the next day. For example after a particularly noisy review lesson on Africa where the students were calling out answers, joking, and all talking at once, Kate related,
Today I just sat each class down and said, 'Look, we have some things to talk about.' I told them that it's alright to have fun in class but the extent to which we are having fun is getting out of hand. We need to get serious and get through Africa and start on Asia.

After such talks, Kate reported that her students' behavior improved and in fact, they were "angels" for the next several class periods.

However, Kate's perception of the students' behavior and the students' perception of their behavior often differed with each other. On written teacher evaluations, for example, the students indicated that they didn't think that they obeyed Kate. Kate, however, perceived herself as a "stern, strong disciplinarian" and she felt that the students did obey her.

Kate seemed to gauge her success or failure as a teacher from verbal and nonverbal feedback from the students with whom she came in contact daily at the junior high. As was suggested earlier, Kate actively sought feedback from her students. While she received feedback from her university supervisor, her cooperating teacher, and her university professors, Kate seemed to value the feedback she received from her students more than from any other source. Thus, the students were probably more influential than any other factor or individual (e.g., her cooperating teachers, her university supervisor, her university coursework, the setting, etc.) in shaping Kate's practice and in learning about herself as a teacher.

Kate learned other things about herself as a teacher. She realized that she no longer needed to write long, detailed lesson plans for every lesson that she taught. She stated that she was often frustrated when the class discussion took a different turn than she had anticipated in the long, detailed lesson plans. Instead of the long, detailed plans, Kate began jotting topics and page numbers from the social studies text that she expected to
cover in the 3" x 3" blocks of Gary's plan book. Kate did not perceive these brief notes to be planning. In Kate's words:

I'm the queen of winging it. To be honest, winging it works better than planning for me. I mean I have to have a general idea I guess, but ideas just come. I'll just be like walking around the room talking about something and something will just come to mind and I'll just do it. Whereas if I sit down and write out everything I'm going to do, then I get bent out of shape when it doesn't work the way it's supposed to.

Interestingly, what Kate perceived to be her weakness also contributed to what she considered to be one of her strengths as a classroom teacher. Kate believed that "insight" was her strength as a classroom teacher. She defined insight as the ability to:

Teach something and then something won't click and I'll change [the way I teach] it the next period. And then I might go back and teach it the way I did the first time. Just the ability to come up with ways to change [the way something is taught] and see what's not working and what is working.

Kate's perception of her strengths and weaknesses appear to be contradictory in nature. On one hand, she considers her ability to deviate from her lesson plans and to adapt her lessons to the needs and abilities of her students to be a strength. On the other hand, she considers planning or more specifically, a lack of planning to be a weakness. It is likely that Kate plans more than she gives herself credit. As she suggested, she has an "idea" of what and how she is going to teach a concept or skill. However, she adapts how she presents ideas and/or concepts based on continuous feedback from her students.

On one particular occasion, for example, Kate began sixth period by giving a five question quiz on the material that the class had read and discussed the day before. After Kate collected the students' quizzes, she repeated the first question from the quiz and asked
for a volunteer to answer it. When no one responded after several seconds had elapsed, Kate called on specific students to answer the question. When she still did not get an answer, Kate asked the students what was going on. The students related that they were "lost" and did not know any of the answers to the questions on the quiz. At that point, Kate abandoned her lesson plan for the day, threw out the students' quizzes, and reviewed the material covered the day before. Toward the end of the period, Kate played a modified version of the game "Trivial Pursuit" with the class to check students' understanding of the lesson.

Kate also discussed a type of "knowing" which was derived from practical experience. She differentiated between the theory that was taught in her university courses and practice. According to Kate, she thought about her experiences in the classroom all the time. She suggested that the type of "knowing" which she discussed came after reflecting on her experiences in the classroom.

Kate also learned about herself as a teacher through experimentation. Sometimes she tried different teaching strategies without consciously being aware of what she was doing. Kate related the following example. She suggested that she had had trouble "reaching" her sixth period class from the beginning of her student teaching experience at the junior high. Additionally, she noted that Gary had also been frustrated with his attempts to "reach" this class. One day during the second week of April, Kate was elated when in her words, the class "finally came together". Reflecting on the class period, Kate related,

I went about it a different way, but not really realizing that I did. I went and sat in the back of the room at the table with these two boys and had everybody turn facing me. I just sat down and [taught]. One little boy was playing with a super ball and it rolled away from him in the middle of my lesson. I didn't see him playing with it before. I said,' What are you
doing?" just joking around with him. He said, 'Playing with my ball.'
And that got a big laugh from [the rest of the class]. I said, 'I love balls.'
Ho, ho, ho, then everyone really laughed. And from then on it was just
like, they were into it. They were all answering the questions. And they
had never been like that before. I don't know if it was just because I was
sitting in the back and sitting with them on their level, I mean eye level and
everything. It was really weird.

It is unclear what actually made sixth period "click" for both the students and the
teacher. But subsequent observations by both the researcher and Gary confirmed that Kate
had indeed began to "reach" this class. After standing outside the classroom door the
following day and listening to the exchanges between Kate and sixth period, Gary told
Kate that she "was like a shepherd with her flock of sheep. I couldn't believe that class.
They were all working and doing what they were supposed to. It was just amazing."

Kate suggested that perhaps she was able to "reach" sixth period because she was "on
their level". Kate seemingly ignored the exchange in the middle of class with the student
and the super ball during her reflections. The episode was illustrative of Kate's sense of
humor and of her willingness to share the more "human" side of her personality with her
students. Perhaps Kate's success with sixth period is due to a combination of factors
including sitting on their level during class discussions and Kate's willingness to interject
humor into the classroom.

Kate also learned about herself as a result of the projects and assignments she was
asked to complete in her university courses. Kate shared the following example of what
she had learned about herself in the university diagnosis course:

[The professor] had an assignment where we had to talk about our personal
biases. And I thought, well, this will be easy. I don't have any. And then
I started thinking about it and I thought that is wrong. I do have biases. You know, the things that I feel, it's just not right. How could I think like that? It's not fair. But, I do...I thought that [activity] was useful. We've known all along that [these biases] were there. We know what we believe and we know what we do. We've just never had the opportunity to examine them before.

Summary

This chapter described the internal influences derived from data analysis on the practice of student teaching for Kate. The internal influences consisted of two superordinate factors: past experiences and self as learner. Each of the superordinate influences were further broken into subordinate influences on Kate's practice at the junior high. The following model (Figure 2) depicts the superordinate and subordinate internal influences on Kate's practice.

Kate saw teaching as a learning process. She viewed the teaching/learning process as problematic and her instruction was strongly influenced by the students in her classes. Kate wanted to be a successful teacher and she utilized a variety of strategies to accomplish her goal. Kate spent a great deal of time outside of school reading and preparing for class. She made a conscious attempt to learn about her students both personally and academically. She implemented a variety of instructional strategies and activities and succeeded at reflectively analyzing the effects of these strategies and activities. Kate was then able to apply what she had learned from her experiences to future plans and actions.

What Kate did both in and out of the classroom was an aggregate of her past experiences and her beliefs and values. Much of what she learned and what she did
Figure 2. Superordinate and Subordinate Internal Influences on the Practice of Student Teaching
was based on her familial background, her past studenting experiences, and her previous field experiences. Inherent in each of these factors were Kate's beliefs and values.

The influences described in this chapter were termed internal influences for lack of a better descriptor. As the term suggests these influences are intrinsic, personalistic in nature, and unique to the biography of each individual. These internal influences interacted with the external influences which will be discussed in the next chapter. In fact, the internal influences determined to a great extent how Kate interpreted and reacted to the external influences on the practice of student teaching.
CHAPTER IV
EXTERNAL INFLUENCES ON THE PRACTICE OF
STUDENT TEACHING

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the external factors that influenced the
practice of student teaching for Kate. There were three superordinate factors that
influenced Kate's practice at the junior high including significant others, the school setting,
and her university coursework. Within each of the three superordinate factors, there were
subordinate factors. Both the superordinate and subordinate factors which influenced
Kate's practice will be described in depth in the remainder of this chapter.

Significant Others

During her student teaching experiences, Kate came in contact with many individuals
who influenced her practice. The cooperating teacher, the university supervisor, the
coordinator of gifted programs, the researcher, Kate's peers, and her university professors
all influenced Kate's practice in some way. The sixth graders whom she taught influenced
her practice both as a group and as individuals. Each of these individuals will be discussed
in greater detail in this section.

Cooperating Teachers. Gary had been teaching at the junior high for eighteen years and
had supervised numerous student teachers. Kate and Gary initiated a friendly,
comfortable, give-and-take relationship from the onset of Kate's tenure at the junior high
school. Both were out-going, energetic individuals who enjoyed a challenge.
Additionally, both Kate and Gary worked approximately thirty hours a week at other jobs
after school and on weekends. Kate believed that she and Gary had a unique relationship based on mutual trust and respect. In her words,

Things are really good with Gary and me. We get along really well. We get along well and we have a good relationship because my feelings are so similar to those that he's feeling right now...But it's just because he's so much like me and we just have a good time. He lets me do what I want to.

Gary told Kate that in eighteen years of teaching, she was the first student teacher that he felt comfortable leaving alone in the classroom. According to Kate, Gary related that he had been "stuck with some real ditzs before", but he was quick to reassure Kate that she was "doing a wonderful job." Kate believed that Gary was complimentary of her performance because "he [didn't] have to go step by step and show me how to plan like he's had to do with a lot of other [student teachers]. And just because he doesn't have to control the class for me". Gary felt so strongly about Kate's performance in the classroom, that he told the school's principal that "Kate was doing an excellent job with her classes and was the best student teacher that had ever been at [the junior high school]."

Gary had so much confidence in Kate's ability as a teacher that he gave her complete autonomy in the planning and teaching of his sixth-grade social studies classes. During the first few weeks of Kate's student teaching experience at the junior high, Kate reported that Gary slipped in and out of the classroom while she was teaching. As Kate began teaching full days at the conclusion of her university methods courses, Gary left her on her own in the classroom more and more. Instead of being intimidated by the responsibility of planning and teaching five classes of sixth graders, Kate seemed to thrive on the experience. Gary's absence helped to reinforce for her the notion of "real" teacher.

According to Kate:
[When Gary leaves me alone in the classroom] I don't feel like I'm being judged on what I say. I feel like I can really talk to them [the students] and they can talk to me without-I don't want to say interference from [Gary] because it's not—but it's much freer. It's just more my classroom. For example, we were supposed to cover a topic that I didn't feel...I had planned for it, but something just wasn't right to do it yesterday. So I was like, we're not doing this. We're doing something else.

Interestingly, Gary was willing to give Kate full responsibility for the teaching/learning process despite the fact that they approached their professional practice very differently. For example, during instruction Kate utilized a variety of materials and activities which were very different from Gary's instructional strategies. She encouraged the students to work in small groups and provided students with hands-on materials and activities whenever possible. She also utilized a variety of visual aids and materials which were not part of Gary's usual classroom routine. According to Kate, Gary, on the other hand, followed a routine where the students would "read the material, do the vocabulary, discuss it, and do the workbook page." Kate suggested that Gary:

doesn't expect much from [the students]. It's just like homework. He doesn't expect them to do it and they don't do it. And then nothing happens. He just lectures and gives lessons and worksheets. He told me that he's not creative any more because there's so much to cover and it just doesn't work.

Near the beginning of her student teaching experience at the junior high, Kate noted that one of her goals was to be more than a teacher to her sixth graders. She related that she wanted to be their friend as well. Kate suggested that even though Gary discouraged
her from befriending her students, he seemed to have successfully maintained this balance between teacher and friend that Kate wanted so desperately to achieve with her students.

According to Kate, Gary was concerned about his students as individuals and frequently made time before class or after school to meet with individuals to listen to personal problems and/or concerns. Additionally, Kate noted that Gary often chaperoned after-school functions and did things "like ride a skateboard down the hall which the students [went] wild about."

Like Gary, Kate also did "crazy things" with her students. Kate recalled one particular afternoon when Gary had asked her to deliver some materials for a special after-school function to the school's library. Kate had "drafted" four students to help her. On their way back to the north wing, Kate shared the following scenario:

> When we were outside [on the catwalk between the two buildings] so we wouldn't disrupt any of the classes, I started doing the Wizard of Oz thing. You know, where you kick your leg back and skip. So we were all doing that and singing on the way back. And [the students] were like, 'You're so cool. You're like no other teacher. You're such a teacher of the 80's,' and on and on. It was really fun just being my goofy self!

There is evidence that Gary acted as a role model for Kate. Both Kate and Gary valued their students. They both tried to cultivate a friendly, caring relationship with their students as individuals. Like Gary, Kate made herself available before and after class to talk with students. She also reported that she frequently attended after-school functions in which some of her students were participants. Additionally, Kate and Gary appeared uninhibited about expressing their individualism and the more "human" aspect of the teaching/learning process.
Gary was always willing to discuss a variety of situations such as excusing students from class, filling out school reports and forms, and dealing with angry or concerned parents with Kate whenever she felt the need. She reported that she had learned a lot from Gary and suggested that his advice was "invaluable". For example, she related that prior to her student teaching experiences she did not interact well with parents.

I'm very defensive. But, I've had to learn not to be [defensive] when dealing with parents. Having someone to talk to [like Gary] to say [to me], 'Look, this is what you have to do', or 'It would be best when a parent comes to the room to let them talk first, then explain your side'.

Since Gary did not have a homeroom, it was his habit to spend first period in the teacher's lounge located in the main building of the junior high complex. More often than not, Gary used this time to catch up on paperwork or to meet with parents or other school personnel. However, Gary always reserved a few minutes to work on the daily crossword puzzle in the local newspaper. In fact, there was a friendly "race" every day between Gary and another male teacher to complete the crossword puzzle.

The majority of teachers at the junior high avoided the smokey haze in the teacher's lounge like the plague; entering just long enough to buy a Coke or some "munchies" from one of the vending machines and then retreating quickly. But the teacher's lounge was a revered haven to the few "regulars" that frequented it every period. Newcomers to the lounge were not made to feel particularly welcome and as a result usually did not stay long. Student teachers fell into this latter group and thus there seemed to be an unspoken rule that the teacher's lounge was off-limits to them. However, Kate was the exception to the rule.

Kate frequented the teacher's lounge both before and after school and whenever she had a free class period. She participated in the friendly banter among the "regulars" and was in fact, accepted as one of them. Toward the end of her student teaching experience,
Kate laughingly related that she was too "naive" to realize that the teacher's lounge was supposed to be "off limits" to student teachers. She was proud of the fact that she was the only student teacher who had ever "broken into the 'regulars' which frequented the teacher's lounge and [who was] accepted as an equal among them."

Gary's influence on Kate apparently extended beyond the classroom and carried over to the teacher's lounge. Kate's acceptance as one of the "regulars" in the teacher's lounge could be attributed to the fact that since Gary was an accepted "regular" he determined that Kate should also be accepted. It is equally possible that since student teachers typically viewed the teacher's lounge as "off limits", Kate was just simply the first student teacher to spend a great deal of time there. In that case, perhaps she was accepted because of the amount of time she spent there. Finally, it is also possible that because Kate was unaware of the "unspoken rule", she was able to enter the teacher's lounge uninhibited by expectations and stereotypes; thus she was able to establish a rapport with the teachers on an individual basis rather than in the perceived role of "student" teacher.

Kate suggested that Karen, her cooperating teacher from an earlier placement, had also influenced her practice. Karen taught fifth grade in a nearby elementary school. Although the elementary school was non-traditional in its layout with open classrooms and common areas, Karen was a very traditional teacher. She, like the other three fifth grade teachers in her area, had constructed classroom "walls" from bookcases and filing cabinets.

Kate described Karen as "the supreme ruler of [her] classroom. No questions asked. But at the same time it was a relaxed atmosphere." She described her relationship with Karen in the following manner:

[Karen and I] had a totally different relationship than [Gary] and I have. I wouldn't dream of telling her the things I tell [Gary]. But she was real good about talking to me too. We just had what I think was a very special
relationship in comparison to that of the ones that I've had with previous cooperating teachers...[Karen] loves teaching and so she has a real hard time just handing over her class. But the relationship we had, I didn't have any problem with that. I would just say, 'Look, I want to do this.' And I don't know if it was because I was assertive... Just from day one we always had that kind of relationship.

Kate maintained that Karen had helped her mature both as an individual and as a teacher. During the first few weeks in Karen's classroom, Kate realized that her "number one priority was school." Kate learned from Karen that she had to be organized and prepared for school at the beginning of the school day, even if that meant completing schoolwork at home in the evening. In Kate's words:

Forget [the university] classes over school. You've got to have school stuff done or otherwise [Karen] will be disappointed in me. And so [at first] it was more, I was doing it for her. But now the things I learned from her, I'm doing for myself because it drives me crazy not to have it any other way.

The data suggest that both Gary and Karen served as role models for Kate and contributed to her conceptualization of elementary and junior high classrooms. Kate's elementary experiences had been in self-contained classrooms where the teacher was responsible for teaching all content areas. At the junior high each teacher was responsible for teaching a particular subject to several different classes. Unlike the elementary teachers, the teachers at the junior high had a daily planning period and were thus relieved of the responsibility for students for at least one fifty minute period a day. Since teachers at the elementary school did not have a regularly scheduled time at school in which they could
plan or complete work, Kate apparently learned early that she must be prepared for school before the school day began.

It seems that this notion carried over into her experiences at the junior high since Kate frequently referred to the amount of work she had to do at home in the evening. During interviews with the researcher Kate talked about the amount of reading she did after school to familiarize herself with the social studies text and the content she was teaching. She also made frequent references to grading students' work and averaging grades at home. On one particular occasion, Kate related that she "stayed up until 1:00 A.M. averaging students' nine-week grades" since the regularly scheduled "records day" was rescheduled as an instructional day due to inclement weather. Observations of Kate in the teacher's lounge at the junior high verified that she utilized her planning periods as a time for relaxing and socializing rather than for planning or completing school work. In fact, on the one occasion that the researcher observed that Kate had school work to do during her planning period, she was unable to complete it because of an impromptu conference with a parent. Ironically, the parent never attended the meeting and Kate and Gary spent the entire period in the office "chatting" with the school's principal much to Kate's chagrin.

_Students_. The students in Kate's classes were a primary influence on her student teaching practice at the junior high. As might be expected, the students were also the primary focus of her interviews with the researcher. During the ten weeks that Kate had been at the junior high, she had grappled with such problems as student motivation, make-up work, and forged parental signatures. One of the first problems that Kate had encountered occurred when Gary was absent during her first week of student teaching at the junior high. Even though a substitute teacher was present, Kate capitalized on this early opportunity to assume responsibility for the classroom. She was immediately confronted by Susie.
Susie was a thin, pale child with long blond hair and bangs that hung down in her eyes. Although she sat with her back to the windows in Kate's second period class, Susie was reading her social studies text while wearing sunglasses. When Kate realized this, she quietly walked over to Susie's desk and held out her hand without a word. Susie removed the sunglasses and placed them in Kate's outstretched hand. In less than five minutes after Kate had taken the sunglasses, Susie was down on the floor "looking around." When Kate asked Susie what she was doing, the student responded that she was looking for her contact lens. Kate also got down on the floor and helped Susie look for the missing contact lens but to no avail. Laughingly, Kate remembered how "foolish" she had felt when she noticed that Susie wasn't wearing the mate to the supposedly missing contact lens. After questioning the student further, Susie suddenly remembered that she had forgotten to put her contacts in that morning. Reflecting back on that episode several days later, Kate noted that Susie "just didn't want to work." Additionally, Kate suggested that Susie's apathy toward school work also seemed to be shared by the majority of students in second period.

Then there was Tommy, the boy who forged his mother's signature on his test paper. Kate, following Gary's normal routine after giving a test, sent the students' test papers home to be signed by a parent or guardian "in an attempt to keep the parents abreast of each child's progress in class". Recalling the incident, Kate noted:

I'll give [Tommy] credit. It looked good. I saw his mother's writing--real signature. It was good forgery. If he hadn't been so scared about bringing it up, I never would have guessed. He like slid the paper back and forth [across my desk].

Kate and Gary disagreed about how to handle the forgery. Kate thought that Tommy should call his mother and explain what he had done. She called him out into the hall and told Tommy that he would have to call home during the break between classes and tell his
parents of his "crime". Gary intervened and suggested that Kate make a copy of the test with the forged signature and once again send the copy home to be signed by one of Tommy's parents. That way Tommy's parents would not only hear about what he had done, but would also see Tommy's handiwork. In the end, Kate followed Gary's suggestion and sent a copy of the test home with Tommy. However, Kate was convinced that such action "would not solve the problem" and that Tommy would "forge his mother's signature again when the opportunity presented itself".

A similar situation occurred toward the end of Kate's student teaching experience at the junior high. It was near the end of the nine-week grading period and Kate had given a test on the unit she had just completed. The test grade was to be averaged into the students' nine-week grades. Kate had once again sent the students' test papers home to be signed by a parent or guardian just as Gary did. When she collected the signed test papers, Kate noticed that the signature on Becky's test paper looked strangely familiar. Kate compared the signature on Becky's test to her mother's signature on a D/F slip that had been sent home to her parents earlier in the week. The two signatures were very different.

Kate called Becky to her desk in the front of the room and asked, "Did your mother sign this test?" The student responded that her mother had signed the test. Kate showed Becky the D/F slip and pointed out the differences in the two signatures. Then Kate took Becky out in the hall so that they could continue their conversation. According to Kate, she once again asked Becky if her mother had signed the test paper. The student admitted that her mother had not signed it. Becky told Kate that her mother had said that she would not sign the test paper unless Becky made an "A". Kate explained to Becky that forging her mother's signature and then lying about it was wrong. In Kate's words,
I said it's not fair to the other students who are facing the same thing that you get by with it because you forged a signature. It's not right. The punishment will fit the crime.

Kate decided not to tell Becky what the punishment would be because she "wanted her to really think about what she had done." Kate and Becky returned to the classroom and later in the day Kate called Becky's mother and told her about the episode.

Becky's mother was an elementary school teacher. According to Kate, Becky's mother was most unhappy with her daughter's academic performance at the junior high in general and particularly in Kate's class. She told Kate that she was considering having her daughter retained because she was not performing well in any of her classes. In Kate's words, "She just went on and on about all this kind of stuff, talking my ear off." Becky's mother assured Kate that she would be punished at home and suggested that Kate also punish her at school. It was agreed that Becky would be assigned to after school detention for the next week.

Kevin presented Kate with a different kind of problem. Kevin's mother had written Kate a note inquiring about her son's progress in social studies class. Kevin's sister had been in Kate's fifth grade class at the elementary school and Kate had met the students' mother at a parent/teacher conference there. According to Kate, Kevin was "really doing badly". Kate thought the she and Kevin had gotten off to a bad start and she shared the following to demonstrate her point:

I think what it is is that I got to know [Kevin] because he dates a girl in my second period class. You know, he's going with her. I used to joke around with him at lunch because I wasn't seeing his class. Now that he's in my class he thinks that he can get away with a lot more than he can. He just doesn't do anything. And his sister is wonderful. I know that it's
terrible to compare them like that but it's just like, 'What is your problem?' I mean he's just as smart as he can be. But every time I reprimand him he's like, 'Ugh, God, like how can you do this to me when you're so cool to me at lunch.' He's one of the few that has a hard time realizing that lunch and the classroom are two different things.

After explaining the situation to the researcher, Kate decided that she would call Kevin's mother at home that evening and talk to her personally rather than responding to her inquiry in writing.

Kate really worried a lot about her students in general and second period in particular. Unlike her other classes, the majority of students in second period were reading below grade level and had difficulty completing their work for a variety of reasons. Sally was a good example. Sally's dad was a drug addict and in order to help her cope with her father's problem, Sally went to a support group for children of drug abusers. Sally was repeating sixth grade for the second time. Additionally, she was receiving special help in the area of math from the resource teacher at school. Kate wanted Sally to participate in a special project for her university reading diagnosis course but was afraid that Sally would decline to participate because she had little free time after school. But when approached, Sally readily agreed to participate even though she had to put in extra time after school.

According to Kate, Susie was "operating below grade level on paper and pencil tasks", but "verbally was operating at grade level". It was Kate's intention to try to determine why there was such a discrepancy and to identify strategies to remediate the problem.

One of Kate's goals as a teacher was to generate alternatives to paper and pencil tasks at which Susie, as well as the other students, could excel. Kate reiterated,

I don't want [the students] saying, 'Oh no, not another worksheet!'...I like to let them do it. I don't like to lecture.
Certainly these descriptions of the students in Kate's classes are not exhaustive but they are representative of the students that Kate talked about during interviews with the researcher and of the kinds of problems, both individually and collectively, that the students presented to Kate.

The University Supervisor. Another individual who influenced Kate's practice was Joan, her university supervisor. Joan had supervised Kate during her two previous field experiences at the elementary school. Part of Joan's responsibility as a university supervisor was to serve as a liaison between and among the university, the public school, the cooperating teacher, and the student teacher. Additionally, the university supervisor was responsible for monitoring and evaluating the student teacher's performance in the classroom. Joan had been very complimentary and supportive of Kate during her experiences at the elementary school.

Kate shared with the researcher that she was unhappy with Joan's infrequent and unannounced visits during her student teaching experience at the junior high. Kate noted that Joan had only observed her twice during the ten weeks that Kate had been teaching at the junior high.

My supervisor will say, 'I'll see you in half an hour.' And you know [I'm thinking], do I read this now? Is she going to cut me down? She breezes into the classroom like 'I'm here to give you a grade'.

According to Kate, Joan's major criticism as her university supervisor was that Kate no longer used creative methods and activities during instruction at the junior high. Joan noted during a conference with her that Kate used to utilize creative activities during her placement at the elementary school. Joan's evaluation and comments infuriated Kate. Kate felt that she had utilized a variety of creative instructional strategies and activities to
supplement the text and still cover the required material. According to Kate, Joan had an "elementary teacher mentality" and thus expected to see a "cutesy idea" every time she observed Kate. This "mentality" frustrated Kate. In her words,

You have to be flexible but you can't completely lose everything you've done the day before by planning a cute little activity. It just wasn't feasible. I mean with that class [referring to second period] you're lucky if they remember what you taught them the day before. I mean you really are! I don't need to impress her [Joan] and when you're observed you don't need to be observed doing a cutesy idea every time. That's not the way it is.

Kate was also upset because Joan had interrupted the last lesson that she had observed Kate teach. Kate noted that others including Gary and this researcher frequently participated in her classes without "upsetting the flow of the lesson" or intimidating Kate. However, when Joan interjected an answer to a student's question which Kate couldn't answer, Kate felt that Joan adopted a "superior and condescending attitude". Kate had responded to the student's question by telling him that she didn't know the answer and suggested that the class find the answer together. Joan interjected that she knew the answer to the student's question because she had lived in Kenya for a year. She then proceeded to answer the question while in Kate's words, "the students just looked at her".

It is important to note here that Joan had supervised Kate during her two previous field experiences at the elementary school. Joan was both supportive and pleased with Kate's performance as was evidenced by the grade of A -- which was recorded for Kate at the end of her second placement at the elementary school. Thus, Joan had observed Kate teach probably a minimum of eight times -- three observations during each of Kate's two elementary placements and two observations during her placement at the junior high. Yet, both Kate and Gary were displeased with what Kate termed Joan's "lack of supervision".
The data from interviews with Kate indicate that Kate was sharply critical of Joan's performance as a university supervisor. It is possible that Gary influenced Kate's perceptions of and beliefs about Joan when he shared his displeasure about the number of supervisory visits and the supervisor's criticism of Kate's instructional strategies with the researcher in Kate's presence. Perhaps Kate was displeased with Joan because her criticism and unsolicited participation in class discussions were perceived by Kate as threats to her self-esteem and sense of efficacy. Other than making her angry, there is no evidence from the interviews with Kate or from classroom observations that Joan's comments altered the way in which Kate approached the teaching/learning process.

A District Coordinator. A different kind of problem which Kate confronted during her student teaching experience centered around her interactions with Julie, a district coordinator of gifted education. Since Kate's seventh period class contained several gifted students, the coordinator volunteered to teach a unit on China to this class. Kate learned of the "guest lecturer" only two weeks before Julie was scheduled to come into her classroom. According to Kate, such short notice found Kate scurrying to cover the material left in her unit on Africa and bring closure to the unit before spring break and the coordinators' unit on China.

The second day that the coordinator was teaching, Gary asked Julie if she would mind being left alone in the classroom. The fifty minute period would give him and Kate an unexpected break and a few extra minutes to talk. Julie agreed to being left alone in the classroom, but added that Kate should plan to be present later in the week. Kate thought that "she just wanted someone else in the room with her." However, at lunch the following day, the coordinator cornered Kate and informed her of "her responsibilities." According to Julie, not only was Kate expected to be in the classroom, but she was also expected to
"familiarize herself with the unit; research and answer the questions posed in the unit; be prepared to answer students' questions; and design a test to evaluate students' understanding of the material covered in the unit". Kate was furious when she learned of the coordinator's expectations of her.

Kate told Julie:

It would have been quite nice if you would have given this to me a while back. In addition to student teaching, I work thirty to forty hours a week outside of here. Now you are telling me that you want me to research a topic that I know nothing about and which I'm not teaching to my other four classes and be prepared to answer any questions that they might have.

Despite Kate's confrontation, the coordinator reiterated that it was Kate's responsibility to follow through with the unit.

Kate fumed about being informed of her responsibilities "at the spur of the moment."

In Kate's words, "I feel used. I feel that I'm being taken advantage of because [the coordinator] would never have gone to Gary and dumped it on him in the manner that she did me. It's just because I'm a student teacher!"

Kate also objected to the method of instruction implemented by the gifted coordinator. The unit on China was designed to be an independent unit. The students were to utilize references on China in order to answer questions from the packet. Kate noted her own efforts to move away from paper and pencil tasks during her student teaching and questioned why a "resource teacher and supposed expert on China would have [the students] do most of the unit independently."

Lastly, Kate strongly objected to designing the test used to evaluate the students' understanding of material which she had neither developed nor taught. According to Kate, designing a test for someone else to use "is not good." I don't know what
[the coordinator] stressed or what she finds important. I don't think it's right for someone who is not teaching the unit to make up the test. If it's not done by the person who made up the unit, what purpose does it show? It's no evaluation of it.

In addition to telling Julie how she felt, Kate also shared her displeasure and indignation with Gary. Gary, in turn, shared his displeasure with Julie's attitude toward and treatment of Kate with the school's principal. According to Kate, the problem was finally resolved when the principal called both Julie and Kate into her office and told Julie that she could teach the unit on China anyway she saw fit. She could not, however, demand or require Kate to participate in the planning, instruction, or evaluation of the unit.

Julie expected Kate to be be present during classroom instruction and take an active role in the teaching/learning process. Certainly, the gifted coordinator had very definite expectations of Kate which were different from those she had of Gary. The earlier descriptions of Kate's interaction with the gifted coordinator, as well as Kate's verbalized perceptions seem to indicate that Julie viewed the status of student teachers as less than equal to a regular teacher. Kate's reactions seem to indicate that she considered herself to be just as qualified to teach gifted students as Julie. It is possible that Kate perceived herself as more qualified than the gifted coordinator because she had worked with the students for a longer period of time and was familiar with their particular needs and abilities.

*The Peer Group.* One factor which became apparent after analyzing the data was Kate's lack of dependence on her peer group. Although she shared an apartment with two other student teachers, taught with them, and attended classes with them, Kate rarely referred to them in her discussions. On one occasion when she did refer to her roommates, Kate
noted that they had all had a virus which caused all three of them to miss at least one day of student teaching. Additionally, she did not seem to depend on her peers for moral support. Throughout the course of this study, the researcher never observed Kate interacting with other student teachers other than to exchange greetings or farewells. This could be due to the fact that both Kate’s participation in this study and her work schedule after school and on weekends left her little time to interact with her peers. It is also possible that Kate’s seeming lack of dependence on her peer group could be attributed to her relationship with the researcher and her cooperating teacher. In this case, both individuals served as sources of support and outlets of frustration for Kate as she completed her student teaching experiences at the junior high.

The Researcher. The researcher also had an impact on Kate during her ten weeks at the junior high. The researcher spent ten to twenty hours each week collecting data and interviewing the participant. Data collection consisted of "tailing" Kate throughout the school day and recording field notes of the various activities and interactions in which she participated. In addition to the classroom, the cafeteria, corridor, and teacher’s lounge often provided Kate and the researcher with opportunities for brief exchanges.

Interviews with Kate were conducted after the regular school day and outside of the school building--usually in a nearby restaurant. While the duration of each interview varied, a typical interview lasted anywhere from an hour and a half to two hours. These interviews were anything but formal. They became the vehicle for Kate’s self-expression, for sharing problems and concerns, for talking about difficulties and limitations, and for exchanging experiences and ideas (See Appendix C for an example of an interview).

It is important to note here that the interviews with the participant were unstructured. In fact, the researcher never began the interviews. Kate always initiated the discussion
about whatever topic she chose to discuss. In addition to discussing her student teaching experience, Kate talked about everything from finding a teaching position to removing the ketchup which she spilled on her blouse during an interview. She also inquired about the researcher’s student teaching and teaching experiences. Kate seemed to trust the researcher and was uninhibited about sharing information about her personal life such as her trip to Florida during the public school’s spring break and her relationship with her boyfriend.

The researcher made a conscious attempt not to evaluate Kate’s actions or her performance in the classroom even when specifically asked to do so. For example, Kate would sometimes begin an interview with a question such as "What did you think about the students' brochures and presentations?" In such instances, the researcher would parrot the question back to Kate and wait for her to respond. Kate would also ask such questions as "Do you blame me?; Do you think that what Julie is asking me to do is fair?; or Do you think that I’m awful?" The researcher would reassure Kate that she was not evaluating her performance as a teacher and would rephrase Kate’s question in an attempt to better understand Kate’s practice of student teaching.

The observations and interviews with Kate indicate that she was not collaborative. That is, Kate did not regularly seek advice or solutions to problems that occurred during her practice from her peers, her university supervisor, or her cooperating teacher as might be expected of a preservice teacher. Typically, Kate generated her own solutions to problems and acted accordingly. It was only after she had identified problems, possible solutions to those problems, and had charted a course of action that she shared this process with Gary, her cooperating teacher. Kate seemed to believe that such conversations were necessary in order to keep Gary abreast of what was occurring in his classes. For example, in the teacher’s lounge after school one day, Kate informed Gary that she had
discarded her lesson plans for sixth period because the students had not done well on a quiz and so she decided to go back and review the previous day's lesson.

Because of the unstructured nature of the interviews with the researcher, Kate used the discussions to identify problems from her practice, generate possible solutions to those problems, select what she considered to be the best solution, and then incorporate that solution into her future plans. Classroom observations indicated that Kate did implement her own suggestions to problems encountered during her student teaching experience at the junior high. She would, during subsequent interviews, begin the process of reflection and analysis all over again beginning with the result of her earlier reflections.

For example, Kate noted during an interview that after her classes had finished studying the ancient cultures of Africa, she gave a test on the material. Kate related that she had spent the day before the test reviewing the material and noted that she had even given the students a study guide to help them prepare. The students did not do well on the test and Kate expressed concern and disappointment with the students' low scores on the test.

When the researcher asked Kate why she thought the students did not do well, she responded:

The students knew about it [the test] and knew exactly what was going to be on it. It's not like we didn't go over the material. Like with third period, they actively participated everyday. And it was especially the students who participated all the time that did poorly on the test. I think I'll make them make corrections if they got below a "C" on the test and give them ten extra points if they do it. And I'll probably give more quizzes along the way to see how I'm doing and their knowledge--what they're getting from it.

Subsequent classroom observations revealed that Kate did have the students who scored below a "C" on the test correct their mistakes. She checked the corrected tests and
gave student credit for the corrections. Kate also began to give frequent, short quizzes to her classes on new material which she covered in class.

It is possible that Kate did not feel the need to collaborate with her peers, the university supervisor, or Gary because of her participation in this study. The regularly scheduled interviews with the researcher provided Kate with an opportunity to systematically reflect on her practice. Additionally, emphasis was placed on the reflective process in her university coursework and so she did not appear to have any trouble generating alternative solutions to the problems that she identified. Finally, Kate had successfully completed two prior field experiences and Gary had expressed his utmost confidence in her ability to teach. Kate seemingly needed no further reassurance of her of her ability as a "real" teacher.

*University Instructors.* Another individual who influenced Kate's practice at the junior high included the instructors of her university methods courses. Kate was enrolled in two methods courses during the first five weeks of her student teaching experience at the junior high. The methods courses in general required that Kate draw heavily from her practical experiences in the classroom in order to complete the course assignments and requirements. Kate really respected and admired one particular instructor and frequently referred to this individual in her discussions.

Kate respected this instructor both as a teacher and as an individual. Kate suggested that one of the reasons that she enjoyed this instructor's class was because it was a language arts course, one of her areas of specialization. Kate also noted that this instructor involved the student teachers in "meaningful" activities and discussions. According to Kate, the weekly two hour class passed quickly and was over before she realized it. Kate
felt that this instructor "truly cared" about the student teachers and was sensitive to their needs and abilities.

As might be expected in a student-teacher relationship, Kate worried about what this instructor thought of her and the work that she did. Kate recalled one particular occasion when she was afraid that she had made this instructor "mad". The class had been discussing facts, interpretations, and judgements. The instructor had assigned a passage about a teacher's interactions with a class for the student teachers to read. Kate and the instructor had interpreted the passage differently.

When Kate was asked to share her interpretation of the passage with the class, the instructor disagreed with her interpretations. Kate cited evidence from the passage in an attempt to defend her interpretation during the ensuing class discussion. Even though Kate felt confident enough to disagree with the instructor, she still worried about what the instructor thought of such verbal disagreements.

It is probable that years of "studenting" as well as her experiences as a student "teacher" had taught Kate that teachers do not view challenges from their students favorably. It seems that Kate valued this instructor's opinion and desired to do well in her class. Kate apparently feared that differing with this individual would jeopardize the instructor's acceptance of her as both a student and as a teacher.

It is worth noting here that while Kate was enrolled in two methods courses, she only referred to one university instructor in her discussions with the researcher. She did, however, make reference to both courses. There are several plausible reasons why Kate spoke of only one instructor in her discussions. The one instructor which Kate admired and to whom she frequently referred in her discussions was a full-time university faculty member. This instructor, a female, was highly visible and actively involved in the student
teaching model in which Kate was placed. Thus, Kate was familiar with this instructor and had in fact, taken a course from her before.

On the other hand, the instructor of the social studies methods course to whom Kate rarely referred was a graduate teaching assistant. It was the first time that this instructor, a male, had taught a course in this particular student teaching model.

Perhaps the reason that Kate spoke frequently of one instructor and not the other was gender related. It is also possible that the individual personalities of the instructors had something to do with why she referred to one instructor and not the other. The difference could also be attributed to the content areas they were teaching and Kate's preference toward each.

The School Setting

Kate alluded to the influence of the school setting and the notion of accountability on several different occasions. Kate indicated that she did not feel pressure from Gary to account for everything that she did or did not do in the classroom. Kate did, however, feel pressure from the administration. She was frustrated with the "bureaucracy" which she encountered at the junior high level.

Bureaucracy. One particular occasion to which Kate frequently referred took place in March. The sixth grade students had been taking a battery of state tests during the first two periods of the day for a week. It was near the end of the week and the students were tired. Additionally, the weather had been unseasonably warm and both the students and teachers seemed to be suffering from spring fever. Kate had asked Gary's permission to take her third period class outside and was informed that it was against school policy to hold class
outside. She would have to get permission from the principal if she wanted to proceed with her plans.

When Kate approached the principal about taking her students outside, she was told that she could take them outside if, and only if, it was for instructional purposes which could not be carried out in the classroom. Kate related:

The red tape that you have to go through to do the things that you want to do. All the justifying you have to do for an activity you want to do in your class. I mean, when I wanted to take the kids outside one period because they had been [taking state tests] all week and weren't having gym. Screw it if you lose one class period, you're going to lose it anyway because you're not going to get anything accomplished. Whereas if they were outside [doing] something new, you might get through to them by doing a related game. But [the principal] was like, 'you've got to justify it.'

In the end, Kate decided to hold class indoors. She had the students raise the blinds all the way to the top of the windows and open all the windows as wide as they would go. Kate told her students that they would just have to "pretend" that they were conducting class outside.

Kate's reference to the "red tape" suggests that she learned about the bureaucratic organization of schools. She realized that while she might "lose" a class if she took them outside because there were more distractions with which she would have to compete, she also realized that she was equally likely to "lose" the students within the four walls of the classroom.

*Students/Classes.* Kate also recognized the impact that the school setting had on students. During one of her interviews Kate talked about the differences between a self-contained
elementary classroom and the junior high. Teachers at the junior high taught a specific content area to several different classes. The students at the junior high were expected to effectively manage coursework and departmental instruction. Kate felt that to expect sixth graders at the junior high to:

get to classes and the responsibility of going to a locker [in between each class] to get everything they need is too drastic a change from fifth grade [at the elementary school]. The students need something that will get them started in the fifth grade preparing them for the junior high setting. Or something that's kind of like a bridge to sixth grade at the junior high level that will get them into seventh.

Although Kate did not specify what she meant by a "bridge to sixth grade at the junior high", it is apparent that she was aware of the influence of the school setting on students.

As suggested earlier, Kate was also knowledgeable about adolescents in general, and her students in particular. She knew a great deal about her students' personal and academic lives as is evidenced throughout this study. She was also aware of the effects of peer pressure and the school setting on adolescents. Kate expressed concern that the structure of the junior high did not adequately meet many of the needs of adolescents. She worried that the sixth graders were often expected to follow rigid schedules or exposed to situations that they were developmentally not ready to handle.

According to Kate, the sixth graders were "still so social." She noted that "there's no time really for [the students] to socialize except in between classes." Kate also believed that the sixth graders were "too young to be around ninth graders." She suggested that the older students often exposed the younger students to inappropriate situations and topics such as "drugs and smoking". In Kate's words, the sixth graders "look up to the older
ones and the decisions that they are making. Then [the sixth graders] do the same thing when they're not ready to."

University Coursework

Kate was enrolled in two methods courses during the first five weeks of the study. Kate spent her mornings at the junior high and her afternoons in university classes. In her language arts class, Kate was required to complete a diagnostic project in which she identified questions to be answered from the particular problem/individual she chose to study, as well as a plan of action to initiate change.

Kate thought about asking Sally, a student in her second period class, to work with her on the project. Kate was worried about Sally because her reading ability and level of comprehension seemed to be far below her oral language development. Kate described Sally's problem as:

It's like if you give her a test on material. If you give her a written test and an oral test, she'll pass the oral but not the written.

Kate knew that Sally had been tested by the school psychologist for learning disabilities and had qualified for special help in math.

Kate planned to present Sally with a map of a country and ask her to explain how she would go about drawing the same map on another sheet of paper. Kate planned to tape record Sally's response so that later Sally could transcribe the tape and read the directions which she had dictated orally. Kate's rationale for this task was to enable Sally to make a connection between oral and written communication. As it turned out, Sally was absent from school for several days and Kate was forced to design another project for her university class.
Instead of studying a student, Kate decided to examine her performance as a classroom teacher. She chose to focus on five days of lessons. Kate's goal was, in her words, "to see if I could teach the exact same lesson in the same manner to each of my classes." Kate stated that she knew before she started the project that she could not teach the same material in the same manner to each of her classes. She knew that she would have to adapt the material to the needs and abilities of each of her classes.

During the five days of lessons, Kate had assigned each student a country which he/she was to research and report on. After reflecting on the project she had assigned, Kate decided that the next time that she made a similar assignment she would let the students choose the particular topic which they would research. Kate had taken her classes to the library for two days in order for them to research their assigned topic. She soon discovered that many of her students, particularly those in her "lower" classes did not know how to utilize the available references and resources in the library. Thus, Kate suggested that the next time she made a similar assignment, she would begin by having the class as a whole brainstorm a list of questions which they had about the topic. She would then have each student choose questions from the master list to answer using the reference materials about his/her particular topic. Finally, Kate decided that she would also have to teach her students about how to use the library and reference materials in order to answer their questions about a particular research topic.

The impact of the second methods course in which Kate was enrolled during the first half of her student teaching experience was not as positive. In fact, Kate described this methods course as "awful". According to Kate, the two hour class period seemed to pass slowly. The student teachers were often so bored that they talked among themselves while the instructor was talking or entertained themselves by shooting rubber bands at each other. Kate described the student teachers' behavior as "every teacher’s nightmare." Kate related
that she had not completed the assigned readings or studied for the midterm in this class and still managed to get a "B" on the test. Kate suggested that she missed the items on the test that had to do with theory because "I didn't know what he was talking about", but she did well on the items that were related to practice and dealt with such topics as field trips or permission slips.

Kate's attitude and behavior in this course were quite different from the one described earlier. Kate often said that she did not "care" about this class and indicated that she only wanted to finish it. Interestingly, this was a social studies methods course, a content area which Kate related that she did not enjoy and one in which she did not feel prepared to teach. Yet, she seemingly put forth less effort in this methods course than she did in the other one. Perhaps this could be attributed to her dislike of the content area. It is also possible that Kate's minimal effort could be attributed to the different assignments and expectations of the instructors.

The assignments which Kate talked about from the language arts methods course required the student teachers to draw heavily from their practical experience and utilize their knowledge of students, as well as the content area in order to complete assignments. The assignments in the social studies methods course which she made reference to involved designing lessons and units which she could use in the classroom.

Summary

This chapter described the external influences on the practice of student teaching for Kate. The external influences on Kate's practice included three superordinate influences: significant others, the school setting, and her university coursework. Each of these three superordinate influences included subordinate factors which influenced the practice of student teaching for Kate and which were discussed in this chapter. Figure 3 depicts both
Figure 3. Superordinate and Subordinate External Influences on the Practice of Student Teaching
the superordinate and subordinate external influences on Kate's practice, as well as the superordinate internal influences on her practice.

The first superordinate influence on Kate's practice which was discussed in this chapter included significant others. Gary, Kate's cooperating teacher, was probably the one person who had the most influence on her practice at the junior high. Perhaps Gary's willingness to turn his classes over to Kate was the determining factor in his influence. Gary gave Kate complete autonomy and responsibility for the teaching/learning process and then supported her actions, decisions, and judgements. Gary's actions and support enhanced Kate's sense of efficacy and self-esteem. She was given an opportunity to learn from practical experience. Kate was able to explore and test a variety of instructional strategies and techniques which reflected her training and experience, as well as her beliefs about the teaching/learning process.

Probably the second most influential factor on the practice of student teaching for Kate was the students whom she taught. Kate worked hard to learn about her students both personally and academically. She used this information about her students when planning, implementing, and evaluating instruction and student learning.

There were a variety of individuals who were discussed in this chapter and who influenced Kate's practice at the junior high. These individuals often presented Kate with dilemmas or problems which she had to resolve and which ultimately affected her practice. The extent to which each of these individuals affected her practice differed greatly.

The researcher also influenced the practice of student teaching for Kate. Regular interviews with the researcher provided Kate with a forum for identifying practice-related problems and solutions to those problems. The interviews also provided Kate with a supportive environment in which she could vent her frustrations and share concerns without fear of sanctions or retribution. It is likely that interviews with the researcher
replaced Kate's need to seek collaborative relationships with other individuals such as her peers and/or her cooperating teacher as is typical of preservice teachers.

The school setting was the second superordinate factor discussed in this chapter which influenced Kate's practice. Indirect factors such as the number of classes and students she taught and the daily schedule affected Kate's practice. There were also more obvious factors such as school policies pertaining to the recording and documentation of student absences or the policy about conducting class inside that had a direct influence on Kate's practice.

The third superordinate factor discussed in this chapter included Kate's university coursework. At least one, if not both of the university methods courses that Kate completed while student teaching at the junior high encouraged thoughtful reflection and required that Kate draw heavily from her practice at the junior high. These courses also provided her with opportunities to design and implement instructional strategies and activities which were both useful and appropriate for the grade level and content area that Kate was teaching.

The following chapter will examine the findings from this study. The interaction between the internal and external influences on Kate's student teaching practice at the junior high will also be discussed. Finally, the following chapter will discuss the implications of the findings for teacher education programs, as well as raise questions for additional research.
CHAPTER V
FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

Roses are red
Violets are blue
And we all want you to know
We love you Miss ____!

From All of Us

This poem was one of many that Kate's students wrote and shared with her on the last day of her student teaching experience at the junior high. Kate expressed surprise at the students' feelings for her. "You never know about some of these kids until it's all over. I can't believe some of them feel the way they do about me. You just never know."

In addition to hugs from the girls, "high-fives" from the boys, and the large sheets of white paper autographed by every student in each of her classes, Kate was showered with other tokens of the students' affection in the form of gifts, flowers and balloons. The students weren't the only ones who felt strongly about Kate. Gary, her cooperating teacher, had told Kate that she had "a hellava lot of talent" and was going to "make one hellava teacher!" In the eighteen years that Gary had been teaching at the junior high he had seen a lot of student teachers come and go. Thus, he apparently felt qualified to tell the school's principal that Kate "was the best student teacher that had ever been at [the junior high]."

What was it that Kate had done or not done during the ten weeks at the junior high that prompted such praise from both her students and her cooperating teacher? What were the various factors which influenced the practice of student teaching for Kate?

There is a great deal of controversy over the role that the student teaching experience plays in the development of teachers (Hollingsworth, 1989; Lortie, 1975; Zeichner, 1980;
Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1981). Some research suggests that the effects of formal training are "washed out" by practical experience (Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1981). Others suggest that an individual's biography and life experiences are key determinants in a beginning teacher's development (Denscombe, 1982; Lortie, 1975; Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1984).

As Tabachnick and Zeichner (1984) point out, in spite of all the research on student teaching, we know very little about "what takes place during the experience itself and how professional life is interpreted and acted upon as students participate in its ongoing affairs" (p. 29). The authors also contend that much of the research on student teaching relies heavily on self-reported pre- and post-survey data. They suggest that in order to understand the nature of the student teaching experience and the factors which influence it, researchers must supplement teacher self-reported data with actual classroom observation.

In an attempt to fill this gap, the present study combined classroom observation and interviews with a student teacher in order to identify and describe the influences on practice for a student teacher enrolled in a field-based teacher education program.

This study goes beyond merely combining observational and interview data and develops a biography of the student teacher participating in this study in order to facilitate understanding of both the student teacher and the student teaching experience. The biography takes into account a student teacher's past experiences, beliefs and values, as well as the social and cultural context of the student teaching placement. Thus, the biography provides us with a comprehensive look at the student teaching experience while simultaneously identifying the crucial people and events both past and present, which significantly shape the student teacher's personal and professional development.

The results of this study indicate that autonomy, reflection, and formal training are important components of learning to teach. This chapter will describe the role of these three components in greater detail. The internal and external influences (See Figure 4) on
Kate's practice will also be examined in relation to these three components. Finally, the implications of this study on teacher education programs will be discussed and questions for further research will be posed.

The Practice of Student Teaching

Teaching is a complex task which, contrary to popular belief, is not easy (Lanier & Little, 1986; Lortie, 1975; Sanders & McCutcheon, 1986; Zeichner, 1983). According to Sanders and McCutcheon (1986), teaching involves organizing and arranging "multiple factors in ways so that they are effective in cultivating the learning of a particular group of students—not some abstract student population but a real classroom or school-sized group of persons with individual personalities, backgrounds, and other peculiarities" (p. 50).

The context in which teaching occurs is equally complex. Many factors such as the teacher's personality, beliefs, and values; other teachers' actions; the nature of the learners; interpersonal relationships between and among teachers, students, administrators, and parents; psychological factors and social norms; the building's layout; school policies; and an indeterminate amount of other factors influence classroom life. These factors interact in a cause-effect type relationship and play a significant role in shaping the practice of teaching (Clark, 1988; Clark & Lampert, 1986; Sanders & McCutcheon, 1986; Shulman, 1987).

In addition to this, student teachers also have to operate within another context—the university program. There are certain expectations or minimum competencies that student teachers are expected to achieve before they are certified as teachers. Student teachers often find it difficult to manage the complexities of the teaching/learning process. Additionally, they must simultaneously meet the requirements and demands of both the university and the public school.
Figure 4 represents the factors which were influential on Kate's practice of student teaching. It should be noted here that the model depicted in Figure 4 is interactive in nature. The factors labeled as internal influences represent Kate's beliefs, values, attitudes, and past experiences both personal and professional and constitute her biography. The internal influences interact with each other and with those factors labeled as external influences. Similarly, the external influences interact with each other and with the internal influences to impact a student teacher's practice. The nature of the interactions that occurred within Kate's classes and with the individuals that she encountered at the junior high, in combination with her beliefs, values, and past experiences, helped to personalize the student teaching experience for her.

In the first chapter of this study the practice of teaching was conceptualized as a three-level triangle (Lovlie, 1974). The first level of the triangle consisted of a teacher's actions, the second level was defined as planning and reflection, and the third level included the moral and ethical decisions a teacher makes. Kate's practice of student teaching can also be conceptualized in this manner. At various times and collectively throughout her student teaching experience at the junior high, each of the internal and external factors was influential in shaping the three levels of Kate's practice.

The scenarios in Chapter 2 make up the first level of Lovlie's triangle and provide a description of Kate's actions and interactions within the context of the junior high school. Kate's actions typify what teachers do when they transform knowledge not shared by their students into what Shulman (1987) calls "pedagogical representations and actions" so that the students can "come to know" what others know. These actions include asking questions, leading class discussions, making assignments, checking attendance, and administering and evaluating tests. The scenarios in Chapter 2 provided the reader with descriptions of Kate's actions while she was student teaching at the junior high. Once
Figure 4. Influences on the Practice of Student Teaching
again the reader is reminded from these descriptions that Kate's behaviors and actions as a student teacher approximated those of a "real" teacher.

The second level of the triangle, planning and reflection, was evidenced during interviews with Kate. According to Løvlie (1974), this level of conceptualization of one's practice involves normative questions about teaching and learning. The data suggest that consideration of students' needs and abilities were for Kate an integral and important part of the teaching/learning process. As was suggested earlier, Kate's practice was student driven. While the social studies curriculum she was to teach was for the most part predetermined by both the district and her cooperating teacher, Kate still had latitude within that curriculum to determine what information sixth graders "ought" to know and how she was going to convey that information to them. Kate's aim was to help her students develop a global perspective of social studies. She stated that she did not want students to memorize isolated facts about a particular country or culture, but rather emphasized a general understanding of world geography and of different cultures and peoples. In order to accomplish this aim, Kate learned that organization and planning on her part were critical skills for a teacher to have. She was pleased with the various instructional strategies and activities such as the travel brochures and plastic maps of Asia that she considered innovative and which she incorporated into instruction.

The data also indicate that Kate engaged in critical reflection and analysis of what was taught and what was learned by both herself and the students. For example, reflecting on the assignment which required the students to research a particular country and develop a travel brochure depicting important and interesting information about the country, Kate determined that the assignment was valuable and one which she would probably use again. However, she noted there were aspects of the assignment that she would change. She acknowledged that she had made assumptions about the students' ability to use reference
materials. She learned that before making a similar assignment in the future, she would either review or teach students how to use the library and reference materials.

At the third level of Lovlie's (1974) triangle, the teacher makes decisions about whether what and how she teaches is "right" or justifiable. Kate demonstrated that she was aware of the ethical considerations that teachers make. Kate seemed to approach the teaching/learning process from a "humanistic" perspective. That is, she made a conscious effort to learn about her students as individuals and to convey the more "human" side of herself to the students. She openly admitted in class discussions when she did not know the answer to students' questions and she shared freely aspects of her personal life with her students (e.g., anecdotes from her travels, what cartoons she liked, where she worked on weekends, etc.). Additionally, Kate was uninhibited about displaying uncharacteristic behaviors of teachers such as skipping down the catwalk with her students.

The Role of Autonomy in Learning to Teach

The notion of being a competent and effective student teacher was a pressing and psychological force for Kate. Student teaching provided Kate with an opportunity to prove to herself and to others that she could teach and teach successfully. Autonomy was an integral part of Kate's sense of competence and effectiveness. Kate told the researcher in an interview that she preferred "being down there [referring to the classroom] alone." Kate viewed autonomy as an indication of her success. If Gary thought that Kate was not competent and effective in the classroom, he would never have left her alone with complete responsibility for the teaching/learning process. The autonomy that Gary gave Kate enabled her to plan and implement lessons and units within the prescribed social studies curriculum determined by the school district without interference. Kate seemingly perceived herself as the "teacher" with full responsibility for running and managing the
classroom. Gary's acknowledgement that Kate was going to make one "hellava of a teacher", as well as his frequent absences from the classroom, reinforced Kate's perception of herself as an effective, "real" teacher and gave her the confidence to act accordingly.

In addition to Gary's vote of confidence in her ability to teach, Kate was also operating with the knowledge that she had successfully completed two previous student teaching experiences at the the elementary school. Additionally, the director of student teaching had approved her participation in the study. All of these factors are likely to have reinforced Kate's sense of competency and effectiveness in the classroom.

Gary's conceptualization of the teaching/learning process was different from Kate's, as was his teaching style. However, Gary did not expect Kate to mirror what he did in the classroom. He allowed her the freedom to test a variety of teaching strategies and to develop her own teaching style. Gary still accepted Kate even though her conceptualization of the teaching/learning process was different from his. Zeichner and Tabachnick (1981) note that the autonomy provided by this type of mentoring is very effective in the socialization of beginning teachers. In fact, the data from this study suggest that autonomy was a key factor in Kate's success as a student teacher. The freedom and autonomy that Gary afforded Kate allowed her to assume control of both her own learning and that of her students. Gary acted as a screen for Kate when anyone (i.e., the district coordinator of gifted education or the university supervisor) other than the principal imposed or interfered with Kate's independence in the classroom.

Kate's relationship with Gary was also an indicator of her competence and effectiveness. Kate was quite comfortable asking questions of Gary, bouncing ideas off him, and seeking feedback. You will recall that Gary rarely intervened during Kate's instruction or in her management of the classroom after the first few weeks. In the few instances during the first few weeks of her student teaching experience at the junior high
when Gary specifically told Kate how to do something or how to handle a problem, Kate followed his directions but expressed her anger during interviews with the researcher. She made it clear that she would handle problems or situations very differently from Gary if it were her own classroom. Kate viewed unsolicited suggestions or advice negatively or as criticism, regardless of how positively it was stated or how constructive the advice was. It is likely that Kate perceived unsolicited "help" as a threat to her sense of autonomy, that is her competence and effectiveness. Thus, Kate reacted defensively and negatively to suggestions and/or advice regardless of who offered it.

Kate's teaching practices did not appear to be altered by the feedback she received from her university supervisor. You will recall that Joan characterized Kate's instructional strategies as no longer "creative". Kate resented Joan's criticism and attacked her qualifications as a university supervisor. Kate did not think that Joan had visited her classroom and observed enough to understand the intricacies of Kate's practice at the junior high. Research supports the fact that a teacher's behavior is not significantly changed by feedback from supervisors, especially when feedback from the supervisor is the only information that the teacher receives about his/her practice (Good & Brophy, 1987).

The autonomy that Kate enjoyed at the junior high was a result of both external and internal factors. Gary was an obvious external factor who enabled Kate to operate autonomously in the classroom. But there were subtle internal factors which also contributed to the autonomy that she enjoyed in the classroom. Kate was an assertive, independent young woman outside of the classroom too. She held a part-time job in addition to student teaching and her university coursework, despite a university program policy discouraging student teachers from working during the semester in which they completed student teaching. Although Kate's parents were financially able and willing to pay for Kate's education and expenses, the salary from her part-time job provided her with
another form of autonomy. She was not completely dependent upon her parents and thus did not have to account her financial and personal affairs to anyone.

The Role of Reflection in Learning to Teach

There are several probable explanations for Kate’s reflective nature which include both internal and external factors. The internal factors which influenced Kate to engage in critical reflection were probably linked to her beliefs and values and past experiences. Although no formal assessment of Kate’s beliefs was conducted in this study, Kate made frequent references to her beliefs about the teaching/learning process and life in general during interviews with the researcher. For example, Kate wanted to be more than a teacher to her students; she also wanted to be their friend. She believed that teachers should be warm, personable individuals who cared about their students’ academic and personal lives. She believed that because of societal and familial changes, many of her students had to make choices and decisions that they were unprepared and too young to make. Kate spent a great deal of time outside of the classroom thinking and fretting over her students. The sixth graders seemed to recognize Kate’s interest and concern and the data suggest that they perceived her as a friend. Students frequently sought her advice or opinion on a variety of topics and invited her to attend a variety of extracurricular activities such as ballgames and skating parties.

Given Kate’s personality and her experiences, it is likely that she would have reflected on the practice of student teaching without the influence of any other factors. However, there were external factors which contributed to Kate’s reflective nature. These included significant others and her university coursework.

Kate’s participation in this study included regular interviews with the researcher who was an external influence on her practice. The interviews were confidential, informal, and
unstructured and usually took place in a nearby restaurant over dinner. The researcher left it up to Kate to initiate and discuss any topic that she chose. The researcher sometimes asked questions or shared personal experiences with Kate during the course of an interview. The researcher did, however, consciously try to refrain from evaluating Kate’s lesson plans, instruction, or performance in the classroom even when Kate specifically requested that she do so. When this occurred, the researcher usually responded with a restatement of Kate’s question which she would then talk through until she answered her own question or arrived at some resolution to a problem or concern. In this sense, Kate was collegial. She used the interviews with the researcher as a sounding board and eventually arrived at some plan of action or made a value judgment.

Lack of time is often cited as a primary reason why teachers and student teachers don’t systematically reflect on the teaching/learning process (Wildman & Niles, 1987). The regular interviews with the researcher provided Kate with time to reflect on the practice of student teaching and her experiences at the junior high school. Thus, it is likely that Kate spent more time reflecting and analyzing her practice of student teaching than would normally be expected because of her participation in this study. Secondly, the relationship between Kate and the researcher was such that Kate could talk about her successes, failures, and/or frustrations without fear of criticism or retribution since the researcher had no direct contact with her program of studies. Again, because Kate’s participation in this study enabled her to explore her feelings and a variety of topics, she was not particularly collaborative with her peers even though she lived with two student teachers, and worked and went to class with others.

It is unclear how much Gary facilitated or contributed to Kate’s reflective nature. Prior to date collection, Gary explained to the researcher that he did not want to intimidate Kate or the sixth graders by the presence of several adults in the classroom. On the days that the
researcher observed in Kate's classroom, Gary purposely made himself scarce. Consequently, the researcher did not observe Kate and Gary discussing or analyzing a particular lesson or activity. Kate did, however, refer to activities or exercises such as writing reaction papers for Gary or taping a conference between she and Gary after he had observed her teach during the course of the interviews with the researcher.

The teacher education program in which Kate was enrolled was heuristic in nature and encouraged critical reflection at all levels. Faculty members frequently modeled the reflective process at every opportunity and made assignments which encouraged the students to engage in critical reflection. For example, the structure of at least one of her university courses in which she was enrolled during her student teaching experience at the junior high required that Kate critically reflect on her practical experiences in the classroom, as well as her beliefs and values. On one particular occasion, the instructor of the reading diagnosis course asked the student teachers to think about their personal biases. Kate related that at first she thought that the assignment would be easy since she did have any biases. But after she thought about it, Kate was startled and appalled to discover that she did indeed have biases that were "not right" and "unfair".

You will recall from Chapter 2 that Martyn Denscombe (1982) contended that student teachers often encounter a conflict between what he termed the continuity of classroom experience (learned from years of "studenting") and the discontinuity between their formal preparation as teachers and the realities of practice. He argued that a number of factors such as an individual's past experiences as a student in the public schools; a desire to be effective and become an accepted member of the school's subculture; school practices and policies; and a student's own conceptions of teaching and learning lead student teacher's to adopt utilitarian and traditional approaches to teaching and learning.
Similarly, Lortie (1975) contended that "reflexive conservatism" keeps teachers from examining and testing their practical beliefs and theories. Consequently, teaching practices remain largely unchanged by experience or by formal university training.

The findings from this study indicate that a student teacher's past studenting experiences; a desire to be effective and become an accepted member of the school's subculture; school practices and policies; and a student's own conceptions of the teaching/learning process do indeed play a significant role in learning to teach. However, these factors do not necessarily lead to more utilitarian approaches to teaching and learning as Denscombe (1982) and Lortie (1975) suggest. On the contrary, this study demonstrated that reflection enables a student teacher to critically and systematically examine her past experiences, beliefs and values, as well as explore a variety of management and instructional strategies which facilitate the student teacher's professional growth and development.

The Role of Formal Training in Learning to Teach

The results of this study, contrary to popular belief, indicate that formal university training plays a more influential role in learning to teach than student teachers realize. Research indicates that teachers report that actual teaching experience is more influential in learning to teach than formal university training and that teacher education programs are "washed out" by actual practice (Lortie, 1975; Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1984). As Tabachnick and Zeichner (1984) noted, the data supporting such statements are self-reported by teachers. They suggest that classroom observations are needed to substantiate such notions. Similarly, Kate also stated that she had learned more about teaching from practical experience than she had from her university coursework. However, the data from classroom observations suggest that her formal university training was not "washed out"
by practical experience and that she did indeed draw heavily from her formal university training at all three levels of practice.

Kate expressed a desire to deviate from Gary's more traditional methods of instruction which included reading the text, defining vocabulary words, class discussion, and testing. She also indicated that she didn't want the students to memorize isolated facts, but rather wanted them to develop an integrated, global perspective of the social studies. Kate acted upon her beliefs and intentions during lesson planning and instruction. The activities and materials that she utilized during instruction encouraged student creativity and required that the students integrate information and skills gleaned from personal experience and other content areas into their assignments.

Lortie (1975) contends that "latent culture" or the thousands of hours that teachers spend as students in other teachers' classrooms play an instrumental role in shaping a teacher's conception of her role in the teaching/learning process. Kate's description of her own experiences in junior high school were very traditional. While she advocated a return to a grade level and school configuration of K-6, 7-8, and 9-12 as it was when she was a student in public schools, Kate made no mention of or reference to specific teachers or instructional methods which she encountered as a student in public schools. She did, however, discuss the impact that Karen, her cooperating teacher from an earlier student teaching placement, had on her planning and instruction.

The data from this study suggest that much of what Kate espoused and incorporated into her classroom was the result of her formal university training which included both coursework and actual classroom experience rather than the result of her previous "studenting" experiences. There was evidence that Kate drew heavily from the five methods courses which she took during the fall and spring semesters while simultaneously completing her student teaching. What is unclear is from which university classes or
methods courses Kate drew ideas and activities which she incorporated into instruction. It is also unclear whether her ideas were drawn from generic principles of the teaching/learning process or taken directly from activities and instructional strategies introduced in specific methods courses.

**Implications for Teacher Education Programs**

A review of the literature reveals that there is a controversy concerning the value of the student teaching experience (c.f., Denscombe, 1982; Lortie, 1975; Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1984)) and the impact of formal university coursework (c.f., Hollingsworth, 1989; Lortie, 1975; Zeichner, 1980; Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1981) in learning to teach. The results of this study suggest that both formal university coursework and practical experience are invaluable in the process of learning to teach. However, their value is not automatic. There are two components identified from this study that must be incorporated into both university coursework and practical experience if these experiences are to be meaningful and contribute to a student teacher's professional development and maturity. These components include autonomy and reflection.

*If* student teachers are to benefit from both formal university coursework and practical experience, then teacher educators must strive to provide them with environments which foster autonomy and encourage them to reflect critically on both coursework and practical experience. Autonomous environments in which student teachers are not only able to take control of the classroom but also of their own learning, enable student teachers to experiment with a variety of instructional and management strategies and to develop their own style of teaching.

It is not easy for those involved in teacher education programs (e.g., the cooperating teacher, the university supervisor, the university instructor) to relinquish control and
provide student teachers with autonomy. Our tendency is to protect student teachers from making the same mistakes that we have made and to insist that they model what years of experience have taught us to do. Additionally, since autonomy involves risk-taking, dilemmas, and conflict resolution, there is a fine line between when enough is enough and too much is too much. In another words, teacher educators need to recognize that some degree of autonomy is necessary if student teachers are to take control of their own learning and professional development. On the other hand, teacher educators need to realize that too much autonomy could result in frustration and stifle a student teacher's professional development.

Reflection goes hand in hand with autonomy. Reflection becomes the means through which student teachers can make connections between formal university coursework and practical experience. Autonomy, without reflection, does not enable student teachers to learn about or understand practical experience. The challenge for teacher educators is to develop courses and assignments which encourage student teachers to examine their beliefs, values, and past experiences; provide them with the necessary freedom to take risks and resolve conflicts and problems encountered in practice; and provide them with the necessary time and opportunity to reflect critically on the teaching/learning process.

Research suggests that beginning teachers exhibit different levels of maturity in the classroom. Less mature student teachers tend to hold more traditional, restricted views of the teaching/learning process, while more mature student teachers tend to focus on understanding individual students (Good & Brophy, 1987; Hollingsworth, 1989).

This study clearly indicates that Kate's practice of student teaching was centered around her students. While it is unclear when or how Kate arrived at her present level of professional maturity, it is likely that the year-long student teaching experience which was a unique and integral part of this teacher education program had a significant impact on her
professional development and maturity. You will recall that Kate had already completed two previous student teaching placements and had thus spent twenty weeks in public school classrooms at the time this study began.

Kate's knowledge of her students in general and of their needs and abilities in particular determined to a great extent what and how Kate taught. While she was cognizant of the social studies curriculum and of her own deficiencies in the social studies content area, these were not the driving forces behind her practice. For example Kate covered the same content in different ways for different classes. Kate found it necessary to provide her "slower" students with more practical examples related to their immediate experiences. On the other hand, her "gifted" classes related easier to more abstract concepts and were able to complete work or assignments independently. When Kate encountered problems in the classroom such as cheating and forgeries, she did not regard them as discipline or management problems as one might expect a novice or student teacher to do. Instead, Kate once again focused on the individual student rather than the problem.

The findings from this study indicate that autonomy, reflection, and formal training all contribute to a student teacher's professional growth and development. It seems logical then that teacher education programs need to take steps to assure that the necessary conditions are present both in a student teacher's formal coursework and during practical experiences in classrooms which facilitate autonomy and reflection. But in order to do this, several questions must be answered in order to increase teacher educators' understanding of the relationship between and among autonomy, reflection, and formal university training.
Questions for Further Study

While the findings from this study suggest that autonomy, reflection, and formal training are important components in learning to teach, there is much that we do not know about each of these components. If autonomy is critical to a student teacher's professional development, it would seem logical that additional research which defines the nature of autonomy is needed. How is autonomy granted to student teachers by cooperating teachers? How is autonomy maintained by student teachers as they interact with teacher educators, supervisors, and cooperating teachers? What conditions must be present for autonomy to be granted to and maintained by the student teacher? Can too little or too much autonomy lead to frustration and failure?

The role of reflection also needs to be explored in more depth. We know little about the nature of student teacher's reflections and the conditions that effect reflection. It seems likely that reflection occurs to different degrees under a variety circumstances. What are those degrees and what conditions are necessary to facilitate quality reflection? Does the nature of reflection that is initiated and conducted independently differ from reflection that is stimulated by someone other than the student teacher and shared with a significant other?

The role of university coursework in learning to teach needs to also be examined. What courses are student teachers required to take? What is the content of those courses? What specific information, skills, or activities from university courses do student teachers incorporate into practice? Does it make a difference when student teachers complete methods courses (i.e., before student teaching or concurrently with student teaching)? If so, what is the nature of the difference between the two? When methods courses and student teaching are completed simultaneously, are student teachers required or encouraged to link course assignments and practice? If so, what is the nature of these assignments?
Lastly, the relationship between the practice of student teaching and formal university training needs to be examined in greater depth. What are the specific links between what student teachers do during planning and instruction and their university coursework? How is reflection incorporated into the teacher education program as a whole, and into particular university courses? Does a student teacher's formal university training have a direct relationship to autonomy in the classroom? If so, what is the relationship between formal training and autonomy?

Summary

This study identified and described the internal and external factors which influence the practice of student teaching for a student teacher learning to teach. This study adds to our understanding of the practice of student teaching and the complex interactions that occur among the people involved (e.g., the student teacher, the cooperating teacher, the university supervisor, university instructors, etc.); the settings (e.g., the public school, the public school classroom, the university classroom, etc.); and the formal university program. The findings from this study suggest that autonomy, reflection, and formal university coursework play a key role in learning to teach.

There is still much that we do not know about the process of learning to teach. Further research which examines specific teacher education programs and specific components of those programs, in relation to the student teaching experience is necessary if we are to increase our understanding of the practice of student teaching and improve teacher education.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

Researcher's Biography
As Merriam (1988) notes, one cannot observe or measure a phenomenon or event without changing it in some way. Thus, it is important to understand the perspectives of all those involved in the research. What follows is a description of my background and experiences from my perspective as a researcher.

I grew up around teachers. My mother was both a teacher and an administrator, as was my grandmother. My family and I spent much of our leisure time with other teachers and their families. Even our neighbors were teachers. I knew firsthand what teachers did both in and out of the classroom. That's why I was never going to be a teacher!

However, I discovered during my freshman year of college that I did want to be a teacher after all. My formal university training included two field experiences, in addition to student teaching. I loved every minute of those early field placements. I still remember the names of my students, cooperating teachers, university professors, and university supervisors. I remember playing kickball with my students every day during recess because I was afraid that if I didn't play, they wouldn't like me.

I completed my student teaching experience in a split 5/6 classroom. My cooperating teacher was a teaching principal who was more concerned with his administrative duties than he was with his teaching responsibilities. My palms still get damp and cold when I recall the absolute panic that I experienced when he told me the day before the students returned to school in the fall that I was completely responsible for all aspects of the classroom beginning the following day. I remember the tearful telephone conversation with my mother when I told her that I didn't know how to start the school year and her calm, but firm reassurance that I did know. Unlike Kate, I focused on what I had to teach and how I was going to teach it during my student teaching experience.

I was hired in January, having graduated early, to complete the year as a second grade teacher in a small, rural elementary school. This time I was not nearly as overwhelmed
when I discovered that my students were behind in every subject. I focused my attention on my students and what they had or had not learned. After two more years as a second and fourth grade teacher, respectively, I transferred to the largest middle school in the county.

I spent three years teaching language arts to fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth graders at the middle school. I experienced many of the things at the middle school that Kate experienced at the junior high. Although I loved teaching adolescents, I was always cognizant of bells and schedules, and of all the material that I needed to cover. The paperwork seemed voluminous. There were always countless forms to complete in triplicate. Perhaps the most frustrating experience of all occurred with I chose not to use the seventh grade literature book and to use a supplemental, high interest, skill-oriented reading series in one of my seventh grade literature classes.

There were twenty-eight males and two females in this class. The overwhelming majority in this class hated school, had failed at least one grade, and stayed in constant trouble. The students enjoyed reading and were for the first time in a long while, successful in class. However, several of my colleagues and a supervisor did not approve of my decision to use the supplemental reading series and were uninhibited about expressing their opinions.

It was sometime during that year that I decided to return to school and get out of education once and for all. But, again it was not to be. A graduate assistantship in the college of education introduced me first to a university supervisor’s perspective and later to a university instructor’s perspective of learning to teach.

I have been supervising student teachers for the last five years. My experiences as a student, student teacher, a teacher, a university supervisor, and a university instructor have broadened my perspective of learning to teach and have increased my understanding of
each of these roles. As a result of my experiences, I found it easy to establish a friendly, trusting relationship with Kate from the beginning of this study and was able to empathize with her as she shared her experiences as a student teacher at the junior high.

Despite my experience and the fact that I have supervised numerous student teachers during the last five years, this study has made me realize that my understanding of the process of learning to teach was fragmented and limited at best. Kate willingly and unselfishly enabled me to examine the process of learning to teach through her practice of student teaching and thus facilitated my understanding of the factors that influence it. For that, I am deeply indebted.

There were several factors in addition to my professional experiences which prompted me to conduct a qualitative study. A review of the relevant educational literature revealed a lack of observational studies to support teacher self-reported data on the process of learning to teach. Secondly, my graduate coursework introduced me to and familiarized me with qualitative research methods, as well as exemplary qualitative studies. Additionally, several of my professors were engaged in qualitative research projects of their own which they willingly discussed and shared with those of us who were novices. There were also several opportunities to conduct "mini" qualitative studies in several of my educational courses. Finally, the knowledge that I gained from attending the Qualitative Research in Education Conference at the University of Georgia proved invaluable to me in conducting this study.

As Merriam (1988) notes qualitative research is particularly valuable because it makes "the familiar strange and interesting again"—those people, places, or things in "everyday life which [are] so familiar [to us] that [they] may be invisible" (p. 165). My purpose has been to accurately and thoroughly describe the familiar, that is, the process of learning to
teach from the perspective of a student teacher in order to increase our understanding of this process.
APPENDIX B

Sample Interview Questions
1. Tell me about yourself (i.e., how old you are, where you were born, where you live, do you have any brothers or sisters, etc.?)

2. What do your parents do for a living?

3. Tell me about your parents' education?

4. What subjects/courses did you like best in school?

5. What subjects/courses did you like least in school?

4. What were your most important accomplishments in school? In college?

5. What extracurricular activities did you participate in while in school? In college?

6. Why did you decide to come this university?

7. Do your grades adequately reflect your abilities?

8. Do you have plans for graduate school?

9. How have you spent your summers while in college?

10. What are your pet peeves?

11. How would you describe your personality?

12. What do you do in your spare time?

13. What do you like to do for vacation?

14. What travel experiences have you had?

15. What do you do for exercise?

16. What has been the biggest disappointment in your life thus far?

17. What has been your greatest success thus far in your life?

18. Who has exercised the greatest influence on you? How?

19. At what point did you decide to enter the teaching profession?

20. What other occupations did you seriously consider as possibilities?

21. What are the major attractions that teaching has for you?

22. What person(s) most influenced your decision to become a teacher?
23. What personal characteristics do you think are necessary for successful teachers to have?

24. In what ways is teaching different from what you expected when you made the decision to go into the field?
APPENDIX C

Sample Interview Transcript
ST: I have a project to do for my diagnosis class. There's this girl, K., and she's been tested and she's below grade level. She's like fourth grade ability-wise, but verbally she's like sixth grade. That's what I'm going do my assessment on. I'm going to work with her and see what is happening. Try to get her to get the written part up to her level.

R: She's reading on a fourth grade level?

ST: I don't know...I wouldn't say she's reading on a fourth grade level, but she's just...Anything, when she tries to write, it comes out on that level. Do you know what I'm saying? She just doesn't. Verbally she at the sixth grade level, it's just...I guess it is reading.

R: So you have no idea about comprehension or anything like that...what she's doing there?

ST: It's like if you, if you give her a test on material. If you give her written test and an oral test, she'll pass the oral but not the written.

R: Okay, when you said she's been tested, what's she been tested for?

ST: Umm.

R: A learning disability or...

ST: Just the standardized tests to see where she is. She's been put in LD math.

R: It will be interesting to see what you find out.

ST: One thing that I was thinking about doing is having her tape and then having her transcribe the tape to see what she's saying and have her write it so she can express herself in that way and so she can see if. I don't know. I don't know how well that'll work or if she'll be willing to...She's the one whose father's a drug abuser. So I don't know how willing she is to put in extra time at the school.

R: She might be. It might be an excuse for her. She likes you anyway, so she might be willing to do that. Again it will be interesting to see. Does she have any trouble reading the textbook?

ST: The textbook doesn't provide enough. It's the one thing that I've noticed. It's just, it's not...it'll say something but it doesn't back it up. So it doesn't seem important.

R: But the actual vocabulary that they use is tough.

ST: Some of it is, but they explain it all. Like anything that's hard to understand is explained in other words to them or we go over it. And I think one...if she just read it, I don't think she'd understand it. But we go over and go over it repeatedly.
R: Okay. Is there a set of prescribed things you're supposed to do with the diagnosis project?

ST: Umm. There's a bunch of different things that we're supposed to do. We're supposed to come up with questions. Things that we wanna know and come up with a plan to try to change the behavior.

R: Uh-huh. Have you done any of that yet?

ST: No. She's been out too with it, so...

R: It will be interesting to see what you find out.

ST: I just want to come up with some other ways that she could get grades. Not everything. I mean obviously she couldn't have everything given to her orally. But maybe if she could get...just some other alternatives for projects and stuff where she doesn't have to write. And they're not just for her either.

R: Right. What are the assignments like in that class...like answer the questions at the end of the chapter or research papers....

ST: Not so much research papers but umm, well, they just did one report where they had to write everything out. And you can tell in her writing that she, she can't put the sentences together. But when you're talking to her, everything's just....You would never realize that there's a problem talking to her.

R: Have you talked to G? Does he have any suggestions?

ST: Well, he said to me, he said K., you know, it's not realistic. He said when you're doin this for you...he said you can't, especially with such a large group, you can't pick out individual things for everybody. And I disagree with that but...You know, I figure it's pretty much gonna be on my own...seeing what I can do to help her.

R: Well, one way you might think about that would be instead of trying to do individual things for everybody, as you alluded to earlier, do different activities for the whole class so that at some point she has a chance to excel, while she's also developing areas of weakness by participating in the other kinds of activities. You might do like divide them in groups where they write something or they create it and then write it so that she could be in on the creation of it, but have somebody else actually write down what she said. Or the taping. That's certainly worth a try.

ST: I'm just interested to see how that develops. How...if she can hear herself talking, if she could write it the way she heard it. You know, maybe the problem is there. That she's not, what she' hearing, she's not...or reading, she can't write it down the way she read it.

R: That's a distinct possibility.
ST: I don't know. It just upset me when I saw that report on her because I felt like...she's repeating sixth grade also. I felt like that she was just getting labelled as being kind of hopeless. I don't think she is.

R: Is she receiving any kind of uh...well, you said LD in math.

ST: She just started that.

R: You might talk with the LD teacher. She may have some ideas and some insights if she works with her one on one.

ST: I just think if she could get turned on to something, she might really excel.

R: Going back to the LD teacher. If you find out what her problems are in math, she may have similar problems in reading and language arts. If it's, if she's transposing things from here (points to head) to paper, then she may make those same kind of transformations when reading social studies or language arts or anything else. So that may give you some insights. Or it may basically be that she needs...because there's so many outside problems that she's having to deal with, that just individual attention alone will make a difference.

ST: She gets a lot of attention from her father, but it's the wrong kind. And she's, I mean she's such a good kid.

R: Do the other children seem to notice it?

ST: Well, no. She...They're at that age where everything...They're so petty about everything and...her boyfriend. Or her ex-boyfriend. She's broken up with him like ten times. He's a doll, but he's dating her best friend. So that's kind of a problem and people are getting split on it right now. But she's not like real upset about it. She's just like-who cares about them. She's real, she's mature as far as surviving and...socially. She's real accepted.

R: Okay. So she's not ostracized then.

ST: But then again she's in a class with people who are repeating too. A lot of them are.

R: What are her grades like?

ST: Well, I think she told me she got a "B" last time in G.'s class. But, umm, he's...he doesn't expect much of them.

R: What's much...or not much?

ST: He just, from what I've seen, it's just like homework. He doesn't expect them to do it and they don't do it and nothing happens. But at the same time there's not much he can do when they don't all do their homework or they're not all ready for a test. 'Cause anything you do to punish them just makes them resent the fact that they're there. There's this one little boy...this other child that we've been talking about doing the project on who's just into everything. He's got a drug problem. He got
busted for smoking in the bathroom last week. And stealing—he got caught for that last week. He has silent lunch table until the twenty-seventh of March and he has detention like every day after school. He just got three more days and he skipped the first day. And he is... he just doesn't care and he's a leader! I mean... everybody... He's cute as a button... I mean you look at him and say, "Naw!" He's the biggest con artist. And it's just... it makes me sick because he just keeps gettin' another week. He doesn't care. I mean he's a cool kid. Everybody thinks so. He sits up there like yeah, I'm here again, but he still talks.

R: What would you do? Do you have him?

ST: Yeah. Well, I might later. I don't as of right now. I would umm, work out something. Some kind of positive reward system for him and ignore the bad behavior as much as possible. I mean like he's the type of kid that if he's even around trouble, usually he's a part of it. But if he's around it, he'll be blamed for it no matter what. And he's thriving on it right now so...

R: Wonder if his grades are suffering?

ST: Oh, yeah. He's repeating next year. Let's put it this way. He got a low "D" on his last science test and the teacher said that's the first one he's passed all year. They're not good.

R: They already have decided that he will have to repeat sixth grade next year? By February 18?

ST: I don't think he's passed a class. And so many of the teachers there just don't care. They just hate being... they're just there to get money and....

R: Going back to the little girl you mentioned earlier, is her dad—you said he was a drug addict... She's in a support group for children of drug addicts, right? But is he receiving any kind of help?

ST: None whatsoever.

R: So in other words, he hasn't recognized that there's a problem yet. Does she live with her dad?

ST: No, she doesn't live with him. In fact I found out she lives with her mother.

R: Does she see him at all?

ST: Quite a bit. She told me about, she likes going there because he lets her stay out as late as she wants. And he has a lot of money, so he buys her things. But umm, I mean it's just not a good situation.

R: No, it doesn't sound that way...

ST: Do you know what she said to me the other day? Oh, my god! She said to me, she said there's only one thing I want to do before I die. I'm like, oh, wow, what might
that be? She says, you know, girl-boy types of things. I said what are you talking about? She said the process of making a baby. I mean my mouth hit the floor. I thought, okay, aren't you a little young to be thinking about that? She said "yeah." I said that's something that requires a lot of responsibility for both parties. I said I don't think now's the time to even be thinking about it! She said I don't want to do now, I just wanna do it before I die. I thought...She told me, she said so many eighth graders do it. I said I think it's one of the biggest mistakes you could ever make. But they are wrapped up in it.

R: Has the family life education program been implemented yet? [ST shook her head no.]

ST: You know there are all these parents against teaching, having the schools teach sex education, but...It's important and if they're not, I mean, if they're not going to do it (teach sex education), somebody's got to.

R: It's scary.

ST: It really scares me with this little girl because I can see her going in either direction.

R: Adolescence is a critical point in a child's life. So it will be interesting to see if you, if your intervention, whatever you decide, has any effect.

ST: I'm hoping that I can get her interested in track or I'm not, I might not be coaching track, I might coach a traveling girl's soccer team here in R. And I'd like to see her maybe do something like that, something that she...When I was in track you had, it was just like a whole different crowd that you could go to and be a part of and always feel like you are welcome there. It's not the constant pressure of, you know, being accepted because you have something in common.

R: How many days a week do you go to class?

ST: How many days a week do I have it or do I go [laughingly]?

R: How many days a week do you have it?

ST: Three.

R: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday? [Both ST and R talking at the same time]. Excuse me.

ST: For three hours we're sitting there.

R: Well, if you didn't go to school this week on Wednesday and Thursday (ST was sick), I imagine you didn't go to class. Is that correct?

ST: I did go to class on Wednesday.

R: Oh, did you?
ST: My roommate woke me up at 11:30 [P.M.] and I felt guilty, so I went. But yesterday I just didn't have the energy.

R: Are your, uhh, roommates both student teachers? [ST nods affirmatively].

ST: One of my roommates has had strep throat and the other has had a sinus infection.

R: So you're passing it around, whatever it is.

ST: Um-huh. The three of us were all sick this week.

R: Maybe a good snow will come and kill all these germs that are going around so everybody will feel better.

ST: A lot of the kids have been out too.

R: Oh, I know!

ST: Do you remember me talking about that child who lost her contact lens last week. She told me she wore contacts. And she was sitting in class with her sunglasses on.

R: You didn't tell me this one.

ST: Oh, I didn't?

R: Huh-uh.

ST: It was when we had a sub. This girl was reading her book with her sunglasses on. I said, give me those. She said...she was like lookin' around on the floor five minutes later. I said, what are you doing? I'm looking for my contact. She didn't have contacts. She was lying to me and I knew it. I said, S., please don't lie to me. Well, she came in Monday and she's like I'm getting glasses this week. I said what happened to contacts? She said I don't like 'em. I said cool, okay. Anyway, she just thinks that she can come and go as she pleases. I had lunch duty and she just, boomp, went and used the telephone and came back and sat down. She's in trouble already at solitary. I thought what are you doin'? Callin' my dad. Did you have permission? No, all my other friends do it. They are going to drive me nuts by the time this is over [Laughs].

R: Say you want one by your side at all times? [Both ST and R laugh].

ST: She's in the low class too.

R: And she really doesn't wear contacts?

ST: Huh-uh. That just made me mad that she lied to me.

R: Well, it will be interesting to see if she gets her glasses now.
ST: I mean I wasn't real harsh on her about it...about lying to me about it. I was just like...Cause, I mean I can understand if you're having a bad day and you just can't keep your mind on your work, okay....I mean, I was down on the floor looking for the contact lens. You know, I looked like a big fool and felt so stupid. She's like [ST laughs].

R: This day and age I don't think they pop out that easily, do they? Unless you have hard contacts. But usually young kids don't. They usually have soft ones.

ST: She told me she had hard ones. And then I said well, I don't see anything in your eye. And she said, well, I didn't put it in this morning. That's when I said, Oop, I'm looking for a contact lens that you did not put in? She just didn't want to work. She's like that everyday it seems. So it's hard to motivate her too.

R: How do you propose to do that?

ST: Have her do something important in her group. To do group work and have her talk, just you know, just bring her out more.

R: Do you do a lot of group work in sixth grade? (ST shakes her head no.) Does G.?

ST: Not that I've seen. He just lectures and gives lessons and worksheets. And he told me that. He said I'm not creative any more. There's so much to cover and it just doesn't work.

R: How do the kids respond to working in groups?

ST: They haven't really done that much of anything yet. I've asked them and they say they like, they say they enjoyed...I said what types of things do you like to do? And they say they enjoy doing group work. I mean it gets old doing worksheets. It gets really boring.

R: What constitutes group work? What do they do when they work in groups?

ST: Uhh...Starting next week, I'm having, I have slides or pictures of Africa that my dad has. And so I'm dividing them into groups and I'm having them as a group come up with characteristics of the land. And then we're gonna come up as entire class with as many characteristics as we can come up with. We'll brainstorm for a few minutes. Just any time when they're working with a partner or as a whole.

R: Why do you use group work?

ST: It's just something I like to do. I'd rather do that than sit and listen to a lecture. And I think when you're down in groups, you can get a lot of different ideas. People are more willing to talk in groups. If they're shy they won't talk in front of, of the group. If I call on them in front of the class and if they're sitting there in the group bouncin' ideas off each other, they're more willing to talk. And there's always someone willing to get up in front of the class in each group.

R: How do you know that what they do in the groups is on task? Or is that a concern?
ST: It really never has been for me. I figure, I mean if it happens repeatedly you can sort of tell when they're on task. I walk around and listen to what they're saying and just judge it by what I have to tell about what's been goin' on in their group. I can tell whether or not they've been on task. I don't know I think it's important for them to work together. It's not always a solo effort in life. You need to be able to work with other people, not always have your opinion accepted.

R: True.

ST: I like to different things. Stuff that they find different. Just when I'm teaching I like to do a bunch of different things too. You know I like to act out some stuff. I'm not big into the drama part because I feel like a fool. But, you know, I think they enjoy getting up and trying and getting to act goofy. One thing that I've noticed so much about the junior high is, especially about being flexible. Because you get them wired. The other day when it snowed, they knew they were getting out early and it was just... You know, it's like you're not getting out before the end of this period so just sit down and just... This girl's playing with the shade. It's like you stop!

R: Was this the day you were teaching? Was this Monday?

ST: Uh-huh. Monday and I was just like, if you don't put that shade down right now... I'm just surprised at how well they listen to me and it seems like they respect me. I haven't had trouble earning their respect as of yet. They listen to me without me having to be really mean.

R: Why do you think that is?

ST: I don't know because it doesn't seem like there's a big difference between fifth and sixth grade. I think part of it has to do with the way G. runs his class. Because he's fun as long as they cooperate. You know, they find it fun as long as they behave. And so when I say something they know that all I have to do is say something to G. and things are going to get a little tight around there.

R: How did he achieve that?

ST: He does things like ride a skateboards down the hall or you know, stuff like that to make all the teachers mad. He's really funny about that.
APPENDIX D

Note from Student to Student Teacher
Roses are red
Violets are blue
I have never had a teacher quite as COOL as YOU?

I'll miss you.

I'm cool, I get
VITA
Kathryn Allen Liptak

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EDUCATION:

October, 1990  Ed.D. *Curriculum and Instruction*, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia.

May, 1987  M.A. *Secondary Education (Middle Childhood Education)*, West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia.

December, 1979  B.S. *Elementary Education (1-6) with Language Arts Specialization (4-8)*, West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

August, 1989- Present  Instructor/Assistant Professor, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky.

*Responsibilities:* Taught undergraduate and graduate courses in education. Placed and supervised early elementary/elementary student teachers. Advised undergraduate early elementary/elementary education majors. Member of the Elementary Program Area Faculty and Dean's Advisory Committee.

August, 1987- May, 1989  Graduate Teaching Assistant, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia.


August, 1985- May, 1987  Graduate Teaching Assistant, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia.

*Responsibilities:* Supervised elementary practicum students. Supervised student teachers in elementary and junior high settings. Taught foundations and methods courses for elementary education majors.
August 1982 - June, 1985

**Middle School Teacher**, Collins Middle School, Fayette County Board of Education, Fayetteville, West Virginia.

**Responsibilities:** Taught fifth and sixth grade language arts (1 year). Taught seventh and eighth grade language arts (2 years). Tutored home-bound students. Student council advisor for grades 6-8.

January 1980 - June 1982

**Elementary School Teacher**, Gatewood Elementary School, Fayette County Board of Education, Fayetteville, West Virginia.

**Responsibilities:** Taught self-contained second grade and fourth grade, respectively. Assisted in the writing of elementary social studies and math curriculum guides for grades K-8.

**PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:**

- American Educational Research Association
- Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
- Kappa Delta Pi Honorary
- Phi Delta Kappa

\[\textit{Kathryn Allen Kiptak}\]