What Do the Experts Say About Urban Special Education Issues?

Edited by

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Exceptional Student Education Program

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Introduction: Meet the Experts

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Research Expertise: Dr. Correa's areas of expertise are in early childhood special education, visual and multiple disabilities, trans-disciplinary teaming, culturally responsive intervention, and working with families. Dr. Correa has had extensive experience as a program administrator and Project Director (or co-investigator) on 14 federally funded personnel preparation projects over the last 12 years totaling over $5 million. Six of the funded projects have been in the area of early intervention, resulting in the institutionalization of a unified early childhood/early childhood special education program in the College of Education. She is currently Principal Investigator on an OSEP leadership grant, preparing doctoral level students in early childhood and early childhood special education and serves as the Associate Dean for the COE.

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Meet the Study Group Members*

Utley Study Group	**Klingner Study Group**	**Correa Study Group**	**Smith Study Group**
Yvette Perez Jacqua Little Eduard Bijlsma Heather Thomas	Magda Salazar Liliana Salazar Cheryl White-Lindsey Lisa Barrocas	Jacques Bentolila Delsue Frankson Cary Unzueta Jorine Voigt	Dolores Vasquez Liana Gonzalez Deidra Marshall Kristina Gonzalez Whitney Moores-Abdool

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Repetto, J. B. & Correa V. I. (1996). Expanding views on transition. *Exceptional Children*, 62(6), 551- 563. [Abstract prepared by Jacques Bentolila]

In this position paper, the authors look at transition from the perspective of early childhood and secondary perspectives. They advocate for transition planning to occur seamlessly throughout a student's educational career and they identify key areas that must be addressed during these transitions. Transition is defined in two documents: Section 303.148 for early childhood and in IDEA for secondary education. Both these areas state that transition planning should be individualized, involve key stakeholders (school) and have the family/student involved. In reviewing the research Repetto and Correa (1996) state that only 13% of the elementary schools surveyed have formal transition policies for children exiting pre-kindergarten programs and entering kindergarten.

The authors propose a seamless model of transition which advocates for program planning from birth through age 21 and addresses (a) curriculum, (b) location of services, (c) future planning, (d) multi-agency collaboration, and (e) family and student focus. The curriculum must be coordinated and flexible to meet the needs of the students. Students are encouraged to become self-advocates in the process. The location of services is varied and partnerships are cultivated with various agencies involved with the responsibility of educating the student. Portfolios are utilized to ensure future planning and are seen as a working document that will assist the student with making decisions. Multi-agency collaboration is vital for a seamless transition process. The individuals that serve on the collaboration teams will vary and change as the transition process takes place. The family will take the lead role in transition planning with the student taking an increasingly more active role in the process as they mature. This transition process will start in early childhood and be repeated throughout a student's educational career, this is different than today's transition planning that traditionally occur only in secondary education and not nearly to the extent proposed.

Repetto and Correa (1996) state that incorporating a seamless transition model may result in these benefits to society: Lower dropout rates, Continued family involvement, Less fragmentation of services and curriculum, Lifelong learning, and Generalization of skills to life.

The authors propose that this seamless transition model is meant to enhance, not replace, existing services. This model is in-line with the new secondary reform efforts underway in Miami-Dade County Public Schools, which look at ways to create a smoother transition for all students from one grade level to the next. The administration recognizes that transition is difficult for student across the board and students with disabilities are no exception. Assisting students with disabilities with this transition is going to take more resources and this paper proposes a possible plan of action to provide these students with the transition services they will need to become successful graduates.

Blanton, L., Sindelar, P.T., Correa, V., Hardman, M., McDonnell, J., & Kuhel, K. (2003). *Concepts of beginning teacher quality: Models of conducting research*. (COPSSE Document Number RS-6). Gainesville, Fl: University of Florida, Center on Personnel Studies in Special Education. [Abstract by Delsue Frankson]

The purpose of this research was to inform scholars and policymakers about advantages and disadvantages of preparation alternatives and the effective use of public funds in addressing personnel shortages. The focus of the Center on Personnel Studies in Special Education was on the preparation of special education professionals and the impact on beginning teacher quality and students outcomes. It focused on beginning teachers serving severe disabilities, beginning teachers in transition programs, and beginning teachers serving culturally diverse and English Language Learners. Traditions of research on teaching and how conceptions of good teaching evolved as tradition change were considered.

Several models for understanding teacher quality in special education were presented and analyzed for their conceptual richness and their technical soundness for use in research. The models were evaluated in terms of their usefulness for addressing research questions within the five genres for studying teacher education. Research shows that teacher quality is the essential factor in student learning however it is not easily defined. Teacher quality means different things to different groups, for example legislators, parents, teacher educators, and researchers all define teacher quality differently (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Wenglinsky, 2000).

The research focused on the landscape of teacher quality in general and special education and how the distances between the fields have narrowed in recent years. The research also focused on defining and measuring teacher quality. It was stated that reaching a consensus on a definition, even among teacher educators and researchers, is likely to be impossible. The definitions ranged in focus of the actions of the teacher, the knowledge a teacher possesses, or the creativity of the teacher (Porter 1989). It stated that any good definition of teacher quality should include a focus on student learning, and the teacher's ability to influence learning positively. They also mentioned other factors that made defining teacher quality difficult; like school and community factors, the teacher's background, and the teacher preparation that may directly or indirectly contribute to student learning. Models and measures of beginning teacher quality were also discussed and focused on. Five models were evaluated; 1.) Process product measures, 2.) Teacher evaluation check-list, 3.) Standards, 4.) Large-scale surveys, and 5.) Commercially available observations. For each model and measures introduced, the teacher education research genres to which it applies were considered and evaluated against a set of criteria for technical adequacy and practicality (Kennedy, 1996).

Evaluation Methods

The six criteria that were used to evaluate the models and measures of beginning teacher quality are 1.) Utility, 2.) Credibility, 3.) Comprehensiveness, 4.) Generality, 5.) Soundness, and 6.) Practicality. One of few models for determining beginning teacher competence in severe disabilities, in transition program, and teachers serving diverse and

English language learners was a set of performance-based standards programs developed by CEC. These standards are organized by a listing of what CEC described as validated knowledge and skills.

Recommendations

There were several recommendations that were made in the article for further research. They recommended using multiple research traditions in conducting beginning teacher quality research, and conducting beginning teacher quality research in all areas of special education. They also recommended getting the attention of policymakers by producing compelling research findings, and linking measures of teacher quality with student outcomes. They strongly recommended using caution in developing and using measures based on teaching standards. Their final recommendation was to seek to publish special education research findings in journals outside of special education.

Daunci, A. P., Correa, V. I., & Reyes-Blanes, M. E. (2004). Teacher preparation for culturally diverse classrooms: Performance-based assessment of beginning teachers. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 27*(2), 105-118. [Abstract by Cary Unzueta]

In this article, the authors discuss two very important topics affecting education in general as well as special education. The first issue is our culturally and/or linguistically diverse (CLD) classrooms. As our country continues to grow and diversify, our classrooms are filled with CLD students. However, the classrooms and teachers, sometimes unwittingly, teach prevailing ideas and practices derived from a predominantly Anglo-Saxon culture. The CLD students are expected to perform and test under a culture that they know little of and understand much less. When the results of the tests are analyzed the students are erroneously labeled. Hence "CLD students are over represented among low academic achievers and disproportionately assigned to special education" (p. 105).

In an effort to correct this, new legislations and laws like No Child Left Behind aim to teach students in an unbiased way. The authors identify four competencies needed by teachers to teach CLD students "a) knowledge and sensitivity about cultural influences, b) ability to provide a supportive learning context, c) appropriate instruction and assessment and d) facilitation of parental involvement" (106).

This leads to the second topic of the paper and to the research study. The authors try to answer two questions on teacher preparation for our CLD classrooms. "Do [culturally responsive teaching] CRT skills of beginning teachers with a high level of relevant pre-service preparation differ from the skills of those with a low level of preparation and (b) do CRT skills of SE[Special Education] beginning teachers differ from those of GE[General Education] beginning teachers?" (p. 107)

A total of 68 first year teachers from four Florida state universities were chosen for this experiment. 95% of the participants either from SE or GE were considered to be racially white. All participants were working in CLD classrooms and had gone through the teacher education programs at the universities.

In answer to the first question, no differences were found due to level of preparation of the teachers in CRT. However special education teachers and general education teachers did have significant differences in their knowledge of student backgrounds, fairness, and extending student thinking. Special education teachers had a higher understanding of the needs of CLD students than general education teachers. The special education teachers also received better training in working with students one on one and providing for the learning needs of individual students increasing the fairness level of education to CLD students as they received more individualized attention. Now in the case of extending the student thinking special education teachers were not better trained than general education teachers as the latter was taught to focus student learning on critical thinking techniques.

This study can open doors to many more unanswered problems. First, why if the training of teachers in CRT is already in place are so many minorities still being placed in special education classes because of cultural biases? Why are the same biased tests and cultural differences still being used to misclassify so many minorities? Why aren't all teachers taught to know their students, teach to the student's needs and to teach all students to think critically? Knowing where the students are coming from will only help the teacher to better teach the students the importance of what they are learning. Not all students learn in the same manner and minor adjustments to each student's needs would encourage the students to be more active learners. Just because there is a learning disability does not mean that some may not be able to think critically.

Boyd, B., & Correa, V. (2005). Developing a framework for reducing the cultural clash between African American parents and the special education system. *Multicultural Perspectives, 7*(2), 3-11. [Abstract by Jorine Voigt]

Cultural clashes have occurred and continue to occur between African American parents and the special education system because of diverse cultures, beliefs and personal experiences. Unpleasant previous experiences can contribute to creating negative perceptions and stereotypes about both groups.

In an article written by Boyd and Correa (2005), the issue of cultural clashes that exist between African American parents and special education professionals is addressed and suggestions are provided for special education professionals/educators and school personnel on how to reduce friction and create and atmosphere conducive to partnership and understanding. The purpose of the article was twofold: (a) to present a conceptual framework that can be used to examine the factors that have led to a cultural clash between African American families and the special education system (b) to develop a framework for building collaborative parent-professional relationship.

There are three factors that have influenced African American parents' perceptions of professionals in the special education field. First, the socio-cultural dynamic in the African American family is one that encompasses the role extended family. Because caring for a child with a disability is a challenging task, members of the African American community will look to family members and close friends for support before coming to the school system. Secondly, the level of acculturation especially impacts low-income, minority parents, because they are more likely to hold different cultural values and beliefs than that of the middle-class professionals with whom they interact; from the first meeting one can sense the class differential and that can create barriers. Lastly, the development of biases toward professionals derives from the first two factors mentioned above. When biases are created, cultural clashes are the result.

African American parents withdraw their participation from the special education system because of the separation of their child from the mainstream classroom and the subsequent placement in a self-contained classroom. When the child is physically separated from the 'regular' classroom setting the African American parent looks to the special education system as a tool to assist the child to 'catch-up' and eventually return to the 'regular' classroom; however, when that does not happen special education is then viewed as a tool for academic segregation. And, because of the history of African Americans in this country, academic segregation is very real and a sensitive issue. To cope with the special education system, African American parents look to their religious officials and individuals in the extended family for support.

With regard to professionals' perceptions of African Americans, at least three factors have shaped the perceptions of some professionals who work within the field of special education: (a) the structure of the special education system, (b) the development of biases toward parents, and (c) professional's induction into the system. Personal biases, coupled with having to adopt the cultural values of the special education system,

may lead some professionals to construct a narrow or biased view of how parents should interact with them. The use of professional jargon is just one tangible example of how clashes are established and maintained during both the assessment and Individualized Education Process (IEP) processes. Unfortunately, during IEP meetings parents are asked to listen and sign documents before providing any input even though they are the foremost expert of their child. Often times, appointments are made without really taking into account the parent's schedule. Subtle things like jargon, body language, and scheduling can relay an inconsiderate message to the parent.

The authors suggest that in order to reduce the cultural clashes that exist we must provide more opportunities for school personnel and pre-service teachers to work with diverse families. The article suggests keeping the lines of communication open between home and school and not to wait until there is bad news to make a phone call- makes positive phone calls. Most of all remember the parent is your best resource and if it your business to improve the quality of life for that child invite the parent to the table and validate his or her feelings and wants for the child.

Results of Expert Study Group E-Mail Interview with Dr. Correa

Question 1. Dr. Correa, you have conducted a lot of research about classrooms with cultural and linguistic diversity. You have also done a lot of studies on helping students to transition from stage to stage. After all this research, has anyone applied the ideas into a school? If so what are the results. If not then how do you apply all of the theory to practice?

Dr. Correa Responds: Most of my work in CLD has been disseminated in various ways: Public school workshops/training; Journal articles; Local, state, national conference presentations; Courses in preservice education; Books and book chapters.

It is hard to quantify how my work has been translated into educational practice.

Question 2. Dr. Correa, in a recent study on teacher preparation for CLD classrooms, you studied the preparation of first year teachers in the state of Florida from 4 major universities. Florida has one of the highest minority populations in the US. The study was conducted in classrooms that included children from minority populations. Why, out of all of the teachers chosen, was only 1 black and no one was Hispanic?

Dr. Correa Responds: This work was done with my doctoral student, Ann Daunci. She is currently on the faculty at the University of Florida and I will ask her about this. However, I can tell you that the 4 universities included in the study were predominately majority universities and the demographic make-up of these teachers (even in the state of Florida) is predominately white. This is a situation that should continue to be remedied in our recruitment efforts.

Question 3. Dr. Correa, in your expert opinion what would be the best way to get the attention of policy makers?

Dr. Correa Responds: Two-fold: 1) Provide them compelling research data in a format they can digest and understand quickly: see the example of a policy brief from the COPSSE project: http://www.coe.ufl.edu/copsse/docs/PB-10/1/PB-10.pdf

2) Provide "success stories" of what works in schools and with families. Testimonials are very powerful in influencing policy makers.

Hope this helps Happy Holidays,
Vivian

Vaughn, S., Klingner, J, & Hughes, M. (2000). Sustainability of research-based practices. *Exceptional Children, 66* (163). [Abstract by Liliana Salazar]

According to the Merriam Webster dictionary, *sustainability* is defined as *"to give support or relief to, to keep up, prolong."* However, through my personal experiences as an educator, the meaning of sustainability has not always been as clean cut as the definition is.

When Dr. Crew became the Superintendent for the Miami-Dade County Public Schools System about two years ago, he emphasized, and continues doing so, the use of "researched based materials." What exactly are researched based materials? Walk around your school and ask teachers and most of them will say they have heard of it, but can they truly articulate what it is? Can they look in their classroom for an intervention or strategy or methodology that is researched based and show you the research behind it? Probably not. Should they be concerned that the interventions/strategies/methodologies they are using in their classrooms are not researched-based? YES, THEY SHOULD.

Before I define what "research-based" is, allow me to explain how I found out the meaning. When I began my doctoral studies about two years ago, I had no idea what true research was. I thought research was going to a library, looking through ERIC and finding a few articles that had to do with a topic, and writing a paper about that topic. Well, that is a simplified explanation of the act of doing research, but it does not mean my paper was researched-based. As I progressed through my studies, I began to understand the importance of research in education, and I noticed that the decision making for my school began to take a turn towards more research-based solutions.

So then, what is researched-based? In short, it is the process a researcher uses to prove if his/her theory on an educational practice really works. Although the meaning is short, the PROCESS is not. For example, in education, studies are implemented, specific treatments on subjects are administered, and data collection is gathered to determine if a practice really works. If it does, and if it can be replicated in different types of schools and classrooms, then the research yields it is research-based and deemed effective. (This is, again, in short….research can be more complicated.)

This leads me to the dilemma that emerged from reading this article. If the research has proven a particular practice to be best practice because it is effective, then why is it not sustained in the schools? Who is to blame for this lack of sustainability? Due to the ever-growing advances in research on best practices for educating students with disabilities, this article reviews the current research about the sustainability of research-based practices and "the extent to which it is reasonable to assume that educators can or should sustain practices" after researchers leave target sites. In addition, the authors of this article examine the problems researchers and educators are encountering, and they provide implications for researches and educators to work together so that the "best practice" can be sustained.

Why Are Researched-Based Practices Not Being Sustained?

There are two prevailing views: *Blame the Teacher* – Teachers choose to continue to use the approaches they are most comfortable with and are easy to implement. Or, *Blame the Researcher* – Researchers develop effective interventions, train the teachers, and expect ALL teachers to use these interventions, but do not take into consideration a teacher's real need in the classroom and the realities a teacher faces in a classroom. According to Malouf and Schiller (1995), three factors that influence the connection between research and practice are:1)allow teachers to use their knowledge and experience with research knowledge; 2) be aware of the teacher's predisposition about the effectiveness of research in pedagogy; and 3) understand that teachers do everything in a classroom and then teach.

A researcher attempting to implement and sustain an intervention practice must understand that the teacher is a partner, not a subject. A researcher must work with a teacher every step of the way, offering support and taking into consideration the demands and needs a teacher might have in her classroom everyday. Without this understanding, a teacher will not buy into this intervention and adopt it as a practice in her classroom.

Implications – Questions to Answer before Research and Sustained Teaching Practice Can Be Linked

1) What issues influence a teacher to use an instructional practice?
2) What conditions would contribute to the use of instructional practices on a long-term basis?
3) If teachers are allowed to mentor each other on this practice, will they be more inclined to use it?
4) What practice stood the test of time? Why? How was it different from the other practices? EX: Longitudinal Study
5) What is the difference between a practice and routine knowledge?

My Conclusion

The authors raise issues that are significant to the educator that has been in "the system" for many years and has learned a trillion different strategies, only to revert back to the strategies she felt most comfortable with. It explains the breakdown in the communication-relationship, and offers possible solutions as to why the strategy was not sustained.

These authors raise issues that are equally significant to a researcher, which we all are, because it provides the "pre-existing knowledge" we need in order to make the theory we choose to implement for our dissertation sustainable. I will probably spend the next two-three years of my life working on my dissertation, and I want the study to lead to sustainable outcomes. I would like my theory to be used throughout the years – not just during the time I am conducting my study.

Klingner, J. Artiles, A. J., Kozleski, E., Harry, B., Zion, S. Tate, W., Duran, G. Z., & Riley, D. (2005). Addressing the disproportionate representation of culturally and linguistically diverse students in special education through culturally responsive educational systems. *Education Policy Analysis Archives, 13*(38). Retrieved [10/12/05] from http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v13n38/. [Abstract by Cheryl White-Lindsey]

The authors focus on the disproportionate representation of culturally and linguistically diverse students in special educations. The authors developed a system of culturally responsive educational systems that would not only enhance the current instructional practices given by practitioners, however aid researchers and policy makers in developing culturally responsive systems of their own. Through the creation of culturally responsive systems, evidence-based interventions and strategic improvements in practice and policy, the goal is to close the achievement gap between culturally and linguistically diverse students and their peers. Once instruction provided in the general education classrooms have improved (for students described above), then a reduction of students referred to and placed in special education programs should occur.

Culturally responsive systems involve, "evidence-based interventions and strategic improvements in practice and policy to improve students' educational opportunities in general education and reduce inappropriate referrals to and placement in special education." The authors discuss involving the cultural systems across three broad domains: policies, practices, and people. Within these domains, suggested strategic implementation guidelines have been provided as a resource when creating a system of culturally responsive programs.

Disproportionate representation, a problem within our schools dating back three decades has yielded the authors of this document to address the promotion of creating conditions, producing resources and tools to provide support to multiple stakeholders including; administrators, teacher educators, teachers, community members, families, and the children whose opportunities they wish to improve. In addition to providing the tools describe above, a change in the manner federal, state and local agencies create laws regarding the education of students from this population is considered and a thorough analysis of how to conduct that change is provided.

Policies

Culturally Responsive Policies occur when policy makers take into the account how its enactment affects all students. Theses policies must be proactive and provide equitable opportunities to those students who historically have had the least access to high quality schooling. Federal and State level policies are the most difficult to change however a reexamination and revision process need to be conducted to include culturally responsive systems. District level policies must be reorganized their resources in an effort to meet the needs of all students served in every schools. Collaboration between district level special and general education administrators can provide a path to reducing disproportionality. School level personnel must consider their hiring practices and marketing individuals that reflect the schools' culture.

Practices

Actions must be carried out to bring out the policy changes described above. Teacher development an important aspect of creating a culturally responsive system. Teachers who receive continued supports are more likely to develop cultural sensitivity to the students they serve. Teachers that are prepared in urban schools are more likely to develop culturally responsive practices and continue to work in schools and classrooms with students who are culturally and linguistically diverse.

Professional development is another means of creating this system of supports for instructors. Providing experiences to help teachers understand the central role of culture will allow a better understanding of self-awareness. Through on-going discussions, working in team oriented situations and consistent dialogue teachers will feel comfortable when working in diverse situations. Researched based best practices are another means of creating supports.

People

Culturally responsive school leaders, teachers and families and students were also discussed as another factor needed in creating these supports. Distributed leadership allowed the school to reorganize how responsibilities were distributed in order to revise, renew and improve their school communities. Teachers must believe that all students are capable of learning and knowledgeable of learning. In that same context teacher must encompass those same qualities. Finally the student's must be engaged at all times, accept that all students are uniquely different and allow themselves to acquire new information.

Overall the authors' intent was to describe the notion of creating Culturally Responsive Systems of Supports in order to reduce the disproportionality of culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Klingner, J., & Vaughn, S. (2002). The changing roles and responsibilities of an LD specialist. *Learning Disabilities Quarterly, 25*, 19-31. [Abstract by Lisa Barrocas]

The authors describe an account of a single teacher's (Joyce) passage from a seasoned resource teacher to a novice inclusion teacher over a seven year period. Revolutionized… not in the sense that one would traditionally think of but for a teacher of students with learning disabilities, whose roles through the years have evolved. From personal experience, having taught in both a resource setting as well as in a co-teaching model, the role of an inclusion special education teacher is challenging and diverse, as the researchers noted. For Joyce, teaching changed a great deal from the resource room to the inclusion model. As a rule of thumb, general education teachers are typically regarded as the "curriculum specialists," whereas the special education teacher is regarded as the "strategies specialist," which in turn makes inclusion an educational marriage made in heaven if the support, knowledge, and philosophy are in place.

In the resource room, Joyce was the queen of her classroom. She had the independence of creating lessons of her own choosing. During the first year of co-teaching, Joyce was able to co-plan, co-teach, and co-assess with her general education teacher. However, she felt as if she was receiving mixed messages from her general education counterparts. She had to adjust to general education teachers' willingness to share the classroom responsibility; however, it was a very successful program. The support (funding) was not there the following years for the co-teaching team, which added to challenges of balancing it all.

Inclusion is acquiring national attention with legislative initiatives like the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 and the No Child Left Behind Act. Legislation has certainly put special education at the forefront of educators, politicians, and other professionals. However, according to the authors, at time of print, little attention has been given to the impact it has had on effective LD teachers. This can be an area of further research.

Vaughn, S., Klingner, J., & Bryant, D. (2001). Collaborative strategic reading as a means to enhance peer-mediated instruction for reading comprehension and content-area learning. *Remedial and Special Education, 22*(2), 66- [Abstract by Magda Salazar]

Today, too many children, including students with learning disabilities, do not learn to read proficiently in the primary grades. If students do not learn to read at or close to grade level by the end of elementary school, they enter the secondary grades unable to meet the demands of their content area classes. Policymakers have shown their concern about low levels of academic achievement by promoting reforms to assure that all students meet high standards in reading through District and school accountability as measured by both District and State formal assessments.

If districts and schools are going to be held accountable for improving reading scores, then they must have a clear understanding of the factors that contribute to reading achievement, the needs of their students relative to these factors, and the various approaches that are available to meet students' needs. Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR**)** offers an effective strategy to the improvement of reading skills of students with learning disabilities. CSR was designed specifically for students with learning disabilities and students who are at risk of reading failure. This strategy adapts what most of us as educators know as Reciprocal Teaching by incorporating cooperative groupings within the classroom setting. CSR teaches students four critical reading comprehension strategies:

1. **Preview** where students brainstorm about the topic and predict what the lesson will be about. This activity occurs before the onset of the reading lesson. Students scan the material, search for clues, and integrate what they already know with what they anticipate that they're going to read about. Previewing generates interest in the text, stimulates background knowledge that's associated with what they're reading and provides students with an opportunity to make informed predictions about what they're going to learn wile encouraging active reading of a text.
2. **Click and Clunk** is where students identify parts of a passage that are hard to understand, as a result of poor vocabulary skills. It is associated with student self-monitoring. Students are the ones who determine whether or not they understand challenging words or concepts.
3. **Get the Gist** is another term for paraphrasing or summarizing the important information in the read text. Students are asked to identify the main idea of the selected text.
4. **Wrap Up** where questions are student initiated and answered by peers in order to demonstrate a higher order thinking process

CSR was initially implemented in stages, gradually increasing the number of participants to ensure the programs success. In its initial stage, the teacher's role was to teach each of the strategies and student roles to the entire class prior to reading. The activity was to include identifying in advance the vocabulary words from the reading materials which students will probably not be able to figure out through the group

process. Once students were ready to implement the CSR process, the teacher served as a facilitator allowing the students ownership of the lesson through their collaboration. A wrap-up activity including information gathered by all the groups was then held at the end of the class to ensure student participation and understanding. During the implementation of Stage 1 which occurred within specific classrooms, modifications were made based on participants input including the teaching of higher order thinking questions, oftentimes through pre-written stems to encourage higher-level discussions. Lack of prior knowledge on the subject matter was also noted to be a restraint; therefore the preview strategy was/is encouraged to be conducted with the teacher as a whole group. Emphasis was also placed on teaching students when to coach rather than respond for each other through the clear definition of roles. Students were taught to use the following cooperative group roles focusing on both task achievement and maintaining positive relationships: Leader (determines next steps for the group); Clunk Expert (reminds group of steps); Gist Expert (guides the group through getting the gist); Announcer (asks group members to carry out activities); and Encourager (gives encouragement to group members)

In Stage 2, CSR was implemented on a wider scale at various schools. Teachers were provided yearlong collaborative professional development programs and implementations of the strategies were analyzed for 3 years. Stage 3 of the project included incorporating CSR within the Middle School and various content area teachers. Modifications to the program included two other reading interventions selected on the needs of middle school students who were learning to read and comprehend text. The interventions included Word Identification and Partner Reading. Overall, CSR data indicated that student performance improved in reading skills based on the level of implementation of the teacher. Teacher implementation ranged from what was termed High Implementers, Moderate Implementers, and Low Implementers. Factors related to responses to the degree of implementation varied, ranging from lack of time due to other "mandates" as well as a need for more assistance in the development of the programs set-up. CSR can be summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Summary of CSR Components

Primary Outcomes:	basic decoding fluent decoding linguistic knowledge background knowledge making inferences self-regulated comprehending
Students:	Struggling readers
Setting: **Materials:** **Cost:**	general education class OR reading class Varies based on state/school/teacher preference None
Support for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Readers:	Success has been reported with second language learners. Heterogeneous grouping allows scaffolding by students who are bilingual or who have greater proficiency in reading skills.
Approach:	modeling, guided practice, independent practice, cooperative learning

Klingner, J., & Vaughn, S. (July/Aug 1998). Using collaborative strategic reading. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 32-37. [Abstract by Magda Salazar]

Any effective professional working with struggling readers in any setting knows that one of the greatest deficits of struggling readers is the lack of the knowledge of instructional strategies, particularly self-monitoring strategies. The researchers propose using Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) in an inclusive setting for content area. The article provides steps on how to implement students with learning disabilities in inclusive, as well as in special education settings.

So, what is CSR? Collaborative Strategic Reading is a procedure that teaches students to use comprehension strategies in cooperative learning groups. According to the authors, the research is rooted in Brown and Palinscar's research, reading guru, who coined Reciprocal Teaching (a self-monitoring comprehension strategy.), CSR is a two-phase approach: Phase 1-Teaching the Strategy; Phase 2-Cooperative Learning- Group Roles. Phase one requires students to learn four strategies: Preview, Click and Clunk, Get the Gist, and Wrap Up. Preview is done only before reading; Wrap Up is solely done after reading the entire text/passage. Click and Clunk and Get the Gist is implemented during the reading.

- 🕮 Previewing serves to build schema, prior knowledge. Students make predictions about what they are going to read. Students are encouraged to look at headings, pictures, tables, and bolded/italicized items.
- 🕮 Click and Clunk teaches students to monitor their reading comprehension and identify when the comprehension process has broken down. The teacher asks guiding questions, such as, "Is everything clicking?"
- 🕮 In Get the Gist, students learn to identify the main idea from the paragraph, and explain in their own words the main idea.
- 🕮 In Wrap Up, students formulate higher-order thinking questions, or what is referred to in Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS), teacher-like questions.

Phase two is the cooperative learning, requiring group roles. "Cooperative learning seems to work best when all group members have been assigned a meaningful task" (p. 35). The authors recommend six possible roles: Leader, Clunk Expert, Announcer, Encourager, Reporter, and Time Keeper. Each student is provided with the corresponding cue sheet explaining the role requirements.

Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) is definitely a valuable approach based on research by Palinscar and Brown. Teachers, including two from Miami-Dade County Public Schools, one of whom has recently joined the Inclusion District Team, reported students' gains in reading comprehension through the implementation of this strategy. Additionally, a colleague had the opportunity of visiting the school mentioned in the article with Dr. Klingner. She reported that the most beneficial outcome was that no one was able to identify the students with learning disabilities. All the students were actively engaged. CSR demonstrates a strong possibly of yielding benefits for struggling readers.

Results of Expert Study Group E-Mail Interview with Dr. Klingner [TBA]

Question 1. Have you seen the problem of "sustainability" in research improve since the publication of your article entitled, *Sustainability of research-based practices?* Since the publication of this article, have you been involved in feedback or data collection to see if any changes have been made, or progress made towards these changes?

Dr. Klinger Responds: I have not collected any additional data in the schools in which I conducted the research for the sustainability articles my co-authors and I wrote, partly because I moved to Colorado and partly because the grant supporting our work ended. I do think that we're getting better at doing professional development, which does lead to enhanced sustainability. But I also think we have a ways to go... I worry about the promotion of "teacher proof" materials and programs, when I think the direction we should be going in is different. I think teachers are the key, and we need to figure out how to empower teachers, and provide different types and intensities of support to teachers depending on their needs and interests. Just as students vary in their needs, so do teachers.

Question 2. How have culturally responsive systems been implemented in schools? In addition, have states and or government agencies adopted any of your findings to reorganize education policies to be culturally responsive?

Dr. Klinger Responds: Good question (actually, all of your questions are good questions). I would say to some extent, but not enough. I think that NCLB and the government's current focus on high stakes testing counter efforts to be more culturally responsive, in part because of their emphasis on "one size fits all" approaches, and not enough recognition that students thrive in different contexts, with different programs, depending on a variety of factors. There are a lot of tensions at play. For example, it can be hard for teachers to give enough attention to relationship-building, which we know is a key factor in supporting culturally and linguistically diverse students, when they have to give so much attention to test preparation.

Question 3. What are the long-term effects of Collaborative Strategies Reading (CSR) on achievement of minority students with special education needs?

Dr. Klinger Responds: I haven't done research on the long term effects. This could be a good dissertation or other research topic for someone!

Question 4. What would be your recommendation to the teacher of students with learning disabilities, one who has a diverse role to facilitate adjusting to new roles, settings, and various teachers (as outlined in your article entitled, *Changing Roles of the LD Specialist*)? As a former teacher, one who co-taught, I teased my co-partners that I often felt like I had multiple personalities. Additionally, I taught 2 hours of reading and language arts in a co-teaching third grade classroom; one hour of math with the same co-teacher; one hour of second grade co-teaching; and one hour of math with fifth graders in a resource room. I did not have a resource room, but used my third grade co-teaching classroom as the resource room.

Dr. Klinger Responds: Sounds like your situation was a lot like Joyce's... Certainly, this is a challenging role. I don't think I have any recommendations other than those in the article.

Question 5. The *No Child Left Behind* act has resulted in greater demands on the role of special educators. In the state of Florida, in order for teachers to be considered "Highly Qualified," elementary special educators need to be certified in elementary education and those at the secondary level must be certified in the core academic courses they teach in addition to the special education subject area. What are your feelings about that?

Dr. Klinger Responds: I think that what it means to be "highly qualified" in special education is something we don't yet know enough about. I've been doing some work in this area with Mary Brownell and others at the Univ. of Florida, on COPSSE (the Center on Personnel Studies in Special Education), and suggest you check the COPSSE website: http://www.coe.ufl.edu/copsse/. One of the things I'm working on now is RTI. I'm attaching our NCCRESt statement on this, and could send you additional manuscripts (one in press with Reading Research Quarterly and the other a book chapter), if you're interested. Another in press article you might be interested in is on SFA in schools in Miami-Dade (Elementary School Journal). And a few other in press articles/chapters focus on English language learners.

Smith, R., Salend, S.J., & Ryan, S. (2001). Watch your language: Closing or opening the special education curtain. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 33*(4), 18-23 [Abstract by Deidre Marshall]

The authors concentrate on the effect of educator's language and behavior on students and families from two different perspectives: deficit-oriented (closing the curtain) and competence-oriented (opening the curtain). Both are influenced by how teachers view competencies and deficits of students with disabilities. Deficit-oriented language and interactions from teachers limit and deny students access to skills, friendships with their peers, and curriculum content.

Competence-oriented language and interactions from teachers focus on understanding students and providing them with a learning environment that maximizes student abilities. For students, both approaches influence academics, friendships, and self-esteem.

Both approaches affect family's perceptions of teachers and willingness to participate in the education of their child, including IEP meetings. The authors include an inventory for educators to assess their skills at "opening the special education curtain" for students with disabilities. The authors hope in writing this article is to convey acceptance of individual needs and empower students to succeed in inclusive settings by assisting educators in using competence-oriented language and interactions.

Smith, R., Salend, S.J., & Ryan, S. (2001). Watch your language: Closing or opening the special education curtain. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 33*(4), 18-23. [Abstract by Whitney Moores-Abdool]

Deficit oriented use of language as opposed to competence-oriented use of language plays a strong role in the academic achievement of students with disabilities. The manner in which teachers view the competencies and deficits of their students become apparent through behavior, and use of language (Biklen, D., & Duchan, J., 1994; Smith, R. 2000). Special education teachers in general, are genuinely interested in playing a positive role in the acquisition of knowledge for students in their classes. However, in some instances, teachers in special education use deficit oriented language inhibiting students' motivation to learn, and in some cases negatively affecting students' self- concepts. The impact of deficit oriented language with special education students and their families extends into poor self-esteem, low academic performance, and difficulties socializing with peers (Rosenthal, R., 1997; Salend, S.J., 2001). Utilizing examples and non-examples, competence-oriented language and deficit oriented language teachers are provided with clear guidelines for enhancing the learning and motivation of students with special needs. Figure 1 provides a checklist for teachers to use to ponder about their language use and behavior with their students. Sources used for this paper include a selection of journal articles and books related to the topic.

Keywords: deficit; competence; language; special education; teacher; students

Thomas, C. (2004). How is disability understood? An examination of sociological approaches. *Disability and Society, 19*(6), 569-583. [Abstract by Dolores Vasquez]

Carol Thomas reveals the controversy in Britain over the understanding of what constitutes *disability*. There is not one unitary perspective on the nature of disability. She highlights two understandings: disability studies and medical sociology. The author examines the features of each approach.

On one side, there is the field of *disability studies*. Proponents of this understanding believe that disability is structured by social oppression, inequality, and exclusion of individuals with disabilities. Disability is the outcome of social barriers that restrict the activities of those with impairments. Those who share this understanding have a commitment to those who are disabled, advocating full equality, informing legislators and professionals in the disability services arena, and society in general.

One key name in disability studies is Vic Finkelstein. He proposed the social model of disability studies. He was disabled himself and brought forth the question, Is one disabled due to personal tragedy or social oppression? He argued that it was the latter, and worked throughout the 1970's toward changing society and its understanding those with disabilities in employment, health care, etc. He stated, "… although it may be a tragedy to have impairment, it is oppression that characterizes the way our society is organized so that we are prevented from functioning." Finkelstein's belief, in essence, was that people with impairments were disabled by society, not by their particular impairments.

The study of Finkelstein's understanding of disability inspired others to delve into what disability truly encompasses, as well. Tom Shakespeare and Nick Watson are two such people. They believe that people were disabled by both their bodies and society. Simply put, a person's activities are restricted by the body, as well as social barriers. One cannot separate one from the other. Their understanding does not allow for disabled people to be viewed separately from "normal" people due to the fact that EVERYONE'S body places limitations on activities (the limitations are different for each person).

On the other side of the coin is *medical sociology*. This understanding of disability views it as a chronic illness. Disability is caused by illness and impairment, and entails suffering and disadvantage. In medical sociology, importance is greatly placed on medical impairment or biology.

One key proponent of this understanding is Michael Berry. He believes that disability is caused by impairment. One's impairment may be caused by disease, genetic disorders, trauma, pathology, etc. These impairments cause the disability. In summary, the main cause of a person's restrictions on activity is illness or impairment, even though society plays a part, as well. Another key individual is Simon Williams. He proposed a realist theoretical perspective, stating that "corporeal realities" must be taken into account when defining disability. There is a biological body whose impairment has effects on

restrictions in social activity. He wanted sociology to put the "body" back in to understanding disability.

In her article, Carol Thomas reveals that, even though there is a believed divide between the two understandings of disability, the two actually overlap in many ways. Shakespeare, Bury, and Williams agree that the social model of disability is flawed. It denies the impact impairment makes on disability; it does not take into account that impairments is correlated with disability. They share the belief that impairment and illness have direct effects on and individual's restrictions of activity that constitute disability.

Even though the other authors were inspired by Finkelstein, his position stands out from the others. His belief was that disability is a form of social oppression not caused by impairment whatsoever. To Finkelstein, disability is completely socially imposed and amounts to social oppression. Shakespeare and Watson agree that both social exclusion and impairment cause disability. Social exclusion plays a significant role in social oppression. Bury and Williams do not address social oppression at all. They agree that social processes shape a person's experience and disability. They advocate that disability is caused by both social exclusion and impairment, but impairment is more significant.

Zickel, J. P., & Arnold, E. (2001). Putting the I in IEP. *Educational Leadership, 59*(3), 71-73 [Abstract by Liana Gonzalez]

The authors focus on self advocacy in relation to students with special needs truly understanding what their IEP entails. Furthermore, the process of “Putting the I in the IEP” encourages the metamorphosis of the IEP from a 'passive process', where the student is simply told what and how he or she will learn, to an 'active process', where the student is completely involved in the creation and implementation of their IEP.

Montclair Elementary School in Virginia created a self-advocacy program. They developed a Self Advocacy Circle (SAC) consisting of four quadrants or stages: Reflecting, Goal Setting, Speaking-Up and Checking. In the first stage of this model, reflecting, students reflect about their strengths and weaknesses, focusing on how to overcome these weaknesses. Stage two, goal setting, involves finding a way to maximize strengths to support problems areas in order to set goals. Speaking-up, or stage three, targets how the students will communicate to others the type of support they will need. This is a crucial stage since it involves accessing modifications and accommodations to accomplish the IEP goals. The final stage, Checking, consists of students and teachers sharing their ideas as to how they will negotiate the implementation of the IEP.

In order to rehearse this model in a manner conducive to the students truly understanding and applying it, they implemented school wide activities involving role-playing. Specifically, entire classes would 'act-out' a particular component of this program throughout the school day, in various classes. Once the students became proficient with the SAC model they were presented with their IEPs for review, and also to become familiar with the language used in said document. This was accomplished in small groups and with teacher guidance.

After being immersed in this process for a week, the students were ready to set personal goals for each academic area. It is interesting to note that during this process, the students not only discussed what and how they needed to learn, but also what their future goals were. This implied they were also beginning to think about transition.

Conclusion

School wide support and implementation of the Self-Advocacy Circle was successful at 'investing' students in the nature of their learning as well as its' implications. It gave students ownership of their IEP which resulted in them becoming active in their learning, via setting their individual goals, and ultimately fostering self-advocacy.

Smith, R. M. (2000). View from the ivory tower: Academics constructing disability. In B. B. Swadner & L. Rogers (Eds.), *Semiotics and disability: Interrogating the categories of difference*. (pp. 55-73). New York: SUNY Press. [Abstract by Kristina Gonzalez]

The author argues that academic journals have predominately outlines the way the disabilities are seen and therefore handled within our educational system. The author chose two articles with polar perspectives in order to show how these polar perspectives influence policy, research, and consequences. When researching the issue the author chose to use two journals known for very different perspectives of disabilities.

Exceptional Children and *Disability and Society* were chosen because the author also chose to concentrate on the issue of inclusion when researching articles. Both journals are very rich resources for providing what the author terms positivistic versus post-modern views of inclusion and disabilities.

The author found that most submissions to *Exceptional Children* tended to see the issues of inclusion and children with disabilities from a definite medical model approach. Smith termed perspectives from this angle constitute a *Deficit-Based* definition of disabilities. A disability is seen as an "impairment or deviance from normal functioning". These perspectives focus on the impairments of the individuals and what compensations may be put in place in order to "cure" that individual.

The submissions to *Disability and Society* tended to have a perspective stemming form what Smith terms a Strength-Based definition of disabilities. Disabilities are seen as "social phenomenon which allows people to be grouped based on their impairment." Disability is discussed as a societal ailment not as an individual's ailment. The authors of the articles published in this journal acknowledged that those with disabilities have some difficulties with everyday life. These difficulties require skills not labels in order to be overcome.

The consequences to schools in using a deficit based definition for applying research is that as a society we begin to define students with disabilities based on what their limitations are. We begin to employ a medical approach in "treating students" in the manner of professionals treating patients in a hospital. We begin to find treatments for perceived limitations of our students. Instead, we should begin to employ more strength-based definition to color our policies. We should begin to concentrate on what our students can achieve and ways to maximize and build on each student's strengths.

Results of Expert Study Group E-Mail Interview with Dr. Smith

Query: How do we get parents, professionals, and the students themselves to see past students' "Exceptional Student Education" labels in order for all students to achieve their maximum potential? **Dr. Smith's Response:** I think it is very important to teach students self advocacy skills. Dr. Nevin can recommend a program* where the process of teaching the self determination skills to students not only involves the students but teachers of younger students who were coming into the self efficacy curriculum class. This is a good model of starting something that spreads by engaging more and more people. One person can make a difference, even new teachers. The adults need to learn self determination skills also; by setting goals, we find allies who help us achieve them.

Query: What steps do we as a public school system employ to decrease reliance upon the medical model for placement and provision of services for students with disabilities? **Dr. Smith's Response:** There are schools within school systems that have enrolled in the *Coalition for Essential Schools* (see Ted Sizer's work) and de-tracked the student body into a naturally inclusive environment. Another approach has been to get a systems change grant and help a school or school system to completely revise its system to be inclusive and student centered. School wide positive behavioral support models are also outside the medical model. We need to seize opportunities for both top-down and bottom-up/grassroots approaches. Education and advocacy and collaboration are keys to success in all of these models.

Query: How do we obtain a balance between a student-centered approach to instruction and what IDEA's label implies (accommodations for students based on their diagnosis)? **Dr. Smith's Response**: I think universal design is a good point of entry to resolve the tension between well intended labels and student centered learning and achievement. A better system than labels would be to determine what supports students need (all the students) and then just provide them.

Query: Since labels are required by federal law in order to provide students with services, how can we prevent the stigma that comes along with them? **Dr. Smith's Response:** We prevent the stigma by not living it. A label is not an awful thing. It is a tool like a hammer or saw. Some kids are relieved when they learn their label. They learn that there is nothing wrong with them, that their struggle has a name. And they can move on with their lives. We need to demystify the labels and let them be no big deal. For the most part the labels are mostly useful for bureaucracy and not so useful in class so you can leave them out. If the child is an integral part of the learning community and is not marginalized, the stigma is not an issue.

--I hope this was useful. Robin Smith [12/9/05]

*Dr. Nevin's recommendation: Sharon Field and Alan Hoffman: Steps to Self Determination (1996) Available through PRO-ED Publishers Austin Texas. Also see Self Determination Synthesis Project for research reviews and lesson plans: http://www.uncc.edu/sdsp/

**See *What is Universal Design*: http://www.cast.org/research/udl/ and the ERIC Digest *Curriculum Access & Universal Design*: http://ericec.org/digests/e586.html

Grossman, H., Utley, C., & Obiakor, F. (2003). Multicultural learners with exceptionalities in general and special education settings. *Effective Education for Learners with Exceptionalities, 15,* 445-463. [Abstract by Heather Thompson]

Although mandated by IDEA (1997), a large number of minority students are still being placed in special education. These students, based on their ethnicity, socio-economic status and linguistic orientation are often referred foe special educational services. More than ever, these learners are at a disadvantage with the many discrepancies that exist in the educational system and more times they fall through the cracks of the general education classrooms.

The authors describe the demographic profile of the multicultural learners in the US; the challenges in educating these learners; the learning and teaching styles incompatibilities and finally, how to foster multicultural transformation in general and special education programs. Dr. Utley and her colleagues looked at the changing demographic population and its impact on the education of multicultural learners. According to the US Bureau (1996), by the year 2030, 14.4% of the population would be Black African American, 18.9% Spanish/Hispanic/Latino, 7.0% Asian/Pacific Islanders and 1.0% American Indians/Eskimos. Changes in the population bring with it increased poverty for the multicultural learners. As a result more educators find it difficult to provide quality equitable educational services for the students. Many of these learners live at and below the poverty line. Many of the educators are not aware of the disparities in relation to ethnic and socioeconomic conditions of multicultural learners. Many educators do have preconceived notions that these learners who have exceptionalities are prone to be problematic, without first trying to understand the "intrinsic and extrinsic" causes of their cultural and socioeconomic disparities.

According to Grossman (1995), intrinsic causes refer to quality health care, nutrition, one's level of cognitive ability and self concept. Extrinsic causes are those factors that the students have no control over; for example the educational policies, approaches and procedures that do not meet the needs of the learners with or without exceptionalities; biased expectation and poor evaluation of students, especially migrant students entering the US for the first time.

There are several challenges that educators must deal with in order to provide the appropriate education for multicultural learners. These challenges include shortages in general and special education personnel. Although there is an increase in the number of multicultural student population, the majority of teachers are mono-lingual Anglo-American (Cook & Hoe, 1995; Wald, 1996; Zeichner, 1993). Another issue identified is that of teacher bias, behavior and expectations. These traits are manifested in the way teachers perceive this group of students. Multicultural students who are poor are perceived to have limited expectations and are expected to perform poorly in school (Obiakor, 1991). Teachers are generally insensitive to the needs of these learners, therefore, a positive teacher /student relationship is not developed.

The learning styles of multicultural students are more likely to be participatory peer-oriented learners, field dependent, and global and reflective learners whereas their Anglo peers are more likely to be individualistic, field-independent, concrete learners. When the general or special educator's teaching style does not match the learning style of the student, incompatibility between both groups exist. Some teachers are not creative, find it difficult to motivate and communicate at the learners' level. This leads to behavioral problem as a result of misunderstanding of one's culture. To foster transformation in multicultural education, the goal is to promote and increase equality for all learners who are considered to be multicultural students including those who have exceptionalities.

Multicultural education should clearly provide educational opportunities for all learners including those from different races, ethnic groups, social class, exceptionality, and gender. Programs and instructions should be designed to help students develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that they need to exist in a competitive society. Teachers should show respect to students despite their differences and diversity and use these differences to bring about the unique features of each learners' culture in a positive way. Teachers must possess the skills and knowledge to and will power to make a difference in the lives of their learners, if we want to see any reform or change in the educational system.

Obiakor, F. E., Utley, C.A., Smith, R., & Harris-Obiakor, P. (2002). The Comprehensive Support Model for culturally diverse exceptional learners: Intervention in an age of change. *Intervention of School and Clinic, 38*(1), 14-27. [Abstract by Jacqua Little]

The Comprehensive Support Model for Culturally Diverse Exceptional Learners (CSM) is designed to support the saying that it takes a whole village to raise a child. The components of the CSM are self (the learners), families, schools, communities, and government. The idea is that the success or failure of a culturally diverse exceptional learner depends on all components of the CSM working cohesively.

The learner is the center of the CSM. These children have to be able to function in such destitute situations in school, home, and the community. Culturally diverse learners have to be strong enough to survive the typical systems of identification, assessment, placement, and instruction. The CSM is designed to build these learners self-esteem and motivate them to be accountable for participating in the process. The culturally diverse exceptional learners must know, love, and motivate themselves.

Families of these students are there to instill the above-mentioned values. The family is supposed to be the support system. They must be involved in every aspect of the student's life. This increases the opportunity of the student's success. Some behavioral problems could be easily circumvented if the family was more involved. Ultimately, nothing that is implemented will be successful without the participation and support of the parents.

Schools are also a component of the CSM. The school has to design instruction, curriculum, and discipline that addresses the differences and is suitable for the culturally diverse exceptional learner. The lack of teacher preparation is also a problem that must be addressed by schools. It was indicated that colleges must educate future teachers about the cultural diversity. Also, the schools could use people from the community to help build relationships.

Resource people from the community strongly support the CSM. The community sets the tone of the schools environment. If the community environment improves, then the school environment will improve. This piece of the model directly addresses the whole village concept. It is stated that the neighborhood has a great impact on a child's "academic development, depression level, emotional development, social behavior, and self-esteem."

The government is the final component of the CSM. Laws were enacted, and schools should be held accountable. The government must uphold and ensure these laws are not violated. Even though there have been many cases ensuing upward movement, such as *Plessy v. Ferguson, Brown v. Board of Education Topeka,* inequalities in funding continues. The CSM acknowledges the government as a change agent that will continue to support equality.

The final issue addressed within the CSM is implementing effective Professional Development Programs. Some of the topics listed are as follows:

- Understanding and valuing cultural differences
- Beliefs and values of culturally diverse families.
- Strategies for implementing intervention programs with culturally diverse families.
- Culturally appropriate referral and assessment procedures.
- Culturally influenced learning and behavioral styles
- Culturally responsive pedagogy
- Behavior management and culturally diverse students
- Infusing multicultural content into reading, language arts, social studies, and science.

All of these topics should be addressed and staff members should better be able to provide an effective environment for cultural diverse learners.

In conclusion, I strongly support the CSM. The model is designed to bring every entity together, self, school, family, community, and government. It seems as if currently, each entity of the model is working independently vs. dependently. Knowing that all the components of the CSM depend on the success or failure of one another is what should drive all of these entities to cooperate with one another. We also have to remember that the CSM is a structure to get everyone to work collectively. The CSM is a very good model, but how is each component going to be held equally accountable? I personally believe that currently, the parents are not being held as equally accountable as the remainder of the model, and until something is done there, the model will only work to a certain extent.

Kea; C.A., & Utley, C. A. (1998). To teach me is to know me. *The Journal of Special Education, 32*(1), 44-47. [Abstract by Eduard Bijlsma]

Dr. Utley is passionate about the problem of minority students and their disproportionate representation in special education. With research done by Ewing (1995) and Ford (1996) and others, documentation is clear for an overrepresentation of multi cultural students in special education programs, and an under representation of those students in gifted education.

Many minority students are not successful in school because their cultural, social, and/or linguistic characteristics are unrecognized, misunderstood, devalued, misdiagnosed and mis-educated (Obiakor & Utley, 1997). As a result, special education has largely been ineffective of improving school performance for those students (Gottlieb, Alter, Gottlieb, & Wishner, 1994).

The authors suggest three solutions to this problem: 1) training of culturally and linguistically diverse teachers in teacher preparation programs, 2) inclusion of multicultural education perspectives in special education, and 3) implementation of culturally responsive instruction in classroom settings (Kea & Utley, 1998). In order to facilitate meaningful student learning, it is of great importance that the teacher is able to communicate with all students, including those students with culturally diverse background. This way, the teacher can act as a 'cultural translator,' and prepare the minority student with the expectations of the dominant culture (Smith-Davis, 1995). In an increasingly diverse society, it is important that we embrace cultural diversity, and those differences should be celebrated in school with teachers that are knowledgeable and understanding.

Utley, C. A., & Obiakor, F. E. (2001) Culturally responsive teacher preparation Programming for the twenty-first century. In C. Utley & F. Obiakor (Eds.), *Special education, multicultural education, and school reform* (Chapter 10). Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas [Abstract by Yvette Perez]

There is a category of learner in our schools that has been largely ignored in the wake of all the new school reforms being implemented It is the multicultural learner with mild disabilities. With the tapestry of education and educational policies being changed everyday, it is up to the fields of special education and multicultural education to ensure that these students are not left behind and are receiving an n equitable and culturally responsible education. In the book *Special Education, Multicultural Education and School Reform,* Cheryl Utley and her colleagues address these and other issues and attempt to create a bridge between school reform and the education of multicultural, special education learners. Specifically, I have chosen to review *Chapter 10: Culturally Responsive Teacher Preparation Programming for the Twenty-First Century*. It is my belief that implementing change needs to begin at the core of teaching, the teacher preparation process.

The Need

State and federal policies such as IDEA as well as national professional standards established by organizations such as CEC and NBPTS are the driving influences in educational reform and teacher preparation programs. The responsibility of the colleges and universities is to ensure that the high standards are incorporated into teacher programs. Especially in an urban school setting, it is imperative that students of education not only learn the traditional teaching methods, but are given knowledge and information about culturally based learning, behavior management techniques and skills, various teaching styles, culturally responsible education practices and family and community values.

Studies have shown that higher education schools are failing to turn out teachers prepared to teach multicultural learners in low socio-economic areas. These teachers generally have little or no knowledge of the different ethnic groups in the United States and generally have negative attitudes toward these different groups. Colleges are encouraging negative views by supporting the assumption that poor education is caused primarily by cultural, family or biological circumstances and supporting educational practices that maintain separate and unequal education opportunities for at-risk and multicultural students.

Traditional University-Based Teacher Preparation Programs

Colleges of Education have teacher education programs that prepare prospective teachers to educate students with disabilities in inclusive classroom settings. In place is course work that provides a knowledge base for the teacher as well as the instructional skills necessary to actually deliver the instruction. One big criticism of the traditional model is that students spend way too much time learning how to teach in a university classroom and not enough time practicing the art they are learning. Also, a necessary change would be the practice of teaching students in culturally diverse schools. A

multicultural/bilingual general education and special education curricula component to the teacher education program would correct the mis-education of students and support inclusive, rather than exclusive practices.

Culturally Responsible Pedagogy in General Teacher Preparation Programs and Culturally Responsible Pedagogy in Special Teacher Preparation Programs

The chapter recommends the change in teacher education programs to include a "culturally responsible pedagogy paradigm" for preparing prospective teachers to work with multicultural learners with and without disabilities. Another critical aspect of teacher preparation programs is the field-based experience. It is a necessary component to "try out" techniques and skills learned in the classroom.

Models of Infusion

The chapter continues by listing and discussing four infusion paradigms that have been implemented in teacher preparation programs. The first examines the degree of exposure to multicultural issues into one's teaching. The second consists of program goals and competencies to serve multicultural students throughout the special education program, faculty development, curriculum development/implementation and program evaluation. The third is focused on multicultural change in post-secondary courses and is a framework applicable to single courses, the larger university curriculum, K-12 schools, higher education and business. The fourth presents a structural outline of how to infuse the components of multicultural education into the curricula of teacher education.

Conclusion

The chapter ends with the authors' vision for teacher preparation: "Our vision is that special education teacher preparation programs in this new millennium will reflect a change of attitudes, the modification of curricular content and instructional practices, and a transformation of concepts and principles that acknowledge the dynamic interaction of urban poverty conditions and cultural and linguistic diversity in the lives and communities of children with disabilities" (p. 205).

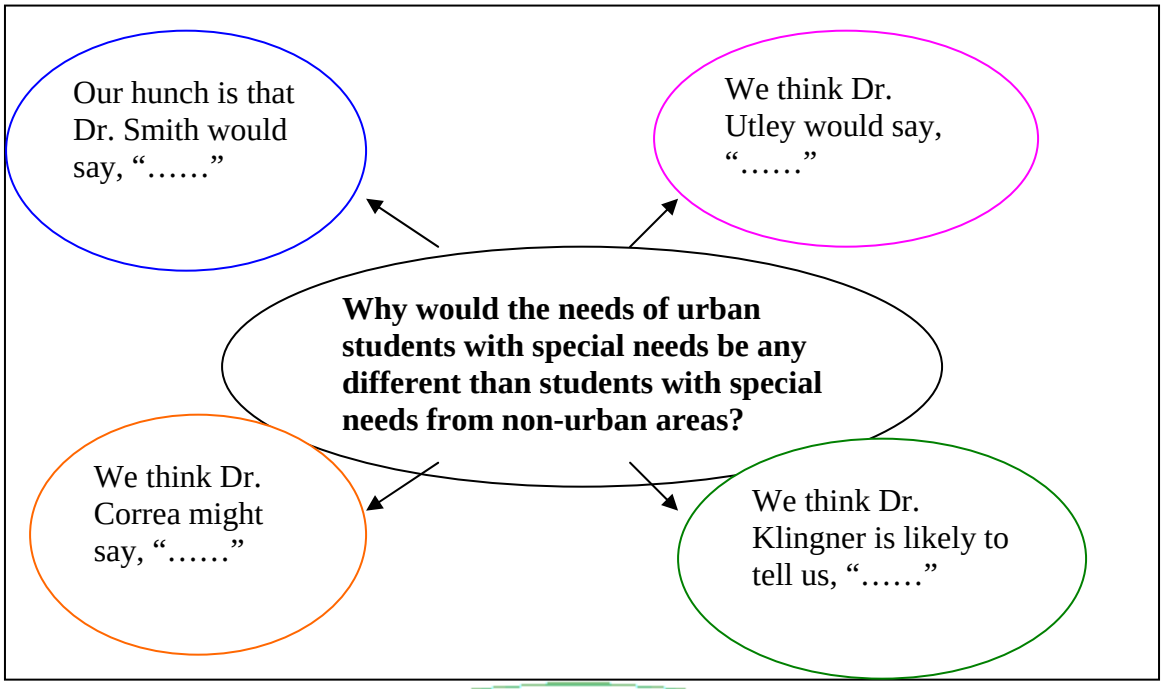
Results of Doctoral Seminar with Dr. Utley

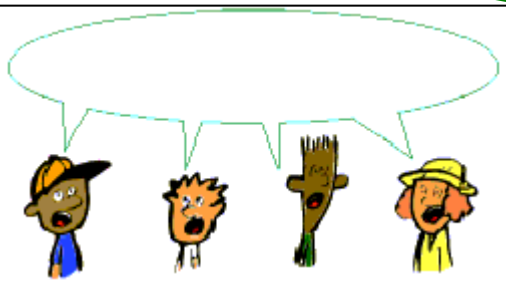
On February 28, 2006, Dr. Utley visited FIU's campus and met with the doctoral students in Trailer #8 as part of the regularly scheduled EDP 7058: Behavioral Interventions Research and Evaluation class. Approximately 35 people participated in the seminar. Dr. Utley shared the work she has been doing with Juniper Gardens Children's Project in Kansas City, Kansas. In particular, she provided a snapshot of the implementation of the Positive Behavior Supports program for an inner city school in a high-poverty, high-drug-use community. The school managed to modify PBS so as to match the cultural heritage of the children and their families to the extent that discipline problems decreased, truancy decreased, and achievement increased over the 3 year period of the program to date.

Dr. Utley answered questions and encouraged all participants to make it possible for PBS to be transferred to the Miami-Dade schools, given the unique multicultural population that the area enjoys.

Results of Capstone Experience

OUR BRAINS ('metamorphosized' due to our expert study groups)
TACKLE a VEXING ISSUE[1]





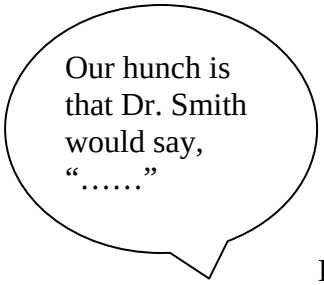
[1] Responses are printed with no identifying characteristics to protect anonymity of each writer.

To be very honest, the needs are not all that different. Non-urban areas are not exempt from urban issues in (special) education. In fact, the practices/strategies utilized in an ESOL or special education classrooms are just examples of good teaching. All children can benefit from the strategies listed for ESOL and Special Education. The needs are not different at all; all students regardless of language, physical or learning ability require a teacher that is knowledgeable of his or her practice and sensitive to the individual needs of each student. When reviewing the readings for the Correa presentation, I realized that Dr. Correa's suggestions regarding minimizing cultural clashes among CLD parents and school professionals can be used in any field where professional jargon may cause intimidation or a breakdown in communication. Whether you in live an urban or non-urban setting, no one likes to feel incompetent--especially where their children are concerned. I feel that Correa would say that parents are the experts and that we must validate their feelings and desires for their child. We must respect their culture and invite them (parents) to plan for their child's academic and social future.

Students with special needs are already different and require special attention and more preparation, patience, and money. Students from minorities have historically been ignored and discriminated against. Now put the two ideas together and the answer is that it is obvious that their needs will be different. They need more attention, more resources than they are being given.

I believe Dr. Correa would say the needs of students with disabilities from urban schools and non-urban schools would not be so different. The fact is that an *individual student's* needs are exactly that... individual. No matter the setting, educators must look into each student to provide them the support they need to move ahead. I think she would say the actual difference between urban and non-urban schools would be seen in the institutional and policy areas. The urban schools resources may not be as plentiful, or may have to be stretched to meet more individuals with special needs, but the actual needs of the students may not be that different.

Dr. Correa would probably stress that the needs of urban students with special needs would be different, because urban students are usually dealing with more severe issues in their lives. Urban students are usually exposed to crime and violence more frequently than urban or suburban students. Most of them are not from stable home environments. They usually do not have access to services that students from non-urban areas have available to them.



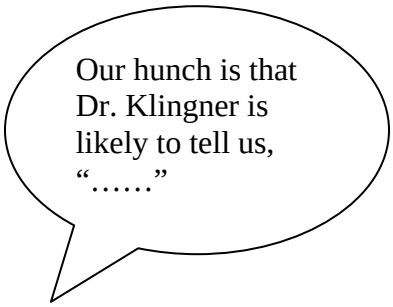
Dr. Smith might say that besides the cultural needs, there really isn't a difference between the needs of urban and non-urban students with special needs. She may even respond that the difference lies in the needs of the teachers from urban and non-urban school districts. Teachers in urban school settings may need more training/experience with cultural diversity, differences and understanding. This way, the needs of the students will be met.

Based on what I have read, Dr. Smith appears to be a strong advocate of the universal design for learning (UDL). Within this context, I believe that in an urban setting, UDL would be the primary recommendation for the students in this setting. Secondarily, many social issues cross the lines of urban and non-urban. However, the advantage that students in an urban setting have over students in non-urban settings is a wide array of support services. I believe that Dr. Smith would advocate the idea of individualizing for student needs, while supporting all students in the classroom with UDL's.

I believe Dr. Smith would certainly agree that urban students with disabilities need extra support, from an educational perspective, because they have more real life issues to contend with. Specifically, research shows that many urban students are members of single parent households, and therefore do not receive as much monitoring when it comes to homework completion and test preparation as other students from suburban and rural settings. On the other hand, I believe Dr. Smith would assert that these urban students have a wealth of valuable experiences to share, which in turn provide for excellent teachable moments and class discussions.

I believe that Robin Smith would respond that urban students with special needs need not be any different than students with special needs from non-urban areas. As Robin Smith well put it in our e-mail interview, "…determine what supports students need (ALL STUDENTS) and then just provide them." This is exactly what teachers, parents, and students want – whatever it takes to facilitate learning in our schools, whether the child lives in the country or in the city!

Dr. Smith would argue that regardless of where a person lives, having a disability is just a part of what makes people who they are. I feel that she would respond that living in the urban area would be more of an issue than having special needs. Dr. Smith advocates the idea that it is society that has to change, not those who have special needs. Furthermore, in urban settings, diversity could become one of the strongest advantages and having special needs is just another way of celebrating diversity .



In response to the question, I believe Dr. Klingner would start by discussing the importance of meeting the needs of each child as an individual. As a former special educator, Dr. Klingner definitely understands the importance of students with disabilities and how uniquely they are designed. In addition when bringing in factors such as socioeconomic status, racial and socio-emotional factors that exist in greater numbers in urban settings, the needs will be far greater for the urban student with disabilities. Dr. Klingner believes in the notion of working collaboratively, so I would say she would want to meet the needs of both students from urban areas and non-urban areas using similar processes and then provide additional support where needed for students from urban environments.

The concept of overrepresentation of minority students into special education is not new, as is the ideology of the differences between the haves and have-nots grows, including the "achievement gap" in schools. Some minority students are at a greater risk for failure and are more likely to be referred and placed in special education because of contributing factors such as the referral and/or assessment procedures (including high stakes assessment), academic achievement, classroom behavior, parental involvement (or the lack of), and the role of the teacher (qualification and retention in urban settings). Having read several of Dr. Klingner's articles, I will address the issue of the role of the teacher first. At the core of evolutionary change is the role of the teacher. After numerous school reforms, the constant consensus is that the quality of our schools depends on the quality of our teachers. Schools with high percentages of poor and minority students often have less experienced teachers than schools with students who are more affluent and white even within the same school district (Kozol, 2005). According to Exposito and Lal (2005), in 2002-2003, California had 18% of special education teacher without certification; the majority in urban settings. Newly hired teachers leave urban settings at higher rates than teachers in more affluent schools. Teachers are working the hardest, sometimes including 50 or more hours a week; about 15% of the teachers are working 60 hours ore more with a caseload of about forty to fifty students in the elementary setting; and as much as one hundred and fifty students at the secondary level. Additionally, discrepancies in teacher salaries between urban and suburban settings is appalling.

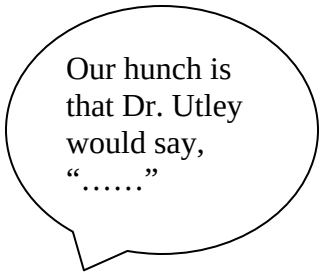
If I were answering for Dr. Klinger, based on her writings, I would state that educational needs should be emphasized for all students regardless of their setting. However, in response to this particular question, I would state that Dr. Klinger would wish to focus on the impact of school personnel's negative stereotyping of urban families. Much of Dr. Klinger's research focused on the placement of students in special educational settings

based on cultural diversity. As a result, Dr. Klinger and colleagues promote inclusion of students within the general educational setting with strong professional development and teacher instruction practices (i.e., CSR – Collaborative Strategic Reading).

Dr. Klingner has written several salient articles that help me understand how she might answer the question about differences between urban students with special needs and other students with similar needs in different settings: *Addressing the Disproportionate Representation of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students in Special Education through Culturally Responsive Educational Systems; Using Collaborative Strategic Reading; The Changing Roles and Responsibilities of an LD Specialist,* and *Sustainability of Research-Based Practices.* Dr. Klingner's overall research emphasizes children with special needs and specific teaching strategies to increase their learning process. Awareness of their culture and social context is also an important aspect of Dr. Klingner's research because this awareness leads to effective teaching strategies and increases student learning. In these articles, Dr. Klingner did not specifically address the "burning issue" question. However, there are main themes that come out of her research that lend themselves to answer the "burning issue" question.

Dr. Klingner's data emphasizes that there is a great overrepresentation of students that are culturally and linguistically diverse in special education. In short, a teacher's awareness of their culture and diversity will improve the education these students receive and thus reduce the number of referrals to special education because, through this awareness, these children will make progress in their classrooms. In addition, their cultural identity will not be forgotten or extinguished. Based on this research, Dr. Klingner would agree that that the needs of urban students with special needs would be different because many students from urban schools are culturally and linguistically diverse.

Dr. Klingner is a proponent for inclusion and argues that a successful inclusive classroom will rely heavily upon the relationship of the general educator and the special educator co-teaching in the class. Taking into account, Dr. Klinger would most probably state that administrators in urban schools must be very careful when putting an inclusion class together. These children, above all children, can not be guinea pigs in an inclusive setting that is not well planned, where there are more students with special needs than general education students, and where both teachers do not communicate or do not hold the same high expectations for all students, regardless of their disability. An inclusive setting in an urban school would also help children who do not qualify for special education, but still need additional help. Obviously, being the researcher she is, Dr. Klingner would desire that students from urban schools receive the most up to date and researched based intervention strategies there are. However, she would be very concerned with how sustainable these strategies would be after the researcher and her support leaves the school. Therefore, when considering sustainability of research, I feel Dr. Klinger would agree that students in urban settings benefit from any type of research strategies that would create a more conducive classroom setting to learning, but she would be very concerned with leaving in place supports that would allow those strategies to be sustained even when the researcher leaves.



I believe that Dr. Utley will have some great responses to our questions. I believe that she will refer us to the Continual Support Model that brings parents, the schools, and the communities together. I would then like to ask her has this model been implemented in urban schools and how was the success evaluated. Also, as it pertains to the ability of students to pick up on the subtleties of responding to different cultures differently, I believe she may say that it is not necessarily responding verbally differently, but the idea of understanding their culture. I believe she will be more in depth on how, as educators, we have a responsibility to understand the differences between their culture, their culturally accepted behaviors, and the so-called norm of the dominant American culture.

Dr. Utley would emphasize the pervasive reality that students with special needs who attend urban city schools face. They typically come from working-class homes where resources are limited; in most cases, students are from single parent homes where the parental involvement and motivation for these students is limited, making it harder for students with special needs to excel in schools. In cases where parent(s) would want to get the best for their children, it is difficult, as they often must work several jobs to make ends meet. They are not able to lobby and advocate on their children's behalf.

I believe that Dr. Utley would respond that the multicultural learner with mild disabilities in urban areas has been largely ignored in the field of education. Further, I believe that Dr. Utley will argue that due to the negative misconceptions held by teachers and administrators teaching multicultural students in low socio-economic areas, children in these areas are destined to fail before they even enter the classroom for the first time. Finally, I think Dr. Utley will suggest that the first step to reform is by changing teacher education programs to include a "culturally responsible pedagogy paradigm" for preparing prospective teachers. Also, that our future teachers need meaningful field experiences to foster an understanding and respect for different ethnic groups in the community. By starting with the teachers, hopefully the "playing field" (at least in the classroom) will be that much more leveled. Schools in urban city schools find it difficult to attract qualified trained teachers in subject areas. As a result of this problem, students with special needs do not have the trained teacher who is willing and able to cope and deal with each child's specific needs. Another major problem also is the lack of financial resources to equip classroom and labs properly. Discipline is not generally enforced and if so, it is done on a military style which becomes more intimidating for those students who may have emotional/behavioral problems or come from families with different cultural expectations for acceptable behavior. On the other hand, in non-urban schools, students with special needs often receive a better quality education than their counter parts. Non-urban schools are often better equipped with the necessary resources, trained

teachers in their subject areas, and specialists (psychologist/behaviorist, OP/PT, etc.) to deal with the various needs of students. These schools have state of the art equipment, and comfortable spacious surroundings that encourages problem –solving, learning and mobility of students. These parents are better able to lobby and make advocate on their children's behalf. It is important to note that also that schools in urban cities does have less tax-base funds and supplemental funds to work with, which plays an important function in the quality education that our students receive With fewer tax dollars to support urban schools, our students will continue to reap negative outcomes, as findings determine the quality of teachers, limited resources, and eventually the educational outcomes that our with special needs students receive.

This is what I expect Dr. Utley to say. Students from families classified as low socio economic status are more frequently represented in an urban public school than in the non-urban schools. The urban public schools have a problem attracting qualified cultural diverse teachers that are able to handle the needs of those students. In addition, the cost of living, in particular affordable housing will make it even harder for qualified professionals to make a living on a public education school teacher salary.