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An interpretive inquiry into socialization and developmental processes concurrent with preservice status transitions: Student teaching as a rite of passage

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AN INTERPRETIVE INQUIRY INTO SOCIALIZATION AND DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESSES CONCURRENT WITH PRESERVICE STATUS TRANSITIONS: STUDENT TEACHING AS A RITE OF PASSAGE

by

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APPROVAL PAGE

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Using Arnold van Gennp's construct of the "Rites of Passage," this study was designed to follow five elementary/middle school student teachers through the socialization and developmental processes of the transition from student to student teacher to teacher during a fourteen-week student teaching field experience. This interpretive inquiry research design included investigation into three aspects of the student teaching experience: (1) the student teacher's response to her cooperating teacher as a model; (2) the student teacher's translation of educational theory into classroom practice; and (3) the processes involved in the student teacher's development of the "teacher-self."

Five student teachers participated in this study. Four were enrolled in a fourteen-week student teaching experience, which included seven-weeks each in an urban, multicultural school and in a suburban school. The fifth student teacher, a twenty-year veteran teacher who was seeking additional certification, completed one seven-week field experience. Data were collected via nine questionnaires and one essay, classroom observations and follow-up conversations with the supervisor, and discussions at six seminars.

Based on interpretations of their responses, descriptive and analytical information provided insight into the various stages in each student teacher's rite of passage in progressing from student to teacher. Data analysis yielded common themes about perceptions of student teaching and teaching in general, perceptions of children, and perceptions of self as teacher. Needs for further research are discussed.

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INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

> Since all genuine education comes through experience, the teacher's obligation is to arrange for the kinds of experience that exact and promote thinking. . . . According to Dewey, learning takes place when students are given something to do rather than something to learn. What they do should be significant and worthwhile; it should relate to real life undertakings (Green, 1973, p. 158).

The student teaching experience is intended to be the real life undertaking of preservice teacher education programs. This experience is designed to give prospective teachers an opportunity to translate learning and pedagogical theory into practice--a process that is both transactional (involving direct interaction with the environment) and transformative (involving personal changes in attitudes and values).

Although a limited amount of research has provided information on how established teachers assess their student teaching experience retroactively, little attention has been focused upon what is transpiring in the lives of student teachers at the very time their student teaching experience is taking place. This study is intended to help fill that void by providing an examination of the student teaching experience as a current, ongoing process.

In discussing varying paradigms of preservice teacher education, Zeichner (1983) writes that one dominant view sees the student teacher "primarily as a passive recipient of. . . professional knowledge" (p. 5). Such a paradigm demands that the student teacher's behavior model that of the cooperating teacher and is

based on the assumption that the specific knowledge, skills, and competencies most relevant to the teaching role are transmissable and measurable. This traditional, technical, product-oriented approach virtually rules out the student teacher's participation in any critical inquiry into teaching as an interactive process.

Indeed, some research has already indicated that student teachers typically adopt the same style of teaching and interacting with children that characterizes their cooperating teachers (Zimpher, deVoss & Nott, 1980; Richardson-Kohler, 1988). Copas (1984) argues that the perceptions student teachers hold about effective and ineffective teacher behaviors are formed directly from their views of cooperating teachers. Furthermore, these perceptions are significant because of the impact the student teaching experience is likely to have on future teaching behavior both in instructional methodology and in interaction with students.

The student teaching experience, however, is far more than meeting the goals of an evaluative check list. Student teaching is a growth process, "a form of development, a process of 'becoming,' rather than merely a process of educating someone how to teach" (Zeichner, 1983, p. 3). It is in this process of professional development that a student teacher may either come to emulate his/her cooperating teacher or develop a unique "self" that is a preview of the teacher he/she is to become.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this research is to conduct an in-depth interpretive inquiry into the student-to-teacher transition of a select group of student teachers in an integrated elementary/middle school teacher preparation program. With adaptations from Burgess's (1984) notions of field research, this interpretive inquiry research focuses on the "observed present, but the findings are contextualized with a social, cultural and historical framework" (p. 218). An additional context is the clinical

framework of the student teaching field experience. There the student teacher works under the guidance of a cooperating teacher, while the university supervisor oversees the student teacher in the field placement.

This interpretive inquiry was designed to investigate the process of becoming a teacher by following five student teachers in their transition from preservice teacher education students to classroom teachers during the student teacher component of their teacher education program. Ultimately, this study focused upon each participant's development of her "teacher-self". I shall demonstrate that this process of becoming is analogous to Arnold van Gennep's (1960, originally published in 1908) anthropological construct, the "rites of passage."

Van Gennep (1960) classified the "rites of passage" into three subdivisions, which he termed rites of separation, rites of transition and rites of incorporation. He explained that his special category, "rites of passage," is useful in analyzing "a passage from one situation to another or from one cosmic or social world to another" (p. 10). The three phases of the "rites of passage" may be described as follows:

(1) Rites of separation, or separation: The person leaves a present situation, position, or a social, political, or economic status.
(2) Rites of transition, or transition: The person moves from his/her old situation, position, or status toward a new status.
(3) Rites of incorporation, or incorporation: The person assumes the roles and responsibilities of his/her new situation, position, or status.

In this interpretive inquiry, I have imposed van Gennep's theoretical framework, the "rites of passage," onto the socialization and developmental processes concurrent with preservice status

transitions for a select group of elementary/middle school student teachers. Specifically, my central research question is this:

> How does each student teacher participant progress through her rites of passage during her fourteen-week student teaching field experience?

To give focus to each student teacher's progression through the rites of passage, I inquired into three subsidiary aspects of the student teaching experience:

1. What is the student teacher's response to her cooperating teacher as a model?
2. How does the student teacher translate educational theory into classroom practice?
3. What are the processes in the student teacher's development of the "teacher-self"?

Significance of the Study

Student teaching is typically the culminating activity in a preservice teacher preparation program. During the student teaching field experience, the student teacher is given something to do. That "something to do" is significant and worthwhile in that the preservice teacher now practices those skills, behaviors, and concepts that define one as teacher. In other words, the student teacher gradually assumes the roles and responsibilities of a classroom teacher. Caruso offers a succinct summary of the student teaching experience. He writes:

> It offers student teachers an opportunity to meet children head-on, to test ideas and theories, and to ask new questions about themselves in relation to the world. (p. 57)

Brimfield and Leonard (1983) describe student teaching as the primary component in preservice teacher preparation programs. Indeed, during the student teaching field experience, student teachers consolidate their perceptions of teaching in the "context of an environment and set of processes and motives created by the cooperating teacher" (p. 29).

Some researchers suggest that a student teacher's successful development into a classroom teacher depends upon the relationship between the student teacher and his/her cooperating teacher (Bunting, 1988; Richardson-Koehler, 1988). Richardson-Koehler goes on to point out the possibility of both positive and negative results from student teaching. One problem may be the cooperating teacher's emphasis on the practical activities and immediacy of his/her own particular classroom setting. Therefore, the student teacher would not have had opportunities to experiment and/or practice applications of his or her ideas and skills in different classroom situations and with different groups of children. In addition, because most cooperating teachers tend not to discuss the theories and generalizations of pedagogy, student teachers may be limited in opportunities to reflect upon the practice of teaching in general.

Bunting (1988) calls for the need for research in tracking a student teacher through key phases of the final practicum to investigate the processes of the student's translation of theory into practice and the socialization of the student teacher into the profession of teaching. Caruso (1977) suggests that during the student teaching experience, student teachers "pass through a number of phases which affect personal and professional self-identities" (p. 57).

This interpretive inquiry was designed to provide insight into the processes of five student teachers' becoming classroom teachers within van Gennep's rites of passage framework. Following analysis of the student teachers' perceptions of their experiences, I have discussed ways within each phase of the rites of passage that the

processes could have been facilitated to make the separation, transition, and incorporation proceed more successfully. I conclude the study by answering the three subsidiary questions of this inquiry and suggest additional research needs for investigating the transition of a person from student status to teacher status and the development of the teacher-self.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Students enter student teaching already possessing what Bolin (1988) calls "a latent philosophy of education," (p. 53) stemming from their own experiences as pupils, who, throughout their years of schooling, observed teachers and classroom situations. Fuller and Brown (1975) point out that "teachers' early experiences as pupils are apparently related not only to choice of teaching as a career but to expectations about teaching, teaching behavior, teaching field, choice of location, and persistence in teaching" (p. 36). Lortie (1975) likewise calls attention to the "special occupational effect" of general schooling on those who choose a career in teaching and thus "move to the other side of the desk" (pp. 61-62). At the same time, he shows the limited extent to which the pupil experience--though useful and valuable--can be viewed as an apprenticeship. "The student's learning about teaching, gained from a limited vantage point and relying heavily on imagination, is not like that of an apprentice and does not represent acquisition of the occupation's technical knowledge," Lortie writes (pp. 61-62). "It is more a matter of imitation, which, being generalized across individuals, becomes tradition" (p. 63).

Importance of the Student Teaching Experience

Although the student's learning about teaching through years of observing teachers offered only the "limited vantage point" of a pupil's perspective, a whole new vista may be expected to open up with the student teaching field experience. This experience will provide an introduction to the real world of teaching, a world that is

likely to be quite different from that which had been imagined (and possibly glamorized) during the days of sitting in school as a pupil and dreaming of one day being a teacher.

Tannehill and Zakrajsek (1988) argue that the student teaching experience should be a time in which the preservice teacher can "experiment, adapt, and grow while practicing pedagogy skills under the guidance of a competent teacher" (p. 38). The environment should be a place of safety in the sense that mistakes are turned into learning experiences. Components of that student teaching experience should include immediate and appropriate feedback from the cooperating teacher and opportunities to reflect upon various segments of the experience as well as inquiring into the experience in a holistic manner.

Joyce (1988) writes that "nearly all experienced teachers. . . indicate that the practice teaching experience is the critical influence" (p. 38) in developing teaching styles of preservice teachers. Data from studies by Richardson-Koehler (1988) and Brimfield and Leonard (1983) show that the student teaching field experience is the "most important component in the preparation of teachers" (Richardson-Koehler, 1988, p. 28), a finding that has emerged in numerous other studies as well (Mason, 1961; Hermanowicz, 1966; Davies & Amershek, 1969; Yamamato et al., 1969; Silberman, 1970; Peck & Tucker, 1973; Emans, 1983).

It has long been recognized that field experiences are a crucial part of socialization into a profession. In his 1959 study of socialization into the legal profession at that time, Lortie (1959) reported that lawyers in the early stages of their careers typically complained that their training had not adequately prepared them for the realities of the profession they would practice (including its "routine," "mundane," and "laborious" aspects). In Lortie's words:

> A few moot court performances before fellow students hardly equal the commitment to interaction in the professional role that we find in medical schools,

> teacher training programs, or schools of social work. No real clients are served and no real cases are handled by law students prior to graduation. (p. 364)

Sixteen years later, in his study of the teaching profession, Lortie (1975) sounded a similar theme, pointing out that those who become teachers tend to value their practice teaching over their education courses. "Practice teaching has the texture of reality," (p. 71) he wrote, adding that it also helps the students feel they are moving toward their chosen goal--to be a teacher.

On the other hand, some debate surrounds the subject (Zahorik, 1988). Practice teaching experiences are not uniformly positive (Waxman, Rodriquez, Padron, & Knight, 1988; Zechner & Tabochnick, 1981; Alvermann, 1981), and some teacher educators have raised doubts about the effectiveness of student teaching programs as usually designed (Everston, Hawley, and Zlotnik, 1984). The value of a field experience depends upon the quality of the experience that is offered (Zeichner, 1981-82). Erdman (1983) points out that "the quality of many early field experience programs is poor due to their inattention to the connectedness of theory and practice" (p. 27).

In a participant observation study of fourteen elementary student teachers, Richardson-Koehler (1988) found that indications of the student teachers' distancing themselves from the influence of formal pedagogical coursework was already showing up within the first two weeks of the field experience. Such detachment resulted in the student teachers' failure to translate educational theory into classroom practice. Ultimately, Richardson-Koehler suggested that the student-teacher participants in her study "were not exposed in the schools to a model of learning to teach that relied on rigorous analysis of teaching and colleagiality" (p. 33).

Some departments and schools of education have developed special programs to remedy this situation. Cohn and Gellman (1988), for example, describe the School-based Teacher Education

Program (STEP) developed at Washington University-St. Louis in which "the primary vehicle has been a professional semester that offers methods courses and student teaching concurrently" (p. 2) and which utilizes a carefully integrated approach wherein the faculty members who teach the methods courses also do the field supervision and function in triad fashion with the cooperating teacher and STEP student as well as in a team approach with the entire STEP staff. "As students experience simultaneously the realities and practice of the classroom and the educational theories of the academy," write Cohn and Gellman, "the aim is for students to inquire into and seek meaningful relationships between the two worlds" (p. 2). These teacher educators are persuaded that the carefully worked out developmental approach to preservice supervision in such a program "can foster within teachers an inquiry orientation which can eventaully empower them to be autonomous and analytical professionals rather than technicians" (p. 8).

The Place of Student Teaching in University Teacher Education Programs

In spite of the important part that the student teaching experience plays in overall teacher preparation, working in the development and supervision of such field experiences is generally accorded low status within schools of education. As Goodman (1988) points out, "most merit systems discourage education faculty from spending their time working with undergraduate preservice teacher education students" (p. 48). As a result, work with preservice teacher education students is frequently assigned to persons "with the least rank within teacher preparation programs and schools of education" (p. 48) (for example, graduate students and junior faculty). Goodman maintains that, furthermore, "status in teacher education seems to be inversely related to how close one gets to 'field experiences'" (p. 48; also Joyce & Clift, 1984).

Not surprisingly, a program that is relegated to low status is unlikely to be the recipient of generous funding, a problem that cannot help but affect the quality of many student teacher programs. "It is difficult to imagine that field experiences will be used to promote experimentation, reflection, and active decision making among preservice teachers until more resources are allocated to this component of teacher preparation," writes Goodman (p. 50). For example, it would be useful to allocate time and money to providing special courses for cooperating teachers, given the major impact cooperating teachers have upon student teachers. Such courses would be designed to aid cooperating teachers in their supervisory tasks. Yet, "few institutions offer comprehensive staff development to cooperating teachers or supervisors" (p. 48).

The Crucial Role of the Cooperating Teacher

Joyce (1988) argues that the cooperating teacher is the single most important influence in the development of the student teacher as a teacher. Studies conducted by Joyce and other educational researchers (Richardson-Koehler, 1988; Seperson & Joyce, 1981; Wilbur & Gooding, 1977; Mahlios, 1982; Dutton, 1982; Flint, 1965) confirm that the cooperating teacher serves as a model and that student teachers' attitudes, behaviors, and teaching methods closely resemble those of the cooperating teacher. Richardson-Koehler found that some cooperating teachers expected student teachers to discover the established classroom routines through observations. In time, those student teachers mimicked their cooperating teachers, including the language, but were unable to describe or explain the classroom structure and procedures. Whether the student teaching experience is positive or negative, the impressions the preservice teacher gains about teaching and the extent to which the prospective teacher is initiated into the teaching profession and internalizes his/her field experience directly affects the kind of teacher that intern is to become.

Erdman (1983), drawing upon Dewey's differentiation between educative and miseducative experiences (Dewey, 1973), shows how a narrowly interpreted "apprenticeship perspective" which "construes the role of the preservice teacher as a helper who primarily assists the cooperating teacher" can be contrasted with a more broadly defined "partnership perspective" that "more readily addresses the complexity of teaching" (p. 28). Bunting (1988) provides data that show the socializing influence of the cooperating teacher, and Copas (1984) concludes that "the value of the direct learning experience in schools seems to depend upon the quality of the teacher with whom the student teacher is placed" (p. 49). She goes on to say that it is imperative that the very best classroom teachers be selected as cooperating teachers if student teacher programs are to accomplish their intended goals. Goodlad (1984; also 1988) warns about the practice of too casually assigning student teachers to cooperating teachers and schools that are often poor examples and thus are at cross purposes with learning the what and how of effective teaching. "Surely such a practice assures perpetuation of the very things we want teacher education programs to change," (p. 316) he writes. He continues:

> The success of professional preparation, it seems to me, depends on the degree to which programs are able to separate beginners from the primitive or outworn techniques of their predecessors. If we were to set out to provide the most advanced preparation for future doctors, surely we would not intern them with those whose solution to every illness is blood-letting (p. 316).

Copas (1984) has developed an extensive research-based list of essential behaviors which she calls "critical requirements" for cooperating teachers. Such a list would seem to be crucial in view of findings by Tannehill and Zabrojsek (1988) that indicate that students' expectations for extensive mentoring, guidance, and specific feedback from cooperating teachers is often unrealized.

The Rites of Passage

During the period of working with a cooperating teacher, the student teacher is undergoing a "passage" experience or time of personal and professional transition. Van Gennep's 1908 theoretical formulations on "the rites of passage" are useful in seeking an understanding of this process. Van Gennep (1960) classified "the ceremonial patterns which accompany a passage from one situation to another or from one cosmic or social world to another" (p. 10), calling attention to three stages: separation from the former life, a time of transition in between the old and new, and incorporation into the new life. His construct can be put to use in understanding the identity transformation that occurs along with socialization into a new status.

In 1988 I conducted a pilot interpretive inquiry of the ways three student teachers modeled their cooperating teachers and the mitigating circumstances that might either support or discourage such behavior. At the outset of the 1988 study, I had intended to utilize a theoretical framework of accommodation and resistance. Accommodation behavior would have been attributed to those student teachers who modeled their cooperating teachers. In contrast, resistance behavior would have been attributed to those student teachers who did not model their cooperating teachers. In my original hypothesis for this inquiry, I stated that the student teacher who chose not to model the cooperating teacher would be well on his/her way to developing a sense of self as teacher.

My analysis of the findings of this 1988 inquiry failed to fit the accommodation/resistance theoretical framework. The themes that emerged from the analysis revealed that the three participants were moving through specific phases of development and socialization and that accommodation/resistance may or may not have been a consideration in any one of those phases. The emergent themes pointed to each student teacher's change in position in a series of shifts. Accompanying those shifts were

changes in how each participant perceived both him-/herself as a prospective teacher and his/her assigned classroom.

Clearly, the shifts and changes that had taken place in the lives of the three participants in my 1988 pilot study were indicative of the separation, transition, and incorporation phases of Arnold van Gennep's (1960) anthropological construct, the "rites of passage." This same theoretical framework was cited by Eddy in her 1969 book, Becoming a Teacher, in which she writes of her study of a group of first year teachers who were employed in an inner-city school system.

Eddy is not the first scholar to make use of van Gennep's construct in analyzing adult socialization processes. Davis and Olesen (1963) drew upon the rites of passage construct to examine identity stresses among student nurses at the time of the status transition from college student to student nurse, noting "how closely the reactions of the students (e.g., the sense of discontinuity with a former identity, the mourning for a lost self, the pained anticipation of what the future held in store) parallel those feeling states, symbolic representations, and ceremonial sequences that are formally ritualized in sacred rites of initiation throughout the world" (p. 98). Their major focus was on "the extra-occupational facets of adult socialization that aspirants are exposed to while simultaneously being socialized into a profession" (p. 100).

Other scholars have also referred to rites of passage. Leemon (1972) adapts van Gennep's stages to the college fraternity culture, and Tinto (1988) shows how an understanding of the "rites of passage" can shed light upon the decisions of students to drop out of college. But it is Eddy's (1969) study that is most pertinent for our purposes here.

During the fall of 1963 and of 1964, Eddy (1969) followed twenty-two first year teachers who held positions in multi-cultural elementary and junior high schools which she described as "inner city slum areas." Each week the thirteen elementary and nine junior-high school teachers returned to the college from which they

had received their degrees. At the weekly meetings, the participants in Eddy's study responded to questions about their most important experiences during the previous weeks, along with questions about lessons, dealing with students, and interaction with other teachers, principals, and other school staff.

At different times the participants in Eddy's (1969) study answered questions pertaining to descriptions of their schools, textbook and resource materials they used in their classes, interactions with parents, and other pertinent information about the students in their classes. In addition, Eddy gathered data about the socio-economic background of each participant.

In following the participants' development and socialization into the teaching profession, Eddy utilized van Gennep's (1960) "rites of passage" construct as a theoretical framework for analyzing her findings. Specifically, Eddy discussed the participants' separation, transition, and incorporation. The participants experienced separation from their status as students, which involved leaving one reference group and identifying with another group. The participants' transition included their learning the organization and procedures of their particular schools and developing skills and competencies in classroom instruction and interactions with pupils, parents, other teachers, school administrators, and other school personnel. Eddy then identifies the participants' incorporation phase during which the new teacher demonstrated success to those in supervisory positions over them and were recognized as teacher by the significant others (parents, other teachers, and administrators) within the school setting.

Eddy reports her findings by citing anecdotal data from the responses supplied by the participants. From those responses emerged information about the first-year teachers' work setting, instructional planning and responses, teacher/pupil relationships and classroom management. At the time of the study, these first-year teachers were forced to examine two crises: one, the specific problems and concerns of the tendency toward geographic isolation

and social alienation of inner-city slum-area schools; and two, potential disruptions from threatened teacher strikes and integration-issue boycotts. Eddy (1969) reported her participants' reactions to these crises.

The following summary shows the comparison and constrasting highlights of Eddy's (1969) study, my 1988 pilot study, and this present study:

1. Eddy followed her twenty-two participants for one semester. She explored their development and socialization as teachers and their initiation into the bureaucracy of teaching.
2. In my 1988 pilot study, I inteviewed three persons who had completed an eighteen-week student teaching experience. I explored reasons they modeled their cooperating teachers or developed their own distinct identity as a classroom teacher.
3. In this present study, I followed five student teachers through the development and socialization processes in their transition from student to student teacher to teacher.

In each of these three studies, van Gennep's (1960) anthropological construct, the "rites of passage," was utilized to analyze the processes of development and socialization in their status changes.

Development of the Teacher-Self

As Lortie (1959) emphasizes, "the development of a professional self-conception involves a complicated choice of perceptions, skills, values, and interactions. In this process, a professional identity is forged which is believable both to the individual and to others" (p. 363). For Olesen and Whittaker (1966)

three central tasks are involved in a person's professional socialization: becoming aware of the requirements of the professional role, coming to recognize oneself in that role, and developing the ability to properly communicate about oneself as a professional. Simpson (1967) views adult socialization into an occupational role as a three-part, sometimes overlapping, sequential process. First, the person shifts attention from the broad, societally derived goals which led him/her into the profession and turns to "the goal of proficiency in specific work tasks." Second, "certain significant others in the work milieu" become the person's foremost "reference group." And third, the person "internalizes the values of the occupational group and adopts the behaviors it prescribes" (p. 47).

All of this is by way of saying, as applied to the student teaching experience, that the student teacher is undergoing a personal and professional transition in which she or he is developing what I have chosen to call a teacher-self.

"The assumption of a new identity or any substantial change in an old identity means that one behaves differently," writes Gross (1976, p. 9). In learning to teach, the student teacher must move across "the chasm dividing pupilhood from teacherhood" (Fuller & Brown, 1975, p. 47). This means thinking of oneself as a teacher, while at the same time shedding the familiar pupil role.

However, the new teacher typically receives mixed messages about the objectives, goals, and processes of becoming a teacher. Those mixed signals emanate both from the persons who are the novice's teaching educators and from the clients (students and their parents) served by the new teacher. Moreover, the preservice or new teacher may be positively or negatively rewarded by different persons for the same behaviors. Goals imposed by those to whom a new teacher is responsible are typically vague, and some of the novice's successes may be met with criticism. The preservice teacher may find her-/himself with a confidence in her/his skills as a teacher while, at the same time, in a relatively powerless status.

That powerless position, along with some preservice teachers' perceptions of the inadequacy of their preparation for the classroom, leaves most student teachers anxious and focused on their own survival. The student teachers' emphass on self-preservation begin to shift. As the student teachers gain more confidence in their abilities and demonstate skills and competencies in assuming the roles and responsibilities of a classroom teacher, their emphasis on self-preservation shifts to their valuing the ideals of teaching responsively and interacting sensitively (Fuller & Brown, 1975). New teachers find that "teaching is. . . . constant, unremitting confrontation" (p. 48), a process that serves as a catalyst in the development of the teacher-self.

Caruso (1977) has observed various phases that student teachers go through during this transitional process:

1. anxiety, combined with excitement over being in a classroom at last;
2. confusion, uncertainty, and feeling overwhelmed by the complexities and newness of the situation, then gradual clarity about expectations and routines;
3. insecurities and ambivalence about personal competencies;
4. critically analyzing and questioning the school's educational philosophy, the curriculum, and the cooperative teacher's way of doing things, while at the same time becoming more aware of their own teaching performance and possibilities;
5. a new confidence and self-assurance as the student teachers realize they are "going to make it;" and
6. a sense of sadness and loss at the conclusion of the student teaching experience as goodbyes must be said to the children and the cooperating teacher, along with feelings of relief that the field experience has ended and

> the dream of employment in the teaching profession is now in sight.

According to Caruso, the crucial point that "signals a move toward professional self-identity" occurs during Phase Four and the movement to Phase Five.

Aspiring Toward Professional Competence and Confidence

This "move toward professional self-identity" or development of the teacher-self is occuring at the same time that the student teacher is encountering the reality of the classroom and faces the necessity of translating theory into practice. Perhaps she or he came to the student teaching experience with a vision of teaching such as that summed up by Goodman (1988):

> [Reformers] have called for the establishment of field experiences that encourage preservice teachers "to reflect on the origins, purposes, and consequences of their actions, as well as the material and ideological constraints and encouragements embedded in the classroom, school, and societal contexts in which they work" (Zeichner & Liston, 1987, p. 23) It has even been suggested that field experiences should enable preservice teachers to conceptualize and develop original curriculum based upon their own and their students' intellectual interests and to recognize their powers to transform classroom life (p. 45).

Instead, many preservice teachers find themselves jolted by the reality of opposing forces: on the one hand, the vision of teachers as change agents in the classroom and, on the other hand, teachers' occupational expectations that are limited by the constraints of the existing school work environment. Goodman makes this point:

> Most research suggests that teachers are expected to assume a relatively passive role in deciding what, how,

> or why specific content should be taught to their pupils. . . . Increasingly, the expectation is for teachers to manage mass-produced instructional programs that come complete with specific objectives (content), procedures, tests, and schedules. Getting the children through these programs on time in a smooth, quiet, and orderly fashion becomes the main criterion upon which teachers are judged (p. 45).

Likewise, Goodman (1988) points out that "most teacher educators maintain a technical perspective towards the preparation of preservice teachers" (p. 49), even when the field experience program's primary goals are "reflection" upon and "critical thinking" about the processes and interactions of the student teaching experience. What often tends to be reflected upon, according to Goodman, is "what works" with the result that a "technocratic perspective" is further perpetuated in teacher education.

Gitlin (1987) writes of the "deskilling" effect that occurs when teachers become curriculum managers rather than instructional decision makers. He goes on to write that schools are structured in a hierarchical framework that mandates teachers' spending a significant part of their school day or week using technical skills. Those "skills," according to Gitlin, include efficiently moving students from one objective to another, correcting and grading tests and papers, keeping students in line, and providing documentation on what a student has learned" (p. 112). Gitlin argues that those technical skills increasingly encroach upon the role of teaching and diminish the "creative and conceptual aspects of teaching" (p. 112). Certainly, the goal of the field experience for preservice teachers is not to make them become educational reformers while they are student teachers. However, the school environments in which student teachers are placed should include opportunities to reflect upon the impact of the what, why, and how of the curriculum, activities, instructional methods, and management of student behavior upon the students in the various classrooms in which the

student teacher will be teaching. Gitlin calls for an alteration of the "common school structures which shape teacher behavior" (p. 118) if the teacher (and the student teacher) is to assume an active role in classroom decision-making and realize his/her own "power to transform classroom life" (Goodman, 1988, p. 45).

Major Concerns of Preservice Teachers

Fuller and Brown (1975) write of three stages of preservice teachers' learning to teach. The first is a survival stage during which a student teacher typically questions his/her own adequacy as a teacher and feels apprehensive about classroom management, the supervisor's opinion of his/her peformance, and the observation/ evaluation process. The second stage, called mastery, includes a student teacher's developing competence in teaching skills. During the third stage of learning to teach, the preservice teacher may proceed along one of two avenues: he/she may become established in routines, on he/she may become concerned about his/her impact upon the pupils.

According to Fuller and Brown these three stages of learning to teach also serve as descriptiors of concerns that characterize preservice teachers: survival concerns, teaching situation concerns, and pupil concerns. These author speak of the great stress experienced by beginning student teachers who worry about their own survival in the real world of teaching. "Most interns are concerned about class control," write Fuller and Brown. In addition, student teachers are faced with "concerns about limitations and frustrations in the teaching situation," and the realization that they must not merely survive but teach and are expected to put into action all that they learned in their college courses.

At the same time, according to Fuller and Brown:

> Preservice teachers express deep concerns about pupils, about their learning, their social and emotional needs,

> and about relating to pupils as individuals. But they may be unable to act on these concerns. Flooded by feelings of inadequacy, by situational demands and conflicts, they may have to lay aside these concerns until they have learned to cope with more urgent tasks, such as being heard above the din (p. 39).

Student teachers' concerns are exacerbated further by their identification with pupils and fantasy-like perceptions of themselves as teachers. Indeed, according to Fuller and Brown (1975), a preservice teacher's development into a teacher critically depends upon his/her resolution of the issues and concerns of the field experience.

A preservice teacher's achieving appropriate solutions to his/her student teaching concerns depends a great deal upon the university teacher preparation coursework and the sequence in which the preservice teacher completes required courses. Fuller and Brown (1975) write that "most programs meet the needs of teachers in a sequence different from the sequence in which teachers feel the needs" (p. 39). These authors suggest that preservice teacher's concerns might be lessened if coursework preparation were more closely related in both content and sequence to teachers' needs. They are also convinced that "research is needed to develop and sequence such content and experiences which address the felt needs of developing teachers as these needs occur" (p. 41).

Personal Transformations during the Student Teaching Experience

During this time, changes are taking place in the student teachers themselves. Some studies have indicated that preservice teachers, in moving from idealism to realism, are likely to develop a more conservative, pragmatic, efficiency-oriented, authoritarian outlook on education as they work with cooperating teachers in

actual classroom situations. (See summaries of this research in Blase [1986], Fuller & Brown [1975], and Bunting [1988].) Other studies conflict with such conclusions and provide evidence of a more individualized socialization process. Bunting (1988), for example, found in her study that "at least a cluster of candidates left student teaching considerably more flexible and adaptable in their teaching" (p. 45). Pointing out the cooperating teacher's role as a socializing influence, she reports the following finding:

> Changes observed in candidates subsequent to student teaching were clearly related to differences in the character of candidate-teacher pairings. Teachers who possessed more flexible, adaptable views more often witnessed movement in this direction by candidates under their supervision. Teachers with more extreme views more often witnessed no change in the views of candidates assigned to them (p. 46).

Blase (1986) stresses the need to look at two separate types of changes that take place over time in the attitudes, cognition, and behavior of teachers during the socialization process. One set of changes comprises the rationalization process and the other humanization process.

In the rationalization process ("long-term adjustments that result primarily from instructional interactions with students" [Blase, 1986, p. 101]), the teacher's perspective on his or her work tends to contract, moving "toward conservatism and objectification of the classroom" (p. 101) . In the humanization process ("long-term developments in the teacher's socialization perspective toward students as people"[p. 112]), the work orientation of teachers tends to expand, with a high value placed on "the intrinsic rewards linked to dealing with students as people" (p. 112). Blase is persuaded that students have a powerful impact in the socialization of teachers and that "shifts in the teacher's perspective over the long term are

largely a product of reciprocal interactions with students as whole people" (p. 103).

In sharp contrast, Feiman-Nemser and Floden (1986) describe three models of teacher development that are unidirectional. Such models of development stress internally guided changes that may not be indicative of the goals of teacher education.

Nevertheless, the first model of personal transformation, or teacher development, is characterized by changes in teacher concerns. This model is embedded in Fuller's (1969) description of stages of progression in a teacher's gaining classroom experience. Those stages described earlier in this chapter under the heading, "Major Concerns of Preservice Teachers," and include a survival stage, a mastery stage, and an impact stage.

The second model of teacher development emerges from theories of cognitive development. This approach considers teacher development as one component in adult development, and the higher stages are marked by effective teaching, including "'increased flexibility, differentiation of feelings, respect for individuality, the cherishing of interpersonal ties and a broader social perspective' (Witherell & Erickson, 1978)" (Feiman-Nemser & Floden, 1986, p. 522).

The third approach to teacher development, according to Feiman-Nemser and Floden (1986), refers to inservice programs driven by practitioners' statements of needs. In other words, teachers define their needs, and teacher centers respond by providing inservice educative opportunities and by supporting teachers in their professional growth and development. Ultimately, "teachers who reach the final stage will have responsive and diversified classrooms where students have many opportunities to make choices about learning" (p. 522).

These three models of teacher development, then, emphasize teachers' acquiring higher levels of competence in classroom teaching and management skills but do not include teachers' development of beliefs about, attitudes toward, and values

concerning teaching processes or teaching as a profession. Feiman-Nemser and Floden (1986) summarize research indicating that the personal and professional transformations of both novice and veteran teachers take place within the context of interactive socialization processes.

That socialization formally commenses in university preservice teacher education programs and continues as prospective teachers move through their student teaching field experiences. Feiman-Nemser and Floden (1986) discuss the accommodations novice teachers make as they respond to university coursework and school classroom teaching norms and expectations. That response, according to these authors may follow one of three avenues:

1. Internalized adjustment: Teachers, believing that expectations are appropriate, conform to those expectations.
2. Strategies compliance: Teachers may adjust their behaviors to conform to expectations while at the same time holding intrnal reservations.
3. Modification: Teachers strategically redefine the situations and work toward alternative or modified expectations.

Feiman-Nemser and Floden (1986) write that "emphasis on the resistence of beginners to the effects of the workplace may underestimate the extent to which teaching culture is transmitted from one generation of teachers to the next" (p. 521). In addition, Blase (1986) points out that "the research literature has little to say about many aspects of teachers' work and the development of self" (p. 100). Other education specialists also decry the limited attention schools of education have been giving to research production and theory building that applies specifically to teacher preparation (Emans, 1983; Goodman, 1988). Bunting (1988), for example, in presenting evidence that "the pairing of student and cooperating

teacher is related to student teaching outcomes" (p. 43), reports that nonetheless "limited insight has been shed on the dynamic interworkings of the relationship" (p. 43). Freiberg and Waxman (1988) are concerned over the fact that while "field experiences are an important part of the professional development of teachers" (p. 8), there is "a dearth of research that indicates the types of field experiences, curriculum, or feedback preservice teachers need to facilitate teaching competence (Howey, 1977; Lanier & Little, 1986; Zeichner, 1980)" (p. 8). Joyce (1988) observes that while "research on training in commercial and industrial settings has continued to progress steadily during the last 15 years" (p. 32), there has been no parallel activity in teacher education circles. In the field of education, "research on training and skill learning in preservice applications has languished during the last 15 years, following a decade of considerable activity" (p. 32). He emphasizes that this situation must change and points out the great need for a "renewed interest in the possibilities of preservice training research" (p. 32).

Summary

In summary, the following five major themes emerged from the review of literature:

1. The student teaching experience should be a time in which the preservice teacher can "experiment, adapt, and grow while practicing pedagogical skills under the guidance of a competent teacher" (Tannehill & Zakrajsek, 1988, p. 38).
2. "Nearly all experienced teachers . . . indicate that the practice teaching experience is the critical influence" in developing teaching styles of preservice teachers (Joyce, 1988, p. 38).
3. The cooperating teacher serves as a model, and student teachers' attitudes, behaviors, and teaching methods closely resemble those of the cooperating teacher.

4. The student teacher's socialization process involves "the development of a professional self-conception" which, in turn, involves "a complicated choice of perceptions, skills, values, and interactions. In this process, a professional identity is forged which is believable both to the individual and to others (Lortie, 1975, p. 363).
5. Arnold van Gennep's (1960) anthropological construct, the "rites of passage," has been utilized in various studies as a theoretical framework within which the researcher has analyzed developmental and socialization processes of persons or groups of persons who have moved from one status or position to another.

In previous studies, van Gennep's (1960) rites of passage construct and similar models have been used to describe and analyze the transition processes student teachers undergo during their development into classroom teachers. From these studies have emerged speculations that certain factors during the student teaching field experience are critical to the student teacher's development into his/her teacher-self. The primary critical influence is the cooperating teacher and three issues of his/her expertise:

1. Guiding the student teacher through the roles and responsibilities of the classroom teacher;
2. Facilitating the student teacher's decision-making skills; and
3. Interacting with the student teacher in reflecting upon his/her teaching behaviors and instructional strategies and their impact upon the pupils.

Other factors, according to previous studies, that influence the student teacher's development of his/her teacher-self include university course work and the preservice teacher's translation of pedagogical theory into classroom practice and the school setting.

Other studies imply that the student teacher's interactions with the pupils in the field assignment may also have some influence.

In addition to the critical factors that influence teacher development and socialization, the studies indicate that acculturation into the teaching profession takes place over a period of time. Eddy's (1969) study demonstrated that the socialization and acculturation processes continue well into the first year of teaching. It is hoped that this present research will add to the knowledge base that has accumulated from the past and generate further research in the future.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study was designed as an inquiry into the socialization process through which five student teachers progressed during their fourteen weeks of student teaching. Data gathering consisted of (1) nine questionnaires and one essay, (2) classroom observations followed by open-ended interviews with each student teacher, and (3) seminars with the five student teachers. The rationale for interpretive inquiry, a description of participants and setting, method, and analysis are presented in the following discussion.

Rationale for Interpretive Inquiry

Firestone (1987) explains that qualitative research, of which interpretive inquiry is one methodology, is a phenomenological approach based in four paradigms:

1. Assumptions about the world. Qualitative research is rooted in a phenomenological paradigm which holds that reality is socially constructed through individual or collective definitions of the situation.
2. Purpose. Qualitative research is more concerned with understanding. . . the social phenomenon from the actors' perspectives through participation in the life of those actors.
3. Approach. The prototypical qualitative study. . . helps the reader understand the definitions of the situations of those studied.
4. Researcher role. The qualitative researcher becomes "immersed" in the phenomenon of interest (pp. 16-17).

Burgess (1986) points out that field studies reveal significant diversity in their "research aims, objectives, processes, problems and methods" (p. 218) and that no single attribute is equally representative in all field studies. However, he describes ten common characteristics of field research. The following discussion compares the salient features of the present interpretive inquiry with those field research characteristics identified by Burgess:

1. The focus is on the observed present, but the findings are contextualized within a social, cultural and historical framework (p. 218).

Present study. The focus is on the fourteen-week student teaching experience of five student teachers. The findings are contextualized within the social structure of the classrooms to which the student teachers have been assigned, the university preservice teacher preparation program, the persons with whom the student teachers interacted during their student teaching, and their reasons for entering the teaching profession.

2. The research is conducted within a theoretical framework. While there may only be a small number of questions to orientate a study, further questions may arise during the course of the research (Burgess, p. 218).

Present study. Arnold van Gennep's (1960) construct, the "rites of passage" provided the theoretical framework for this study. I began the study with a small number of orienting questions that were adapted from Eddy's (1969) study of first-year teachers in an inner-city school setting and

questions from my own 1988 pilot study (Bowers, 1988). Additional questions (i.e., questionnaires) were added as needed during the course of the study.

3. The research involves close, detailed, intensive work. The researcher participates in the social situation under study (Burgess, p. 218).

Present study. I served as the university supervisor and seminar leader during the study.

4. The major research instrument is the researcher who attempts to obtain a participant's account of the social setting (Burgess, p. 218).

Present study. I developed the questionnaires, made classroom observations, and conducted the follow-up interviews after the classroom observations. I analyzed the responses on the questionnaires and the notes from the observations, follow-up interviews, and seminars.

5. Unstructured interviews in the form of extended conversations may complement the observational account (Burgess, p. 218).

Present study. I held unstructured interviews with the student teachers following my observations of their classroom teaching. Near the end of the student teaching experience, I asked the student teachers to write an unstructured essay about their perceptions of student teaching.

6. Personal documents may give depth and background to the contemporary account (Burgess, p. 218).

Present study. In my attempt to follow each student teacher, I asked each student teacher to complete nine questionnaires, one every other week during the student teaching experience. In addition, each student teacher submitted to me lesson plans, grade and attendance records, and written data about each school to which she was assigned.

7. Different methods of investigation may be used to complement field methods with the result that different methodologies may be integrated by the researcher (Burgess, p. 218).

Present study. The inquiry consisted of three methods of gathering information about each participant's student teaching experience (see "Method" in this chapter). I integrated the methods to present the data, analyze the results, and draw conclusions.

8. The decisions regarding the collection and analysis of data take place in the field and are products of the inquiry (Burgess, p. 218).

Present study. The decision to use written questionnaires was based on my concern about maintaining confidentiality of the participants' responses and in following each participant's progression through the student teaching experience in a consistent manner. The analysis of the data was made within the "rites of passage" theoretical framework and included the participants' anecdotal accounts of their student teaching experience and my own identification of

common themes and perceptions and conclusions that may be drawn from these five participants' experiences.

9. The researcher attempts to disturb the process of social life as little as possible (Burgess, p. 218).

Present study. Neither the participants nor I attempted to use the student teaching experience to affect major changes in public education. My role as researcher was to follow the student teachers during their field experience and to facilitate their socialization and development into the teaching profession.

10. Research reports disseminate the knowledge which informants have provided without rendering harm to them, taking into account ethical problems that confront the researcher and the researched (Burgess, p. 218).

Present study. To ensure the participants' confidentiality, I assigned a pseudonym to each participant and did not identify the school system, schools, or cooperating teachers with whom the student teachers worked. In addition, only one sample of one student teacher's interview has been included in this study. Some other participants expressed their concern about their entire descriptions being included in this study and possible identification of themselves or their schools or cooperating teachers. I assured them that their interviews would remain confidential. The sample included in Appendix C is there by permission of the participant.

Participants

Six student teachers, who were assigned to me in my capacity as university supervisor of student teachers, initially served as participants in this study. After three weeks, however, one person opted to withdraw from student teaching and thus from the research project. Of the remaining five participants, one student teacher was a twenty-year veteran teacher who was working toward additional certification. The other four participants were enrolled in the undergraduate integrated elementary/middle school teacher preparation program at an eastern Virginia university.

Prior to the first day of classes in the public schools to which the student teachers were assigned, I met with the participants to explain the purpose and methodology of this study. Each participant signed an agreement (see Appendix A) to participate in the study. I informed them in writing and verbally that they could withdraw from the study at any time with no fear of penalty to their final evaluation for student teaching. Furthermore, to ensure their privacy and confidentiality, I assigned each participant a pseudonym.

The participants' responses to the first questionnaire provided some background information about each student teacher. Also, each one completed an information sheet about her school assignments for student teaching.

Gayle was a twenty-eight-year old white female who was born and reared in a small town in a southern state bordering the Gulf of Mexico. Gayle wrote that her mother significantly influenced her decision to become a teacher. Gayle's undergraduate coursework was completed at two universities in her home state. She transferred to the eastern Virginia university to complete her student teaching requirements.

Gayle's first student teaching placement was in a fourth grade classroom in an urban elementary school. This school of 750 students served children from low- to middle-class blue collar

working families. Her second placement was in a suburban elementary school which serves children from predominantly professional and business middle-class families. In this setting, Gayle taught a sixth grade class.

Kaye was a twenty-nine-year old white female who was born into a military family. She spent the predominant part of her life in a suburban area of coastal Virginia. She felt that some of her exceptional teachers combined with her own enthusiasm for learning and her wanting to work with children led to her decision to enter teaching.

Kaye's first assignment was a fifth grade class in an urban elementary school that served about 600 students. These students' socio-economic backgrounds ranged from lower- to middle-class families, whose primary vocations included enlisted military personnel and blue collar workers. Her second placement was a sixth grade class in a suburban elementary school of approximately 800 students. The socio-economic background of the students was similar to that of the students in the first school.

Like Kaye, thirty-eight-year-old Ellen was raised in a military family. She lived in various military posts in the United States and Germany until she was sixteen years old. At that time her family settled in a densely populated city on the east coast of Virginia, where she has remained since her marriage. Ellen, a white female, indicated that she was influenced by her sister, a teacher, to enter teaching. She perceives teaching as a way to meet her maternal needs.

Ellen's first placement was a fourth grade class in an urban-suburban elementary school that served a racially diverse population. Her second placement was a fifth grade class in a suburban elementary school. For both schools the socio-economic status of the students' families ranged from lower- to middle-class.

Lynne, a white female, was twenty-seven years old at the time of this study. She grew up near Washington, D.C. where she was active in teaching horseback riding. In fact, she stated that the

positive comments that other riding instructors made about her teaching skills influenced her decision to become a teacher.

Lynne's first placement was in an urban, multicultural middle school, in which she taught sixth grade. Her second assignment was a fourth grade class in a suburban elementary school. The socio-economic status of the students at both schools ranged from low to middle class.

Betty, a white female, was forty-eight years old when she entered the student teaching program. After teaching in self-contained classrooms in upper elementary grades for nineteen years, Betty became the mathematics resource teacher for learning disabled students in her school. Since this new position included Betty's teaching children in grades K to four, she had to complete state mandated requirements for K-4 certification. These requirements included student teaching. She felt that teaching had been an excellent career choice and was glad that some of her own teachers had influenced her decision to become a teacher.

Betty's student teaching required only one seven-week placement, which was in her own school of employment. The school's principal, the cooperating teacher, Betty, and I, serving as the university supervisor, agreed that she would student teach half each school day and fulfill her responsibilities as a mathematics resource teacher for the remainder of the school day. To meet the university required minimum total hours, the student teaching time was extended to fourteen weeks. Betty student taught a fourth grade class in this suburban elementary school, which served students whose socio-economic status ranged from middle to upper middle class.

Setting

The university in which the five participants were enrolled for their student teaching semester is located in an urban setting

near the Virginia coast. The four-year teacher preparation program is under the auspices of the College of Education of this university.

The specific teacher preparation program in which the participants of this study were enrolled was an integrated elementary/middle school undergraduate degree and state certification program. At the time of this study, the university was in the process of restructuring its preservice teacher preparation program to a five-year program that will award a master's degree and state certification.

The university requires each preservice teacher to complete two seven-week student teaching placements: one in an urban, multicultural setting; the other in a suburban setting. The population of each geographic area in which the schools are located is over one million.

Method

Three methods of gathering data were utilized for this study: (1) nine questionnaires and one essay, (see Appendix B); (2) four classroom observations and follow-up open-ended interviews, (see Appendix C for sample); and (3) seminars. The three methods constitute a methodological triangulation. Specifically, the three methods of gathering data involve "'between method' triangulation [in which] different methods are used in relation to the same object of study" (Burgess, 1986, p. 145). Each data gathering method complements the other two. Furthermore, to ensure greater consistency and validity in reporting the student teachers' responses and my interpretations, the three sets of data have been integrated in the analysis.

Questionnaires

The questionnaires were adapted from two sources: (1) interview questions used by Eddy (1969) in her study of first-year

teachers in an inner city school setting; and (2) my own 1988 pilot study in which I conducted interpretive inquiry open-ended interviews with three persons who had completed a sixteen-week student teaching field experience from August to December, 1987 as part of their preservice teacher education program at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (Bowers, 1988).

Eddy (1969) utilized van Gennep's separation, transition, and incorporation phases of the "rites of passage" construct to describe the socialization and development of a group of first-year teachers as they left student teaching and entered into what Eddy called the "bureaucracy of education." Her interview questions were designed to trace the progression of the participants through their transition and initiation processes.

My study is designed to follow five persons through the student teaching socialization and development processes that are concurrent with preservice transition status. I, too, have utilized van Gennep's three phases of the "rites of passage" in following the five participants in my study through their student teaching experience. I designed the nine questionnaires to focus on the student teachers' progression through the three phases of their "rites of passage."

The questionnaires were given to the five participants during the scheduled seminars. The participants were asked to complete the questionnaires and to mail them to me by a specific date. The first questionnaire was completed prior to the beginning of the student teacher's classroom experiences. The next seven questionnaires were completed every other week during the fourteen-week student teaching experience. The final questionnaire was administered following the completion of the student teaching experience.

In the present study, the purpose of the first questionnaire was to gather background information about the student teacher in terms of age, reasons for entering teaching, and factors and/or persons that were major influences on that decision. The next seven

questionnaires were designed to gather ongoing information about the participant's perceptions of her vision of teaching, classroom instruction, classroom management and discipline techniques, relationships with students, the cooperating teacher, the school administrator(s), parents, and other factors involved in the process of becoming a teacher. The final questionnaire was written as a means for the student teacher to evaluate the entire student teaching experience, including any changes in the person's perception of self--especially self as teacher.

The essay, which was assigned during the twelfth week of student teaching, was designed to help the student teacher see the entire student teaching experience as a whole picture and respond to open-ended questions about certain key issues in the process. Those key issues included planning, instruction, student discipline, non-teaching activities, record keeping, and any other items the student teacher wished to discuss. Furthermore, each student teacher was asked to relate how she dealt with differences of opinion, if any, between her and her cooperating teacher.

Classroom Observations and Follow-up Open-ended Interviews

For the purposes of this study, I visited each student teacher at her school four times, with the exception of Betty who completed a seven week assignment. I visited Betty twice. For each placement, the first visit occurred within ten days after the student teacher arrived at each assigned school. This visit was an opportunity for me to meet the school principal and the cooperating teacher and to talk with the student teacher about her initial perceptions of her placement. The second visit occurred during the last two weeks of each seven-week student teaching assignment. The purpose of the second visit was twofold: (1) to observe the student teacher's actual classroom teaching and interactions with the students and (2) to converse with the cooperating teacher about the student teacher's progress. The second visit was followed-up

with an open-ended interview with the student teacher about the actual lesson, interactions with the students, and any other pertinent topics. If a follow-up interview was not possible at the school, the interview took place by telephone as soon as possible. I recorded notes of the interviews (see sample in Appendix C).

Seminars

Seven seminars were planned to discuss specific student teaching issues and concerns that I or any of the student teachers had identified. The second seminar was cancelled due to scheduling conflicts. The following were the topics of the other six seminars:

1. Initial perceptions of and adjustments to student teaching and the assigned school
2. Classroom management and discipline
3. Relationships with parents
4. Evaluations of teachers
5. Hands-on activities across the curriculum
6. Accessing services for students with special needs

Each seminar was opened by giving the student teachers opportunities to discuss successes, issues, or concerns that needed immediate attention. Furthermore, even though I planned specific themes for the seminars, each meeting was conducted in an open-ended, conversational manner. The student teachers were encouraged not only to talk about specific incidents but also to critically analyze the incident or incidents within the context of the classroom and the total school. They examined the roles and responsibilities of the student teacher as the classroom teacher in dealing with the everyday activities and interactions in the classroom. I took notes during the seminars and wrote journal entries of the seminars the same evening in which they were held.

Analyses

The analyses presented in chapters 4 and 5 are of two types, as defined by Burgess (1986):

> (1) Descriptive accounts where the emphasis is upon providing detailed description which is informed by theoretical schemes; and
> (2) Analytical descriptions whereby the conceptual scheme used is developed on the basis of the data that are obtained (p. 182).

In actuality, the analyses in this study, as well as other interpretive inquiries, are more interpretive than analytical. The major focus of this inquiry is the student teachers' shared meaning of their awareness of their being (their existence) in the classroom and of their perceptions of their student teaching experiences. Those awarenesses and perceptions are most effectively communicated to the reader in the actual words of the participants.

The secondary focus of this study is my interpretation of the students teachers' being and perceptions of the student teaching experience within the theoretical framework of van Gennep's separation, transition, and incorporation phases of the "rites of passage" (as presented in chapter 4).

The concurrent issues of reliability of the study and trustworthiness of the responses of the participants and my interpretations of those responses fall within the guidelines of interpetive inquiry research as mentioned earlier in this chapter. Since I as the researcher was immersed in the study, I was ethically obligated to maintain fidelity to the personhood of each participant in accepting their written and spoken records of their perceptions and experiences as truthful and to report those experiences and perceptions, as well as my own interpretations, in a manner that can be assumed to be trustworthy. Indeed, one of the basic assumptions of interpretive inquiry is the truthfulness of

both the participants and the researcher. However, the reader is reminded that in a subjective study, as is interpretive inquiry, one of the limitations is that the perceptions and interpretations of both the participants and researcher may or may not vary with a different group of participants and another researcher. That limitation is lessened to a great extent by using the participants' own words as much as possible, as I have done in chapter 4.

In chapter 4, I included the anecdotal descriptions of the student teachers' experiences and perceptions to answer my central research question: How does each student teacher participant progress through her rites of passage during her fourteen-week student teaching field experience?

In the description of the separation phase, I included the following four discussions:

1. reasons for entering teaching
2. personal characteristics that make one a candidate for teaching
3. expectations of student teaching
4. critique of coursework preparation for teaching

In the description of the transition phase, I included the following four discussions:

1. relationship with the cooperating teacher
2. instruction, including actual classroom teaching, use of supplementary resources, and lesson planning
3. classroom management and discipline
4. factors that contribute to elementary/middle school students' success or failures

In the description of the incorporation phase, I included the following two discussions:

1. the student teachers' evaluations of the student teaching experience
2. the student teachers' changes in their vision of teaching

My interpretation within that "rites of passage" framework is followed in chapter 5 by answering the three subsidiary questions of this study:

1. What is the student teacher's response to her cooperating teacher as a model?
2. How does the student teacher translate educational theory into classroom practice?
3. What are the processes in the student teacher's development of the "teacher-self"?

In answering these three questions, I have identified common themes that emerged from the participants responses within the rites of passage framework and have discussed my analysis of how each major theme is played out. I have described specific attributes of (1) the cooperating teacher as a model for the student teacher, (2) specific methods of translating educational theory into classroom practice, and (3) some of the socialization aspects of the development of the "teacher-self."

In chapter 6, I have discussed conclusions as applicable to the five participants in this inquiry and have made recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER 4

THE SOCIALIZATION AND DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESSES: THE RITES OF PASSAGE

In his description of "rites of passage," Arnold van Gennep (1960) has written of the process a person undergoes in moving from one life situation or social position to another. As has already been mentioned, this process typically consists of three phases through which the person passes: a separation phase, a transition phase, and an incorporation phase (van Gennep, 1960; Eddy, 1969; O'Neill & O'Neill, 1974; Bridges, 1980; Frayser, 1985). A person who is moving through the series of shifts that comprise the "rites of passage" undergoes profound and extensive changes in self-perception and world outlook. Concurrently, others are changing the way they perceive that person as he or she reaches each new stage of passage. It is such a process that a student teacher is experiencing as she or he moves from the status of student to the status of student teacher to the status of teacher.

In this chapter, I have answered my central research question: How does each student teacher participant progress through her rites of passage during her fourteen-week student teaching field experience? To answer this question, I have used as much as possible the student teachers' own words in an anecdotal foremat to describe how each one has progressed through each of the three phases of the rites of passage. The reader is reminded that the "rites of passage" is the theoretical framework for this study.

The Separation Phase

As the student teacher is moving away from the role of student, including the various assumptions, interpretations, and behaviors associated with that role, a separation is occurring. The person begins to shift his or her thinking from what one was (pupil) to what one is on the way to becoming (teacher).

In one sense, the separation from the student role began with the person's decision to become a teacher in the first place and then continues through the preparations necessary to assume the responsibilities of that new role, including especially the changes in perceptions of what that role entails--changes that are most likely to occur during the student teaching experience.

Seeing Things Differently

In describing her initial reaction to student teaching, Ellen commented, "Very hectic." She was astounded to find there were "lots of things to do and not enough time to do everything." Lynne spoke of the "slightly chaotic" beginning of her experience and quickly became aware of the "many diverse discipline problems as well as abilities within the students."

Kaye experienced a "rough beginning," which she attributed to an in-school placement change necessitated by the death of her initial cooperating teacher's son three days before the beginning of school.

On a more optimistic note, Gayle described her initial segment of her experience as "excellent." She explained:

> *My cooperating teacher and all other teachers at L___ have been very helpful. They offered their assistance many times. The classroom is somewhat large, thirty in all, but the rest of the school is also full. I feel at ease while teaching in front of these students. There are*

only a couple of students that are disruptive in the classroom.

In the unique situation faced by Betty, what might be termed a "reverse separation" took place. She had to shift to the role of student teacher after having been a classroom teacher with twenty years' experience. This change in status was occasioned by her acceptance of the position of math resource teacher in her school. That new position requires primary grades certification, and Betty had been endorsed for only grades four through seven. She related that, by serving as a math resource teacher, she "had been working with numerous first graders illegally." Thus, Betty found herself occupying two different statuses simultaneously, a higher status (veteran teacher) and a lower status (student teacher), a situation that sociologists call status inconsistency. Betty feels resentful about her status inconsistency:

I enjoy teaching and I feel comfortable when teaching math at the present time. I guess deep down, however, I do resent having to do this after 20 years in the classroom. There is always much to learn and perhaps some methods courses might have proved just as beneficial, if not more so, than student teaching. I feel that all of my experience isn't worth too much to the administrators. There needs to be some other way to gain endorsement for "seasoned" teachers!

She perceives little difference between her experience teaching fifth grade and the actual teaching part of student teaching. But Betty anticipated gaining new ideas from her cooperating teacher. She wrote:

I have been interested in observing my cooperating teacher's way with her class. Some of her ideas are really good. It is amazing that after twenty years of teaching, something as simple as filing all one's bulletin

board letters in a file box makes it so much simpler to put together a bulletin board.

In discussing the process persons undergo in a rite of passage, William Bridges (1980) points out the part that disenchantment plays during the separation phase. He defines disenchantment as "the discovery that in some sense one's world is indeed no longer real" (p. 22), and emphasizes the important distinction between disenchantment and disillusionment. "The disenchanted person recognizes the old view as sufficient in its time, but insufficient now," he writes (p. 22). Such a person moves on to new growth. The student teaching experience apparently served to show the student teachers that their older views of teaching were now insufficient, and their experience with "disenchantment" (the reality of today's classrooms) thus began propelling them toward the new growth referred to by Bridges.

The Way It All Began

The process of moving away from the role of student to that of teacher is rooted in the decision to become a teacher in the first place. To explore the how, when, and why of that decision, I asked each participant, "What were your life circumstances at the time you made the definite decision to enter teaching? What were the major attractions of teaching for you?"

Lynne: *"I was teaching English horse back riding. Several of my students' parents were lare teachers. Upon observing my classes, they advised me to go into teaching. I was at a crossroads and needed to make a decision. I finally found something that I enjoy and am good at."*

Kaye: *"I was twenty-six years old and had just completed an associates degree and decided that*

I would like to work with children. The first attraction was the opportunity to work with children. I also liked the fact that teachers had the summer months off. The most important factor was the opportunity to work with children and spark their enthusiasm for learning."

Ellen: *"About two years ago I decided against having children. I decided that teaching would fulfill the 'mother' instinct inside me. The attraction included opportunities to influence children and the hours--the belief that a child's education will determine the type society we live in. Our children are our future."*

Gayle: *"When I was a junior in high school, I became interested in teaching because I thought it would be the right profession for me. It's a good job for a woman--rewarding--good job to raise a family."*

Betty: *"At some point in senior high school. I had often been designated as a tutor by some teachers. The major attractions? I enjoyed children and the broad area of subjects an elementary major takes. The major attractions--respect for teachers then; working time (summers free); enjoyment of being with others."*

Four of the interviewees believe that working with children in a way that offers children hope and influences them is the major attraction for entering teaching. Lynne and Betty acknowledged early potential for success in the teaching profession. Ellen and Gayle view elementary/middle school teaching as appropriate to traditional gender roles for women. Personal desires for a typical eight to four or five workday along with extended summer vacation time are other attractive features of teaching. Ellen believes that the well-being of our nation depends upon the education of its

children and that teachers are the key to our children's and, ultimately, our nation's future.

The Examined Life

The separation process includes a person's examining his/her personal traits or qualities that would be beneficial to that person's assuming the desired new role. In the first questionnaire I asked each one to write about his or her own qualities that would fit with teaching as a profession.

Lynne: *I can relate to kids easily. I can get my ideas and desires across to them. I think they're neat.*

Kaye: *A genuine love for children and a desire to help children learn more about their environment.*

Ellen: *Creative. Organized.*

Gayle: *My personality; being patient; a love for children.*

Betty: *Sense of humor; curiosity about many things; enjoy learning new things; enjoy children from about nine to thirteen.*

Four participants suggest that their positive attitudes toward children make them good candidates for teaching in the elementary and middle school. Other personal traits cited by these interviewees include personal curiosity and enjoyment of learning, along with the ability to transmit knowledge and facilitate interaction with the environment.

During the seventh week of the student teaching experience, each one discussed how her personal attributes functioned in the classroom. Kaye spoke of her sense of responsibility to her students and her determination "to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning and to provide the material, motivation and

practice needed to succeed in learning." Lynne stated "relating to kids" and "getting my ideas and desires across to them" means that "I teach them as best I can what I am required to and then some."

Gayle's "personality" and "patience" is revealed in her commitment to both the intellectual and emotional needs of her students, as is evident in the following statement: "I feel I am responsible for presenting material to student, making sure they understand and evaluating their progress. I also feel responsible for being there for the students, being concerned."

Ellen's "creativity" and "organization" are played out in the following way: "To provide them with a safe and secure environment where each person will be able to become a part of the learning process."

Betty's "curiosity" and "enjoyment of learning" are reflected in her lesson preparation. She explained:

> *I need to provide the best learning environment that I can. I need to be properly prepared. Children (upper grades anyway) know when you're not prepared. They sense your weak areas. Above all I need to be fair and try to adjust my lessons to fit various needs.*

Education Courses and the Preparation Process

Formal preparation to assume the roles and responsibilities of a teacher is a necessary component of the preservice teacher's separation process. During several visits with the participants during their student teaching, I asked them to discuss the ways in which their university course work had or had not prepared them for the teaching role in the classroom and how they translated theory into practice. Also, in the questionnaires, I asked them to discuss their university course work preparation, experience, and perceptions.

First, each person cited ways the university course work had positively prepared her for student teaching:

Lynne: *At ___ the emphasis on planning and over planning has helped. Also, handling colleagues (other teachers). . . Specifically, theory, lesson plans, unit plans in social studies helped. In language arts, the theories and mediums for teaching. In math, alternate ways to teach. Management but not for tough discipline problems. [But the classroom theory] gives you insight as to how different kids learn.*

Kaye: *[University A] gave me a better understanding of children's behavior and classroom management skills were obtained at [University B]. However, I don't think you are ever fully prepared until you actually get hands on experience. Lesson planning was the most important aspect of my university courses and my teaching experience. Also, ideas presented for teaching in the methods classes helped in the classroom.*

Gayle: *My in school (classroom) experience seemed to be the best preparation for teaching. . . Even though I would not teach in these classes, observing was a valuable experience. . . I feel that the small amount of time I spent in the classroom during my methods classes has helped me during my experiences. There are some things that the methods cannot teach you that an actual classroom situation can. Being in front of a group of children can be kind of scary.*

Ellen: *[The preparation at _____] gave me various theories used in the classroom. Also the knowledge of subject matter, different teaching strategies, and philosophies of teaching. The most important course I took at _____ was my management course. I wish this course had been longer. I have used a lot of the techniques I learned in management in the classroom. I have*

> *also used many of the lesson plans I used in each of my courses.*

Betty compared her initial preparation during 1958 to 1962 with the course work preservice teachers in the 1980s' receive. She explained:

> *I took a wide variety of courses, minoring in social studies, which gave me a broad knowledge of many areas to be shared with my students. Basal readers and handwriting. . .were not taught. These areas were learned from practical experiences after employment! I know from having had several student teachers. . . that today's graduating students are probably far better prepared than I. . . . Thinking back to my first student teaching experience in 1962, my minor in social studies helped me far more than all the art, music, and P.E. methods courses I had taken. It was my cooperating teacher that brought it all together for me.*

In discussing her recent required course work, Betty related that "my courses taken for certificate renewal have been most beneficial because most of them have been sharing experiences as well as instructional."

In summary, the following positive aspects of the preservice teacher education course work emerged from the participants' discussion. Three inexperienced teacher candidates cited the importance of courses which included classroom management and instructional methodology, especially in gaining ideas for instructional activities. Lynne and Kaye mentioned as being beneficial lesson planning assignments that were part of specific methods courses. Kaye cited the understanding of student behavior as a salient component of her university course work. Gayle's concerns about "being in front of a group of children" were alleviated somewhat by her pre-student teaching classroom

observation experiences that ran concurrently with her methods courses.

As stated in the literature review in chapter one, Joyce (1988) names the cooperating teacher as the most important single influence in a preservice teacher's preparation for teaching. Betty supports Joyce's argument in her statement, "It was my cooperating teacher that brought it all together for me." The value of her more recent course work was in the interaction and sharing experiences with fellow classmates.

There were ways in which the participants in this study felt that the university has failed to prepare them--primarily in dealing with inappropriate student behavior. They also offered suggestions for what course work should include. Their answer to questions about whether or not their education courses were helpful during their student teaching field experience were revealing. They had specific suggestions for changing certain aspects of their coursework and student teaching experiences:

Lynne: *(After two weeks). Dealing with forty-minute class periods is tough, especially in language arts. The sixth graders have trouble shifting gears. A bigger emphasis on handling <u>major</u> discipline problems by the teacher would help.*

(After eight weeks). *Knowledge of varying curriculums. Unavoidable, I assume. Most classes I need to handle tougher discipline problems than what is covered in class.*

(After ten weeks). *You could probably shorten the methods to a half semester without too much damage. I would add more on dealing with administrations and more emphasis on dealing with whacko (unstable) children.*

Kaye: (After two weeks). *My first lesson was flexibility, which is never really taught in methods classes. Most of the time I feel that there isn't enough time, whereas _____ made me believe that creativity was the key to success. Time is the most important element.*

(After eight weeks). *Not prepared to deal with the constant discipline problems that interrupted my teaching. After a while, the strain begins to affect your teaching style.*

(After ten weeks). *Classroom management, especially in dealing with children who disrupt class constantly.*

Ellen: (After two weeks). *_____gives its students a lot of theory but does not prepare us for real life situations.*

(After eight weeks). *Even with all of the knowledge of all the subject matter, different types of teaching strategies, and all of the methods and materials courses, the university courses did not prepare me for <u>real</u> teaching in a <u>real</u> school with <u>REAL</u> students. The participation is not long enough.*

Gayle: (After eight weeks). *I believe I could have taken more courses in management and discipline. I know nothing could have prepared me for every type of problem I will encounter, but maybe more*

examples would have helped me handle my first experience more effectively.

(After ten weeks). *I wish I would have had more courses about classroom discipline. This has been my only problem during my student teaching, especially during the first experience.*

All four student teachers who had not had previous classroom experience indicated that they needed to have had a course in classroom management that included more examples of "real life" situations involving "difficult children." After being threatened with bodily harm from a fourteen-year-old student, Lynne expressed concern that the university course work had not adequately prepared her for such a situation. She explained that "no one even mentioned that such a thing might occur during student teaching." These participants suggested that they would have benefited from more actual pre-student teaching field experience that included observing different classrooms, different teaching styles, different types of students, and varied ways of dealing with "real life" incidents. Kaye felt that "somewhere" there is a balance between creatively teaching what needs to be taught and maintaining effective classroom management. Her answer was more in-class experience in the public schools prior to student teaching.

Betty, the twenty-year veteran teacher, stated no personal concern about inappropriate student behavior or classroom management. However, during seminars she readily talked with the other four participants about their concerns and gave them suggestions they often referred to as "real" and "valuable." Betty did express concern about certain inadequacies in her own earlier undergraduate education, as indicated in the following comments:

(After two weeks). *I've always felt that more emphasis on reading, writing, and arithmetic would have more benefit than the music, art etc., since most systems now have specialists in those fields.*

(After eight weeks). *I always felt that there was not sufficient attention given to the teaching of reading. I really learned by experience and trial and error.*

(After ten weeks). *Twenty years ago, I would like to have had more reading and math methods courses. English was something that wasn't taught as a methods course and may not be taught now. A student teacher is expected to use "good" grammar practices and is expected to write well BUT how do we teach these ideas to youngsters?*

I have attended workshops on every subject imaginable during the last seven or eight years because my principal. . . believed in having in-services at least once a month if possible. She also believed that everyone would become a master teacher with a minimum of effort as long as they knew what was expected of them. Needless to say, these in-services are all beginning to sound the same now but there were many that did spur us on to becoming better educators.

University course work should provide opportunities for preservice teachers to begin separating themselves from the student role and thinking of themselves as teachers--to see themselves on the "other side of the desk." Such a process leads to the next phase in van Gennep's rites of passage, the transition into the teacher role.

The Transition Phase

In her 1969 book, Becoming a Teacher, Elizabeth M. Eddy writes that during the movement from one role to another, the

person is in a "critical state," having left one status or identity but having not yet been integrated into the new one. The person is "neither fish nor fowl." In the transition phase of the rites of passage the "individual begins to learn about the behavior which will be expected in this new status" (p. 21).

Unlike interns in other professions, most student teachers have been exposed to teaching for about fourteen years during which time they have been socialized into the pupil role. Although pupils and teachers share the same environment, their roles are vastly different. As Eddy (1969) points out, "student teaching can only partially bridge the gap separating the role of adult as teacher from child as pupil" (p. 10). Student teachers must experience sudden shifts in both peer and student/teacher relationships and in classroom expectations and behaviors.

The student teaching experience is the transition phase of preservice teacher education. During this time of learning behavioral expectations, two processes seem to occur--but they are intermingled rather than separate systems. One process occurs as the student teacher either models/accommodates or resists his or her cooperating teacher's classroom behavior. The other process is an initiation into what Eddy (1969) calls the "bureaucracy of education." The following discussion focuses on ways in which each student teacher participant in this study was involved in the socialization interplay between the "initiation into the bureaucracy" and modeling or resisting behaviors.

Relationship with the Cooperating Teacher

Ernestine Copas (1984) writes that "the job of the cooperating teacher is to help the student develop a deep and meaningful concept of teaching. . . ." (p. 50). Meeting such a goal is possible

only within the context of a relationship of mutual respect between the student teacher and the cooperating teacher.

Prior to the beginning of the student teaching experience, I asked each participant what she was expecting from her cooperating teacher. All five expressed their desire for instructional suggestions, advice, and honest feedback about their performance. Lynne wanted "mega help." Betty, the veteran teacher, looked forward to learning "from younger teachers."

At the university attended by the participants in this study, the elementary/middle school preservice teaching program requirement includes two settings of seven weeks each during the student teaching experience. Therefore, the student teachers are assigned to two different cooperating teachers. Of the five persons involved in this research, Betty's was an exception in that as a twenty-year veteran, who was working toward K-4 certification, her student teaching experience consisted of an hourly total equivalent to one seven-week period.

Betty's relationship with her cooperating teacher emerged as a team-teaching colleagueship, although Betty did gain "many fresh, new ideas" from her. She explained:

> *I believe that we work well together. I have tried to maintain my own identity without changing her plans, schedules, and routines. She has not hesitated to include me in conferences, etc.*

At the beginning of the student teaching, Betty was concerned about the fifteen-year difference in teaching experience between herself and her cooperating teacher but soon found this discrepancy not to be a problem. Her admiration of her cooperating teacher is evident in the following:

> *At first I think Mrs. _____ was intimidated by me but soon learned that I was there to learn and teach along with her. She is a very competent teacher and I have*

enjoyed seeing her work. I know in past years, the students that she has sent to us in fifth grade have been well prepared. Now, I know why! I have learned many "organizational" tricks from her. I have enjoyed working with her and her super class. I will miss the children.

Lynne described her relationship with her first cooperating teacher in a sixth grade class as "very good," but was basically noncommittal in naming the type of relationship and was somewhat cautious in describing the interaction between herself and Mrs. _____. After the second week, Lynne wrote the following answer to a question asking about the interaction with her cooperating teacher:

She needs to realize that I do not know the curriculum at all (or well), and I have forgotten all the tricks and rules involving the material covered in the curriculum.

The reader should be reminded at this point that Lynne said that university course work should have included more about varied curricula prior to the student teaching experience. Undoubtedly, Lynne was looking to her cooperating teacher for assistance with a component of course work about which she felt uncertain, but she was disappointed. However, after seven weeks, Lynne seemed to perceive her cooperating teacher as a type of positive model from whom she could get "good ideas" about instructional activities but a negative model in terms of organization. She explained:

She was a little nuts and somewhat unorganized handling papers, but a very good teacher with many good ideas. We thought alike about most things.

Lynne's second cooperating teacher served as a mentor, who offered suggestions and allowed Lynne the flexibility to experiment with different instructional styles and varied activities for the students. Lynne offered this explanation:

> *Our relationship is better than I expected. Ms. ____ is very flexible, yet she wants me to have a good and rewarding experience. She is very helpful with lessons. We help each other in the classroom. She always includes me when making decisions about rules, changes in lessons, changes in reading groups, etc. We talk about other things than school. She is very friendly.*

In the case of Gayle, it is evident that, early on, Ms. ____ perceived Gayle as a partner in the classroom. After seven weeks, that partnership had grown into a professional friendship. Gayle wrote:

> *My first impression of my [cooperating] teacher was wonderful. We had a very open relationship and felt at ease with each other in the classroom. I was never afraid to ask questions. Ms. ____ was always willing to give constructive criticism and advice when necessary.*

The relationship between Gayle and her second cooperating teacher can best be described as a professional mentorship, in which Gayle found an almost perfect role model. In describing her working relationship with this cooperating teacher, Gayle discussed lesson planning, instructional techniques, record keeping, and interaction with students:

> *My working relationship with my cooperating teacher has worked out great. We agree on almost every aspect of teaching. I like Mrs. _____'s teaching style and hope that I can use many of her techniques in my own*

teaching. Mrs. ____ sets up the type of lesson plan I was to prepare for each lesson. . . . She would like me to write them this way so that I am prepared each day. . . .

I try to model the same type of instructional techniques she uses. . . . Discipline is conducted in the same manner as when Mrs. _____ was in charge of the class. This was done by my choice. It is enforced and is consistent. This is the type of discipline I would like to have in my classroom.

The grade book is kept similar to Mrs. _____'s.

Mrs. _____ is aware of extra activities that the students are involved in, and with the involvement of the PTA. I would also like to be familiar with what is going on in and around the school. I want the students to know that I am concerned about outside and in school activities.

I believe Mrs. ____ accomplishes what is expected of her in a professional and thoughtful manner. When I have a classroom of my own, I will try to implement the same style of teaching.

Kaye's and Ellen's two student teaching placements illustrate both the positive and negative aspects of relationships with cooperating teachers and the impact those interactions have upon a student teacher's perceptions of the teaching profession and the roles of teachers in the classroom.

During her first seven-week experience, the relationship between Kaye and her cooperating teacher eroded in such a way that the major focus was on "discipline problems" rather than the total roles and responsibilities of teaching. Kaye's frustration with this situation is evident in the following dialogues:

(After two weeks)
Researcher: *Describe your interaction with your cooperating teacher up to the present time.*

Kaye: *My cooperating teacher and I seem to have a lot in common as far as teaching style. She is very helpful when talking to me; however, sometimes she assumes that I know what she's talking about and then doesn't have time to explain.*

(After three weeks)
Researcher: *In what way or ways has your cooperating teacher assisted you or given you some input in your instructional planning?*
Kaye: *She'll make suggestions on what to include and what we don't have time for.*

(After four weeks)
Researcher: *In view of your total teaching responsibilities, how would you describe your interaction and relationship with your cooperating teacher?*
Kaye: *My cooperating teacher and I had a good relationship, but she hampered my teaching style to some extent because of time limitations and my extensive plans.*
Researcher: *Were there other problems?*
Kaye: *My cooperating teacher would interrupt my lessons to discipline children; so, I began to focus more on discipline. Our attitudes toward discipline became similar. . . [but] the method was not effective.*

During the seventh week of the student teaching experience, I visited with Kaye and her cooperating teacher at their school. The cooperating teacher spoke with me privately about problems Kaye was experiencing in the classroom:

Kaye began in August by doing a wonderful job, but now I don't think she is being very effective. I know she's had a lot of personal problems to deal with during her student teaching and I think that's affected her classroom performance. She is sharp with the students

and has not taken her responsibilities--like, there's a set of papers she has not finished grading. I think she's overtired, but I want my kids back. She's losing the class, and I want my kids back before it's too late--before I lose them to bad behavior.

When I requested that the cooperating teacher, Kaye, and I meet together, the cooperating teacher refused by saying, "I'd rather not. It would make things too tense for the rest of the time Kaye is here. I'd rather you would talk with her. You'll know what to say tactfully." Therefore, Kaye and I met later that day at the school and discussed the problems the cooperating teacher had indicated. Kaye responded:

I know there have been problems but Ms. _____ interrupts my teaching to discipline the kids. And she doesn't talk to me after school much anymore because she has a part-time job and leaves at 3:15. I'm really surprised that she has told you there are problems because all along she has been telling me that everything is fine--that I'm doing a good job--and now she says that there are these problems. . . . She's never had a student teacher before and doesn't know how to talk to me or tell me what to do. Most of the time she tells me that I don't have time to teach this or that--just cover the material. She's pushing the kids so that they don't have time to really learn the material. . . . I am part of the problem. And we don't agree about discipline . . . I feel drained and frustrated. I can't wait for this experience to end. I'm beginning to hate it. I can hardly wait to get to my new school next week.

Tannehill and Zakrajsek (1988) write that student teachers typically expect their cooperating teacher to be a mentor, who would provide resources and information about the school and the curriculum and give appropriate and meaningful feedback about classroom performance. The majority of the student teachers in

their study indicated that they wanted the cooperating teachers to "'guide me, help me, show me, direct me, observe me, assist me, instruct me, and share with me.'" These researchers found that such expectations were generally not fulfilled. And, for some student teachers, the field experience is a painful experience resulting from a "collage of problems emanating from unruly students" and a "cooperating teacher untrained in supervision" (p. 38).

At the end of her initial student teaching experience, Kaye described her first seven weeks in the following way:

> *After my first experience, I felt drained, overwhelmed and a total failure as a teacher. I learned that I really had no role model. . . .*

Fortunately, the cooperating teacher assigned to Kaye during her second student teaching experience became a mentor to her, and their relationship developed into a professional colleagueship. She and Mrs._____ worked together toward meeting their mutual responsibilities in the learning processes of the children in their charge. This particular cooperating teacher served as the model described by Copas (1984), one whose job is:

> To help the student teacher analyze the many facets of teaching, to provide the student teacher with sources and resources, and to encourage the student teacher's unique teaching behavior. (p. 50)

After four weeks in the second student teaching setting, Kaye wrote the following:

> *My current relationship with my cooperating teacher is very amiable. At the beginning of the experience, we discussed lesson planning, record keeping, grades, attendance, class rules and discipline to minimize confusion when I begin teaching.*

We discuss instruction methods when she has a specific way of teaching a concept, but she never encroaches upon my own individual style of teaching her methods.

Discipline is usually minimal, but when administered, it is direct and effective without undo [sic] *interruption to teaching. My coop teacher never interrupts my lessons.*

Overall, I have thoroughly enjoyed working with my cooperating teacher and feel that there are no unknown problems that we are experiencing.

At the end of the student teaching experience, Kaye indicated the following:

I still am very encouraged by the feedback I received. . . . [I] gained my self-confidence back with each day during my second experience.

I am in teaching because I love kids and I feel that the education of our children is a very worthwhile profession to be associated with.

Kaye concludes with this observation:

I really am enjoying this school. My cooperating teacher is very helpful and never tries to push either the students or me. She takes notes when I teach and then we talk about strengths and possible improvements.

Ellen's relationship with her first cooperating teacher emerged as a professional mentorship in which Ellen was provided opportunities to experiment with varied teaching methods and instructional activities. At the beginning of the first student teaching experience, Ellen told me that she wanted to observe excellent teaching and integrate "good methods with my own unique teaching style."

After two weeks, Ellen's competence in lesson planning and instructional presentation was evident. However, she was concerned about managing time and student behavior and looked to her cooperating teacher as a model. Ellen wrote, "I observe the way she manages her time and how she handles discipline problems."

The flexibility allowed Ellen by her cooperating teacher became evident by the fifth week of student teaching. Ellen explained:

> *Basically, we shared the same ideas about the role of the parent, school, and teacher, and how they are related in the field of education. Mrs. _____ also let me try out many approaches that I wanted to attempt. . . . I feel this in itself was one of the most valuable experiences I have had. . . .*

Ellen and her first cooperating teacher discussed not only the technical aspects (instructional methodology, lesson planning, the curriculum, testing, time management, and student discipline), but also they discussed why some things were effective and others not and what might be the total impact upon student self-esteem and learning. At the end of her first student teaching experience, Ellen indicated that by being placed in an environment that permitted experimentation with different ways of applying learning theory in actual classroom practice and that provided opportunities for discussing effective and ineffective practices with her cooperating teacher, she had come to believe that the most basic responsibility of the classroom teacher is this:

> *To provide [students] with a safe and secure environment where each person will be able to become a part of the learning process.*

Ellen did not meet with such good fortune during her second student teaching assignment. There, the cooperating teacher failed to help Ellen develop the "deep and meaningful concept of teaching"

of which Copas (1984) writes. Ellen seemed to see her second cooperating teacher as an invisible partner who would gain visibility only when she told Ellen things to do or ways to conduct lessons. Ellen's own words best describe that relationship:

> *It is almost impossible to evaluate the working relationship I have with my cooperating teacher. Since I have been there, she has not given me any feedback on my performance. She is out of the classroom ninety-five percent of the time and I really appreciate this because the behavior of the students is very bad when both of us are in the classroom.*
>
> *We do our weekly planning together. The actual instruction is left up to me as long as I follow the normal routine. . . . I follow my cooperating teacher's record keeping procedure. The discipline management is a very set policy that I follow.*
>
> *I have many differences of opinion about lesson activities, instructional methods, and discipline, but I had no alternative but to give in to my cooperating teacher's routine and methods rather than upset the progress she has made.*
>
> *For discipline my teacher used a point system that I felt to be very inconsistent. I feel this system did nothing to change undesirable [behavior]. I asked if I could use another type of discipline but was told "no" because it would upset the classroom routine.*
>
> *I also had to plan my lesson activities and instructional method according to the set classroom routine. I was not able to use an overhead projector during instruction because I was told the students would get wild.*
>
> *I feel that the biggest difference of opinion between us would be the feedback from the students during teaching time. I want to make sure that the majority*

of students really understand the information being discussed before I go on to another topic the following day.

During the final week of Ellen's second student teaching experience, I talked with the cooperating teacher about Ellen's classroom performance and relationship with the students. It was disconcerting to hear the following information from the cooperating teacher about Ellen's classroom skills:

Ellen is doing a good job and has the potential to be a good teacher. But she has to learn that she can't reach everybody. I think the best thing she's learning now is to not try to explain it so that everybody understands. She thinks that all the kids are supposed to understand before she goes on. She spends too much time explaining. She needs to learn to cover the information and go on. Otherwise, these kids are going to go wild.

Ellen believes that "good teaching is the ability to help each student develop to the fullest extent of his/her potential; to develop into healthy and functioning adults." The teaching style Ellen prefers is a "combination of diagnostic-prescriptive teaching where I can see the individual strengths and weaknesses and a read-review-recite teaching style." In discussing adjustments she has had to make during her second student teaching experience, Ellen said, "I have had to eliminate the diagnostic-prescriptive teaching style because my cooperating teacher feels it takes too much time and effort." The kinds of assignments and instructional activities the cooperating teacher required Ellen to give to the students were mainly "very basic questions straight from the book and dittos." Her frustration in this teaching situation was evident when she related this:

During the second part of my student teaching experience, I had wished I had not gone into teaching at least ten times a day. I like the school and basically like

the class, but the teaching methods I have had to follow are not what I would practice in my own classroom.

Bunting (1988) suggests that cooperating teachers typically serve as socializing influences for student teachers. Tabachnick and Zeichner (1984) argue that the outcome of a student teaching experience is directly related to the pairing and resulting relationship of the student teacher and cooperating teacher. Certainly, the negative student-teacher/cooperating-teacher relationships experienced by Kaye and Ellen could have impeded the final phase of their education toward becoming classroom teachers. At the same time the positive relationships between the student teachers and the cooperating teachers described in the preceding discussion support the notion that the cooperating teacher is a vital factor in a student teacher's process of becoming a teacher.

The Instruction Experience

Student teachers typically perceive the major responsibility of their teaching to be instruction. Indeed, the college/university program consists of giving these preservice elementary/middle school teachers a knowledge base in several content areas, as well as instructional methods and materials courses in those content courses that they are most likely to teach. The ability to write a well designed lesson plan and then teach that lesson effectively is symbolic of success in the student teaching program.

A series of questions about their most and least successful lessons was presented to the student teachers in my research project. They were also asked to describe ways in which the cooperating teachers assisted them, and their responses provided further insight into the relationships between student teachers and their cooperating teachers. How the student teachers answered this series of questions is also helpful in analyzing the transition of each

student teacher from student to teacher. The discussions about lessons served, in addition, to reveal the extent to which cooperating teachers encouraged student teachers to experiment with various content, instructional methods, and media/technology resources, while at the same time providing support if any of the lessons did not go well.

During her first seven-week experience, Kaye spoke of a social studies lesson that was especially successful because the children had the idea the "they were playing but still learning. The atmosphere was more receptive." The lesson was a unit review which included a trivia quiz. She indicated that "the children were very competitive but had a good time, and there was some improvement in test scores." Kaye felt that the cooperating teacher "helped improve the game by introducing a double dare concept for questions missed." Another time, Kaye indicated that her cooperating teacher would make "suggestions on what to include and what we don't have time for."

Kaye believes that student success is the direct result of active student involvement in and enjoyment of lesson activities. Such was the intent of the trivia quiz mentioned above. In describing another lesson that "went well," Kaye talked of the children's enthusiasm that resulted from a game of charades used to reinforce the concept of simple predicates. She explained:

> *We played charades which I think got the students involved and also gave them a visual image of a simple predicate. It worked well because the students finally grasped the concept of simple predicates.*

Time Management Concerns. Early in her student teaching experience, Kaye realized that the notion of instructional time management had to be closely coordinated with what she called "flexibility" to allow for those "unexpected events." Kaye had prepared what she considered to be a creative social studies lesson

that would actively involve all the students in the class. However, this lesson was less than "successful" and "had problems because it was prepared as a discussion and none of the children had read the homework assignment." By the seventh week of student teaching, Kaye indicated that "flexibility" had become part of her lesson planning. . . . She stated that she had not had any "real unsuccessful" lessons "unless students weren't prepared. . . for discussion or questions. . . and then I would change plans."

In conversations and questionnaires during the first student teaching experience, Kaye frequently discussed the lack of creative teaching freedom, which she attributed to her cooperating teacher's not allowing her to experiment with varying teaching styles. In writing about how her teaching became like that of her cooperating teacher, Kaye indicated that "she [the cooperating teacher] viewed lesson plans and told me what would/would not work." Kaye believed that her teaching became like that of her cooperating teacher because of "discipline reasons, time limitations, and restrictions to lesson plans." Her major concern about instruction was expressed in this statement:

> *There's not enough time to be as creative as you'd like with lesson plans, and some plans that you really feel good about wash out with the students.*

As indicated previously in this chapter under the heading, "Relationship with the Cooperating Teacher," the relationship between Kaye and her first cooperating teacher deteriorated, resulting in Kaye's sense of frustration and loss of self-confidence. Kaye's second cooperating teacher permitted her to make instructional decisions, discussed with her the impact specific activities and methods might have upon the students, and provided an environment in which Kaye could begin developing her own individual style of teaching. Frequently, in her questionnaire responses and in conversations with me, Kaye emphasized that her

second cooperating teacher never interrupted her lessons. Kaye felt that in this experience she was treated as a "professional" who was "competent enough to teach the children." She felt that feedback from this cooperating teacher was both "instructional" for her and reflective.

During her second student teaching experience Kaye learned that adjustments in instruction were needed, especially "more thorough planning to include the slower learners as well as the advanced learners to cover all the abilities in the classroom."

By the end of student teaching, Kaye wrote about her responsibilities to her students:

> *to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning and provide the material, motivation and practice needed to succeed in learning.*

During the fourteenth week of student teaching, Kaye seemed to shift from rationalization processes in the classroom (where the emphasis was primarily upon instructional interaction) to an approach closer to what Blase (1986) terms humanization processes which emphasize seeing students as whole people. During her first student teaching experience, she concentrated on student discipline as an intricate part of instruction. The emphasis was on maintaining control in an orderly environment. During the second experience, in contrast, Kaye focused on the student-teacher relationship as the most important component of "good" teaching. She explained:

> *I prefer a relaxed teaching style with open discussion, visual stimulation and lots of interaction with students. Good teaching requires a good interaction between students and teacher in an atmosphere conducive to learning. Students learn best when they are ready to learn, both emotionally and mentally. The teacher needs to prepare the students for learning by ensuring*

readiness and making sure that the materials is understandable (on level).

In a compressed time frame, Kaye's experience provides a small picture of the process Blase (1986) observes in-service teachers to be undergoing over a period of years; that is, a teacher shifts from concern about his/her performance to concern about the students in his/her charge and how this relationship impacts the students' learning processes and futures.

Lynne demonstrated a similar shift, which she attributes to the guidance of both of her cooperating teachers, especially the cooperating teacher with whom she worked during the second seven-week experience. At the beginning of student teaching, Lynne was quite concerned with her own performance and transmitting her own knowledge to the students. At that time, a successful lesson was equivalent to no behavior problems and getting her ideas across to the students. She wrote:

The lesson dealing with dialogue and punctuation went well. The kids pretty much understood the lesson, and there were no major behavior problems. . . I got my ideas across and handled the students pretty well. That has been my biggest fear.

Lynne described an unsuccessful lesson as one in which there was a "major disruption of the class and having to take time out to handle that instead of teaching." Clearly, Lynne was focusing on Blase's (1986) notion of the rationalization process in that she dealt with managing student behavior by assigning an activity that she originally intended as an instructional resource. She wrote:

During language arts I was called a bitch by a student. I took him out of the class, gave seat work to the rest and told them it will be collected and graded. I handled the student well, but I did not get to teach the lesson and they did the work cold.

Lynne's cooperating teacher supported the way in which Lynne dealt with both the student who interrupted the lesson and with the assigning of the seat work to the other students in the class. Lynne expressed relief that the students "kept quiet when I gave them their work." Again, she equated controlling student behavior with instructional activity.

By the end of sixth week of student teaching, Lynne began to demonstrate progression from the rationalization process to something that approximated the humanization process in her teaching. With her cooperating teacher's assistance, Lynne was able to assess students' difficulties in performing two-digit multiplication. She explained:

> *I had students do a set of problems, then come to the board and work one I selected for them. Everyone paid attention and we caught all of the common mistakes made and pointed them out.*

Also, Lynne provided individual students with more active participation in the instructional activities. She related this example:

> *One student who is a repeater, took my place as teacher and reworked his problem as a teacher would. Number 1, he had no choice but to show how smart he really is; (2) he had to show responsibility in front of everyone.*

By the end of her first student teaching experience, Lynne had not completely disassociated instruction from the management of student behavior, as is evident in her above statement: "he had to show responsibility in front of everyone." When I asked Lynne about ways in which her teaching became like that of her first cooperating teacher, she responded, "I started mimicking her behavior controls because they work."

Lynne spoke of issues of classroom ownership in response to questions about her freedom to experiment with varying teaching styles:

> *I could do whatever I wanted to a point. . . . I didn't stray too far from what she does. It is her class, and she has to deal with them for the rest of the year.*

During her second student teaching experience, however, Lynne seemed to shift more toward the humanization processes in her views toward instruction. In describing her instructional style, she indicated a preference for "lots of interaction (positive) between students and myself." She went on to explain that she preferred "to use introductory lecture with hands-on follow-up and practice. . . liberally spiced with thought provoking questions." She concluded that learning occurs:

> *when the student is interested, and material is presented in such a way that they understand and can absorb its meaning. Teachers need to get their attention first. . . . Then "we" need to provide background material, models, and practice at what we want them to be able to do.*

By the end of the fourteen weeks of student teaching, Lynne began to perceive that by sharing both her knowledge and herself with the students she could provide them with the tools for a promising future. She explained:

> *I feel I can give children the hope and knowledge that they can be successful in life. It doesn't matter if they aren't the smartest person in the world; they can take the knowledge I have to give and use it.*

Another student teacher, Gayle, voiced her belief that good teaching includes the teacher's being "caring and understanding, yet firm." According to Gayle, "students learn best in a closely

supervised, firmly directed atmosphere." Her references to a teacher's being firm in managing student behavior as a key to good or effective instruction stem from her comparisons of her two student teaching experiences.

In Gayle's first experience, successful lessons resulted from high student interest in a particular content area and her use of concrete materials combined with some theatrics. She provided the following example:

> *Most successful lessons came from my students' favorite subject, science. This lesson involved demonstrating the rotation of the earth. It was an attempt to show why we saw the sun only in daytime. I feel that the students will be able to grasp this concept because I used something concrete--myself. I believe the children enjoyed seeing me turn in circles in front of the classroom. From the discussion we had afterward, it seemed as though they understood.*

In analyzing why this earth rotation lesson might have been more effective with the children than other lessons, Gayle commented that the students were curious about the topic and asked many questions. Also, she indicated that the lesson activity deviated from the usual read and discuss methodology. It is interesting that Gayle did not include the issue of firmness in her analysis of this and other lessons she considered successful.

In contrast, however, she determined that unsuccessful lessons resulted from lack of organization and her not being firm enough with the students. In writing about her reading groups, Gayle recounted the following reasoning:

> *Maybe they [the reading groups] were not organized enough to keep all the students busy. Because the reading group I wasn't working with had nothing to do, they were talking, and disturbing the group I was working with. . . . The students in the groups were*

getting upset because they couldn't hear other students' reading aloud.

Gayle felt that she was neither organized enough nor prepared to deal with this and other similar situations. Frequently, she discussed with me her desire to have had more university coursework in classroom management, since she was convinced that effective classroom management is paramount to effective instruction.

Not until she was mid-way through the second student teaching experience did Gayle begin to see that positive classroom management is effected through planning that integrates content information, students' social skills development, teacher organization, maintaining students' high interest level, revealing teacher expectations to students, and considering the various learning styles of students. In response to questions about what good teaching is, she expressed these thoughts:

> *Teaching is more than just giving out information from the textbook. It involves lots of planning. Each subject must be handled differently, just as each child will learn differently. . . . {The goal of teaching includes} students' learning social skills while learning material from the text. Just because a teacher is successful at teaching the text doesn't mean they are learning everything they should. . . . She or he should be firm with the class from the beginning and stay consistent with the rules that are presented from the first day. The students will know the routine of the day, which will help things run smoothly.*

Gayle implied that even though both cooperating teachers encouraged her to try out different teaching styles, she closely emulated their teaching methods "in order to be more effective with the students." However, at the end of her student teaching experience, Gayle did not believe that she had developed her own unique teaching style but preferred a pattern similar to that of her

second cooperating teacher. Once again, she emphasized firmness and consistency in management coordinated with instructional hands-on experiences.

While Gayle emphasized firmness, Ellen focused on lesson planning that provided her "with a means of thinking about and providing for meaningful learning experiences within a given class period." She implemented her lesson plan in a teacher directed instructional style. Ellen believes that the teacher should, at all times, be in control of and responsible for students' learning, a concept that was strongly reinforced by her first cooperating teacher.

Initially, Ellen's challenge in teaching was management of instructional time. After two weeks of student teaching, Ellen wrote:

> *My least successful lesson was a social studies lesson. The lesson was planned to take 30 minutes, but I taught for over one hour. I think the children became restless because of the extended period. My cooperating teacher pointed out the need to watch the clock.*

After six weeks of student teaching, Ellen was still working on time management. She stated that her cooperating teacher told her that she "tried to cover too much material in a 30 minute lesson," and the children became restless and bored.

Ellen felt that her first cooperating teacher gave her much positive feedback about her lesson planning and instructional methodology and worked with her in thinking about the interrelationship between the teaching and learning process. Once she solved the problem of instructional time management, Ellen was able to focus on what she considered as her primary responsibility in teaching her students. She explained that the best teaching is "to help each child to learn to recognize his/her potential, to develop his/her abilities, and to encourage the process of self discovery."

As has already been discussed earlier in this chapter, Ellen's second experience was somewhat negative, mainly due to the cooperating teacher's not permitting Ellen to use varied instructional and management techniques. Ellen felt that the instruction and methodology she utilized differed in the two student teaching experiences and, therefore, differed in their impact upon the students. She concluded that effective teaching

> *deals with the (1) quality of work from the students, (2) the actual teaching act (clarity of directions and presentation, monitoring, feedback), [and] (3) ability to attend to individual student needs. . . . The main goal of education is to teach children the skills they need in order to become critical thinkers. I want to teach each child how to think for himself/herself. . . . Their education will have a big impact on their future and what role they will play in society.*

As mentioned earlier, Betty was in the unique situation of being a veteran teacher who, nevertheless, had to fulfill student teaching requirements to obtain K-4 certification. Her experience as a veteran teacher shows up in her comments on what constitutes good teaching:

> *Good teaching is using creativity to convey a skill or concept and trying to teach it in such a way that it is also individualized to meet all the students' needs. It is review, introducing, practice, reteaching if necessary, and evaluating constantly.*

She goes on to say that she is persuaded that

> *students learn best in a controlled, relaxed atmosphere, but each child learns differently and at a different pace. The teacher must be aware of this and make adjustments in her requirements where necessary. Time on task, a minimum of interruptions, and a relaxed classroom will almost ensure that learning will occur.*

Betty felt it necessary to conform to her cooperating teacher's way of teaching to a considerable degree, even though she disagreed with certain aspects and knew she would do things differently if she were on her own--as indeed had been the case in her long years of classroom experience with older students. Yet, for the sake of consistency, she adopted the cooperating teacher's patterns of time structure and her methodology in teaching certain subjects and in grading procedures. Betty's explanation of her feelings about teaching the subject of spelling illustrates the point:

> *I do not teach like Mrs. _____ because after so many years I have a "way" of my own that would be difficult to change! I do have to break the spelling lesson into parts like she would so that the children don't get confused when I'm no longer there. I personally would not teach like she does but I try to for the sake of conformity with the class.*

At the same time, Betty valued much of what she learned from the cooperating teacher. She felt that Mrs. ____'s positive approach to student discipline, integrated with acting courteously and respectfully toward students, established a positive environment in which instruction was more effective. Several times, Betty commented on her cooperating teacher's organizational methods, especially her resource materials filing system. By the mid-point of the student teaching experience, Betty found that she and her cooperating teacher shared a similar vision of teaching; that is, "one of helping children learn through a variety of experiences."

Resources for Learning. A variety of learning experiences for children requires supplementary resources. In response to questions about the use of media and technology resources, the school libraries, and the types of assignments given to students, all five student teachers indicated a preference for hands-on and other

activities that involve children in active learning rather than passive learning. However, they designed most lesson activities to center around textbooks, teacher explanations with board notes, and practice exercises from textbook questions or worksheets.

Incorporating supplementary resources into the lesson activities requires, first, that students and teachers know the location of the materials and, second, that the materials are available. Lynne best commented on these two requirements:

> *[Using resources/technologies in instruction is] wonderful if I know they exist and I don't have to kill to get them.*

Once Lynne knew of the existence of some equipment, she solved some instructional management problems that existed in her mobile classroom. For example, where there was not enough board space in the classroom, Lynne brought in and used an overhead projector at the encouragement of her cooperating teacher. Both she and the cooperating teacher recognized that the "kids. . . needed a bit of time to get used to using it."

On the other hand Ellen wanted to use the overhead projector during her second student teaching experience as she had done in the first, but her cooperating teacher vetoed the idea "because. . . the students would get wild." Because of her second cooperating teacher's restrictions on Ellen's lesson activities, Ellen was compelled to limit her students' assignments to lower cognitive level questions from the text and commercially produced worksheets.

In contrast, the other student teachers (and Ellen, during her first experience) used a variety of resources, especially in teaching science, health, and social studies. For a health lesson on dental care, Kaye invited her family dentist to speak to her sixth grade class about appropriate care of teeth and demonstrated the effects of various kinds of food on the teeth. Lynne taught the human

body to her fourth graders by having them draw body organs on white tee-shirts, which the student wore. Betty's hands-on science included working with the students in setting up a gerbil's living quarters and maintaining on-going care. Ellen had her students perform experiments with bones.

Various audio-visual resources, maps, and games topped the list for supplementary materials the student teachers used to teaching social studies. English/Language Arts activities included using dictionaries, paragraph writing on specific topics, creative writing experiences, and students' reading library books of their choice. Betty taught a lesson on possessive pronouns that included the students' using manipulative cards to illustrate correct apostrophe placement for singular and plural possessives.

Ellen expressed concern that, even though children are encouraged to read books on topics of interest to them, actual time for student use of her first school's library was limited to fifteen minutes once each week. The other student teachers also reported limited student use of their school libraries.

Perhaps Betty's years of experience in selecting supplementary resources for her students and her knowledge of the resources of her school and school system were major factors in her expanded use of print and electronic media. Betty reported that her school library provided a thirty minute weekly library period and "open" research opportunities for students. Betty assigned her students writing activities on research topics for several content areas. Also, she involved her students in current events, such as space shuttle launches, via television, and provided opportunities for student to use microcomputers.

In discussing activities for mathematics instruction, Betty commented that she uses manipulatives in her math groups both in the student teaching setting and throughout the school in her work as a math resource teacher. None of the other student teachers reported using any type of hands-on activities in their math lessons. The typical mathematics instruction consisted of teacher

explanation followed by practice problems, whether from the textbook or on worksheets.

Lesson Planning. Finally, in response to questions about lesson planning, the participants indicated a variety of viewpoints. Kaye thought that lesson plans should be student-centered and continually reflected her intent to make adjustments for slow and advanced learners. In addition, she wished to involve all students in interactive, creative lesson activities. Gayle used lesson planning as a way to organize herself to meet her daily responsibilities of teaching. She felt that both the teacher and the students should always be aware of what would transpire through the school day. However, according to Gayle, lesson plans should not be so rigid as to allow no accommodation for the unexpected. Ellen's lesson planning demonstrated her creativity in planning what she referred to as "meaningful" activities for her students and her sense that the teacher is directly responsible for his/her students' learning.

Betty and Lynne expressed similar perceptions of lesson plans. Betty commented that lesson plans should be written in a workable format that a "substitute teacher could follow." She went on to say, "I do not like to waste time finding the proper terminology from Bloom's Taxonomy so that my evaluation sounds 'educational' in the I, II, and III plan."

Perhaps Lynne gave the most straightforward assessment of lesson planning, which she called "a necessary evil for effective teaching." She followed with a question: "Did Socrates and Plato write lesson plans?"

Classroom Management/Discipline

Eddy (1969) writes that teachers "are expected to establish and maintain orderly patterns of interacting with pupils so that their superior knowledge may be imparted to the subordinate learners" (p. 29). The phrase, "to establish and maintain orderly patterns," alludes to issues of control of people. It is a topic that

emerged as a concern for each of the five student teacher participants in this study.

When I asked the student teachers about children with whom they had had the most difficulty, Lynne wrote about one student who threatened her physically and another who called her derogatory names. Kaye mentioned students who would not stay on task. Gayle referred to several students who made loud outbursts during instructional time. The four non-experienced student teachers discussed students who were disruptive because they refused to do assigned classwork or did not bring in homework.

In response to a request to list typical behavior problems they have encountered in the classroom, the student teachers named the following categories (listed from most frequent to least frequent):

1. talking out of turn
2. being out of assigned seat at inappropriate times
3. abusive language and obscene gestures to other students
4. fighting
5. not following the teacher's directions
6. reading material other than assigned activities during lessons
7. drawing pictures during instructional times

Lynne and Ellen added to their lists students with severe psychological problems and hyperactive students. For example, Lynne mentioned a student who "has emotional problems and runs hot and cold. . . ." Lynne's cooperating teacher recommended a comprehensive psychological and medical evaluation of this child.

When Betty spoke of disruptions, her thoughts turned not to students, but to the incessant interruptions of the school intercom. She wrote:

The intercom system has really been abused this fall. We had this problem a few years ago and remedied the situation by putting hooks on classroom doors for messages rather than having office help annoy the classes. The new principal will have to be made aware of this problem.

Behavior problems have been nil. The children are talkative but that is all!

When Gayle was asked about behavior problems and classroom disruptions, she saw beyond the students to the mitigating factors causing instructional interruptions. She explained:

During my first student teaching experience, we changed classes for reading, English, and spelling. This disturbed the class very much. It was hard for me to apply discipline to the original class. Then these students came in and it was even more difficult to control these students. My cooperating teacher had a good discipline plan, but it was not enforced consistently. This created a problem for me whenever I took over the classroom.

Gayle's observation that her cooperating teacher did not consistently enforce her discipline plan led to my asking about the student teachers' perceptions of a good classroom manager. All five student teachers indicated that consistency is one of the major traits of an effective classroom manager and teacher. In summarizing her views of teaching and maintaining effective discipline in the classroom, Betty wrote that

a good classroom manager formulates rules in the beginning two weeks of the year. . . , posts the rules for all to see. . . , follows through on the rules and consequences, and always tries to be fair.

Betty believes that effective classroom management is more than ensuring that students follow the rules. She stated that "good daily plans. . . insure a smooth running classroom." Those plans should include activities that "hold the students' interests, gives them a chance to interact, maintains discipline, and creates respect for the teachers as well as each other."

Betty perceives good classroom management as the expected result of well-planned instruction. In contrast, the four non-experienced student teachers perceived good classroom management and effective teaching as a matter of controlling student behavior so that instruction can proceed. For Betty, the management of student behavior and instruction are fully integrated components of teaching and learning. The other four student teachers seemed to hold the notion that "the student should sit still while I instill." For example, Lynne wrote that "seeing as children usually will goof-off, I know that rules and procedures with consequences are necessary."

Factors for School Success

Although such importance was placed upon discipline, a well managed classroom was not mentioned by any of the student teachers in response to a question about what factors are associated with the success or failure of children in their school experience. The factors that did emerge were these: parents or homelife (mentioned by four of the student teachers), a classroom environment conducive to the opportunity to succeed (mentioned by one), and the agency of the teacher (mentioned by four).

Two of the student teachers spoke of how they measured success. Betty saw success as relative and individualized. She felt that success is measured by how "well adjusted" her students seemed to be. "For some success is a C-," she wrote on her questionnaire, "and if that is the best they can do--fine!" She

continued, "I need to be aware of these children. I think they are successful if they can make a C and like to be at school."

Ellen said that she measured success or failure "by the effort or lack of effort put forth." Furthermore, she felt that the teacher serves as a catalyst that calls forth such effort and facilitates the student's developing a positive self-image and self-confidence.

As has been noted, four of the student teachers expressed their belief that the teacher is a major influence on the success or failure of their students. Ellen and Betty stated their belief that teachers' expectations play a significant role in promoting student success. Gayle suggested that some students may fall behind academically when teachers are not "able to give individualized attention to students." Betty feels that the best she can do to ensure the success of her students is to show each one that she cares and to give each one "all the support available within the school, extra help, resources, and praise wherever possible."

As was mentioned previously, four of the student teachers believe that parents and homelife are major influences on a student's success or failure in school. Kaye and Gayle were emphatic in stating their belief that student failure is a direct result of parents' lack of interest in their children's education. Kaye explained, "I've noticed that in cases where the parent doesn't take an active role in their child's education, the child doesn't care either." Betty feels that children will succeed if they know that they are loved at home and that their "parents expect them to do well and provide opportunities for them in addition to what is provided at school." Lynne suggested that the parents of successful children work cooperatively with the school and instill in their children the notion "that school is important and not some place to spend the day."

The Incorporation Phase

> Upon the completion of the student teaching experience and the formally prescribed course work, the student is publicly declared by the teacher training institution to be prepared to teach. . . The "strangers" and "outsiders" now have to be incorporated into their new role as teachers. (Eddy, 1969, p. 19)

In van Gennep's construct, the last of the three passages is incorporation; that is, the final stage of the progression into the new status. Incorporation into the teaching profession actually occurs at the point the person is employed as a teacher. However, as the student teachers neared the end of their field experience, they stood in a sense on the threshold of incorporation. Already, their view of the teaching profession and themselves as teachers was showing the earmarks of the incorporation phase. Kaye, for example, had this to say at the end of her student teaching experience:

> *I have discovered that teaching is a lot more difficult and demanding than most people believe, myself included. Teaching does not just happen in the classroom. It takes planning and patience, as well as a genuine desire to work with children, even those that are hard to get along with.*

Gayle also felt that teaching was more difficult than she had expected. Furthermore, neither she nor Lynne were prepared for the paperwork involved in the daily classroom operations. Both Lynne and Gayle experimented with different ways to manage paperwork, as well as other teaching responsibilities, but felt that they still had not adequately solved this problem.

I asked the student teachers how their thinking about the teaching profession remained the same or had changed over the

course of the student teaching experience. Lynne revealed some discouragement in her response:

> *Parents are not instilling in their children that school is for learning and that the teacher is (should be) law. . . . It's a rough job with intangible rewards that are few and far between.*

Lynne still wishes to teach but feels that she is better suited to the middle school situation and can relate better to children of middle school age than to elementary school children. She believes that she will "do a good job," even though "teachers still have to fight for the respect that they (we) deserve."

Betty felt that having to change her status from that of classroom teacher to that of student teacher gave her an opportunity "to learn as well as teach." She wrote that being in the specialized position as mathematics resource teacher is "easier than being a classroom teacher" but she misses not having a specific group of her own.

Three of the four student teachers who had had no classroom teaching experience prior to student teaching had typical idealistic views of teaching and being a teacher. For example, Kaye thought that teaching was going to be "fun" and "that the kids would want to learn and that I would be able to teach the students." Ellen admitted that her initial vision of teaching was "extremely idealistic" in that she felt she "could reach every single student." She thought that "by using all of the knowledge that [she had] gained. . . , no child would 'fall through the cracks.'" Also, Ellen considered herself to be "very hypercritical of the school system."

As mentioned in the literature review, Caruso (1977) indicted that one of the phases through which student teachers pass is that of criticizing the cooperating teacher's way of doing things. I found that the student teachers in this study began the shift from the role of student teachers to that of teacher at about the time they began

to evaluate the teaching behaviors and effectiveness of their cooperating teachers. In contrasting their initial idealism with their present reality and the responsibilities that both they and the cooperating teachers must fulfill, four of the student teachers decided that teachers need much more respect and support than they are getting.

In discussing how her vision of teaching had changed during the student teaching experience, Betty, the twenty-year veteran teacher, indicated this view:

> *My [initial] vision of teaching was one of helping children learn through a variety of experiences. My [vision] is still the same except that there are so many social problems that interfere with actual lesson planning.*

Betty explained that her notion of "social problems" in her school includes the "social activities that seem to come first: drug programs, fire prevention, police awareness, band, strings, chorus. Trying to schedule lessons around these areas is most difficult."

Betty, as well as the other participants in this study had always thought that education should be based on the traditional three R's. However, the student teaching experience brought to their awareness the need to educate children in a way that facilitates their academic, social, and emotional development.

At the end of the student teaching experience, I asked Ellen how she felt about teaching as a profession. She replied:

> *I still believe that teaching is one of the most honorable and worthwhile professions a person could enter. . . . It makes my day when "the light" suddenly comes on in a mind.*

Gayle believes that teaching is a profession that only a few select persons should enter because it "is not an easy job." She goes

on to say this: "I now know it is true that you have to love what you do for the children, not the money."

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

The theme of the previous chapter was to answer my central research question: How does each student teacher participant progress through her rite of passage during her fourteen-week student teaching field experience? Prior to the analysis of the participants' responses, I predicted that each student teacher would move through each phase of the rites of passage in a clear-cut, distinct way. That is, I thought that the separation phase, the transition phase, and the incorporation phase each would have a definite beginning point and ending point and that these entrance and exit points would be easily identifiable. Furthermore, I expected to find three distinct subphases embedded within each phase, as illustrated in Figure 1.

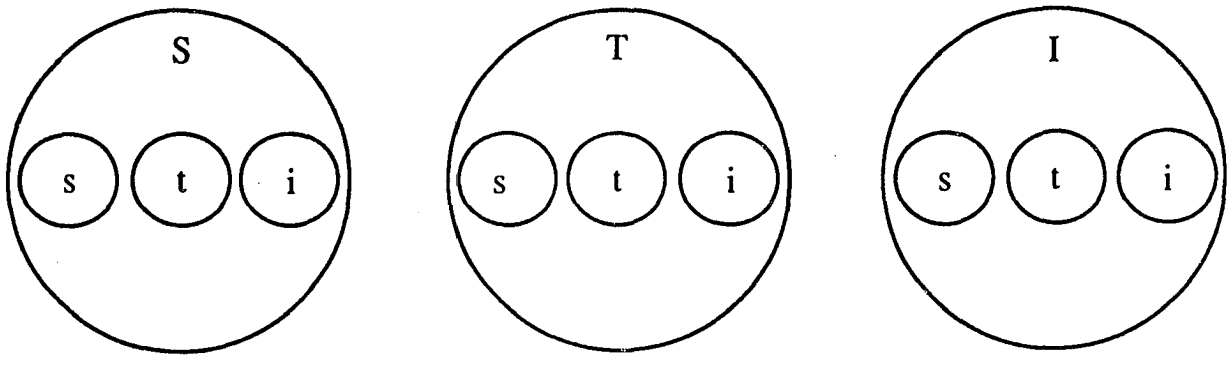

Figure 1
S=separation phase; T=transition phase; I=incorporation phase

Closer examination of the participants' responses indicated that the three phases were not only not distinctly detached from each other; they actually intersected in a kind of Venn diagram, as illustrated in Figure 2. This finding illustrated van Gennep's (1960) observation that in dealing with human activities, he did not "expect to achieve as rigid a classification as the botanists have, for example" (p. 11).

The discussion that follows shows how some of the intersections occurred in the shifts that occurred from student status to student teacher status to teacher status.

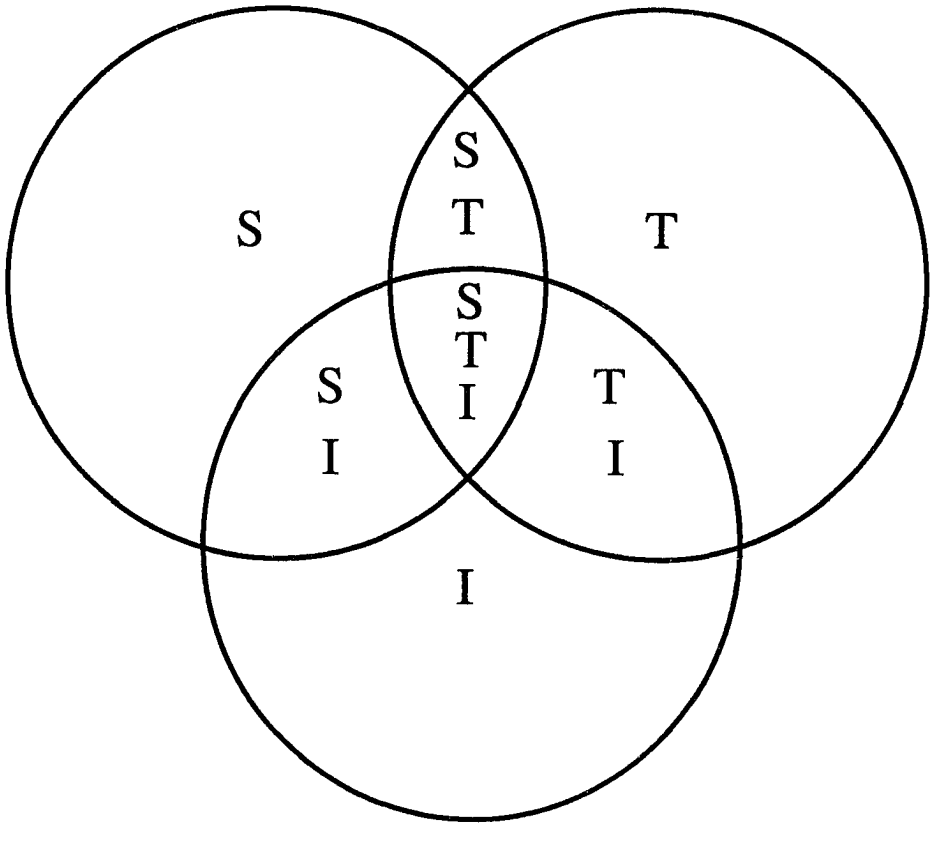

Figure 2
S=separation phase; T=transition phase; I=incorporation phase

The Rites of Passage Process

The big moment in a person's preservice teacher education program is that long-awaited time when the student leaves his/her college or university coursework and enters the "real world" of the public school classroom in the student teaching field experience. Most student teachers feel a mixture of apprehension ("Will I do a good job?" "Will I be able to control the students?" "Will my cooperating teacher be nice and helpful?") and excitement ("Finally, I'm going to get to teach!").

At first glance, it would appear that this student teaching experience inaugurates the separation from the student role. Actually, the first step has already been taken some time before with the person's decision to enter a teaching career. It is that decision-making process that marks the beginning of the separation phase of the future teacher's rite of passage. He or she is, figuratively speaking, parting company with a way of life and breaking away from peers who see themselves only in the student role; the person who has decided to one day be a teacher can already project himself or herself into that future role. In this way, the separation phase--imperceptibly at first--commences. By the time of the student teaching experience, it is underway at full force.

In analyzing the responses from the five participants in this study, four common themes indicative of the separation phase emerged and have been discussed in chapter four. The separation phase with its four major themes and the factors that were found to comprise those four themes may thus be summarized in the following manner:

Separation phase

Theme 1. Reasons for entering teaching

A. The desire to work with children

B. A personal contribution to the well-being of the nation
C. To prepare children for the future
D. A good "job" for a woman, especially in "raising a family"
E. To fulfill a woman's maternal instinct
F. To do something that is enjoyable
G. To do something in which one is "good at"
H. Working time (summers free)

Theme 2. Examination of personal traits that the participants believe would be beneficial to that person's being a teacher

A. Positive attitudes toward and love for children
B. The ability to transmit knowledge
C. Patience
D. Creativity
E. Organizational skills
F. Sense of humor
G. Personal curiosity
H. The enjoyment of learning new things

Theme 3. Coursework preparation

A. The methods and materials in teaching the various content areas in elementary and middle school, including lesson planning
B. The various content courses for teaching in elementary and middle school
C. Classroom management that includes managing both student behavior and instructional time

Theme 4. Introduction to the assigned classroom, cooperating teacher, and students

Although there might be the expectation that the separation would abruptly end and the transition phase begin when the preservice teacher is introduced to his/her assigned classroom, cooperating teacher, and the students, the shift is not so clean-cut. In a sense, the shift from student to student teacher at this point does initiate the transition phase of the rites of passage. But, at the same time, there is overlapping between the separation and transition phases. While one might correctly state, for example, that coursework preparation is indeed associated with the student status and that when the coursework ends the separation phase ends with it, the situation is much more complex. The data showed a definite intersection between the separation and transition phases and involved such factors as these:

1. The participants' reasons for entering teaching. (The participants examined those reasons during the student teaching process while one is in transition from student to teacher);
2. The participants' personal traits they believe are beneficial to one's becoming a good teacher. (The student teacher may enhance those traits or identify additional personal traits that affect one's teaching success.);
3. The introduction to the assigned classroom, the cooperating teacher, and the students. (From the beginning of the student teaching experience and continuing throughout the time the participants are in their assigned classrooms, they learned new things about their classrooms, additional roles and responsibilities of their cooperating teachers, and competencies of their students.)

In analyzing the transition phase alone, I included the following four discussions in chapter 4:

1. Relationship with the cooperating teacher
2. Instruction, including actual classroom teaching, use of supplementary resources, and lesson planning
3. Classroom management and discipline
4. Factors that contribute to elementary/middle school students' success or failure.

Initially, I thought that these four categories alone would focus on the salient features of transition and highlight the participants' main concerns and the processes they were undergoing during the transition phase. However, further analysis of their responses revealed some other themes that are indicative of their transition from student to student teacher to teacher. A summary of those themes includes the following:

Transition phase

Theme 1. An expanding view of teacher responsibilities. Initially, the participants perceived that the teacher's primary responsibility is instruction. As they moved through the student teaching process, they began to identify other teacher responsibilities, such as lesson planning, managing instructional time, and student discipline.

Theme 2. The need for flexibility. As the participants assumed actual classroom instruction, they began to recognize the importance of managing instructional time and maintaining flexibility for unforeseen events.

Theme 3. Seeing a convergence between effective teaching and classroom management. During the transition phase, the participants implemented some effective techniques to manage student behavior.

Initially, they viewed effective management of student behavior as maintaining authoritarian control over the students. Toward the end of the student teaching experience, the participants perceived that creative, well-thought-out lesson planning, followed by effective instructional implementation, was the key to managing student behavior.

Theme 4. Growing autonomy in lesson planning. As the student teachers began to assume instructional responsibilities, they worked closely with the cooperating teachers. At first, some would teach from the cooperating teachers' lesson plans. Gradually, they would develop lesson plans under close supervision of the cooperating teachers. Near the end of the student teaching experience, the student teachers began to independently develop lesson plans, which were approved by the cooperating teachers prior to classroom instruction.

Theme 5. More confidence in ability to choose and use supplementary resources. As the student teachers gained more confidence and competence in lesson planning, carrying out classroom insruction, and classroom management, they began utilizing supplementary resources, such as guest speakers, audio-visual materials, and hands-on activities.

During the transition phase for the five participants in this study, there occurred a critical state in which the participants demonstrated the complex range of shifts from student to student teacher to teacher. That critical state seemed to begin taking place during the second student teaching assignments as each participant was shifting from concern about her student teaching performance

and university course grade to concern about the students in the classroom. (For Betty, the twenty-year teaching veteran, that shift began about the end of the first week of student teaching when the special issues of her student teaching experience were worked out among the principal, the cooperating teacher, Betty, and myself.) I first noticed this critical shift--this major transition--as each student teacher's verbal and written communications with me changed from talk about herself to talk about the students. The following four developments occurred during this transition:

1. The student teacher began to show concern about the relationship between herself and the students she was teaching.
2. The student teacher recognized the possible impact of the relationship between herself and the students upon the students' learning processes.
3. All except one of the five student teacher participants began recognizing the development of her own teaching style and how that style impacts student learning.
4. Each of the five participants began to recognize and discuss some of the critical factors involved in the success or failure of the students they were teaching.

Moreover, for these five participants, including Betty, the critical factor in their successful shift or transition from student to student teacher and ultimately to teacher (or at least the successful completion of the student teaching experience) was the cooperating teacher, who tended to serve as both a model and mentor to the student teacher. (I discuss the relationships between the student teachers and the cooperating teachers later in this chapter.)

Incorporation Phase

The shift from student teacher to teacher, that is, from the transition phase to the incorporation phase, was not an abrupt shift but began during the transition phase when the student teacher's concern moved from her own performance to concern about the students in her class. I noticed that the shift actually commenced at the point each student teacher began to evaluate the effectiveness of her cooperating teacher and continued as the student teacher evaluated her own effectiveness. During this progression, the student teachers began to think of themselves as teachers. That perception was marked by their perceiving a need to educate children in a way that facilitated their students' academic, social, and emotional development. They were able to identify varying learning styles of their students and were better equipped to recognize more complex and integrated factors that contributed to their students' successes or failures. Furthermore, with the exception of Betty, who had a different attitude from the beginning, their attention began to show a dramatic shift from the notion of control of student behavior to the notion that student discipline is a direct result of the teacher's being in charge of the learning that goes on the classroom.

The incorporation phase in the rites of passage for each student teacher participant was also marked by a dramatic change in her vision of teaching. Some of those perception changes include these:

1. Teaching was preceived as being more difficult than the participant had at first believed.
2. Teaching does not just happen. Effective teaching demands planning, patience, and a desire to work with all children.
3. Teaching involves not only performing in front of the students but also management of paperwork.

4. The education of children is not the teacher's responsibilitty alone. Education requires an integrated effort between the teacher and a child's parents. However, each of the five participants in this study expressed their concern that, for many of their students, parental support is lacking.
5. The most profound change for each of the five participants seemed to be their realization of the various "social problems" that impact students' success or failure in school and/or interfere with classroom instruction.

Moreover, the change in each one's perception of teaching indicated even more complex dynamics of their movement through the rites of passage. That is, not only were there intersections between two phases, there was an intersection among all three phases of the rites of passage that was highlighted by each participant's shifting back and forth among the phases. For example, Betty, the twenty-year veteran teacher, found that the student teaching experience offered her an opportunity to learn from another teacher, her cooperating teacher, in the school in which she was employed. However, the predominant back-and-forth shift(s) among the three phases occurred during the time the student teachers had assumed the full roles and responsibilities of the classroom teacher.

While involved in the actual day-to-day teaching process, each student teacher often expressed that she was student, student teacher, and teacher at the same time. In other words, she was fulfilling mutliple roles. For example, during the participants' second assignment, I asked each one if she were a student or a teacher. All of them answered, "Both." Furthermore, in one way or another they explained being a student teacher provided them with the unique opportunity to learn a particular teaching technique

from the cooperating teacher and then to try that technique in their instruction.

Finally, the third phase in the rite of passage, incorporation, is not fully attained during the student teaching experience. Rather, full incorporation occurs only when a person who was a student teacher receives his/her terminal university degree, is certified (or at least intially certified) by the state, and is employed in his/her full-time teaching position. Publicly, that person is declared to be "Teacher." Yet, that new teacher, including Betty in her new certification status, is entering another rite of passage; that is, the separation, transition, and incorporation phases that are the unique experience of a person who has moved from one state or position to another. Whereas the five participants were students in a university setting, each one will soon (and Betty already has) enter the official status of employment in a school. Again, as first year teachers, profound changes in their behaviors and perceptions will occur. Eddy's 1969 book, Becoming a Teacher, addresses the rites of passage of first year teachers in an inner city school setting. A most appropriate extention of this present study would be my following these five participants through their first year of employment and comparing those findings with this present study and with Eddy's study.

Having taken an in-depth look at the central research question, centering around the process undergone in the rites of passage, we now need to focus on the three subsidiary questions: What is the student teacher's response to her cooperating teacher as a model? How does the student teacher translate educational theory into classroom practice? And, what are the processes in the student teacher's development of the "teacher-self"?

The Student Teacher's Response to Her Cooperating Teacher as a Model

The first subsidiary question for this study is, What is the student teacher's response to her cooperating teacher as a model? Copas (1984) pointed out that it is the cooperating teacher's responsibility to facilitate the student teacher's developing a profoundly significant perception of the roles and responsibilities of teaching and what it means to be a teacher. I found that each of the participants in my 1988 pilot study established particular relationships with the cooperating teachers that seemed to be most advantageous in their assuming full classroom teaching responsibilities. For example, one student teacher in that earlier study depicted the relationship with her cooperating teacher as "'balanced between a maternal figure and a professional mentor'" (Bowers, 1988, p. 11). She felt that modeling this teacher's instructional style would be appropriate, since she considered herself a guest in that classroom.

Another student teacher who participated in my 1988 study perceived his cooperating teacher as a "professional expert," whom he should emulate because of her expertise in lesson planning, instructional style, and classroom management techniques. A third student teacher in the pilot study viewed her cooperating teacher as an "invisible partner," with whom she had little in common concerning attitudes toward teaching. However, this student teacher felt compelled to accommodate to her cooperating teacher's teaching and classroom management style to maintain consistency for the students and to avoid their having to make major adjustments following the end of her assignment there as student teacher.

In this present study, the participants also modeled their cooperating teachers in particular ways that best facilitated their student teaching program. The reader is reminded that, other than

Betty, each of these participants was assigned to two cooperating teachers in two separate seven-week student teaching experiences.

Lynne indicated that her first cooperating teacher served as a good instructional model but tended to be somewhat disorganized. She emulated this cooperating teacher's discipline style because "it worked." Lynne's relationship with this teacher might best be described as a loosely structured apprenticeship.

Lynne perceived her second cooperating teacher as a mentor, who guided her through the critical components of the student teaching process as described by Copas (1984), who lists six categories of behaviors that constitute "critical requirements" for cooperating teachers in their work with student teachers. The effective cooperating teacher, according to Copas, is one who is perceived to have provided the help, guidance, and support needed by the student teacher in each of these critical areas in the following ways:

A. Orienting Behaviors
   1. Provided the student teacher with information basic to adjustment to the class and school.
   2. Helped the student teacher locate resource materials, persons, and supplementary materials.

B. Inducting Behaviors
   3. Provided opportunities for the student teacher to study children and their learning processes.
   4. Structured responsibilities for the student teacher to study children and their learning processes.

C. Guiding Behaviors
   5. Helped the student teacher develop skills in planning and evaluating learning experiences.
   6. Worked with the student teacher in developing skills of presentation.
   7. Assisted the student teacher in developing skills of discipline and control throughout the student teaching experience.

D. Reflecting Behaviors
   8. Observed the student teacher and provided feedback as to the effectiveness of performance.
   9. Informed the student teacher of errors in a manner which protected the student teacher from embarrassment.

E. Cooperating Behaviors
   10. Interrupted the student teacher's lesson at appropriate times and in an appropriate manner.
   11. Accepted the student teacher as a co-worker of equal status in guiding the learning process.
   12. Provided for interaction with the student teacher through conferences.

F. Supporting Behaviors
   13. Encouraged the student teacher to explore and develop unique teaching behaviors.
   14. Demonstrated sensitivity to the emotional needs of the student teacher in personal relationships. (pp. 51-52)

Two of the participants in my study felt that they were assigned to cooperating teachers who failed to meet the standards of Copas's critical requirements. Kaye had such an experience with her first cooperating teacher. I believe this cooperating teacher's failures to provide the assistance, guidance, and expertise Kaye needed was the direct result of two interacting facts: (1) the cooperating teacher's not having been adequately prepared for a student teacher; and (2) an increasing conflict between Kaye and this cooperating teacher over interactions with the students (see discussion in chapter 4).

Kaye indicated that her cooperating teacher had not been a positive role model because she had not adequately talked with her about lesson planning, instruction, and disciplining students. Moreover, Kaye felt that her cooperating teacher had too frequently and inappropriately interrupted her teaching and had given her mixed messages about covering a certain amount of material versus ensuring that the students were well grounded in basic reading and

mathematics skills. The conflicts, along with Kaye's perceived lack of support from her first cooperating teacher, left Kaye feeling drained.

On the other hand, Kaye's second cooperating teacher embodied each of the six critical behaviors expounded by Copas (1984). As a result, this cooperating teacher demonstrated a high level of competence in facilitating Kaye's socialization and development during the student teaching process. Kaye responded by becoming self-confident and demonstrated those teaching competencies that I believe are indicative of an outstanding first year teacher. In fact, her final student teaching evaluation was superior.

Initially, the relationship between Kaye and her second cooperating teacher would appropriately be described as a mentorship. That relationship rapidly evolved into a professional colleagueship in which both Kaye and her cooperating teacher worked together to provide quality instruction for the students in their classes. In the end, Kaye indicated that the feedback from this cooperating teacher was both positive and encouraging and was a key factor in her viewing education as a "worthwhile profession."

Ellen was the other student teacher who had the experience of being assigned to a cooperating teacher who was perceived to fall short of Copas's critical requirements. The sequence of experiences with cooperating teachers was the reverse of Kaye's. Ellen's first cooperating teacher provided excellent support and guidance; the second one did not.

Ellen considered her first cooperating teacher to be a superior educator. From the time they were first introduced, Ellen was persuaded that she was someone to observe and emulate. This cooperating teacher further encouraged Ellen to integrate Ellen's own unique teaching style with the effective teaching techniques she had been observing in the classroom. In addition to instructional techniques, Ellen modeled her cooperating teacher's time management and way of handling discipline problems.

Clearly, the relationship between Ellen and this cooperating teacher was that of a junior partnership. This cooperating teacher met the six critical requirements for cooperating teachers as described by Copas (1984). As a result, by the end of the first seven-week student teaching placement, Ellen was demonstrating a high level of competence in the roles and responsibilities of teaching.

In stark contrast, Ellen's second cooperating teacher was not at all the kind of teacher Ellen aspired to emulate. This cooperating teacher's instructional and management style seemed to be one of "cover the textbook and keep the students under absolute control." She demanded that Ellen absolutely follow the "normal routine." This cooperating teacher's rigidity placed severe limitations on Ellen. Ellen was not permitted to deviate in the least from any established routine. These limitations ranged from Ellen's not being allowed to use an overhead projector to being told (in my presence) that she spent too much time explaining material rather than "covering" material for her fifth grade students.

Ellen was compelled to model this cooperating teacher because of the pressure the teacher put on her and Ellen's concern that her final evaluation would suffer. One of the pressures put on Ellen was that the "kids would go wild" if she failed to follow established routine. Ellen responded by outwardly accommodating her cooperating teacher's demands but inwardly resisting. She told me that "at least ten times a day" she wanted to terminate this student teaching experience. Needless to say, this relationship was a negative one. We might say that the cooperating teacher served as an obstacle to Ellen's progress.

In contrast to Kaye and Ellen, Gayle established very positive relationships with both her cooperating teachers. With her first cooperating teacher Gayle's relationship could be perceived as a junior partnership. Gayle found this teacher a person with whom she would feel at ease, especially in asking questions about the teaching process.

This cooperating teacher's instructional and classroom management style were loosely based on the open classroom concept (although the school was a traditional school) for most activities. The students worked in groups and were allowed to move around the classroom without having to ask permission. Gayle modeled this teacher's instructional style and classroom procedures in order to have this type of loosely structured teaching experience. However, at the end of the first seven-week assignment, Gayle had decided that she preferred a more structured teaching and management style. She frequently used the word "firm" in describing the teaching and discipline techniques she would implement once she had her own classroom.

Gayle's second cooperating teacher served her well in a mentorship relationship because this teacher had established what Gayle called a "closely supervised, firmly directed atmosphere." Gayle closely modeled her second cooperating teacher who exemplified all that Gayle had envisioned as the ideal teacher. Moreover, this cooperating teacher possessed exceptional skills in facilitating Gayle's development during the student teaching process.

Betty's unique status as a student teacher in the same school in which she was employed might have afforded her the opportunity to be in an equal partnership relationship with her cooperating teacher. However, that kind of relationship was not realized. The dynamics of the student teaching situation forced this relationship into a junior partnership, similar to that between Gayle and her first cooperating teacher. While Betty's cooperating teacher recognized the superior competence of this twenty-year veteran, during the student teaching program there was always the realization that the cooperating teacher was evaluating Betty's performance. In addition, Betty felt compelled to follow her cooperating teacher's instructional style in order to maintain consistency for the students.

In summarizing the student teacher/cooperating teacher relationships that emerged in this study, five different models may be observed:

1. The Apprenticeship Model. The historical definition of apprenticeship centers around the practice of working for someone who is skilled in a trade or craft in order to learn that trade or craft. Erdman (1983) points out that in some field experience programs a narrowly defined apprenticeship perspective can result in miseducative experiences. "The apprenticeship perspective construes the role of the preservice teacher as a helper who primarily assists the cooperating teacher," Erdman observes (p. 28). Participants in my study who were placed in situations in which the apprenticeship model was predominant tended never to reach the point of assuming the roles and responsibilties of a classroom teacher. Rather, they continued to serve as helpers or assistants to the cooperating teacher throughout their assignment to her classroom.
2. The Mentorship Model. In the Odyssey, Mentor was the person who was entrusted with the task of educating and caring for the son of Odysseus. The term mentor is now commonly used to refer to a wise, trusted, experienced guide who supports and leads the newcomer along the paths necessary to mastery and advancement in a chosen career. In cases where this model was being implemented in the field placements of the student teachers, the student teacher followed the cooperating teacher as an exemplary teacher and trusted guide through the student teaching process. The student teacher typically patterned her teaching and classroom management style after that of her cooperating teacher.

3. The Junior Partnership Model. Erdman (1983) has written that a "partnership perspective toward preservice teaching more readily addresses the complexity of teaching" (p. 28). Where what I have termed the junior partnership model was in operation in field experiences of the participants in my study, the student teacher initially modeled the cooperating teacher in a manner similar to the mentorship relationship. However, the support and guidance did not stop there but moved forward to something more. The cooperating teacher would encourage the student teacher to integrate effective teaching techniques with the student teacher's own personal teaching style and to experiment with various activities and instructional methods and then to evaluate the effectiveness of each. There was a sense of helping a "junior partner" move toward the goal of being an "equal partner" in the classroom. The student teacher with a cooperating teacher who worked under a partnership model was much more involved in classroom decision-making, lesson development, and the like. Near the end of the student teaching experience, the student teacher fully assumed the roles and responsibilities of the classroom teacher.
4. The Lack-of-Support Model. In situations where this model prevailed, the cooperating teacher provided little feedback on the student teacher's performance. When the cooperating teacher did evaluate the student teacher's performance, the assessment was usually highly critical with few suggestions for improvement.
5. The Rigidity Model. In this model, there is no room for innovation. The cooperating teacher who adhered to this model insisted that the student teacher model already established classroom procedures to the letter.

> No deviation would be permitted or tolerated. Essentially, the cooperating teacher who follows this model is a barrier to the student teacher's experimenting to find her own unique teaching style.

One thing that became clear in my analysis of the findings is the significant role played by the cooperating teacher as the connecting link between the theoretical background the student teachers have acquired at the university and the translation of that theory into practice.

Translation of Educational Theory into Classroom Practice

Having looked at the first subsidiary question, we now move on to the second question which focuses on the <u>how</u> of theory translation into practice. The five participants seemed to have interpreted the idea of educational theory as almost anything to do with their university coursework. Their responses to questions about educational theory seem to fall into five categories:

1. Subject area content
2. Methods and materials of instruction in various content areas
3. Learning theory and learning styles
4. Lesson planning
5. Classroom management (which they viewed as discipline)

All the participants in this study felt that they had been adequately prepared in the theoretical aspects of content and the methods and materials of teaching in elementary and middle schools. Furthermore, they seemed to feel that they had been adequately prepared in how children learn and how to plan lessons that are appropriate for the intellectual/learning needs of children.

Indeed, this particular group of five student teachers were prepared for classroom teaching. From the beginning of the first student teaching assignment they were eager to begin the process of actually teaching whole classes and each one began to do so much earlier than suggested in the university's time table for entrance into the various components of student teaching. However, due to a number of mitigating factors, they were, for the most part, not able to implement many of the creative types of activities that had been part of their university coursework, especially those ideas and practices that are taught in methods and materials courses.

Several mitigating factors affecting the student teachers' translation of theory into practice emerged from the findings of this study. Typically, these participants believed that their methods courses offered them a solid background of effective teaching methods, how children learn, and how to develop lesson plans that meet the instructional demands dictated by the curriculum, standards of learning, and the students' intellectual needs. However, each student teacher went into another teacher's classroom. That teacher had already established or was in process of establishing the procedures and routines she would be using for the entire school year. That teacher was experienced. That teacher already had some notion of the population served by her school along with some idea of the characteristics of the students who would be or were in her class. Also, that teacher's years of experience meant that she was already accustomed to a particular teaching style with which she was comfortable and which had either overt or silent approval from the school's administrators. And, along with these factors, that cooperating teacher felt in some way her responsibility to educate effectively the children assigned to her class for the year. That responsibility carried with it the responsibility to meet prescribed state, system-wide, and in-school goals and objectives. Her students would be administered one or more standardized tests during the school year, and that teacher

felt again overt or silent pressure knowing that her students' performance on those tests would likely be looked upon as indicators of her success and effectiveness as a teacher.

With those kinds of responsibilities facing cooperating teachers, they likely will consider a student teacher to be either a great help or a great hindrance (just one more responsibility) in their classroom. But above all, there is a tendency to view the classroom roles and responsibilities of the student teacher as extensions of themselves. That is, the cooperating teacher is responsible for the education of the students in her classroom; therefore, she must ensure that the student teacher is also as responsible. Hence, the cooperating teacher becomes a model for the student teacher. In essence, the hidden or even spoken message is this: "I am responsible. Therefore, you are responsible. If you do a poor job with these children--if they fail to learn and succeed while you are here--I shall be held responsible. With that in mind, you do 'it' like I do 'it' and the job will be done correctly."

How then did the student teachers in my study translate educational theory into classroom practice? The answer is simple. They modeled their cooperating teachers. As I have already discussed, that modeling occurred for a number of reasons: the student teacher's choice, the cooperating teacher's suggestion that the student teacher model her, or the cooperating teacher's insistence that the student teacher model her. Furthermore, the student teachers' modeling the cooperating teachers demonstrated a range. In some cases, the student teacher patterned the cooperating teacher's most effective teaching methods and activities at the beginning. Gradually, the student teacher began to integrate methods and activities she had learned in her university methods courses. Finally, the student teacher developed her own ideas and experimented with instructional activities and methods that were comfortable for instructional activities and methods that were comfortable for her. The student teacher's own unique teaching style began to emerge. During this process of development of the

student teacher's teaching style, the student teacher and the cooperating teacher frequently discussed those activities that were advantageous for the students' learning and those activities to which the students did not respond well.

In other cases, in contrast, the student teacher was compelled to accommodate her cooperating teacher's total classroom patterns. Any discussions between the student teacher and the cooperating teacher were centered on reasons not to deviate from the established pattern of classroom procedures and on ensuring that the student teacher's lesson plans were designed to maintain normal classroom routines. Essentially, the student teacher had little or no opportunity to work toward developing her own unique teaching style or experimenting with different kinds of activities to determine their potential effectiveness with the students.

From the experiences of these five participants, I submit that for these student teachers, the cooperating teachers were the bridge that linked educational theory with actual classroom practice. Some cooperating teachers were open to the student teachers' trying out new activities and methods and, in fact, welcomed the opportunity to learn from the student teacher. In these cases, I observed that there were a variety of creative instructional activities for the students that included many hands-on experiences. On the other hand, some cooperating teachers demanded that the student teacher maintain already established classroom routines and did not welcome any changes. Therefore, there were not opportunities for the student teacher to explore varied instructional activities and methods. In addition, I observed that in these classrooms, most teaching and student activities were textbook centered and follow-up activities were dittoed worksheets.

Another aspect of translating educational theory to classroom practice involves what may be described as the hand-in-glove fit between content, instruction, and learning theory with classroom management, which the participants in this study referred to as

student discipline. Whereas they felt adequately prepared for classroom instruction, the four participants who had had no previous classroom experience expressed much apprehension about having to deal with disruptive students. During the first few weeks of the student teaching experience, the issue of controlling student behavior took precedence over actual instruction. These four student teachers' verbal and written responses to my questions indicated their belief that they had not been prepared for the "real world" of the classroom and that the example scenarios discussed in university coursework were, in a sense, far removed from situations they actually had to handle. I did not observe any examples of the student teachers' trying out varying discipline techniques. Mainly, they followed the procedures set up by the cooperating teachers. Their reasons for doing so apparently had little to do with thinking through the effectiveness or the learning impact of the discipline methods used. The overriding principle in utilizing a particular methods of classroom management of student behavior was controlling students; that is, in simple terms, "if it doesn't harm the child and it works, use it."

I was concerned about this attitude toward managing student behavior and the lack of discussion about its impact on students' social, emotional, and intellectual development. However, my concerns lessened when, during the second student teaching placement, I noted evidence in both my classroom observations and in their written and verbal responses to questions that these four student teachers were beginning to recognize that lesson planning and effective instruction are the key to managing most student behavior. The student teachers were beginning to demonstrate the attitude of the twenty-year veteran in this study; that is, if the teacher's instructional presentation is organized and interesting and the teacher is enthusiastic, and if the students' are assigned tasks that tie in directly to their interests and/or previous learning, while at the same time having been given a goal or objective toward

which to work, then effective management of student behavior may be expected to result.

Again, the bridge that connected educational theory with actual classroom practice was found to be the cooperating teacher. In situations in which the cooperating teachers focused on using seat work to control students, the student teachers utilized the same method. In contrast, in classrooms where the focus was on effective, relevant instruction that involved students in active learning, the student teachers found that they spent less time correcting student behavior and more time teaching content and skills. Clearly, these findings support conclusions made by such educational researchers as Richardson-Koehler (1988) and Seperson and Joyce (1981), who emphasized that, whether positive or negative, the cooperating teacher serves as a model from which the student teacher develops his/her notions about the roles and responsibilities of teaching and translates educational theory into classroom practice. It is also increasingly clear that the cooperating teachers of the participants in this study served as catalysts in the development of these student teachers' concept of themselves as teachers. In other words, the cooperating teachers were central figures in the socialization and developmental processes that led to each participant's realization of her unique teacher-self, which brings us to the third subsidiary question in this interpretive inquiry.

The Development of the Teacher-Self

The processes in the student teacher's development of the "teacher-self" are rooted in the student teaching field experience. Erdman (1983) writes, "A distinction must be made between the observable field experiences and the meanings [italics added] preservice teachers construct from those experiences," (p. 27). She goes on to say that it is their own experience-based constructed meanings that preservice teachers use "to translate and develop

images of themselves as teachers." On a similar note, Blase (1986) calls attention to the importance that symbolic interactionist theorists place upon "research methodologies that allow for sympathetic introspection and an understanding of reality from the actors' perspective," methodologies such as life histories, participant observation, case studies, and interviews" (p. 101). He draws attention to the work of organizational and occupational theorists who are persuaded that only by examining an individual's subjective experiences can we gain insight into how that individual's personal and professional identities have developed and are continuing to develop. "According to these writers," explains Blase, "self and professional roles and attitudes develop as a result of social interaction and interpretive processes within the framework of environmental variables constituting the work setting" (p. 101). Furthermore, it needs to be kept in mind that, "the self is continuously redefined as important events occur" (p. 102).

Aware of this need to understand the "reality" of student teaching from the student teacher's perspective, I designed my research to investigate the ongoing process of the development of the teacher-self over a period of time. By stating their own descriptions of what happens in that process (<u>as it was happening</u>, as well as retrospectively), the student teachers were prompted to search out, examine, and analyze their own experiences subjectively. At the same time, the information they provided can expand the perspective of all interested persons who wish to know more about the preservice experience, for, as Fuller and Brown (1975) write:

> Despite the need for theory building and conceptualization of the process of change during teacher preparation, adequate theories are still not available. One important reason has already been mentioned: too little is known about what actually goes on during teacher preparation (p. 41).

The experiences the five student teachers have shared would appear to shed considerable light on much of "what actually goes on" in the preparation process, including the development of their own unique teacher-selves.

If, as symbolic interactionist theorists suggest, the development of a professional identity is an interactive process involving both the outer environment of the work setting (including the definitions and expectations of significant others) and the meanings the individual assigns to her or his experiences, it is not surprising that the emergence of the teacher-self occurs during the student teaching phase of teacher preparation. It is then that the person, whose definition before this time has been student, will begin to be regarded as teacher by significant others (the children, parents, cooperating teacher, university supervisor) in a work setting filled with experiences within which her or his unique reality is constructed.

For the participants of this study, the process of development of the teacher-self was, indeed, an interactive process that began with the decision to enter a preservice teacher education program. The university coursework provided a type of external work-setting environment that both defined what a teacher is and provided the expectations of the roles and responsibilities of a classroom teacher. The significant others in this external interactive process included the state and the state agency, which delineates teacher certification requirements, and the university instructors/professors who determine coursework content and the classroom experiences to which the preservice teacher will be assigned. In addition, there is an informal external group of significant others who both define and influence what a teacher is. This group consists of the local community, including the parents of the children in the school, and in a broader context, this group expands to encompass society at large, which holds a wide range of expectations for the education of our nation's youth. This informal

network has some role in defining good teaching and poor teaching, thus adding to the definition of the teacher.

Within the school, in the classroom, the student teachers in this study interacted for the most part with the cooperating teacher and the students. The findings of this study reveal that the cooperating teacher once again has a significant role. The cooperating teacher is the primary person--the major factor--in the student teacher's developing a concept of her own unique teacher-self. This development of the teacher-self was most recognizable within the student teaching experience when, during the transition phase of the rites of passage, the student teacher shifted from concern about her personal performance to concern about the students in the classroom and how the relationship between the students and the teacher impacts the students' learning processes. In that shift, each participant reflected upon her own teaching style, independently developed lesson plans, became less concerned about controlling students' disruptive behaviors and more concerned about providing effective learning experience, and perceived the need for herself to educate children in a way that facilitates the students' academic, social, and emotional development. In effect, each participant was moving away from the status of student and student teacher and into the unique position of recognizing self as teacher.

The recognition of self as teacher occurred in varying degrees and was an outgrowth of the relationship between the student teacher and the cooperating teacher. Within that relationship, the cooperating teacher either facilitated the student teacher's development of the teacher-self or hindered that development and socialization process. The key factor was the extent to which the cooperating teacher permitted the student teacher's independence in assuming the roles and responsibilities of a classroom teacher. I submit that for this study the student teacher/cooperating teacher relationship that best facilitated the student teacher's development of the teacher-self was the junior partnership model. In that

model, the cooperating teacher sought to bring the student teacher up to a level that is equal to the status of the classroom teacher. In such an arrangement, the student teacher may be expected to be better prepared to enter her first contract position as a classroom teacher. However, a follow-up study would be needed to support this conclusion. This and other areas needing further research will be explored in chapter 6.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND ADDITIONAL RESEARCH NEEDS

Since teaching is the only profession in which the practitioner has had at least seventeen years of direct observation, persons who decide to become teachers already hold various notions of how the job should be done. Most preservice teachers can discuss at length both good and poor teachers they have had and can give succinct critiques of effective and ineffective curricular materials and teaching methods. However, those critiques and beliefs about teaching tend to include some myths and misconceptions about the nature of classroom interactions among teachers, students, and materials, and about the salient points of what makes good or effective teaching. Moreover, a preservice teacher's notion of teaching and how she/he will conduct her-/himself in the classroom tend to be quite idealistic.

One must keep in mind that during the student teaching experience, that prospective teacher's idealism will most likely undergo significant changes--that, as one of the participants in this study said, idealism will change to realism. Prior to student teaching, most preservice teachers have viewed teaching from the student side of the desk, a place in which idealism can flourish. During student teaching the prospective teacher progressively moves to the teacher side of the desk and begins to see the particular characters and dynamics of teaching in a new way: that is, real people, acting in their own ways and possessing individual learning styles; real instructional materials and the availability or lack of materials and supplementary resources; and real teachers practicing their profession. Once the student teacher begins to integrate the characters and dynamics of teaching in her/his own

mind and to become directly involved in all the interactions that occur in a classroom, she/he begins to emerge as a teacher.

Perceptions of Student Teaching and Teaching in General

The five participants in this study entered the student teaching experience with a variety of preformed opinions about education and what their own classroom experience would be. One participant expressed her feelings of nervousness and her desire to perform in a competent manner. She was especially concerned about dealing with disruptive students and knowing how a teacher organizes materials for instruction. Another participant indicated her "hypercritical" evaluation of the state of education but felt that she was entering an honorable profession. Indeed, all the participants indicated in some way that teaching is an honorable profession and that their role as teachers is the preparation of young people for entrance into our nation's social and economic structures. It seems that at the point in which the student teachers began to see their personal responsibilities in guiding the students in their classrooms, they made a symbolic journey to the teacher side of the desk. Thus began their transition from student to teacher and the development of their teacher-selves.

These five student teachers had some common ideas about the role of the classroom teacher in what they considered to be the goal of education: the preparation of young people for their future places in our society. For persons desiring to teach in elementary and middle school classrooms, the participants felt that a love for children, the desire to work with children, and wanting the "best" for the children must be their first priority.

The participants considered the next priority in meeting the goal of education to be a genuine love of learning on the teacher's part. That learning must begin with the teacher's development of a rich knowledge base in preparation for teaching. Specifically, these student teachers indicated that the knowledge base encompassed

four areas: classroom management, subject matter content, instructional methods, and theories of how children learn. Classroom management should include effective ways of dealing with children who disrupt the instructional processes and time management techniques for completing all the required paper work from grading papers to completing reports to preparing lesson plans. The four student teachers who had no prior classroom experience felt that coursework preparation could have been more valuable to them with fewer methods courses and more instruction on management. One participant was especially emphatic in stating that she had not been prepared for what she called the "real world" of teaching. She, along with two other participants often discussed their lack of preparation in dealing with children who seem not to want to be involved in the classroom activities or who may have already "given up" on school. They felt that university courses in classroom management should include more examples of especially difficult children and more discussion of how they as classroom teachers could work with and for these students.

In contrast, the participant who had been a classroom teacher for twenty years prior to entering this particular student teaching experience, expressed no need for additional courses in classroom management (or specifically, discipline). Throughout her many years as an effective teacher she had developed a high degree of competence in involving students in instruction, which she perceives as the primary and most positive method of managing student behavior.

All the participants in this study view competence in classroom instruction as primary in their role as teacher. However, there is a sharp contrast between the twenty-year veteran and the other four persons. The four participants who had had no prior classroom experience held the notion that managing student behavior should precede instruction, while the veteran teacher believed that well-planned instruction was the key to managing behavior. However, as the student teaching experience was

drawing to a close, three of the nonexperienced participants were beginning to shift toward the veteran's view of classroom management and instruction. I attribute that shift to a integration of their cooperating teachers' influence and their own evaluation of effective and ineffective teaching strategies.

One participant continued to struggle with some aspects of student behavior, however, especially when she perceived that the children's parents were not fully supportive of her role as a teacher. Although her confidence in presenting information had increased, she remained somewhat unsure about her skills in "settling children down" in order for instruction to occur. Both cooperating teachers to which she had been assigned felt that this student teacher's overall insecurities were unfounded in that several of the situations she had had to face with students and a parent were indeed serious. Both cooperating teachers felt that she had conducted herself in a professional manner that defused rather than exacerbated potentially explosive situations.

Once the four student teachers who had had no prior classroom experience felt confident in dealing with student behavior, they concentrated their efforts on lesson planning and instructional methods. One "blossomed" in her second experience in using a variety of hands-on experiences, teacher demonstrations, and a guest speaker. In fact, all the student teachers developed ways to integrate hands-on experiences for their students in every content area. Except for the student teacher who, in her second experience, had an extremely rigid cooperating teacher, they felt some degree of freedom to experiment with different teaching styles, which facilitated their discovering two important factors in instruction: one, their own preferred teaching style; and two, ways to meet students' various learning styles by using a variety of teaching techniques. In this way, they began to be adept at translating learning theory into classroom practice and were on their way to becoming effective classroom teachers.

In evaluating her second experience, one participant (where the cooperating teacher was rigid and demanded the student teacher exactly model her teaching style) felt that the cooperating teacher so heavily emphasized classroom control and following procedure that the academic and social needs of the students went unmet to a great extent. This was all the more unfortunate because the students in this particular case were actually students at risk or in need of special services and programs. This student teacher talked with me at length about her frustrations in that teaching situation, especially ways she would structure the classroom differently if she were the employed teacher rather than the student teacher. I agreed with her and also felt her frustration in not being able to work more effectively with the students.

Content preparation is the third area in which the student teachers felt that they needed a rich knowledge base. The twenty-year veteran expressed the wish that she had had more courses in children's literature and ways to teach reading; she was pleased to learn that pre-student teaching requirements for elementary and middle school now include courses in methods and materials in reading and language arts, as well as children's literature. The participant who had not yet developed a concept of teacher-self felt competent in all content areas, except social studies, and was concerned that the students in her classroom might not learn as much in this area because of her own lack of knowledge. Her cooperating teacher helped this student teacher see how she could increase her knowledge in historical and current events and develop effective ways of teaching her students.

As the university supervisor, I observed that as the student teachers, including the veteran teacher, focused their attention less on their own performance, per se, and less on controlling children, concentrating instead on teaching children, their perception of themselves as "teacher" was strengthened. They were able to achieve a measure of performance that I believe is comparable to a first or second year teacher. They balanced the various roles and

responsibilities of classroom teacher. They began to see the many interactions that are daily occurrences in the classroom. They began to see that the issue is not controlling children. Rather, the primary function of the classroom teacher is to be in charge of the learning that goes on in their classrooms and to facilitate the academic, social, and emotional development of all the students that they teach.

Moreover, a degree of reality set in that the student teachers had not expected prior to their student teaching experience. In some ways, they were overwhelmed with some of the special needs of children and felt that they had not been adequately prepared to meet those needs. In one seminar we discussed the resources available within the school and the school system to which these children might be referred. However, the day to day reality was that these children were in the classroom. Some had severe behavior and emotional problems, as well as learning difficulties, and the student teachers felt ill-equipped to handle such situations even though they sometimes desperately wanted to do "something" for these children. But one participant said at the end that one thing she had learned during this experience was that she could not reach all children as she had once thought possible and had in the past criticized schools for not doing. Even with her years of experience, the twenty-year veteran expressed her dismay about the increasing numbers and seriousness of the social problems that today's children have to face and seemed almost amazed that children perform as well in school as they do.

Perception of Children

As mentioned previously, the participants entered teaching primarily for three reasons: one, they love children and want to work with them; two, teaching is a good job for a woman; and three, they want to participate in preparing children to take meaningful and productive places in society. These three reasons, including the

second one, have to do with their perception of children. I suggest that their perceptions of children influence the way in which the student teachers performed their responsibilities and saw their roles as teachers.

Three student teachers seemed to view children as youth who need to be controlled so that the teacher's knowledge can be passed on to his/her students. One of the three saw children as the symbolic future of our nation and believed that techers should pass on to them our national values so that children can be brought into full participation in the society. Educator Philip Jackson (1986) calls such an educational purpose mimetic, meaning that the children, either literally or symbolically, should mimic the teacher. The primary goal of the mimetic is to transmit the cultural norms, values, and knowledge of the present generation to the next generation. Children are perceived as empty vessels into which knowledge is to be poured and stored. Children must learn to follow correct and orderly procedures and act within the boundaries that have been established by the society, who is represented by the teacher. For example, one participant's desire as a teacher was to "get her ideas and knowledge across to the kids" and to give them "hope and knowledge to be successful in life."

In contrast, another participant tends to hold what Philip Jackson (1986) calls the transformative view of education, in which a kind of metamorphosis, or dramatic change, in values, attitudes, and interests takes place within the student. Jackson writes that "such changes would include all those traits of character and of personality most highly prized by the society at large (aside from those having to do solely with the possession of knowledge per se)" (p. 121). This participant believes that "good teaching requires a good interaction between students and teacher" but only when students are "emotionally and mentally ready to learn." It is something more than controlling them and passing on information. Jackson points out that whereas a common image in the mimetic tradition is that of pouring or storing knowledge into a premolded

vessel, the "root image within the transformative tradition is entirely different. It is much closer to that of a potter working with clay than it is to someone using the potter's handiwork as a container for whatever contents such a vessel might hold" (p. 122). The emphasis in the transformative tradition is on the molding of the clay by a "teacher-as-artist or teacher as creator" (p. 122).

Another participant models this tradition in her belief that before any knowledge is "offered" to the children, they must be prepared (made ready) for the learning process. She further believes that the learning process must involve the children's developing interests in the subject matter and changing certain negative attitudes that they might have toward learning and school in general.

On the other hand, the twenty-year veteran perceived children to be unique individuals with differing learning styles, who needed to be active participants in the learning process. Her instructional activities were designed to involve both the teacher and the students in interactions with each other and interactions with the learning materials. For example, a lesson she taught on possessive pronouns was designed so that the students had to hold up cards for everyone to <u>see</u> exactly how singular and plural possessive pronouns were written (that is, 's or s' as the word ending). In a lesson this student teacher described as one her most successful, she assigned the children to write and later share with the other classmembers paragraphs on any subject of their choice. She thought that this particular lesson was more successful than some others because she was also involved in the assignment--not as a "supervisor" but as an active participant. She said, "They [the students] were pleasantly surprised to look up and see me writing along with them."

Summary and Conclusions

In sum, these five participants saw their goals as educating young people to assume a productive place in society and transmitting our nation's culture to the next generation. They perceived their role as that of teacher and facilitator in the pupils' emotional, social, and intellectual development. The participants felt that their mastery of subject matter content, instructional methods and materials, theories of how children learn, and classroom management was the key to meeting that goal. Moreover, love of learning and love children were perceived to be essential ingredients in their becoming effective elementary/middle school teachers. The findings of this study revealed that, for these five participants, the primary figure in their becoming teachers and in the attitudes they developed about teaching was the cooperating teacher.

The cooperating teachers facilitated the movement of the participants through their rites of passage, especially during the transition phase, which is, for the most part, the student teaching experience itself. They served as the bridge that connected the educational thoery the student teachers brought with them to the student teaching assignment with the actual classroom practice in teaching and interacting with the pupils. The cooperating teachers were primary figures in the student teachers' becoming teachers, in the attitudes they developed about teaching, and especially in the participants' development of their own concepts of themselves as teachers.

Perhaps the major conclusion that can be drawn from the findings of this study is that the cooperating teacher can either (1) dim a student teacher's enthusiasm and perpetuate the status quo or (2) expand the student teacher's vision, fostering growth in her confidence as an educator and the development and utilization of

her abilities to the full. A great deal more research is needed to explore, extend, and generalize this conclusion.

Further Research Needs

I observed that one of the participants never developed a full sense that she could be an independent teacher. Up to the last week of the fourteen-week student teaching experience, she continued to rely upon the cooperating teacher for direction and approval of all her teaching activities even though her cooperating teacher encouraged her to plan lessons and carry out instructional activities independently. Because of this observation and the other findings from this study about the other participants translating theory into practice and developing a concept of self as teacher, I submit that there is a need to examine possible correlations between student teachers' personality profiles, using an instrument such as the Myers Briggs, and the following research parameters:

1. The developmental and socialization processes of student teachers' movement through the separation, transition, and incorporation phases of the rites of passage;
2. Student teachers' response to their cooperating teachers as a model;
3. How student teachers translate educational theory into classroom practice; and
4. The processes involved in the student teachers' development of a sense of self as teacher.

In addition, in analyzing the findings from this study, I had the sense that the pupils in the assigned classrooms had some input into the development of the student teacher's concept of herself as a teacher, but for this study I had made no provisions to inquire into that pupil/student teacher component. I am firmly convinced

that the relationship needs to be researched and plan to do so in a future study.

Researching Requirements for Cooperating Teachers and University Supervisors

In the literature review, I discussed research findings indicating that the cooperating teacher is the most influential factor in the student teacher's growth and development during the student teaching experience and continuing into the person's teaching career. With that in mind, I suggest investigating the two aspects of the student teaching process: (1) restructuring the process of identifying cooperating teachers and (2) redefining the roles and responsibilities of cooperating teachers and university supervisors.

Cooperating teachers should be identified among the lead or master teachers in a school or school system. These cooperating teachers should be in-serviced jointly by the school system and the college/university supervisor to meet the critical requirements of cooperating teachers as described by Copas (1988; see chapter 5 of this dissertation). The cooperating teacher would be well-grounded in subject area content appropriate to elementary or middle school, as well as learning theory and instructional methodology, and classroom management. The cooperating teacher would guide the student teacher in translating educational theory into classroom practice. She/He would work closely with the student teacher in a partnership of initially planning together for instruction and team teaching. As the student teacher increases his/her skills and confidence and becomes more competent in the roles and responsibilities of teaching, the cooperating teacher would provide opportunities for the student teacher to develop creative activities for instruction and to experiment with varied teaching styles. The cooperating teacher would assist the student teacher's reflectively

inquiring into the why's and how's of instruction, group dynamics, and classroom management techniques.

The university supervisor would serve as the liaison between the school and the university, ensuring that the university and state requirements for the student teaching experience and resulting teacher certification are met. No longer would the supervisor "observe and evaluate," but would become a consultant to assist both the cooperating teacher and the student teacher. Also, the supervisor would lead seminars for student teachers and cooperating teachers. If requested by either the student teacher or the cooperating teacher, the supervisor would conduct model lessons in the student teacher's assigned classroom. If a student teacher is confronted with an especially difficult sitation, I recommend that the university supervisor serve as the student teacher's advocate, but that the supervisor also be authorized to reassign or dismiss the student teacher if the situation calls for such action.

If we are going to have the most effective teacher preparation programs, we need to be giving attention to the needs that have been expressed by those who are out in the field. Emans (1983) writes that "the importance of relating preservice education, in-service education, and curriculum development in the schools is becoming increasingly obvious" (p. 16). He goes on to refer to an article by Yarger and Joyce (1977) who conclude;

> It is time to dispense with the dichotomy between preservice and inservice education. . . . Governance, research and development, substantial improvement of schooling, and staff development need to be conceived as a totality. (p.25, as quoted in Emanss [p. 16])

Emans (1983) goes on to say that schools of education need to base more of what they do on actual research and be actively involved in theory building, research production, and building upon the knowledge base of research findings that are already in. Thus

the education professor and the university supervisor would be engaged in facilitating the initial translation of theory into classroom practice.

Freiberg and Waxman (1983) write of the need for research that will ascertain the types of field experiences, curriculum, and feedback that foster the student teacher's classroom instructional competence. In addition, Joyce (1988) discusses the dearth of research on preservice teacher preparation programs and skills development that has characterized the past fifteen or so years. Before that time, there had been a profusion of literature based on sound research that focused on "the effects of variations in program design on developing teaching styles and skills" (p. 32). Joyce suggests the following five research questions:

1. What are the effects of field experiences on teaching behavior? (p. 33)
2. What effect do cooperating teachers have on the teaching behavior of teacher candidates? (p. 33)
3. What are the behavioral effects of various types of supervision? (p. 33)
4. What are the effects of intensive training on the learning of specific teaching skills? (p. 34)
5. What are the effects of training designed to enable teacher candidates to acquire and control a wide range of teaching strategies? (p. 34)

To Joyce's list, I would add the following eight research questions of my own:

1. What are the effects of intensive training on the learning of specific skills to manage student behavior?
2. What effect do students in the student teaching setting have on the behavior of teacher candidates?
3. What effect do cooperating teachers have on the attitudes about teaching that student teachers possess?

4. What effect do the students in the student teaching setting have on the attitudes about teaching that student teachers possess?
5. How do student teachers decide about resource materials to include in their classroom instruction?
6. What is the effect (value) of regularly scheduled seminars on the successes (or failures) of student teachers?
7. How do student teachers make decisions about managing disruptive student behavior?
8. How do student teachers make decisions about the types of instructional methods they use?

I intend to continue this present study in two ways. One, I shall conduct this same study using the same questionaires with a second group of student teachers within the year. Two, I shall follow the participants in a five to ten year longitudinal study as they enter and continue their careers in teaching. I hope that this study has given insight into the processes through which a group of elementary/middle school student teachers have grown, developed, and been socialized into the roles and responsibilities of a classroom teacher. In addition, I hope that those insights can shed some light on the most appropriate and effective ways to prepare persons to enter what one of the participants calls the "honorable profession" of teaching.

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APPENDIX A

CONSENT FORM

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN STUDY

I _____

agree to participate in the dissertation research being conducted by Rebecca S. Bowers. The study will begin on Monday, August 29, 1988 and end on Monday, December 19, 1988. I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any time and that there will be no adverse affects to my student teaching evaluations and final grade.

_____

signature date

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRES

QUESTIONNAIRE 1

1. In what year were you born?
2. In what community were you born?
3. Where were you raised? (birth through 16)
4. In what occupation was your father engaged at the time you began college?
   Your mother?
5. At what point in your life did you make the definite decision to enter teaching? What were the circumstances at the time?
6. What were the major attractions that teaching held for you at the point you decided to enter this profession?
7. What person(s) do you think influenced you in your decision to become a teacher? Explain.
8. Looking back today, what do you think were the most important factors in your decision to become a teacher?
9. What qualifications do you possess that you feel would fit well with teaching as a career for you?
10. What are you expecting from your student teaching experience for yourself?
    From your cooperating teacher?
    From your supervisor?

QUESTIONNAIRE 2

1. In general describe your student teaching experience up to today (9/15/88).
2. In what way(s) were you not prepared? What did you need from ODU (or some other institution) prepare you for student teaching?
   In what way(s) were you not prepared? What did you need from ODU (or some other institution) that you did not get?
3. Describe in detail your interaction with your cooperating teacher up to now.
4. Describe a lesson you have taught that "went well." In what way(s) did your cooperating teacher assist or give input? How did the children react? Why do you feel that this particular lesson was successful?
5. Describe your least successful lesson, if any. In what way(s) did your cooperating teacher assist or give input? How did the children react? Why do you feel that this particular lesson was less successful than others?
6. Describe and give your reaction to interactions (both positive and negative) with children during the last three weeks.
7. Do you have any general concerns about your student teaching?
8. In general, how are you feeling about your experience?

QUESTIONNAIRE 3

1. Describe your most successful lesson during your student teaching experience.
   In what way(s) did your cooperating teacher assist or give input?
   How did the children react?
   What made this lesson more successful than other lessons?
2. Describe your least successful lesson during your student teaching experience.
   In what way(s) did your cooperating techer assist or give input?
   How did the children react?
   What made this lesson less successful than other lessons?
3. Describe 2 or 3 children with whom you had the most difficulty during this student teaching experience.
   How did you manage the situation(s)?
   How did your cooperating teacher assist you?
4. Describe 2 or 3 children with whom you had the least difficulty during this student teaching experience.
   How were their behaviors different from that of the most difficult children?
   How did your cooperating teacher assist you in relating to these children?
5. Did your teaching become like that of your cooperating teacher?
   If yes, in what way(s)?
   Why did your teaching become like that of your cooperating teacher?
   If no, why?
6. Did you feel free to "experiment" with varying teaching styles or free to teach in "your own way"? Please explain.

7. What kinds of supplementary resources have you used in your lessons? (films, videos, other AV's, guest speakers, library books, student projects, others)
8. Describe your use of the school's library.
9. Describe your interactions with the following persons:
   principal
   counselor
   secretary
   custodial staff
   parents
   student teaching supervisor
10. Describe a multicultural educational experience(s) in which you have participated or which you taught.
    How did this (these) experience(s) fit (or meet) the needs of your students?
11. In general, do the students in your class(es) have special problems or environmental situations or backgrounds that you perceive affecting their school academic performance or behavior? Explain.
    As a classroom teacher, how might you ensure that these students achieve academically and demonstrate nondisruptive behavior in the classroom?

QUESTIONNAIRE 4

1. In what way(s) has student teaching differed from what you expected as you began in August?
   How has it been better than you expected?
   How has it been worse than you expected?
2. In what way(s) did your university courses prepare you for your student teaching roles and responsibilities?
3. In what way(s) were you not prepared? What did you need from your university that you did not get?
4. Describe the most important thing(s) that happened to your during your student teaching experience. How (or what) do you feel about this?
5. Describe your interaction with your cooperating teacher?
6. How did your management of student behavior become like that of your cooperating teacher? Please explain.
   Did you agree with your cooperating teacher's method of managing student behavior? Please explain.
7. What were positive things you learned from your cooperating teacher?
8. when you have your own classroom, what are some things you will probably do differently?
9. what was your vision of teaching before this student teaching experience?
10. What is your vision of teaching now?
11. What are the most significant changes in your vision about teaching?
12. Are you a teacher or a student? Please explain.

QUESTIONNAIRE 5

1. What is teaching?
2. What are the roles of a teacher?
3. What are the responsibilities of a teacher?
4. What is meant by the term "effective teaching"?
5. What are the traits of a good classroom manager?
6. Why did you decide to enter teaching as a profession?
7. Now that you have student teaching for seven weeks, do you still plan to stay in teaching? Why or why not?
8. What is your philosophy of education?
9. Describe your coursework (methods courses, etc.) that you completed prior to student teaching.
10. Was that coursework helpful in your first seven weeks of student teaching?
11. How do you see classroom theory (course at ODU, etc.) translating into actual classroom practice?
12. If you could change any aspect of your coursework and/or student teaching experience(s), what changes would you make and why? Please be specific.

QUESTIONNAIRE 6

1. What is the "best thing" you can do for your students during your student teaching experience?
2. Describe yourself-the teacher.
3. Write about your views on each of the following:
   lesson planning
   classroom instruction
   classroom management (discipline)
   meetings
   parental involvement
   use of resources/technologies in your instruction (films, etc., speakers)

QUESTIONNAIRE 7

1. Why are you teaching?
2. What are your responsibilities to your students?
3. What are the boudnaries between your role as teacher and the role of a child's parent(s)?
4. Who in society set these boundaries? Explain.

QUESTIONNAIRE 8

1. What is "good" teaching?
2. How do students learn best? What does the teacher need to do to ensure that learning occurs?
3. Describe the teaching style you prefer to use.
4. What adjustments, if any, have you had to make in your teaching style? why have you had to make these adjustments?
5. List the kinds of assignments you give your students. (In class and out of class)
6. List the types of behavior problems (class disruptions) with which you have had to deal.
7. How do you typically deal with these problems?
8. How would you prefer to deal with behavior problems?
9. Have you had to make adjustments in the way you would prefer to deal with behavior problems?
10. Describe the ideal student.
11. Describe the ideal teacher.
12. Now that you have been teaching for three months, how do you feel about teaching as a profession?
    What things have you enjoyed the least?
    What things had you hoped to accomplish with your class by this time that you have been able to accomplish?
    Unable to accomplish?
    What has facilitated or hindered your accomplishment of these things?
13. As of today, do you plan to teach next year? Why?
14. How do you feel about teaching?
    About your class?
    About the school?
15. Do you ever secretly wish that you had not gone into teaching or had a different class or a different school? If so, what

would you rather do? What class do you wish you had? What school do you wish you were in?

16. Tell in as much detail as possible what factors you believe to be involved in your children's success or failure in school. How do you measure success or failure? How do you believe the children can be helped to be more successful?

QUESTIONNAIRE 9

1. In what ways has your thinking about teaching changed as a result of your student teaching experience?
2. In what ways has your thinking toward students changed?
3. In what ways has your thinking toward school administrators changed?
4. In what ways has your thinking about the teaching profession remained the same?
5. Some ways I feel I have changed as a person as a result of student teaching are
6. Before my student teaching experience, I saw myself as
7. Since my student teaching experience, I see myself as
8. If there has been a change, please respond to the following: The particular turning point occurred when

ESSAY

Write an essay about your working relationship with your cooperating teacher. Include information about the following"

planning
actual instruction
discipline
non-teaching activities
record keeping
other activities

If there have been differences of opinion about lesson activities, instructional methods, discipline, or other things, explain how you dealt with the situation. did you "give in" or did you not "give in"? Explain in detail.

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE INTERVIEWS

Interview with Gayle
October 1, 1988

Researcher (R): Now that you have been teaching for seven weeks, what is your assessment of student teaching?

Gayle (G): *It's been better than I expected. If regular teaching is anything like this, I will definitely continue this profession. I haven't experienced any surprises in student teaching, except I didn't know how much paperwork was involved.*

R: What would you say about teaching at this point?

G: *It's more than just giving out information from the textbook. It involves hours of planning. Each subject must be taught differently, just as every child learns differently--and involves different methods.*

R: What is the teacher's role in the teaching process? How does the teacher fit in all this?

G: *Teachers are responsible for the children learning material in the textbook and common knowledge that comes from other students, adults, and the teacher. A teacher attempts to educate children in all aspects to the best of their ability. The teacher is responsible for the safety of the students while they are in his or her care.*

R: Describe yourself as a classroom manager.

G: *Well organized and neat. Firm with the classes and consistent with the rules. The students know the routine of the day, which will help things run smoothly.*

R: What have you done for your students during your first student teaching experience?

G: *I tried to provide the best possible lessons. "Best" meaning proper approaches, my full attention, being familiar with what I am teaching, allowed for discussion.*

R: Describe yourself as a teacher.

G: *At this point I am still trying to decide on a particular style. I would like to be a friendly teacher, but still be professional. I*

try to show concern where possible, but yet still be firm. I worry about being firm enough and having my lessons organized.

R: Describe your lesson planning.

G: *I feel I need detailed lesson plans at this time in my teaching, but eventually I'll use a shorter lesson plan.*

R: And how do you carry this planning out in classroom instruction?

G: *My instruction is organized so that both the students and I know what will happen. I try to be prepared for the unexpected.*

R: Do you use resources or any technologies, such as films, computers, videos?

G: *Only once--a film for social studies. I'll try to use more in my next experience.*

R: Why have you not used other resources?

G: *There aren't a lot of resources available and we don't have a lot of time to fit them in.*

R: What kinds of things--activities--are taking the time?

G: *Trying to get through reading, spelling, and math lessons and keeping the students in order.*

R: How could you as a teacher help your students achieve academically and not show disruptive behavior?

G: *I need to have the ability to control and discipline the students effectively. The rules should be stated clearly and discussed from the beginning, and enforced with consistency throughout the year. If the rules are followed, and the students have respect for the other students and the teacher, they will have a better chance for learning what is taught. Keeping students on task and interested in the material will help to ensure learning.*

R: Thank you. I know you have to go back to your classroom.

Interview with Gayle
December 7, 1988

Researcher: Now that you are at the end of your student teaching experience, describe the teaching style you prefer to use.

Gayle: *I have only had two different experiences, but know which one I would like to use.*

R: Which style is that?

G: *A firmly disciplined classroom. I would start out firm and stay firm and consistent throughout the year. And I think students need hands-on experiences; so I would include these in my class.*

R: What do students need to learn best?

G: *Well, I believe students learn best in a closely supervised, firmly directed atmosphere. There should be an established routine for each day, with some flexibility. Students should also be able to participate in the lessons, and be able to give feedback without feeling uneasy. Teachers need to be consistent in everything they do--teaching, discipline.*

R: What kinds of assignments did you tyically give your students?

G: *I used the textbook for the basic assignments. For English, the assignments are done in class. In social studies, they answer the quesions at the end of the chapter or section and define the words in that section. And I have them bring in clippings from the newspaper for social studies.*

R: Do you follow your cooperating teacher's style of teaching?

G: *Yes, it's the way I'd like my classroom to operate.*

R: How would you describe your teaching style?

G: *I don't think I've established a teaching style yet, but I do try to model the same kind of instruction that Mrs. _____ uses. I gues I'm still searching for my own style.*

R: Describe your lesson planning.

G: *Mrs. _____ set up the kind of lesson plans I was to write for each lesson. She wants me to write them this way so I am prepared each day.*

R: In your first student teaching experience, you talked about wanting the classroom to be operated or managed in a firm and consistent way. How have you typically handled classroom management or discipline during this second student teaching assignment?

G: *Actually, there are only two or three children who are problems, but these children can be controlled. My first cooperating teacher did not enforce the rules consistently. I would try to keep those students as busy as possible, but this sometimes did not work. I would try putting their names up on the board, but they didn't care about the punishments.*

R: Was this method a form of Assertive Discipline?

G: *Yes, but it didn't work with these children. This second experience is different. All I have to do is pick up a piece of chalk and walk toward the area of the board that is set aside for names.*

R: What is the difference between your first and second student teaching experience?

G: *The second cooperating teacher started the discipline policy from the beginning of the school year. And was firm and consistent. The first also started from the beginning of the year but was not consistent.*

R: Overall, how do you feel about teaching?

G: *I enjoy teaching, but feel uncomfortable about social studies material. Sometimes I wonder if this is what I want to do for the next twenty years, but I won't know the answer to that until I actually have my own class. I do wish I would have had more courses in discipline or classroom management.*

R: Now that you have been in student teaching for almost four months, how do feel about your student teaching experience?

G: I *have learned a lot about the teaching profession. Even though I've found out it involves much more than I expected, I believe I'll still pursue the teaching profession. I've enjoyed meeting the people involved in both schools, getting to know so many different children, and having a close relationship with my cooperating teachers. I tried to fit in at both schools. I wanted to feel at ease teaching the students, and I wanted them to feel comfortable with me. Some of the students were easier to reach than others.*

R: What are the most important things you learned during your student teaching?

G: *That teaching is not just presenting the material to the students. I knew that it was going to involve a lot of time, but not the paperwork. And I learned that you ar constantly thinking and on the go. You're constantly learning about children and new techniques to teach them.*