

Validation and Affirmation of Disability and Deaf Culture:
A Content Analysis of Introductory Textbooks to Special Education and Exceptionality
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Abstract: This paper reports the findings of a review and normative content analysis of 10 introductory textbooks to Special Education to assess the extent that disability culture, Deaf culture and related topics were addressed. A total of 5,481 pages of text were analyzed to determine the number of pages that addressed disability culture, Deaf culture and related topics, and the number of pages of text authored by deaf persons and people with disabilities. Results indicated that disability and Deaf culture were not identified or discussed in any chapter specifically addressing cultural diversity, Multicultural Education or bilingual education. Disability culture was discussed on three pages and the discussion of Deaf culture comprised less than two percent of the total pages reviewed. Discussion of the advocacy efforts of disabled and Deaf persons, the disability rights and independent living movements and the identification of disabled and Deaf leaders was very limited. It was concluded that representation of disability and Deaf culture and the perspectives and views of disabled and Deaf persons in the textbooks reviewed was minimal. Discussion and recommendations address the need to promote cultural competence with respect to disability and Deaf culture in the preparation of Special Education teachers, and the need to provide disabled and Deaf youth access to their communities, history and shared experience.

Key Words: Deaf culture, disability culture, textbooks

Introduction

Students come to schools with substantial variance in experiences, backgrounds, language, abilities, and belief systems. In this context, education systems at all levels prefer to be known as valuing diversity, cultural pluralism (Rueda & Prieto, 1979) and cultural competence and proficiency (Cross, Bazron, Dennis, & Isaacs, 1989; Lindsey, Robbins & Terrell, 2003). The profound influence of culture on the learning and education of all students and the need for teachers to demonstrate cultural competency and proficiency has been well established in the literature (Banks & Banks, 2004; Edgar, Patton, & Day-Vines, 2002; Gay, 2003; Kalyanpur & Beth, 1999; Lynch & Hanson, 2004; Sleeter & Grant, 2002). To this end, the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) approved Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) performance-based standards for the preparation and licensure of special educators, which address the need for special educators to be culturally competent and proficient (Council for Exceptional Children, 2003). A number of authors have called for expanded efforts in this area (Edgar et al., 2002; Foster & Iannaccone, 1994; Sorrells, Webb-Johnson, & Townsend, 2004).

Disability and Deaf culture, though not new to the disability and deaf communities, have recently emerged as subjects of scholarship and study in the area of disability studies. Irving Zola (1982) published one of the first chronicles of the disability experience presenting the possibility of a common and shared experience by persons with disabilities. David Pfeiffer and Andrea Schein both presented papers published in the proceedings of the 1984 Association on

Handicapped Student Service Programs in Post-Secondary Education (AHSSPPE, now the Association on Higher Education and Disability, AHEAD) addressing the question “Is there a Culture of Disability?”

Brown (1994) completed and reported the findings of a study investigating the emergence and existence of a disability culture. This report includes a comprehensive description of the cultural foundations of the disability experience and definitions of disability culture adopted for the investigation reported in this study. Ingstad and Whyte (1995) edited a book addressing elements of disability culture that have become the focus of the emergent discipline of disability studies including disability and personhood, social organization and disability, social position and disability, analyzing processes, and historical transformations. Longmore (2003) noted the disability rights movement in America has moved into its second phase—developing a disability identity with the task of exploring and creating a disability culture. The notion of disability culture and disability as a phenomenon worthy of study and understanding has resulted in the emergence of disability studies as a focus of intensive discourse and inquiry (Albrecht, Seelman, & Bury, 2001; Barnes & Mercer, 2003; Linton, 1998).

Deaf culture has also been well addressed in the literature. Burch (2001, 2002) has traced the early origins of Deaf culture in America during the late 19th century to the second World War. Padden and Humphries (1988) presented one of the first descriptions of the origins and emergence of Deaf culture. The Deaf President NOW movement in 1988 galvanized the deaf community, advancing deaf pride and leading to the appointment of the first deaf president of Gallaudet University. Harlan Lane (1976) authored one of the first historical accounts of the deaf community. Other authors have written extensively on the evolution and characteristics of Deaf culture (e.g., Van Cleve & Crouch, 1989; Groce, 1985). In short, the contemporary professional literature addressing disability and Deaf culture has accumulated since the early 1980s. Numerous authors have validated and affirmed disability and deafness as a cultural phenomenon (Brown, 2002; Charlton, 1998; Hahn, 1997; Hallahan & Kauffman, 1994; Ingstad & Whyte, 1995; Jones, 2002; Lane, 1997; Linton, 1998; Longmore, 2003).

However, disability and Deaf culture appear to have received limited attention in the Special Education and Multicultural Education literature. Kirshbaum (2000) addressed the concept of disability culture and the integration of disability culture in early childhood Special Education. While some authors of texts in Special Education (e.g., Lynch & Hanson, 2004; Kalyanpur & Beth, 1999) have addressed ethnic and linguistic diversity and culture among families of children with disabilities, minimal attention appears to have been paid to issues related to disability and Deaf culture. This raises questions about the extent to which disability and Deaf culture are topics of interest to researchers of Special Education and Multicultural Education.

While it is understood that it is important for students completing teacher preparation programs to develop cultural competence with respect to ethnicity, race, gender, class and other diversity factors, it is generally assumed successful completion of teacher preparation programs in Special Education results in cultural competence with respect to disability and deafness. However, the extent that disability and Deaf culture are addressed as topics of importance in teacher preparation programs and specifically Special Education and Multicultural Education has not been systematically investigated or reported.

One approach is to conduct a normative content analysis (Neuendorf, 2002) of introductory textbooks to Special Education and Multicultural Education to measure the frequency of occurrence and the number of pages that discuss topics related to disability and

Deaf culture. Kuhn (1996) suggested textbooks recount elementary and advanced concepts, accepted theory, achievements, applications, principles, and methodologies typically regarded as supplying the foundation for further practice for the study of virtually any field including Special Education and Multicultural Education. Introductory textbooks are important because they provide a relatively comprehensive overview of the perspectives, concepts, philosophy, ideologies, theory, practice, and issues comprising the framework of a discipline such as Special Education. In short, introductory textbooks generally provide a broad representation of the core elements of a discipline and represent the current thinking of a majority of professionals and experts within a given field. A content analysis of textbooks in both Special Education and Multicultural Education may be helpful to determine the extent that topics related to disability and Deaf culture have been adequately addressed.

The remainder of this article describes a study involving a content analysis of introductory textbooks that addressed the following research questions:

1. To what extent are disability culture, Deaf culture and selected topics related to disability and Deaf culture addressed in introductory textbooks to Special Education and exceptionalism?
2. To what extent are disability culture, Deaf culture and issues or topics related to disability and Deaf culture discussed in chapters specifically devoted to a discussion of cultural diversity, Multicultural Education, and bilingual Special Education?
3. To what extent are people with disabilities and deaf persons provided opportunities to represent and describe their own experiences as persons identified as members of a unique microculture, minority, and community?

The next section of this article describes the content analysis methodology used, including definitions employed, textbooks selected for review, search categories and strategies; data coding, reliability, and data analysis. The results section identifies the number of pages of text devoted to a discussion of each of the search categories and the proportion of total text reviewed that comprised the number of pages discussing each search category. The results include a) the number of pages of text that discussed disabled or deaf persons as members of a diversity group; b) whether disability and Deaf Culture were addressed by chapters devoted exclusively to a discussion of cultural diversity, multicultural and bilingual Special Education; c) the extent to which text that addressed the diversity of Special Education personnel included the number of disabled or deaf persons employed as Special Education or related service professionals, and, d) the number of pages of text found to address each of the search categories. The summary section of the results describes the overall findings of the analysis. The results of the content analysis are depicted in Tables 5 and 6. Finally, the discussion section describes the implications of the results of the study and recommendations.

Methods

A simple normative content analysis (Neuendorf, 2002) of 10 introductory textbooks to Special Education and exceptionalism was conducted to measure the frequency with which introductory textbooks to Special Education and exceptionalism addressed disability culture, Deaf culture and issues or topics related to disability and Deaf culture. Of interest was the number of pages that specific search terms and categories related to disability and Deaf culture appeared in

the text. In addition, this study sought to identify the number of pages in each text that included material authored by disabled and deaf persons who may have discussed perspectives about disability and Deaf culture, their understandings of the disabled or Deaf community, and their own individual experience as a deaf or disabled person.

Definitions

The first step to conducting the content analysis was to adopt definitions of “culture,” “disability culture” and “Deaf culture.” These definitions were generated from a review of definitions reported in the disability studies and Multicultural Education literature to establish the basis for identifying and selecting search terms and categories related to disability and Deaf culture.

Definitions of Culture

For the purpose of this study the following definitions taken from the Multicultural Education literature were adopted.

- (1) *“...the values, traditions, social and political relationships, and worldview created, shared, and transformed by a group of people bound together by a common history, geographic location, language, social class, religion, or other shared identity“ (Nieto, 2004, p.146).*
- (2) *“...everything you believe and everything you do that enables you to identify with people like you and that distinguishes you from people who differ from you. Culture is about groupness. A culture is a group of people identified by their shared history, values, and patterns of behavior” (Lindsey et al., 2003, p. 41).*

Definitions of Disability Culture

Pfeiffer (2004) noted, “There is no single definition of disability culture, but rather there are definitions. These definitions, while being distinct, have overlapping concepts” (p. 14). For the purpose of this study disability culture was defined as follows:

- (1) *“Disability culture is a critical conceptual framework in disability studies scholarship for discussing the shared aspects of our experience, and the language, customs, and artistic products that emerge from it” (Linton, 1998, p. 102).*
- (2) *“Disability culture presumes a sense of common identity and interests that unite disabled people and separate them from their nondisabled counterparts” (Barnes & Mercer, 2001, p. 522).*
- (3) *“People with disabilities have forged a group identity. We share a common history of oppression and a common bond of resilience. We generate art, music, literature, and other expressions of our lives, our culture, infused from our experience of disability. Most importantly, we are proud of ourselves as people with disabilities. We claim our disabilities with pride as part of our identity. We are who we are: we*

are people with disabilities” (Brown, 2002, p. 52).

Definitions of Deaf Culture

For the purpose of this paper, the definition of Deaf Culture is comprised of descriptors presented by Padden and Humphries (1988) that include the following:

- (1) *“...a particular group of deaf people who share a language—American Sign Language (ASL)...use it as a primary means of communication among themselves, and hold a set of beliefs about themselves and their connection to the larger society” (p. 2).*
- (2) *“Deaf people have accumulated a set of knowledge about themselves...have found ways to define and express themselves through rituals, tales, performances, and everyday social encounters. The richness of their sign language affords them the possibilities of insight, invention and irony...what sorts of symbols they surround themselves with, and how they think about their lives” (p. 11).*

Textbooks Selected for Review

Table 1 provides a profile of the 10 texts selected for review for this study. The texts selected were known by the author to be widely used in introductory courses to exceptionality and/or Special Education. In addition, authors of the texts are well published in the Special Education professional literature and acknowledged experts in the field. Textbooks were identified and selected so at least half included a chapter devoted specifically to addressing cultural diversity, Multicultural Education, and bicultural education. As Table 1 indicates, two texts were first editions while the remaining were third editions or later. Six of the 10 textbooks included a chapter devoted specifically to addressing cultural diversity, Multicultural Education, and bicultural education while the remainder embedded the discussion of cultural diversity issues throughout the text. Finally, the latest edition of the textbook available at the time of this study was selected for review.

A total of 85 pages of introductory (INTRO) material and 5,396 of narrative (NAR) were reviewed for mention or discussion of each search term and category. The introduction (INTRO) included any pages devoted to a preface, forward, and acknowledgements. The narrative (NAR) included all pages devoted exclusively to a discussion of content information. Pages included in the narrative category also included chapter summaries, resources, learning activities, names of organizations, and websites. If a page included both references and narrative content it was included as a narrative page. For the purpose of this study, the pages classified as introduction and narrative were the pages selected for review and determining the presence of discussion addressing search categories and terms. The term “text” refers to all information presented on any page of the introduction and narrative including text, graphics, tables, charts, photos, diagrams and illustrations.

Procedures

Search Terms and Categories

A simple normative content analysis (Neuendorf, 2002) was conducted to determine the presence or absence of specific search terms and categories generated by the author judged to be related to disability and Deaf culture based on a review of the disability studies literature. Table 2 provides a listing and description of 24 search categories and a complete listing of all search terms included in each category. A review of the disability studies literature addressing disability and Deaf culture leads to an inexhaustible list of potential topics that may be related directly or indirectly to a discussion of disability and/or Deaf culture. Some topics related to disability and Deaf culture may or may not be relevant to a discussion of Special Education in the context of the instruction of children with disabilities. Topics and search terms included were those frequently identified in Special Education texts judged to be related to a discussion of disability and/or Deaf culture. The search terms and categories listed in Table 2 were ones most likely to be addressed or discussed in introductory Special Education textbooks, based on the experience of the author of this article, and were relevant to a discussion of disability studies and disability and/or Deaf culture. Some topics related to disability and Deaf culture were not included, such as “service animals” and “technology.” While both of these factors are significant contributors to disability and Deaf culture they are typically characterized as accommodations and strategies to facilitate instruction, learning, and independence by Special Education textbooks.

American Sign Language (ASL) and interpreters of sign language were included as a separate category related to Deaf culture. ASL, sign language and interpreters are foundational elements of Deaf culture and any discussion of Deaf culture must address ASL as the primary language of the Deaf community. However, ASL and sign language are also frequently discussed in Special Education texts as instructional strategies for communication and language development. References to ASL, sign language and interpreters were coded as ASL-Deaf culture if the discussion of ASL was addressed in a discussion of Deaf community, Deaf culture, and/or as a unique language of the Deaf community. Discussion of ASL limited solely to the education and instruction of deaf children for the purpose of developing communication and language with no reference to Deaf culture or the Deaf community was coded as ASL-deaf/HI (i.e., deaf/hearing impairment). References to ASL and related search terms involving strategies to instruct students with disabilities other than hearing impairments were coded as ASL-Other. The focus of this study was identifying text specifically focused on developing a knowledge and understanding of disability and Deaf culture and potential implications for Special Education that included a discussion of ASL as the defining linguistic foundation of Deaf culture. Therefore, for the purpose of this study ASL-Other was dropped from the analysis resulting in a total of 23 search categories included for analysis.

Search Strategies

The first step was a thorough examination and review of the subject index of each text to identify all subject index entries relevant to disability and Deaf culture.

Following the compilation of subject index entries, the introduction and narrative text were read and searched for each subject index entry included in the list with specific attention paid to the pages identified in the subject index. Since most subject indexes do not include a complete listing of the page numbers of every instance a topic or term occurs, or the most complete listing of all possible search terms or topics that might be relevant to disability and Deaf culture, subject index page numbers were only employed as a preliminary guide for the

most obvious possibilities. Thus, an important step involved reading each text and attempting to identify pages on which search terms and categories listed in Table 2 may have been discussed but not identified in the subject index. In addition, the text was read to identify search terms and categories relevant to disability and Deaf culture not listed in the subject index.

The review of subject index entries and the text resulted in a comprehensive and continuously expanded listing of search terms and categories related to disability culture, disability studies, and Deaf culture. When search terms and categories expanded, textbooks were subjected to several iterations of review and analysis to identify occurrences of search terms and categories included subsequent to the initial review of the text. This assured each text was reviewed and analyzed for the presence or absence of the complete list of all search terms and categories.

Data Coding, Entry, and Analysis

As Table 2 indicates, a comprehensive listing of search terms was compiled and organized into 23 categories assigned a unique identification number. When a search term or category was found in the text the author kept records for each search category identification number and the starting and ending pages on which the term or category was discussed. The total number of pages containing any of the terms included in each of the search categories listed in Table 2 was calculated as a measure of the amount of text devoted to a discussion of disability and Deaf culture. The proportion of total pages of all text devoted to a discussion of each of the search categories listed in Table 2 was also calculated. All data was entered and analyzed using Microsoft® Excel 2000.

Reliability

A research assistant with a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling was employed to conduct a reliability check for data entry and coding. The degree of agreement between the author and research assistant about whether text on specified pages of each textbook addressed search terms and categories was employed as the measure for assessing coding reliability. The research assistant was provided explicit training on the rules for identifying the occurrence of a search term or topic. She was also provided a complete listing of all search terms and categories (i.e., Table 2) and trained on methods for recording the occurrence of terms or categories in text.

The author provided the research assistant with 20 entries of pages of search terms and topics previously identified and coded to pilot the reliability assessment. The pilot sample included a code for the textbook so she knew which textbook to review and starting and ending pages to review. She reviewed the pages specified and identified the occurrence, or nonoccurrence, of any of the search terms or categories addressed in the text on these pages. If the research assistant identified more than one search term or category she was instructed to select only one and record the assigned search category code. Several pages were included that did not address any search term or category. If she determined the text did not address a search term or category she recorded a code (i.e., 99) indicating no search term or category was addressed on pages she reviewed. Agreement was reached when both the author and research assistant recorded the same search category code for the same pages of text reviewed.

Upon completion of the pilot reliability assessment, the author and research assistant discussed and clarified areas of disagreement to clarify questions regarding search criteria and

coding. The final reliability assessment was conducted on a total of 140 randomly selected observations while assuring all textbooks and search categories were represented. This represented about 10 percent of the observations included in the dataset. Krippendorff's alpha (Krippendorff, 2004) was computed as a measure of the level of agreement between raters. When raters agree perfectly, observed disagreement is zero and alpha is equal to one. When raters agree on the basis of chance results indicating an absence of reliability, alpha measures zero. Thus, for reliability, α 's range is $1 \geq \alpha \geq 0$. For this study, Krippendorff's alpha was based on a 23x 23 observed coincidence matrix corresponding to the 23 search category codes that might be assigned. Krippendorff's alpha was calculated to be .91, suggesting an extremely high degree of agreement and coding reliability. Of the 140 unit search category codes assigned, disagreements were recorded for 12 data units.

Results

A total of 5,481 pages of introductory material and narrative comprised the material subjected to the review and analysis for this study. A total of 1,737 pages were identified as addressing one or more search categories. A total of 1,403 occurrences of the 23 search categories were recorded. Table 3 summarizes the search categories addressed by each textbook, including the number and percent of categories addressed by each book, and the number of books that included text addressing each search category.

Chapters Addressing Cultural Diversity, Multicultural and Bilingual Special Education

Of the 10 textbooks reviewed, six textbooks included a chapter specifically devoted to a discussion of issues involving the education of children with disabilities who were considered culturally and/or ethno-linguistically diverse. These chapters addressed the needs and issues of children and families for whom English was a second language, children whose families may have immigrated to the US and children and families of color. Of interest for this study was whether disability or Deaf culture and related topics were included as topics for discussion in chapters targeting issues of cultural and ethno-linguistic diversity. The six chapters expressly about cultural and ethno-linguistic diversity comprised 208 pages. While the other four texts did not have a chapter devoted exclusively to a discussion of cultural and ethno-linguistic diversity these topics were addressed in the first chapter of each text and the discussion of cultural and ethno-linguistic diversity was embedded in the text that discussed various disability categories. The results described below are limited to the six texts with chapters dedicated exclusively to cultural and ethno-linguistic diversity.

Categories of Cultural Diversity

Table 4 includes seven categories of cultural groups including ethnicity/race, language, gender, socioeconomic status (SES), disability, sexual orientation (GLBT), and religion. Of these seven categories, ethnicity/race, language, and SES were addressed in all texts, including the six chapters in the books with chapters devoted to multicultural and bilingual aspects of Special Education. Ethnicity and language were the primary focus of the six texts that included chapters dealing with cultural diversity. Only one of the six texts (Heward, 2000) addressed gender differences and sexual orientation. However, it should be noted that all texts addressed gender differences with respect to various disability categories. In addition, Smith, et al. (2004) included

a section dealing with sexual orientation in a chapter about students identified as at-risk and Hunt and Marshall (2002) addressed sexual orientation in a chapter about gifted students. Three of the six textbooks briefly discussed religious factors as a relevant topic in their discussion of cultural diversity.

Acknowledging the Existence of a Disability and Deaf Culture

Three textbooks acknowledged people with disabilities as members of a cultural group, minority, and/or microculture. Only one text discussed Deaf culture (Hallahan & Kauffman, 2003) in chapters devoted exclusively to multicultural and bilingual Special Education limited to two pages. None of the textbooks mentioned or acknowledged the existence of disability culture in chapters devoted to multicultural and bilingual Special Education or discussed any elements or details about Deaf culture.

Hallahan and Kauffman (2003) acknowledged the existence of Deaf culture in their chapter addressing multicultural and bilingual Special Education. A description of this culture was included in a separate chapter on hearing loss. These authors defined an exceptionality group as "...a group sharing a set of specific abilities or disabilities that are especially valued or that require special accommodation within a given microculture. Thus a person may be identified as exceptional in one ethnic group (or other microculture defined by gender, social class, religion, etc.) but not in another (p. 90)." Similarly, Colarusso and O'Rourke (2004) and Heward (2000) identified deaf and disabled persons as members of unique cultural groups. Hallahan and Kauffman (2003) included a discussion of people with disabilities as a minority in a separate chapter addressing trends and issues in Special Education.

Diversity of Special Education Personnel

Only two textbooks addressed the diversity of Special Education teaching personnel in chapters addressing cultural diversity. This discussion was limited solely to the representation of personnel with respect to ethnicity in all texts. The absence of racial diversity among both general and Special Education teachers was noted by Gargiulo (2003) and Smith (2004). Representation of disabled and deaf persons among Special Education personnel was not addressed by any text reviewed. Two textbooks suggested adults with disabilities might contribute to the education of children with disabilities. Smith (2004, p. 91) recommended that adults with disabilities should be included on staff to provide role models for young children. Turnbull et al. (2002, p. 428) suggested students with disabilities may benefit from adult mentors with disabilities. Although all of the textbooks reviewed suggested schools or teachers partner with parents, no textbook suggested teachers and parents consider partnering with adult members of disability or deaf communities.

Nondiscriminatory Evaluation, Overrepresentation and Underrepresentation

Table 4 indicates nondiscriminatory assessment and evaluation and ethnic overrepresentation and underrepresentation of students with disabilities in various disability categories received the lion's share of attention in chapters devoted to multicultural and bilingual Special Education. All textbooks addressed both topics.

In chapters addressing cultural diversity, several authors included recommendations for

tapping resources, promoting partnerships, and including activities involving creative arts from different cultures and communities (e.g., Smith, 2004). However, neither the deaf nor disability communities were named or mentioned in any chapter addressing multicultural and bilingual education as a potential resource for personnel or as a cultural or pedagogical resource.

In short, no textbook reviewed addressed any distinctive characteristics, elements or features of disability or Deaf culture in their discussion of cultural diversity, multicultural and bilingual Special Education. All the texts reviewed focused primarily, if not exclusively, on ethnic and linguistic differences.

In Search of Disability and Deaf Culture in Special Education

Results of the review and analysis of each of the 10 textbooks in the 23 search categories are organized into six broad categories including: 1) disability and Deaf culture; 2) empowerment; 3) cultural elements; 4) socio-political elements; 5) definitions and perspectives; 6) classification and labeling, and 7) authorship. The results below refer to Table 5 that depicts the number of pages on which search categories and terms were identified.

Disability and Deaf Culture

Table 5 summarizes the results of the review and analysis conducted to identify the number of pages and the portion of each text that mentioned or discussed ASL, Deaf culture, disability culture and disability anywhere. While Deaf culture was addressed in all the textbooks, this discussion appeared in chapters addressing students who are deaf and hard of hearing. Deaf culture was mentioned or discussed on a total of 78 pages comprising less than two percent of the total pages of text.

As a critical element of Deaf culture, a search was conducted for text addressing ASL and other forms of sign language. Table 5 indicates ASL was discussed by nine of the 10 textbooks as the language of the Deaf culture and community. ASL was addressed as a feature of Deaf culture on 44 pages of text comprising less than one percent of the total pages of text reviewed and analyzed. However, it is important to note the 44 pages which ASL addressed with respect to Deaf culture comprised more than half of the total pages of text found to address Deaf culture. ASL was more frequently discussed as a strategy for communication and language development for youth with hearing impairments. Discussion of ASL limited to the education of deaf and hearing impaired students without reference to Deaf culture appeared on 66 pages.

While acknowledging and discussing features of Deaf culture, in a chapter addressing Multicultural Education and bilingual aspects of Special Education, Hallahan and Kauffman (2003) questioned the extent to which a culture has the right to perpetuate itself asking, "How should we respond to some members of the Deaf culture, for example, who reject the prevention of deafness or procedures and devices that enable deaf children to hear, preferring deafness to hearing and wishing to sustain the Deaf culture deliberately" (p. 90).

Table 5 also indicates three textbooks mentioned or discussed disability culture on three of the 5,471 pages addressing disability issues in 10 textbooks. Upon closer examination of these three pages it was clear that the entirety of each page was not devoted to a discussion of disability culture. The estimated cumulative proportion of total pages devoted to the discussion of disability culture was a single page for all 10 textbooks.

Gargiulo (2003) stressed the importance of recognizing "...the disability culture that surrounds physical disabilities" (p. 583). Citing Kirshbaum (2000), he concluded, "This disability culture emphasizes interdependence, empowerment, and respect for expertise and adaptations derived from personal disability experience. Students often benefit from meeting other people with similar disabilities for support, feedback, and discussions of disability cultural issues" (p. 583). Smith (2004) noted, "People with disabilities have also formed their own advocacy groups, becoming effectively organized during the 1980s and 1990s. The first phase was a quest for civil rights; the second phase is focusing on the development of a disability culture" (p. 19).

Table 5 indicates that only one textbook (Smith, 2004) included any discussion of disability studies. She noted disability studies "...represents an interdisciplinary study of the history and culture of a group of people" (p. 23).

Empowerment

This category includes the search topics of access, disability rights movement, disability rights leaders, and the independent living movement as search categories. Table 5 indicates access was addressed on 62 pages of the 10 texts reviewed. While some discussion of access addressed physical access, technology was frequently discussed as a means of accessing the curriculum, instruction and learning activities. Four textbooks discussed universal design including Hallahan and Kauffman (2003), Hardman et al. (2005), Smith (2004) and Turnbull et al. (2002).

Table 5 shows only four of the 10 textbooks reviewed discussed the disability rights movement, including Gargiulo (2003), Hallahan and Kauffman (2003), Smith (2004), and, Turnbull et al. (2002). A total of 13 pages included some mention or discussion of the disability rights movement.

A total of 19 pages of text included some mention or discussion of disabled and deaf persons who have been considered by the disability and deaf communities as leaders of the disability rights movement. Below is a list of those named in each textbook who have contributed to the disability rights movement.

Text	Leaders of the Disability Rights Movement Named in Textbooks
Heward, 2000	Judith Heumann, Donald Cook, I. King Jordan, Bridgetta Bourne, Jerry Covell, Ed Roberts
Hunt & Marshall, 2002	I. King Jordan
Kirk et al., 2003	Deidre Davis, Joan Corsiglia, Karen Gaffney, Mary Lester
Smith, 2004	Ed Roberts, Justin Dart, I. King Jordan
Turnbull et al., 2002	Billy Golfus

From the list above I. King Jordan was the most frequently mentioned leader as a key figure of the Deaf President Now movement. Dr. Jordan's name was identified in three of the 10 textbooks reviewed. Smith (2004) was the only author who acknowledged the contribution of leaders within the disability rights movement, specifically Ed Roberts and Justin Dart, to the passage of the Rehabilitation Act and the ADA. Only two textbooks mentioned the late Ed Roberts and one named Judith Heumann and the late Justin Dart. Judith Heumann, a woman with

a significant disability, who was appointed by President Clinton as the Assistant Secretary of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services overseeing all federal programs authorizing funding and provision of Special Education services, was mentioned in one (Heward, 2000) textbook. She was a leader in the advocacy and activism that led to implementation of rules and regulations related to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Justin Dart, also a person who had a significant disability and who was awarded the Medal of Freedom for his lifelong efforts to the disability rights movement and the passage of the ADA was mentioned in one textbook (Smith, 2004).

These findings are important since Ed Roberts, Judith Heumann, and Justin Dart, among others, are internationally recognized leaders in the disability community and the disability rights movement. In addition, they have been acknowledged for their contribution to the advancement of the civil rights and empowerment of all deaf and disabled persons, most notably their contributions to the passage of key legislation and rules and regulations including the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). However, a number of disabled and Deaf leaders who have been appointed by Presidents to key positions impacting policy and programs for youth and adults with disabilities were not identified, including Robert Davila, Evan Kemp, Paul G. Hearne, Kate Seelman, Bob Williams, and Marca Bristo to name a few. In addition, many other notable disabled and deaf leaders have contributed to the advancement of disability rights and disability and Deaf culture who were not discussed or named. In short, very little text included a discussion of the contributions by disabled and deaf persons to their own educational, social, political and economic status or advancement.

Only two of the ten textbooks mentioned the independent living movement (Gargiulo, 2003; Turnbull et al., 2002). This discussion was limited to two pages. It is important to note the independent living movement is a key element of disability culture since it involved one of the first organized efforts of persons with disabilities to advocate and empower themselves.

Cultural Contributions of Disability and Deaf Culture

Of interest for this study was the extent authors of introductory textbooks to exceptionality and Special Education included cultural contributions such as artwork, poetry, stories, and music produced by disabled and deaf persons. This category also included a search for any discussion or mention of theater productions, radio shows and other cultural or sporting events or activities focused on the participation of deaf and disabled persons and the disability or deaf experience. In addition, these textbooks were reviewed to assess portrayal of deaf and disabled persons in film and media. Textbooks were also examined to identify whether there was any mention or discussion of publications authored or produced by deaf persons and persons with disabilities addressing issues of concern to these communities.

Table 5 includes the results of the review and analysis of the review of textbooks for these search categories. Six textbooks included cultural contributions authored and produced by deaf and disabled persons comprising a total of 56 pages of text of which 47 pages (83%) were included in three texts (Gargiulo, 2003; Hallahan & Kauffman, 2003; Smith, 2004). The majority of the cultural contributions depicted paintings. Smith (2004) also included poetry, sculpture, sketches, and photography. Hallahan and Kauffman (2003) included a description of the National Theater of the Deaf and excerpts by Kathy Buckley, a deaf comedienne. Hunt and Marshall (2002) and Kirk et al. (2003) included poems by persons with a disability. Turnbull et al. (2002)

described a book of photographs taken and compiled by a deaf person, Maggie Lee Sayre, about life growing up on a river in the South.

The portrayal of disabled and deaf persons in film and other media was addressed by four texts and comprised a total of 32 pages. This category included a listing and brief description of films that portrayed disabled and deaf persons. Of the 32 pages on which the portrayal of deaf and disabled persons were named or mentioned, 23 pages (72%) were addressed in a single text (Smith, 2004) and provided a brief summary of films portraying deaf and disabled persons and described ways persons with disabilities have been commonly depicted by the film industry. Gargiulo (2003) briefly discussed *Rain Main*, a film portraying a person with autism. Hallahan and Kauffman (2003) included several cartoon strips addressing disability topics and mentioned the stereotyping and negative portrayal of disabled persons in the media. They also described a website that provides resources for deaf and disabled persons in the entertainment industry and the website for *On a Roll*, a radio talk show hosted by a person with a disability about disability issues which has evolved into *The Strength Coach*. Kirk et al. (2003) briefly mentioned *My Left Foot*, a film depicting a man with cerebral palsy. Turnbull et al. (2002) described the film, *How Billy Broke His Head and Other Tales of Wonder*, written and directed by Billy Golfus, a man who experienced a head injury, which provides an insider's look at the disability experience and the disability rights movement.

Five textbooks included information about publications, including online publications, devoted to issues of interest to the disability and deaf communities other than professional texts, journals, articles, and papers. Table 5 shows a total of 36 pages mentioned or discussed publications devoted to issues of interest to the disability and deaf communities other than professional material. Of the 36 pages on which such publications were mentioned, 20 pages (56%) were included in the text by Smith (2004) who listed a number of books authored by disabled and deaf persons in a section at the end of each chapter. Hallahan and Kauffman (2003) identified the website to the *Ragged Edge*, an online magazine devoted to disability issues and mentioned *Silent News* and *Deaf Life*, two magazines devoted to issues of concern to the deaf community. Hunt and Marshall (2002) also identified several publications authored by deaf persons and persons with disabilities about the disability and deaf experience. They also referred to *Ability Network Magazine*, a magazine devoted to disability issues. Turnbull et al. (2002) referenced a book by Temple Grandin, a woman with autism, and the compilation of photographs by Maggie Lee Sayre mentioned above. In most cases, while publications were named or referenced there was very little discussion, if any, of the content of these publications.

Socio-Political Elements

This group included the search categories of advocacy, attitudes, discrimination, and legal issues. Table 5 indicates all except one of the 10 textbooks reviewed addressed advocacy and advocacy was addressed on 80 pages of text. Heward (2000) and Smith (2004) were responsible for the largest number of pages of text addressing advocacy. The results of additional analysis indicated that of the pages of text devoted to a discussion of advocacy only 12 pages addressed advocacy efforts and contributions of deaf or disabled persons. The remaining addressed advocacy activities of parents, professionals and organizations. While there are numerous advocacy organizations led by and for persons with disabilities only one textbook (Gargiulo, 2003) mentioned People First, a self-advocacy organization led by and for persons with intellectual disabilities. None of the textbooks mentioned ADAPT or named any

independent living centers as advocacy organizations directed and led by disabled and Deaf persons on their own behalf.

Table 5 also includes the findings of a review of the 10 textbooks for any discussion of attitudes, discrimination and legal issues. Sixty pages of text addressed attitudes and 181 pages discussed issues of discrimination which was found to be the fourth most frequently addressed search category. Of the 23 search categories, legal issues was the most frequently addressed on 756 pages.

Perspectives, Classification and Labeling

Table 5 shows the results from the review and analysis of the search categories that included historical and alternative perspectives, classification and the issues of labeling and language when referring to deaf and disabled persons. A total of 141 pages were devoted to the discussion of historical perspectives. Historical perspectives typically emphasized the origins and evolution of the field of Special Education. The historical treatment of deaf persons and persons with disabilities received limited attention. Only two textbooks (Garaguilo, 2003; Smith, 2004) referenced the work of Scheerenberger (1983, 1987), while one textbook (Hardman et al., 2005) referenced the work of Braddock and Parish (2001). None of the textbooks reviewed referenced the work by Joseph Shapiro in his book *No Pity* describing the contemporary history of the disability rights and independent living movements or any other such accounts.

The search category of alternative perspectives was an effort to identify whether texts and authors' perspectives of disability differed from a categorical or deficit-based orientation towards disability. Of specific interest was the extent that disability as a construct may have been discussed or examined and how it might have evolved as a social construct. Of the 10 textbooks reviewed, six offered some discussion of alternative perspectives, other than a deficit-based model, which might be of interest to the reader. A total of 21 pages of text included some discussion of alternative perspectives of disability. Of the 21 pages, Hardman et al. (2005) contributed 15 pages. The remaining were contributed by Garaguilo (2003), Hunt et al. (2002), Smith (2004), Smith et al. (2004) and Turnbull et al. (2002). Hardman et al. (2005) briefly discussed a cultural view of disability arguing that normality is defined by societal views. He also described the medical model approach towards disability and in one sentence mentioned the impact of power relationships noting people with the greatest power within the culture can impose their criteria for normalcy on those who are less powerful. Hardman et al. (2005) also mentioned socio-cultural and eco-cultural factors that may influence perspectives about disability and described five approaches to the understanding and treatment of persons with emotional disabilities. Smith et al. (2004) addressed the need to understand cultural interpretations of disability. The social constructivist conceptualization of disability was presented by Hunt et al. (2002), Smith (2004) and Turnbull et al. (2002). The discussion was limited to one or two paragraphs in each of the texts.

Classification was found to be the second most frequently addressed search category. This search category did not include discussion of the specific types and characteristics of disability but was limited to how disabilities were defined and classified. All 10 textbooks addressed classification issues on a total of 536 pages. The related search category of labeling and language was addressed by all of the textbooks on a total of 63 pages.

Authorship

As indicated in the methods section, authorship was selected as a search category as a measure of the extent that deaf and disabled persons were consulted or invited to be participants in discussions that characterize who they are and their life experience. This category included quotes, excerpts, poems, and any material clearly authored by a person with a disability, parent, sibling, friend and a child of a deaf adult. Table 5 shows the number of pages on which material authored by such persons was identified. A total of 195 pages were found to have material with authorship attributed to a deaf person, a person with a disability, parent, sibling, friend and in one case a child of a deaf adult. As Table 5 indicates, a total of 96 pages of text included material for which authorship was attributed to a person with a disability or a deaf person while 94 pages were identified as having been authored by parents. Three texts included five pages of material authored by siblings, a close friend, and a child of a deaf adult. The 96 pages of text that included material authored by a deaf or disabled person represents about two percent of the total narrative portion of the 10 textbooks reviewed.

Summary

Table 5 provides a summary of the proportion of introductory and narrative text (5,481 pages) that comprised the total pages on which elements of each search category were mentioned or discussed. As Table 5 shows, disabilities studies was only mentioned in one textbook comprising .02% of the total pages of introductory and narrative text reviewed while legal issues comprised almost 14% of the text reviewed. As reported previously, a total of 1,737 pages of text were found to have addressed one or more search categories comprising approximately 30% of the pages reviewed. However, as noted in Table 5, all search categories except for classification and legal issues comprised less than four percent of the introductory and narrative text. In addition, 10 of the 23 search categories comprised less than one percent of the introductory and narrative discussion of all 10 texts reviewed. The average proportion of the total introductory and narrative text comprising the 10 textbooks reviewed devoted to mentioning or discussing all 23 search categories was about two percent.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to review and analyze introductory textbooks to Special Education and exceptionality to assess the extent disability and Deaf culture were addressed. Evidence from this study suggests minimal attention has been paid to describing disability and Deaf culture and related topics in introductory textbooks to Special Education and exceptionality. Disability is clearly described and defined in terms of characteristics viewed as uniquely if not exclusively individualized. Definitions and classification of disability did not address characteristics of disability with respect to shared or collective experiences by deaf and disabled persons as communities. In addition, there was little evidence of efforts to define and describe characteristics of disability from the perspective of those who live with and experience disability and deafness. These findings extended to chapters devoted to a discussion of cultural diversity, Multicultural Education and bilingual Special Education. Neither disability nor Deaf culture were acknowledged or discussed in any of these chapters in any detail.

In addition, the textbooks selected for review were analyzed to determine the extent people with disabilities and deaf persons were provided opportunities to represent and describe

their own experiences as persons identified as members of a unique microculture, minority, and community. While several textbooks included excerpts and quotes by deaf and disabled persons, the amount of text authorship that may be attributed to deaf or disabled persons comprised less than two percent of the introductory and narrative text. In short, deaf persons and disabled persons have been afforded very little opportunity to define, describe, narrate and discuss the disability or deaf experience from their own perspective in Special Education.

There are a number of implications that warrant consideration. As suggested earlier, introductory textbooks provide an overview of the foundation for the practice and study of any field. As such, they may be considered representative of the critical elements addressed by a discipline. The failure of introductory textbooks in Special Education and exceptionality to address disability and Deaf culture in any meaningful way, and the limited participation and representation of disabled and deaf persons in the discourse about who they are, and descriptions of their experience from their perspective, is very troubling for a number of reasons. First, the importance of training culturally competent and proficient teachers has been well established in the education literature, including Special Education. However, the findings of this study suggest Special Education has failed to adequately address disability and Deaf culture in any meaningful way. A consistent theme evident throughout the texts was a clear emphasis on the successful assimilation of students with disabilities in the dominant nondisabled society and culture. This would suggest that many teachers, while trained to deliver and implement Special Education services and practices, may actually have completed teacher preparation programs leading to teaching certification and graduate degrees with little or no understanding of what it means to actually live with and experience a disability or deafness. That is to say, many Special Education teachers may have been trained to teach students with disabilities with little or no expectation for developing cultural competence and proficiency with respect to disability and/or Deaf culture. Unfortunately, there may be a widespread but false assumption that teachers are culturally competent with respect to disability and deafness solely as a result of having completed a teacher preparation program with virtually no exposure to information and understanding about disability and Deaf culture. Unfortunately, the findings of this study strongly suggest that while discourse about disability and Special Education are evident, the voices, narrative and discourse by disabled and deaf persons about their lives, experiences and culture is minimized and more frequently absent.

Another implication is that disability and deafness have been defined in Special Education exclusively in terms of undesirable anatomical, physiological and psychological characteristics that are uniquely individualistic. This narrow definition of disability steeped in biological determinism precludes the consideration and study of factors that may be collectively shared by large proportions of deaf and disabled persons, and emphasizes the cultural assimilation of disabled and Deaf persons into the nondisabled world. This dominant perspective evident in the textbooks reviewed limits a cultural understanding of disability that emerges from the shared and collective experiences, understandings and narratives. The result is a major gap in the knowledge and understanding of students preparing to be teachers of the disability and deaf experience from the perspectives of disabled and deaf persons. This may have serious impact on the development and implementation of research, policy, program development, and practice for the education of disabled and deaf youth. Clearly, there is a need to broaden the discussion of the characteristics and classification of disability in Special Education to include alternative perspectives of disability addressing the social, cultural, and linguistic constructions of disability and Deafness, including an understanding of socio-political factors that frame and define the

personal and collective experience of disabled and Deaf persons.

Related to the question of cultural competence and proficiency with respect to disability and Deaf culture is the question of the extent teachers and deaf and disabled persons themselves have epistemic access to the shared and collective experience of being disabled and/or deaf including access to their history, heritage and culture. Teachers who have no understanding of disability and/or Deaf culture may be deprived of knowledge, understandings, meanings and pedagogies that may facilitate both student success and failure. In addition, students themselves may have limited or no access to understandings of their individual experience within a cultural framework. The implications of repressing or limiting access to cultural understandings of disability and deafness for people with disabilities and deafness needs to be investigated. One possible reverberation currently being felt within the disability and deaf communities is the lack of understanding by deaf and disabled youth of their history, or knowledge of the work of many disability and deaf leaders, compounded by the aging and passing of older disability leaders. The result is a failure of many young persons reaching adulthood to understand the need to protect their civil liberties or contribute to the legacy, heritage, culture and opportunities they have been afforded as the result of the work of many older disabled and deaf adults. Promoting cultural competence with respect to disability and Deaf culture may offer unknown resources and opportunities for both teachers and students that, at a minimum, will lead to better understanding of the disability and deaf experience, and offer deaf and disabled students access to historical knowledge about other disabled and deaf persons who have made enormous contributions and sacrifices to advance the progress and status of persons with disabilities.

There are several limitations to this study. First, it cannot be concluded based on this study alone that disability and Deaf culture are not addressed in other ways in teacher preparation programs, including other Special Education courses, Multicultural Education courses and fieldwork. Second this study involved a simple normative content analysis limited solely to an examination of the number of pages on which selected terms appeared as defined by the author considered representative of disability and Deaf culture. This was a subjective judgment, albeit supported by the disability studies literature. In addition, while the reliability coefficient was large warranting the conclusion that the identification and coding of specific search categories, terms, and topics was reliable, there is no doubt that a redefinition and reframing of the rules for identification may yield different results. This points to the need for substantial research to identify what may be considered to be the representative core elements of disability and Deaf culture. However, culture is ultimately a socially constructed perspective and subject to change over time as members of a group redefine who and what they are and the elements that define membership and identity (Cushner, McClelland & Safford, 2003).

This study did not address how much text should be devoted to such a discussion, in what context, and by whom. Are professionals without disabilities sufficiently qualified and informed to address disability and Deaf culture or characterize and describe the disability and deaf experience, the disability rights movement, and other features of disability and Deaf culture? To what extent is membership and participation in the disability and deaf communities a requisite for informing the discourse and narrative about disability and Deaf culture? To what extent should the discussion of disability and Deaf culture be limited to persons who are members of these communities and identify themselves as participants in these cultures? In short, how shall we identify authentic representatives of the disability and deaf experience and culture? These are important questions that cannot be addressed by the findings of this study.

Another limitation involves the recording of total pages in which search terms and

categories were found. Recording that a search term was addressed on a single page implies that the entire page was devoted to a discussion of the topic. In reality, the discussion of search terms and categories was frequently limited to a single sentence or paragraph on many pages. Thus, the results presented in this study are a biased *overestimate* of the total pages of text devoted to the discussion of disability and Deaf culture and related topics. In short, far fewer pages of text were actually devoted to the discussion of search terms and categories included in Table 2 than are reported by this study.

Implications for Future Research

Culture as a "...totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought characteristic of a community or population" (Coon, 2000, p. 53) involves a process of intergenerational transmission. For many, if not most cultures, children learn about the elements of a culture from adult members of a community, typically within the family structure. While children may contribute to the elements of a culture, adults generally frame, structure, and communicate their culture through a complex process. Thus, children from many ethnic cultures acquire their cultural understandings, knowledge, behaviors, customs, preferences, beliefs, and artifacts from adult members of a community. This presents a dilemma for youth with disabilities. Typically, youth with disabilities are members of families where one or more members are adults without disabilities and have little or no understanding of disability, disability issues, and disability culture until they have child with a disability. The exception to this may be the children of deaf adults who themselves may be immersed in Deaf culture or parents who may be professionals in a field serving persons with disabilities. It is more likely that the transmission of disability culture occurs among adults with disabilities with little opportunity afforded for the transmission of cultural understanding to individuals who are not members of the community. Thus, research is needed to address the question of how "...group cohesion, culture and identity form when there is no intergenerational transmission of culture, as with most lesbian and gay, and disabled people" (Linton, 1998, p. 93).

Additional research is needed to examine the extent disability and Deaf culture and the discourse about disability and deafness by persons living with disabilities and deafness are actually addressed in teacher preparation coursework including Special Education and Multicultural Education courses. In addition, a review of textbooks addressing Multicultural Education text would be important to identify the number of articles and chapters that present a perspective about disability and deafness authored by persons with disabilities and who are deaf, and can speak to the disability and deaf culture as a shared, collective and true cultural perspective in contrast to a Special Education perspective. Authors of Special Education textbooks may have the authority and license to speak to the education of youth with disabilities, but the authority for speaking to a cultural experience must ultimately be deferred to the members of the community from which the culture emerges.

There is no question that the authors of the textbooks reviewed have made enormously important contributions to the education of youth with disabilities. However, the question raised by these findings is whether Special Education as a discipline, if adequately represented by these textbooks, has surpassed the lowest levels of cultural competence (i.e., cultural destructiveness, incapacity and blindness) as described by Cross et al. (1989) and Lindsey et al. (2003) with respect to disability and Deaf culture.

Additional research is needed to analyze the content of the discourse and pedagogy about

disability with an emphasis on themes, meanings, semiotics, and inferences beyond the simple enumeration of topics and pages reported in this study. While examples of this are emerging (e.g., Brantlinger, 2004; Smith, 2001) content analysis methodologies (Krippendorf, 2004; Neuendorf, 2002) may be extremely useful towards advancing a better understanding of what is both present and absent in the discussion about disability and deafness in Special Education and allied fields. Finally, schools and Special Education personnel must begin to explore the possibilities and benefits that might emerge from connecting deaf and disabled students to adult deaf and disabled communities and affording epistemic access to their history, heritage and culture and knowledge about the factors that structure and often define their personal and collective experiences as members of a unique culture.

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Table 1

Profile of textbooks selected for review.

Authors	Textbook Sections						Total
	<i>Ed</i>	Intro	Narr	Gloss & App	Ref	Index	
1. Colarusso & O'Rourke (2004)	1	2	498	9	39	8	556
2. Gargiulo (2003)	1	7	572	29	40	18	666
3. Hallahan & Kauffman (2003)	9	10	511	11	40	26	598
4. Hardman, Drew, & Egan (2005)	8	7	548	0	33	25	613
5. Heward (2000)	6	12	632	13	65	22	744
6. Hunt & Marshall (2002)	3	6	521	11	30	18	586
7. Kirk, Gallagher, & Anastasiow (2003)	10	13	534	5	28	26	606
8. Smith (2004)	5	12	477	12	45	27	573
9. Smith, Polloway, Patton, & Dowdy (2003)	4	7	508	10	26	26	577
10. Turnbull, Turnbull, Shank, Smith, & Leal (2002)	3	9	595	8	32	35	679
Total	50	85	5396	108	378	231	6,198