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PERFORMANCE + ENGAGEMENT

How a Student with Significant Support Needs Participates in an Inclusive Classroom

Outline

- Introduction
- Review of Research Design
- Summary of Results
- Discussion of Implications
- Questions

Introduction

Students with Significant Support Needs

"completely dependent on others for meeting all major daily living needs…(and) require assistance at all times" for attendance at school to be possible

BC Ministry of Education, 2016, p. 63

Inclusive Education

"all children have the right to be a part of the life of the classroom – both socially and academically – and schools need to create programs that accommodate and celebrate diversity"

Katz, 2012, p. 9

Inclusive Education

Social Inclusion

- Views each student as a valued, contributing member of the classroom

- Fosters a sense of self-worth, acceptance, and belonging

Academic Inclusion

- Encourages participation in grade-level curriculum & classroom learning activities

- Promotes interactive learning with peers

- Creates cognitive challenge

Katz, 2012; Sokal & Katz, 2015

Inclusive
Education is…

Meaningful Participation

Taking Part

Belonging and Contribution

Skinner, 2018
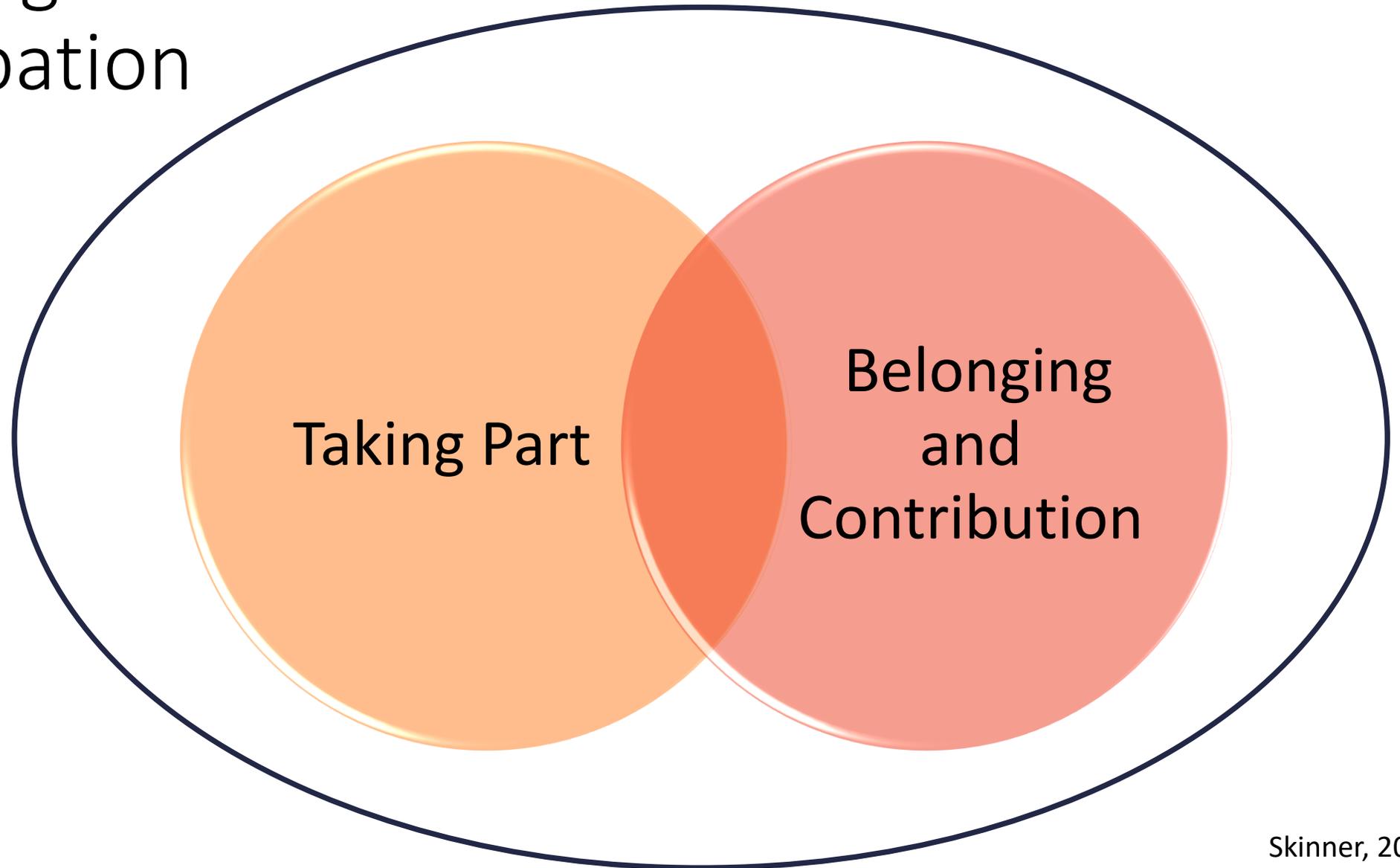
Participation

"doing what everyone else is doing"

participating in tasks and activities alongside and with peers, with or without modifications

"fringe participation"

participating in tasks with peers, but in a restricted role

"waiting or watching"

doing nothing while peers participate in an activity

"doing something different"

participating in an activity that is completely different from what peers are doing

Kramer, Olsen, Mermelstein, Balcells, & Liljenquist, 2012, p. 771-772

Participation in structured and unstructured life situations supports the healthy development and well-being of a child and enhances their overall quality of life

Law, 2002

How does a student with significant disabilities participate in the social and academic life of an inclusive classroom?

Research Design

Setting

School-Wide Inclusive Education Best Practice Indicators Rating Scale

New Hampshire Department of Education, n.d.
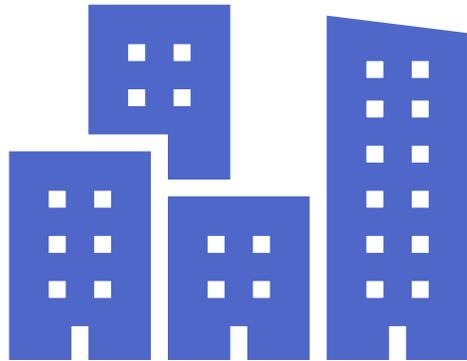
- Third grade classroom
- Large urban school district in lower mainland of BC
- May and June 2018

Participants

All participants were given pseudonyms

|		
	Sophie*	Student with significant support needs
	Leah	Classroom teacher
	Rachel	Education assistant
	Colby, Gwen, Megan, Lola, Sam	Sophie's classmates

Methodology

Qualitative Instrumental Case Study
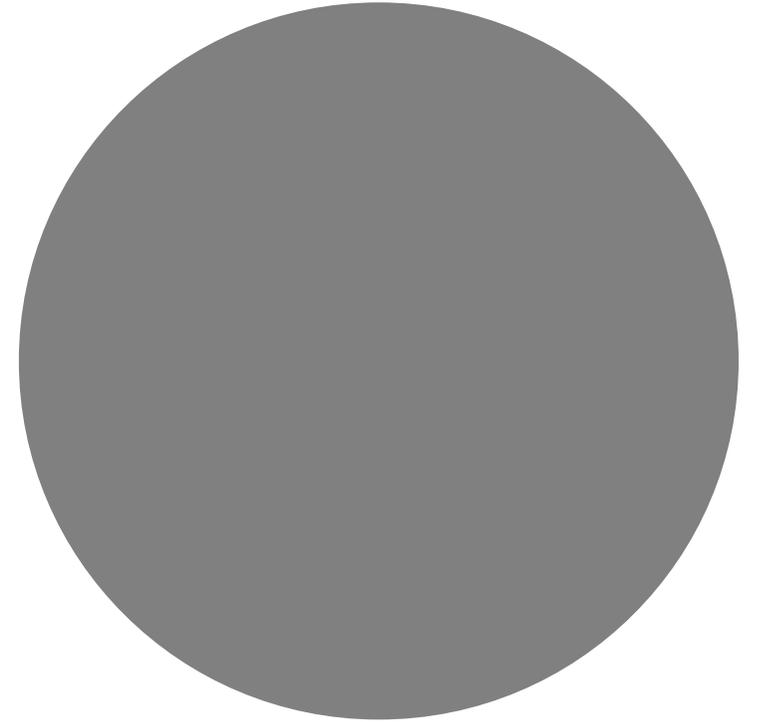
Canadian Model of Occupational Performance and Engagement
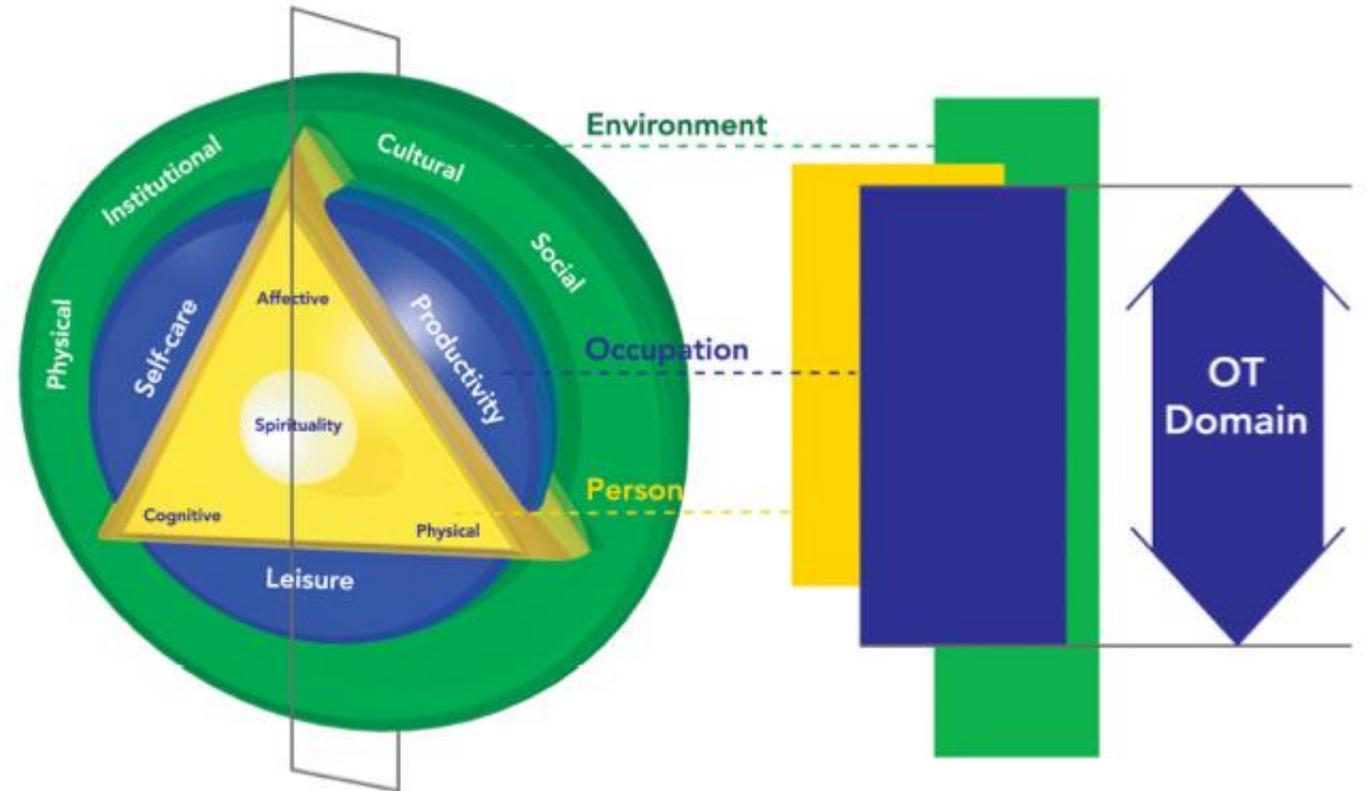
CMOP-E

Polatajko, Townsend, & Craik, 2007

Initial Conceptual Framework

Theoretical Framework:

Canadian Model of Occupational Performance and Engagement (CMOP-E)

Polatajko, Townsend, & Craik, 2007

Context - Inclusive Classroom

Valued Social Roles

Environmental Factors

Tasks Related to Grade-Level Curriculum

Personal Factors

Activity Factors

act of taking part

feeling of belonging and contribution

Classroom Routines

Tasks which are Cognitively Challenging

Interaction with Peers
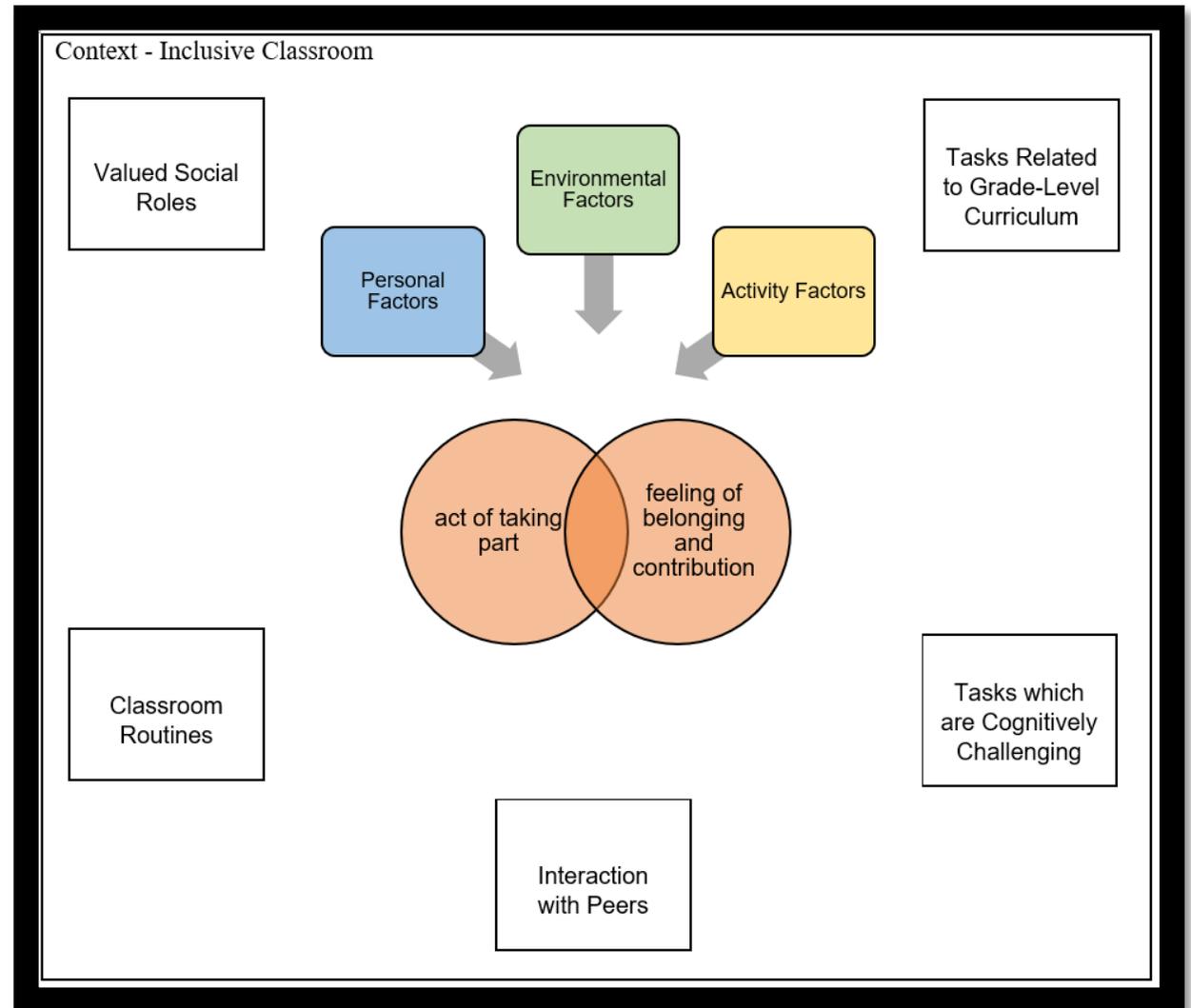
Data Collection

- Semi-structured interviews
- Direct observations in the classroom

Data Analysis

- Process of thematic analysis outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006)
- Each dataset analyzed individually
- Identified common themes across datasets
- Themes contributed to development of final conceptual framework
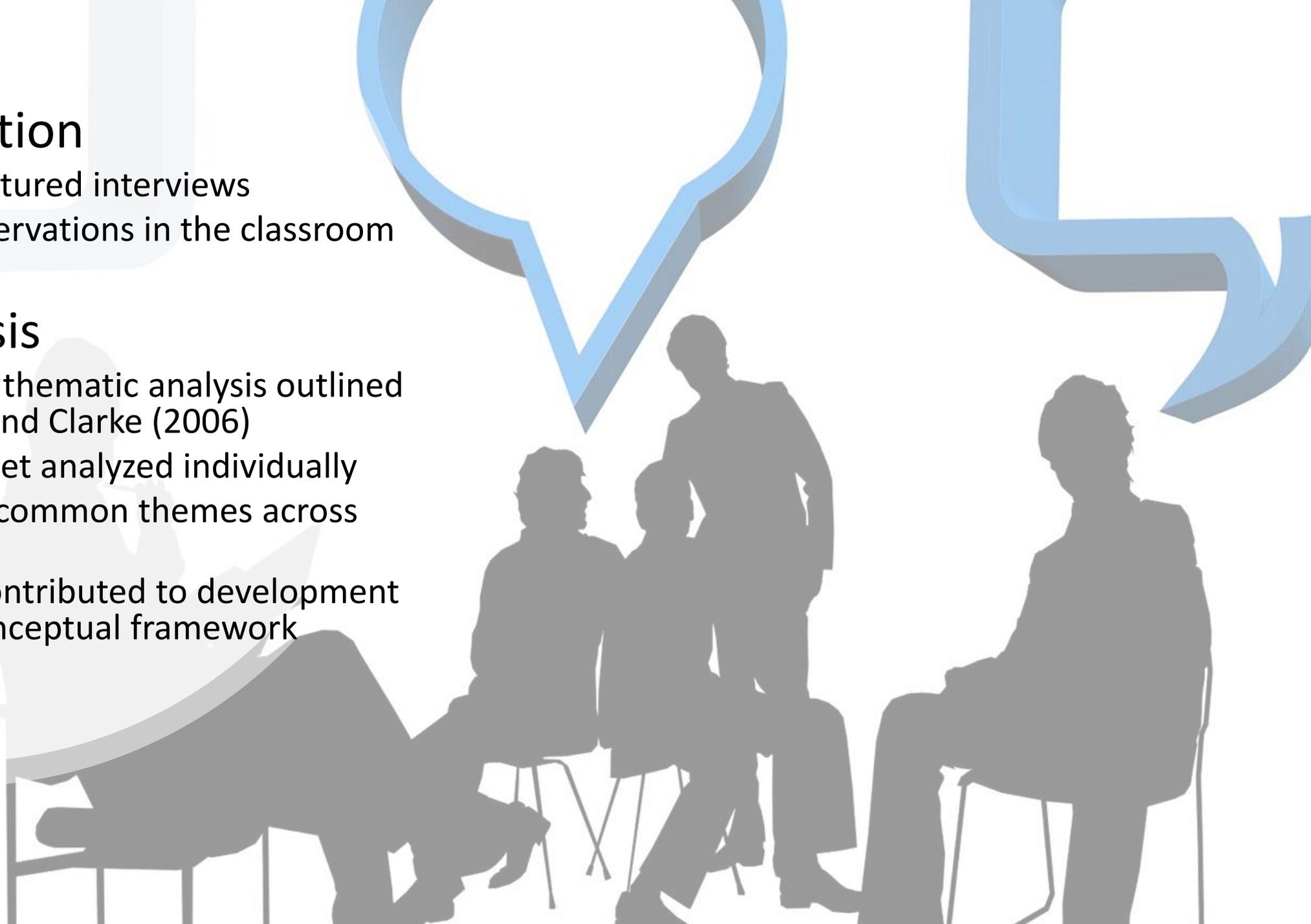
Summary of Results

Themes

- Inclusion – A Social Construct
- Learning – A Social Responsibility
- Connection Through Communication
- Tension – Individualized Program vs Inclusive Education

Inclusion – A Social Construct

"It takes growth. If I took Sophie right now and said, 'okay there isn't room in our class and you have to go to another class', it would be really different. Because that journey (of inclusion) hasn't happened, it took a whole year to create and grow."

Leah, Teacher

Learning – A Social Responsibility

- Classroom culture
  - Personal and social responsibility
  - Sense of belonging
  - Celebrates diversity

Learning – A Social Responsibility

"It's not only children with significant disabilities, it's that everybody has certain strengths and weaknesses, and knowing that and being open to that and understanding that, I think that's helped the children grow."

Leah, Teacher

"Yeah and she claps differently than us, but we don't care cause she does it her own way. Everyone does it their own way."

Colby, Student
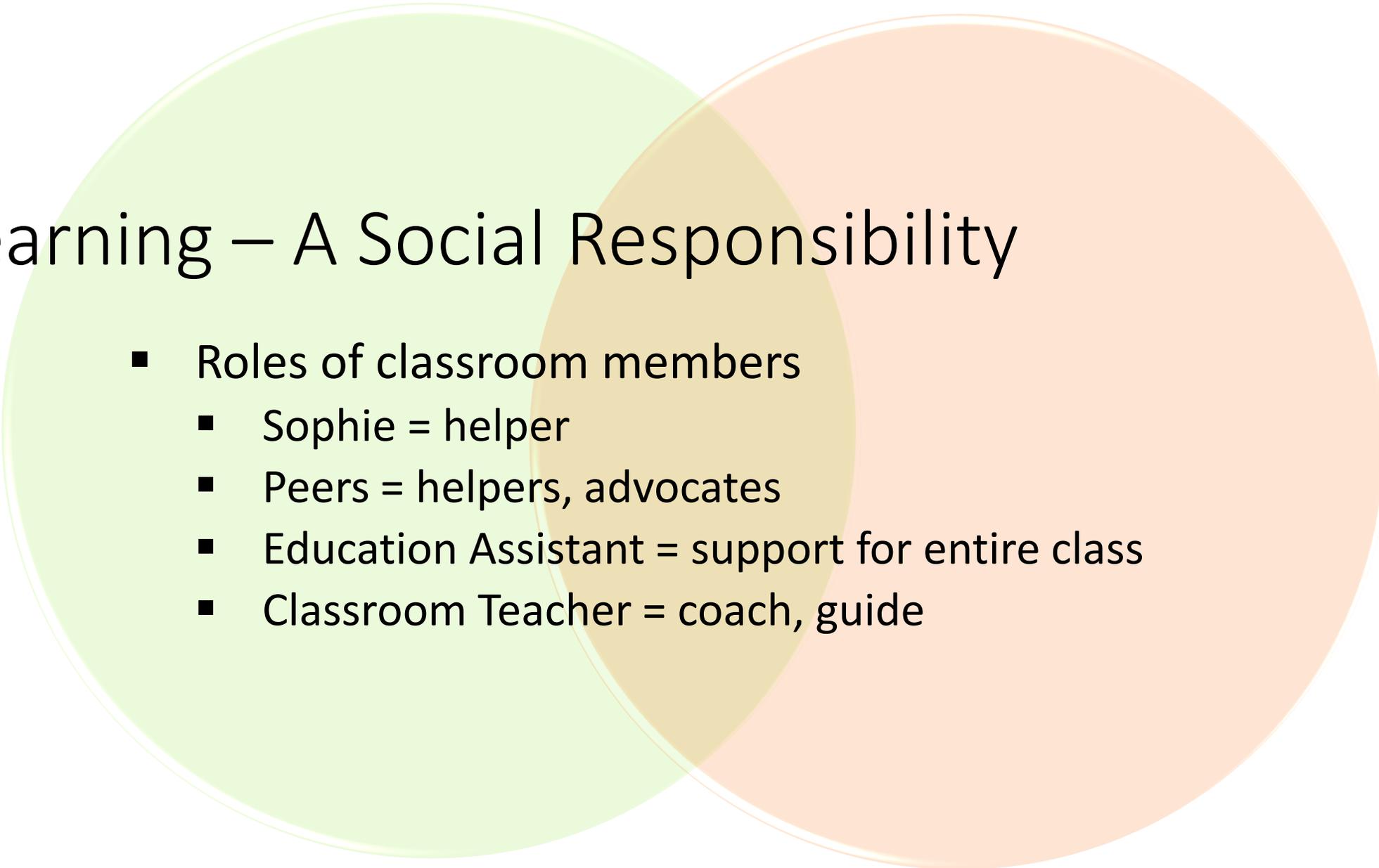
Learning – A Social Responsibility

- Roles of classroom members
  - Sophie = helper
  - Peers = helpers, advocates
  - Education Assistant = support for entire class
  - Classroom Teacher = coach, guide

Learning – A Social Responsibility

"I try to be that person that works with the other kids. I'm always like, 'Hey you, come here! You do this.' I'm just trying to be supportive in the class….So, (it's) like kind of working ourselves out of a job."

Rachel, EA

Connection Through Communication

"Communication isn't always speaking. It can be...it's sometimes normally just understanding what someone means to say to someone."

Megan, Student

"We understand (Sophie)...now we understand what her different emotions mean."

Leah, Teacher

Tension – Individualized Program vs Inclusive Education

"In terms of her writing, sometimes she'll have a friend, and she'll do her lines (with) a pen (on) a white board...together, either with a friend or with Rachel (educational assistant)...but again, I mean it's different..."

Leah, Teacher

"You just go through the day, you know, no pressure, just easy-going, very go with the flow. We still want to obtain our goals, but don't want to push Sophie to the point where she's crying...just enjoy the day!"

Rachel, EA

Tension – Individualized Program vs Inclusive Education

"You do what everybody else is doing. Like, if everybody's doing art, you do art too."

Gwen, Student

"Well...it can't be something completely different, it has to be something that's related."

Megan, Student

Final Conceptual Framework
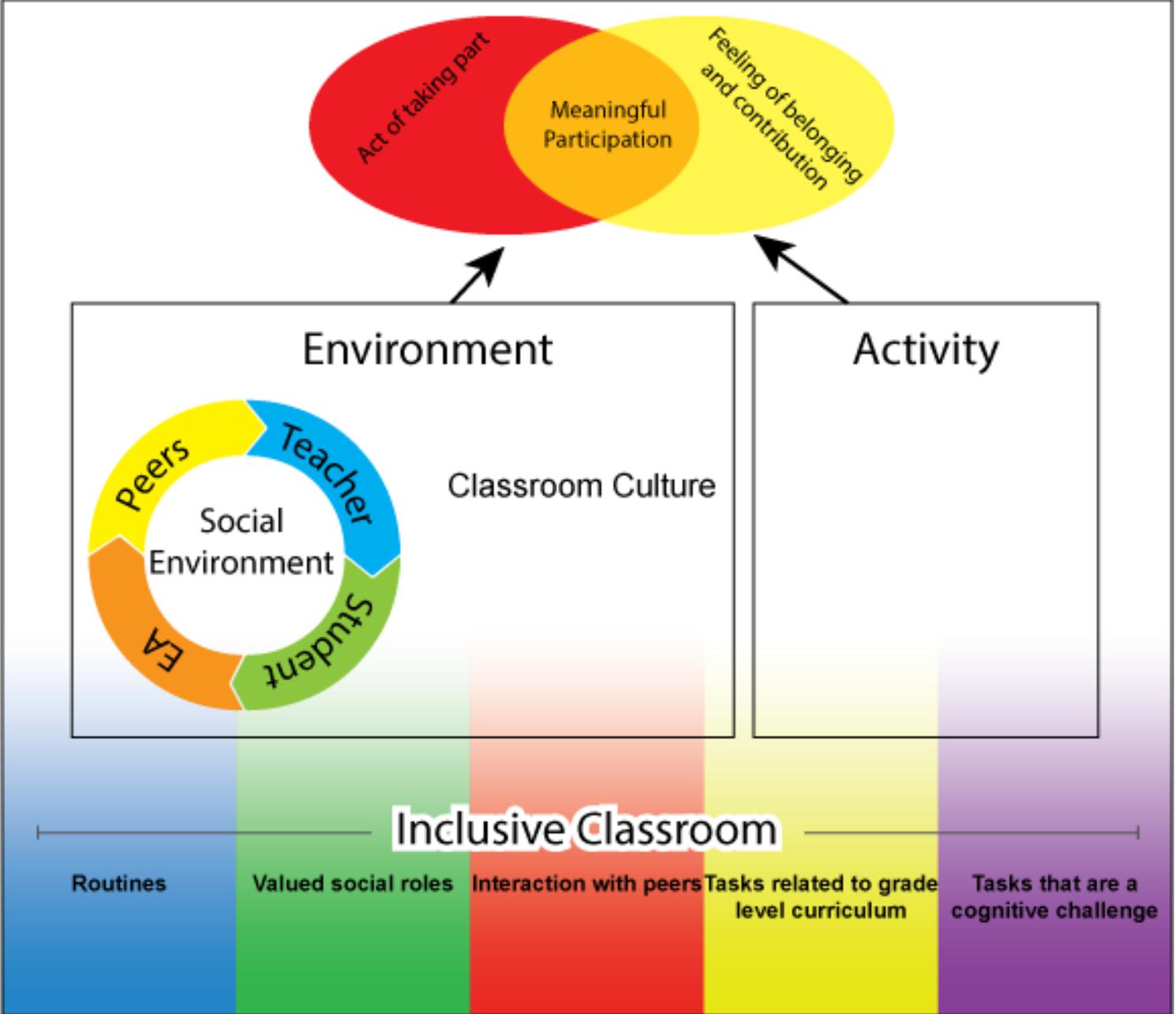
Discussion of Implications

Implications

Design

- Foster social responsibility in learning
- Connect the IEP with grade-level curriculum

Support

- Build teacher capacity
- Collaborative support from specialists

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Questions